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Aims and Scope

Research in Hospitality Management (*RHM*) is a peer-reviewed Open Access journal publishing articles that make an original contribution to the understanding of hospitality and to the theory and practice of international hospitality management.

The journal focusses on three main areas: (1) "Hospitality (Management) Studies" includes articles related to the study of and the study for hospitality. The study of hospitality refers to studies about the essence and ethics of hospitality from a social sciences perspective, while the study for hospitality refers to a more disciplinary approach according to the quintessential managerial areas of Finance, Human Resources, Operations, Marketing & Sales, and Technology; (2) "Hospitality Management Education" is devoted to articles about curriculum content and delivery methods for training and educating hospitality managers. Considering the size and scope of the hospitality industry, and the number of staff and students involved, studies on efficient, effective, and innovative ways of developing hospitality competencies are considered indispensable; (3) "Student Research Projects" allows excellent student work to be published. Student work can relate to excellent BA dissertations or MA theses.

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to this issue of *Research in Hospitality Management*. These are very strange times for ourselves, our students and our industry. At the time of writing, John Hopkins University's COVID-19 dashboard reports worldwide over four million cases and 283 000 deaths across 187 countries—truly unimaginable numbers in anything other than Hollywood movies. Our sympathies with all those affected.

You may be surprised, therefore, that this issue contains no papers on the virus or how it has affected our industry. Research takes time, and good research takes even longer. While a number of leading thinkers (including our own colleagues Elena Cavagnaro and Lucia Tomassini) have put their valuable thoughts down in respected journals such as *Tourism Geographies*, we feel it is more valuable for a journal like ours to continue to share good research across a wide range of topics, thereby supporting hospitality and tourism educators and researchers. The papers presented in this issue were being imagined and worked on long before the virus spread across our world, and it is therefore only right that we respect the effort and commitment our fellow academics put into developing and sharing their knowledge.

Chen presented an earlier version of her article on the gendered representation of chefs at the CAUTHE2020 conference in Auckland and we are pleased to publish the full paper here. **Schreurs** reports on a linguistic analysis of hospitality speech acts, **Singleton & Losekoot** consider a case study of the intersection of architecture, theology and community, and **Medema & de Zwaan** reflect on the concept of hostmanship, a term that is being increasingly used both within and outwith the hospitality industry thanks to Sweden's Hostmanship Group. **Zanella** provides a fascinating personal insight into the challenges of making sustainability more than a marketing slogan or greenwashing—can careful selection of suppliers reduce the impact of higher product costs of sustainable products in the kitchen? We are also pleased to showcase work by StendenHMS staff and their students, especially from our international campuses. **Simbine & Tukamushaba**'s paper considers employee attitudes and commitment to their organization in upscale hotels in the Middle East. **Heyes & Nadkarni** stay in the Middle East and consider luxury consumption in Dubai (look out for a forthcoming special issue of *Research in Hospitality Management* on luxury!). It is always an honour to provide the opportunity for someone to publish their first academic journal paper and **Hajal & Rowson**'s paper on the future of hospitality jobs is such a moment. **Melief, de Boer & Schulp** build nicely on this discussion with a phenomenological study of happiness at work. All in all, a celebration of the richness, variety and global nature of our industry.

We appreciate that COVID-19 has changed our world—and we do of course welcome future submissions around the effects of this virus—but we also look forward to articles that focus on examples of hospitality in the face of hostility, of creative and innovative ways in which our entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs have addressed challenges, and of new opportunities to provide meaningful experiences. Enjoy this issue, stay safe, and do consider writing for future issues of our journal.

Erwin Losekoot

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Media images and the gendered representation of chefs

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ABSTRACT: Images portrayed in online media may influence societal perceptions of chefs, with the potential to perpetuate gender segregation in the professional kitchen. Little scholarly attention in previous research has been given to the examination of gender and images in hospitality media. This article aims to fill that gap through an exploration of how online hospitality media may socially construct the gendered nature of the chef profession. The visual research method — the use of images to learn about the social world — was used to analyse 315 images collected from lifestyle magazines accessed online, food event websites, hospitality and restaurant industry-related websites, cookbooks and cooking equipment websites in New Zealand. Specifically, images depicting male and female chefs were sourced and analysed in relation to their gender representation. The findings revealed a marked difference between the portrayed images of male and female chefs. Not only did female chefs feature less frequently in the images, they were also predominantly portrayed in more domestic settings, with feminine aspects emphasised. The potential implications of these results are discussed, including the reinforcement of gender stereotypes underpinning segregation in the chef profession.

KEYWORDS: female chefs, gender segregation, magazines, male chefs, metaphors, visual research

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL: Online supplementary material is available at https://doi.org/10.1080/22243534.2020.1790202

Introduction

Within the chef profession in the Western world, men appear to outnumber women. Statistics show that only 18.5 per cent of Britain's top chefs were women (House of Commons. The Business, Innovation and Skills Committee, 2013). In Australia, statistics from the New South Wales region reported the chef profession as one of the top occupations for gender segregation, where 21 274 were male and only 4 385 were female (Women NSW, 2012). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found only 20 per cent of chefs and head cooks were female (Harris & Giuffre, 2015). In New Zealand, being a chef was one of the top 20 occupations for males in 2013 (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). This gender imbalance is echoed through the executive chef roles. For example, a 2017 study investigating the top 50 ranked restaurants announced in New Zealand's *Metro* magazine concluded that, out of the 50 restaurants, only nine featured female executive chefs. This figure dropped to five restaurants in the 2018 Top 50 list (*Metro*, 2017).

Previous research similarly attests to male domination in media publications. Painter and Ferrucci (2017), for instance, argue that women are underrepresented in media and are often depicted in traditional feminine roles when they do appear. Importantly, the media are considered a dominant force in shaping discourse on matters of public importance. A review of the literature shows that this is the case for the influence of media, for example, on career options and self-esteem (Kennard, Willis, Robinson, & Knobloch-Westerwick, 2016), gender equality (Mitra, Bang, and Biswas, 2015), political leadership (Schlehofer, Casad, Bligh, & Grotto, 2011), and violence against women (Sutherland, McCormack, Easteal, Holland, & Pirkis, 2016). Previously, it has been surmised that women remain underrepresented in media images associated with the chef industry, although this remains to be empirically confirmed (Kludt, 2017).

Some previous studies have revealed male chefs' dominance in the profession through articulation of the wage gap between male and female chefs (Kludt, 2017; Lutrario, 2017), and the stereotyped portrayals of male and female chefs in cookbooks (Johnston, Rodney, & Chong, 2014; Matwick, 2017). In cookbooks, female chefs were portrayed as caregivers and domestic workers; male chefs were linked to masculine traits such as having scientific knowledge, professional skills and hardworking success (Johnston et al., 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to consider the media's role in the production or reproduction of gender norms. As such, this article provides exploratory insights into how online media portray chefs, and whether or not male and female chefs are represented differently. This information, while exploratory, can be useful in considering how the media may serve to perpetuate visual discourses around gender in the chef profession, and the wider implications of this on perceptions and experiences of the chef profession as a career choice for men and women.

Literature review

A substantial amount of previous research has addressed the influence of the media. Coombe and Davis (2013), for instance, view media as a resource for social change because of its ability to influence an individual's beliefs. Thus, media have been examined for the potential influence on teenagers' religious and spiritual identity formation (Mullikin, 2006), tourist behaviour (Williams-Burnett, Skinner, & Fallon, 2018), as well as wider public issues, including violence against women (Sutherland et al., 2016), representations of policing (Dowler & Zawilski, 2007), nursing and midwifery (McAllister, Downer, Hanson, & Oprescu, 2014). Media have also been found to play a significant role in the formation of an individual's gender role and behaviours. For example, it has been suggested that media may have an influence on how an individual views their physical characteristics; for instance, women's thinness (Fernandez & Pritchard, 2012), and men's mental health (Scholz, Crabb, & Wittert, 2014). Previous studies have also shown a direct correlation between images in magazines and how female viewers envision their future, notably in relation to planning for children amid career plans (Kennard et al., 2016; Knobloch-Westerwick, Willis, & Kennard, 2016). The media have also been found to influence lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer issues through only portraying stereotypical representations (McInroy & Craig, 2017).

Notably for this article, previous studies have suggested a link between stereotypical representations in media and career choice. For example, suggesting links to career choice and performance, Eagleman and Geurin (2015) identified stereotypical portrayals of male and female gymnasts in the media during the Olympic Games, and Painter and Ferrucci (2017) found differing depictions in the representations of female journalists in television programmes. Both Mavin, Elliott, Stead and Williams (2016) and Wright and Holland (2014) have similarly illustrated how the media portray women's leadership stereotypically. Mavin et al. (2016) analysed the media presentation of famous female leaders and found women are less likely to be positively portrayed in leadership positions. Similarly, Wright and Holland's (2004) study of media portrayals of the former prime minister of Australia, Julia Gillard, found that media perpetuate the gender stereotypes and further constrain female political leader's development. Therefore, as the media are found to be a powerful societal tool that has the potential to shape individuals' beliefs as well as their career choices and performance (Kennard et al., 2016), it also seems important to consider how the media represents gender in portrayals of chefs and the wider impact for the chef profession.

Most previous studies tend to agree that the media perpetuate a stereotypical representation of gender roles that reinforces traditional views of gender roles. In general, male chefs are predominantly shown as masculine, intellectual and technically talented professionals, while female chefs are feminine, warm, and caring domestic home cooks. This has been examined in the contexts of social media (Clarke, Murphy, & Adler, 2016), and television cooking shows (De Backer & Hudders, 2016). In a study of celebrity cookbooks, Johnston et al. (2014) reported that male chefs have the image of being professional and skilled, while female chefs are portrayed as sexually attractive, feminine and motivated by self-satisfaction. Similarly, Matwick (2017) found that celebrity female chefs' cookbooks reinforced gender stereotypes by emphasising female chefs' caring and domestic characteristics and ignoring their professional backgrounds and business acumen.

There is also an argument that women challenge stereotypical views and engage in jobs that are considered more suitable for their counterparts (Statistics New Zealand, 2015; Vezich, Gunter, & Lieberman, 2017). In order to fit with the perceived standards and social stereotypes accepted for traditionally male jobs, it is argued that women, for example, may start employing more masculine speech strategies in an attempt to sound like men (Madichie, 2013; Harris & Giuffre, 2015; Matwick, 2017), or taking on aggressive male characteristics and competitive interactional styles (Bartholomew & Garey, 1996; Harris & Giuffre, 2010). This situation has also been found in the professional kitchen. The professional kitchen is known to have a hierarchical system to classify the different roles and responsibilities of individual positions (Starbuck, 2015). In New Zealand, as elsewhere in the world, male chefs tend to dominate the kitchen, especially the top management roles, such as executive chefs and head chefs (Brownell, 1994; Blayney & Blotnicky, 2010; Harris & Giuffre, 2015; Statistics New Zealand, 2015). Therefore, the chef is socially considered a man's job. As a consequence, female chefs often suffer due to the pressure to conform to the culture of professional kitchens (Feit, 2000). In this male-dominated environment, female chefs have been found to engage in certain gendered characteristics and behaviour. Previous studies have found that female chefs sometimes hide their femininity in order to gain acceptance as a chef, for example, by assuming a masculine appearance, such as having a manly haircut, have less or no facial expression, and wearing no makeup (Harris & Giuffre, 2009; Druckman, 2010; Best, 2012).

It is important to note that many scholars consider gender to relate to an individual's behaviour, rather than to their biological sex attributes (West & Zimmerman, 1987; Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2016). Wright and Holland (2014) suggest gender is a constructed idea and ideal, which emerges from social processes of interactions. Differing gender ideals for men and women tend to shape an individual's own behaviour and their expectations of others. In a wider context, Kram (1985) stated that women are often considered fragile and weak in a social and physical way, and as peaceful, passive and emotional; whereas men are generally associated with words like "strong", "assertive", "leader", "tough" and "brave". Åkestam, Rosengren, and Dahlen (2017) consider that when using certain attributes to differentiate and portray women and men, these gender attributes are gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes can be problematic and disadvantage women as they may lead to expectations and judgements that restrict opportunities (Murphy, 1998; Åkestam et al., 2017). As Meyerhoff (2014) explained, women are often featured with characteristics including being weak and not competitive and this may limit their career development, constructing inadequate power and resources for women in the domestic economy, and further creating a division of labour. Therefore, differing media portrayals of male and female chefs could be contributing to gender stereotyping causing male-dominated segregation in the professional kitchens (Harris & Giuffre, 2009; Wright & Holland, 2014; Matwick, 2017).

Methods

As this study explores the use of images depicting male and female chefs portrayed on online media, a qualitative methodology employing visual research methods was applied. Visual research relies on the use of artistic media to produce and represent knowledge (Banks, 2001; Patton, 2002). The data of visual research can include, but are not limited to, film, imagery, drawings, paintings and sculptures. In this research, online images were used to explore the differences between the ways in which male and female chefs are portrayed (Brotherton & Wood, 2008). Online images provide a relevant source of data for this research because they are able to produce social meaning, reflect social understandings, and reaffirm power asymmetries and socially constructed gender patterns (Scollon, & Wong Scollon, 2003; Vezich et al., 2017).

A total of 315 online images representing both male and female chefs were analysed, taken from lifestyle magazines, food event websites, hospitality and restaurant industry-related websites, cookbooks and cooking equipment websites, and news websites in New Zealand. The images were obtained by entering the keywords "chef", "female chef" and "woman chef" in the Google search engine. A search engine was applied because it is a free tool that enables access to a large amount of data and is ideal for information searching on the internet (Khiste, Veer, & Maske, 2011). While there are differing definitions of chefs (Harris & Giuffre, 2015; Orido, 2017), and there are also different types of chefs, such as executive chefs, sous chefs and pastry chefs, this research focused on female chefs in a more general sense.

Through this data collection method, the researchers collected online images of those who were considered to be "chefs" as presented by the media and publishers, accessed through the particular search engine. The data consisted of images of chefs published over a 20-year period from 1998 to 2018. The data collection stopped when the same images continued appearing during searches. Table 1 shows the types of media and sources that the images were collected from. The sources were lifestyle magazines (30%), food event websites (28%), hospitality and restaurant industry websites (26%), cookbooks and cooking equipment websites (8%), and news websites (8%). The media used as sources are well established and popular among public readers and viewers. These media sources target a broad online audience, including those who are interested in food and food preparation, industry-related websites whose purpose is to provide both industry professionals and non-industry viewers with formal information about the industry, food event information websites for attendees, as well as the readers of online newspapers. Sources of media not accessible online were not included in the research. The aim of this research was to consider images accessible to the public online, noting the rapid increase in internet activity and resources worldwide over the last twenty years (Internet World Stats, 2019).

TABLE 1. Data collection sources

Source	Number of images
Bite magazine website	23
Viva magazine website	25
Dish magazine website	27
Good magazine website	5
Noted website	13
Food show website	55
Heart of the city website	34
New Zealand Restaurant association website	3
New Zealand Chef association	9
Hospitality business industry website	32
Restaurant and café industry website	38
Cookbooks and cooking equipment websites	26
News website (*Stuff* and *New Zealand Herald*)	25

Tinkler's (2013) five lines of enquiry were applied to analyse each image. The five steps in the analysis process were: (1) identifying basic details; (2) scrutinising the image; (3) examining the material evidence; (4) conducting contextual research; and (5) reflecting on the meaning of the image. Analysing the basic details of each image involved identifying the background to the image, including where it was collected, where it was published, and its purpose. Scrutiny of the image required detailed and repeated investigation into various aspects of the image. This included, for instance, examining the features of the photo: the pose and posture of the chef, what was shown of them, their appearance and what they were wearing, their facial expression, the props included (if any), the use of lighting and colour, and what meaning these elements were trying to convey to viewers (Tinkler, 2013).

Analysis of the material evidence involved identifying whether the image is paper-based or digital, which Tinkler (2013) suggests has implications for how images can be used and what they mean to people. Analysis of the context included analysing the historical and cultural aspects of the image. The final part, reflection on the meaning of the image, involved interpreting what the image potentially means to the imager, the viewers and the people in the image, and the possible implications of the image's meaning. As Tinkler (2013) considered that all five lines of enquiry overlap and there is no definite sequence when examining each image, the five lines of enquiry were revisited multiple times, involving a process of weaving back and forth between each line of enquiry. The results of the data analysis are presented below, accompanied by example images to illustrate the key findings of how the online images may socially construct gender in the chef profession.

Results

Analysis of the online images found that images of female chefs were under-represented overall. Of the 315 images collected, female chefs only featured in 79 (25%) of them. Predominantly, the images only featured one chef; just two images featured two chefs. This finding serves to highlight the prominence of the male chef in media images. Data analysis also revealed differing purposes for the images. Among the images presented in the food magazines, not surprisingly, images of chefs were commonly displayed next to recipes to promote the dishes and/or the sale of the cookbook. Similarly, the presentation of images of chefs in industry news and magazines served to advertise newly opened restaurants. The industry-related websites used images of chefs when announcing and congratulating the winners of awards and recognitions. Food event websites, such as The Food Show, used the images of chefs to promote an event or cooking tools that were on sale. Thus, the purpose of the image became apparent from the analysis.

Significantly, differences in how male and female chefs were portrayed in the images were identified. In terms of location, the analysis revealed that most images of female chefs featured them in a home kitchen, while male chefs were either featured in a commercial kitchen or in a restaurant (Figures S1–S4).

In terms of the food presented, the food or dishes female chefs were shown to be preparing in the images were mostly home-cooked meals, whereas the images of male chefs focused on them preparing restaurant dishes (Figures S5–S8).

Background elements such as fruits, flowers, and some home decorations were displayed in the female chefs' images. In contrast, the male chefs' images were relatively simple (Figures 9–12). Notably, most of the images of male chefs were posed portraits, with fewer capturing them preparing or presenting dishes.

In relation to attire, most of the images were found to present the female chefs dressed in feminine clothes rather than in professional uniforms such as chef jackets, while almost all the male chefs were shown wearing their chef jackets or uniforms (Figures S13–S16).

The facial expressions of male and female chefs were also found to be presented differently (Figures S17–S20). Most female chefs were presented smiling, while male chefs displayed a more neutral facial expression and, quite often, they also had their arms crossed over their chests.

Of note, there were some exceptions (Figures S21–S24). In the images, published more recently between 2015 and 2018, women's skills were more frequently presented in a commercial kitchen environment. In this period, few male chefs were portrayed as home cooks or in domestic kitchens. The study found two female chefs were presented in their chef uniform and preparing food in a professional kitchen, and four male chefs were shown in a domestic kitchen portraying a home environment during 2015 to 2018. Although these remained exceptions to the majority of images analysed, they were seemingly taken for different purposes and different audiences, such as for the cover for a recipe book, to celebrate the grand opening of a new restaurant, or to promote cookware and advertise events. Future research may therefore wish to consider the influence of media purpose and intended audience on the gender representation of chefs in online images to further the findings presented here.

Discussion

The results of this study have provided some support for previous studies that have found that women remain underrepresented in media (e.g. Painter & Ferrucci, 2017), and instead highlight the dominance of men in the chef profession. The results also provide further evidence that, when they do appear in media images, women are often depicted in domestic settings and traditional feminine roles. The potential implication of this is that the media images reinforce the assumption that women's primary responsibility is in the domestic kitchen, thus perpetuating gender stereotypes in the profession (Bartholomew & Garey, 1996; Druckman, 2010; Matwick, 2017).

Depictions of female chefs with facial expressions with warm smiles and positioned in domestic settings emphasise and further reproduce the stereotypical gender attributes of women. Bartholomew and Garey (1996) suggested that smiling facial expressions create an impression that women gain satisfaction and pride when serving and caring for their families. This corresponds with the argument that women tend to be portrayed in either a sexualised or domestic manner when featured in media (Painter & Ferrucci, 2017). Similarly, Knobloch-Westerwick et al. (2014) found that the media portrayal of women largely supports traditional gender stereotypes and predominantly depicts women with more emphasis placed on their physical attractiveness and sexual desirability, or in roles of motherhood and homecare. While feminine traits were prominent among the images of female chefs, the results also go some way to show that the images do not depict women's strategies to challenge gender norms in the profession, such as by hiding their femininity (Harris & Giuffre, 2015). The way in which women chefs may engage in disrupting gender norms in the professional kitchen is a worthwhile topic for future research.

The stereotypical portrayals of gender in online media images may generate negative outcomes. Matwick (2017) states that stereotypical representation may gloss over women's culinary expertise. Moreover, Åkestam et al. (2017) in their study of advertising and its effects found that advertising stereotypes affect how consumers evaluate the messages in the advertisements. In their quantitative study, they found correlation between audiences' perceptions and level of stereotypical portrayals; traditional portrayals of women were perceived by their audience with a negative attitude. In contrast, "femvertising" (advertisements that promote products and services and at the same time inspire and empower women through images and messages from professional female-talent, received positive feedback from the audience. Behm-Morawitz and Mastro (2008) similarly found stereotypical portrayals in teen movies and their association with negative stereotypes around gender roles and female friendships. As such, stereotypical portrayals tend to have negative impacts and limit the "aspirations, expectations, interests and participation of women and men in our society" (McKenzie, Bugden, Webster, & Mischa, 2018, p. 33).

In contrast, the images of male chefs with uniforms and chef hats send a message that men have the dominance and authority in a professional kitchen, and that the kitchen is predominantly a masculine place. Johnston et al. (2014) have confirmed that the chef uniform and chef hat not only emphasise that a professional kitchen is a place of skilfulness and craftsmanship, but also indicate that the role requires hard work and that the titles and positions need to be earned. The portrayal of male chefs in uniform in this research suggests that men continue to dominate in kitchens and the hats are a symbol of "authority and knowledge" (Jones, 2010); while female chefs are in casual dress with no hat, which shows that their status in the kitchen remain less significant (Matwick, 2017). These portrayals serve to reinforce men's dominant and women's subordinate positions in the chef hierarchy. Moreover, the depiction of male chefs with their arms crossed and with more neutral facial expressions could be seen as a way of symbolising that professional knowledge and skill are linked to traditional masculine chef roles (Johnston et al., 2014). Having one's arms crossed is also a protective-defensive stance by male chefs to show that they are the "ruler" of the kitchen (Lefkowich, Oliffe, Hurd Clarke, & Hannan-Leith, 2017). Similarly, the majority of the male chefs' images were portrait poses taken in or outside of commercial establishments. This lends support for Johnston et al.'s (2014) finding that men are showcased for their dominance in the professional kitchen.

Overall, the results of this exploratory research provide evidence that images used to portray chefs in online media represent male and female chefs differently, and that these portrayals might reproduce and reinforce stereotypical concepts of gender. In sum, female chefs were depicted in relation to domestic cooking and caring for others, and women's traditional role of taking care of the family and home was also reinforced in the images. The historical construction of women as domestic caregivers has been widely established (De Backer & Hudders, 2016). Scholz et al. (2014) highlighted that problematic portrayals can reproduce stereotypes and worsen stigmas. This has wider implications for the way the chef profession is perceived and experienced as a career. Indeed, scholars have attested that images have a strong influence on perceptions and career choices (Dowler & Zawilski, 2007; Schlehofer et al., 2011; Kennard et al., 2016; Painter & Ferrucci, 2017). As such, there may be a case to be made that stereotypical images may indirectly discourage women from seeing the chef profession as something they can belong to, and may not accurately reflect the potential gender challenges that occur in hierarchical professional kitchen.

Conclusion

The chef profession is highly gender segregated, and so far, males have dominated the industry. Stereotypical female characteristics such as being soft and non-competitive have arguably put women in an unfavourable position in the professional kitchen. Due to the important role of the media in shaping public perceptions, this gender inequality is potentially perpetuated and reinforced by media portrayals of the chef profession. This research provided an exploratory analysis of gender portrayed in online images published in the New Zealand media and how they potentially socially construct the roles of male and female chefs. The main results were that media tend to predominantly portray women as domestic cooks and men as professional chefs, and reinforce gender traits, notably of femininity and masculinity. Such problematic portrayals could serve to reproduce inequalities and exacerbate the existing gender segregation in the chef industry.

Results of this research, while exploratory, lend some evidence to suggest that existing social hierarchies are still being reproduced through media portrayals, which can influence the perceptions of people both in and outside the chef industry. There is thus a greater need for awareness of the power of problematic portrayals and the possible implications. Opportunities for further research include cross-national studies, understanding the impact of stereotyped portrayals on the experiences of male and female chefs, and the replication of this study in other professions.

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Measuring language usage in hospitality situations

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ABSTRACT: In this study, language usage in hospitality situations is measured. To this end, a corpus of utterances taken from a Colombian Spanish novel is quantitatively analysed. As a starting point of the analysis, it is illustrated that different modes of address (*T* and *V*) are used in hospitality situations, since they affect an interlocutor's positive face. Likewise, different types of verb moods seem to be relevant to hospitality situations, as they influence the negative face of speakers. Furthermore, whether linguistic forms enhance or threaten the interlocutor's positive and negative face is determined by the type of social relationship between the speakers and the communicative situation in which they are used. Moreover, it is assumed that hospitality situations can be defined as interactions between non-relatives that are non-conflictive in nature. Based on this assumption, the quantitative analysis indicates that in hospitality situations *V* is more likely to be used than *T*, whereas in non-hospitality situations *T* is more likely to be used than *V*. In contrast, hospitality situations do not necessarily differ from non-hospitality situations in the use of verb moods. Together, these findings serve to illustrate how the use of language may shape hospitality experiences. They suggest that hospitality may be related to different linguistic systems interacting with the context. Hospitality professionals working in a field that is highly dependent on a smooth host-guest interaction could especially benefit from these findings. Furthermore, from an academic point of view, these findings may function as a starting point to further investigate the relation between the use of language and the experience of hospitality.

KEYWORDS: communicative situation, linguistic forms, modes of address, politeness, social relationship, speech acts, verb moods

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Introduction

In many languages, invitations are typically performed in the imperative mood, as in (1):

(1) Please come [IMPERAT] in, Sir (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 101)

Although the force of the imperative mood is softened by "Please" and the respect term "Sir", traditionally, the imperative mood is related to giving orders, and, as such, seems to imply a rather hostile act. In line with this example, an explorative study of hospitality speech patterns in Colombian Spanish indicates that different linguistic forms, varying from very polite to apparently extremely impolite, are involved in performing speech acts (cf. Searle, 1979) that are typically performed in hospitality situations, such as greetings and invitations (Schreurs, 2017). These findings were related to the concept of a speaker's *face* (Brown & Levinson, 1987) — that is, the public self-image all speakers are thought to have, and from which two basic needs follow in communication.

On one hand, it is argued that speakers need to feel appreciated by others. This desire has been coined as *positive face* (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The use of polite address terms, such as "Sir" in the invitation in (1), may enhance a speaker's positive face. On the other hand, speakers supposedly want their actions to be unimpeded by others. This desire has been defined as *negative face* (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Speakers may choose one or another verb form to redress the threat to the interlocutor's negative face. Compare, for example, the example in (1) with the invitation in (2):

(2) Why don't you come in?

The invitation performed in (2) is dressed up as a negative question. It does not require an answer (cf. "Because I'm in a hurry"), but is used to propose an activity to the interlocutor (Matte Bon, 1995). In contrast to the invitation in (1), the invitation in (2) has certain linguistic characteristics to give the interlocutor the feeling of freedom of action. Without further ado, the speaker in (2) is just asking a question, and it is up to the interlocutor whether or not to take it as the invitation implied by it.

Most importantly, the social necessity to attend to both positive and negative face is considered to be a universal phenomenon in human communication (Brown & Levinson, 1987). If face is a common notion that can be lost and enhanced, speakers will generally cooperate in order to maintain face. Therefore, they carefully choose the linguistic forms to enhance positive face and to redress the threats to negative face. Whether linguistic forms enhance or threaten the interlocutor's positive and negative face is determined by contextual factors such as the type of social relationship between the speakers and the communicative situation in which they are used. For example, to call a stranger a "bastard" in order to be hospitable is quite unthinkable, whereas in intimate social relationships the use of a term of abuse (cf. *gordito* "fatso" between conjugal partners) may be taken as a sign of appreciation (Fitch, 1998).

Hence, a critical examination of the role of language seems to be appropriate when studying hospitality. Although it has been argued that verbal social interactions have greatly influenced hospitality experiences (Robinson & Lynch, 2007a), from a linguistic perspective, the study of hospitality has been surprisingly limited to date (Robinson & Lynch, 2007b). There is not much literature on language and hospitality, and what there is is often focused on language ability or training (cf. Yuan, Houston, & Cai, 2006; Esfehani & Walters, 2018; Ghany & Latif, 2012; Luka, 2018; for an overview of existing literature on hospitality in relation to language, see also Schreurs, 2019).

In order to address this gap, and drawing on the results presented in Schreurs (2017), in this study it will be argued that the interaction between the meaning of the linguistic forms and the enhancement of positive and negative face could be particularly relevant to communication in hospitality situations. More specifically, specific modes of address (informal *T* and formal *V*) may be used, since these affect an interlocutor's positive face. Likewise, different verb moods (indicative, subjunctive, and imperative mood) seem to be relevant here, as they clearly affect the negative face of speakers. In order to investigate this, the use of modes of address and verb moods in daily hospitality situations will be quantitatively analysed. In daily life, hospitality concerns the encounter between strangers, neighbours, and friends, that is to say, between "people who are not regular members of a household" (Telfer, 2001, p. 39) in the home sphere.

Method

Schreurs (2017) offers an initial impression of the linguistic forms that are used in hospitality situations in the novel *La marquesa de Yolombó* [The marchioness of Yolombó] (Carrasquilla, [1928] 1974) and of the contextual factors that determine how they are interpreted. Two contextual factors are identified: (1) whether the communicative situation is conflictive or not; and (2) whether the conversation is between relatives or between non-relatives. For instance, *T* commonly expresses solidarity in colloquial speech, yet indicates power in conflictive situations (cf. Brown & Gilman, 1968). Similarly, *V* generally indicates respect, however, between relatives it could also express distance. This leads to the expectation that speakers will strategically choose the linguistic forms to construct speech acts depending on the specific circumstances of the conversation. In agreement with the definition of hospitality provided by Telfer (2001), it is assumed here that hospitality situations are most likely to occur in non-conflictive situations between non-relatives.

Description of corpus

To provide independent evidence on how hospitality is linguistically manifested, a corpus of utterances drawn from dialogues in the novel *La marquesa de Yolombó* "The marchioness of Yolombó" (Carrasquilla, [1928] 1974) was created. The novel describes life in a little village in Colombia at the end of the colonial period. The story revolves around the protagonist Bárbara Caballero, who breaks from the traditional role of the woman around the home. In a society ruled by men and *machismo*, the exploration of gold mines, an activity typical for the region in which the story takes place, makes her very rich. She becomes famous for her exceptional lifestyle, her money, her aversion to the common practice of slavery and also for the title of marchioness, which was given to her by the king of Spain as a reward for her dedication and loyalty to the Spanish court. Unfortunately, her success leads to her misfortune, as she is betrayed by her brand new husband, who turns out to be a criminal with his eye on her fortune.

This particular novel was chosen because it offers 1 473 utterances that contain a variety of different linguistic forms, such as two modes of address and three types of verb moods, whereas in contemporary English it is most common to only use one mode of address ("you" followed by a second person singular verb conjugation for both the formal and the informal mode of address) and two types of verb moods (the indicative and imperative mood). Each utterance included in the corpus was classified according to mode of address (*T* or *V*) and verb mood (indicative, subjunctive, or imperative). Also, the social relationship between the speakers (relatives or non-relatives) was defined, and the kind of communicative situation (conflictive or non-conflictive) in which the utterance was embedded was determined.

Measures

Communicative situations

Utterances in the novel were coded as belonging to either a conflictive or a non-conflictive situation. Encounters and pleasant conversations, including banter, were coded as non-conflictive situations. Discussions and quarrels were coded as conflictive situations. The extracts below illustrate how a pleasant conversation between neighbours (cf. 3a) turns into a discussion (cf. 3b), and finally results in a quarrel (cf. 3c). Antonina (high-class) is visiting her neighbours Naciancena and Rosendo (middle-class) and their household employee Procesa (lower-class). They are talking about a party organised by Antonina's aunt, the marchioness of Yolombó, to celebrate the swearing in of King Carlos IV:

(3a) *¡Eh, misiá Antoninita! ¿Vusté por qué no fue al refresco?*
No voy a reuniones, cuando no está aquí Cancio.
Contá a ver qué viste, Procesa, y sentáte en el baúl.
¡María Santa, Ñor Don Rosendo! Nian yo saberé decile. Esu-es la cosa pa más linda que se haberá visto en este sitio…
"Hey, Miss Antoninita! Why didn't you go for drinks?"
"I don't go to meetings when Cancio [her husband] is not at home."
"Tell us what you've seen, Procesa, and sit down on the trunk."
"Holy Mary, Don Rosendo! Words couldn't describe it. It was the most beautiful thing that was ever seen in this place…" (Carrasquilla, [1928] 1974, p. 377; own translation)

The pleasant conversation in (3a) turns into a discussion when Naciancena starts gossiping about Antonina's aunt. In (3b), Antonina demands her neighbour speak up:

(3b) — *¿Qué es lo que dice, Naciancena? — estalla Doña Antonina —. Hágame el favor de repetir, porque no le entiendo.*
— ¡Eh, Antoninita! ¡Se viene a hacer de las nuevas, usted, que no les tapa nada!...
— Pues, si no me explica, no sé lo que quiere decir.
"What are you saying, Naciancena?" Mrs. Antonina bursts out. "Please, do me the favour of repeating it, because I don't understand you."
"Hey, Antoninita! You're of the new kind, you don't cover up anything from them!..."
"Well, if you don't explain it to me, I don't know what you mean." (Carrasquilla, [1928] 1974, p. 379; own translation)

Apparently, the explanation then provided by Naciancena does not please Antonina, which is reflected in the extract in (3c) in which Antonina insults and attacks her:

(3c) — *¡La materia corrompida la tendrés vos y toda tu ralea, zamba atrevida y lengüilarga— barbota frenética, y, lanzándose como un tigre, la levanta de la greña, le ajusta una tanda de sopapos y la despatarra en la tarima—. ¡Es pa que aprendás a respetar las señoras, mugrosa tolerada*!
"You and all your kind of people are the corrupted dirty ones, insolent gossip half-breed," she furiously grumbles, and leaping like a tiger, she lifts her up by her tangled hair, she punches her several times and throws her on the floor. "This will make you learn to respect true ladies, you filthy animal!" (Carrasquilla, [1928] 1974, p. 379; own translation)

Based on this categorisation, 7% of the utterances belonged to conflictive situations (n = 98) and 93% to non-conflictive situations (n = 1 375).

Social relationships
Utterances were categorised either as uttered between relatives or as uttered between non-relatives. The social relationships between family members, namely conjugal partners, (grand) parents and (grand)children, parents-in-law and children-in-law, siblings, siblings-in-law, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, and cousins were coded as belonging to the category of relatives. All other social relationships, namely between inhabitants, inhabitants and the mayor of Yolombó, friends, neighbours, acquaintances, strangers, employers and employees, bosses and servants, godparents and godchildren were coded as belonging to the category of non-relatives. Based on this categorisation, 41% (n = 607) of the utterances were uttered between relatives, and 59% (n = 866) between non-relatives.

Modes of address
The mode of address of all utterances was categorised as either *T* or *V*. Second person singular verb conjugations were coded as representing the informal mode of address *(T)*. In total, there were 673 counts (46%) of *T* in the corpus. Similarly, third person singular verb conjugations denoting a second person singular subject were coded as representing the formal mode of address *(V)*. There were 800 counts (54%) of *V* in the corpus. It appeared that the distribution of modes of address in the corpus was quite equally divided between *T* and *V*, which implied that mode of address needed a more detailed analysis.

Verb moods
Finally, the verb mood of all utterances was determined. Three different verb moods were distinguished: indicative, subjunctive, and imperative. In total, there were 768 counts (52%) of indicative mood and 134 counts (9%) of subjunctive mood verb conjugations. In addition, there were 571 counts (39%) of verb conjugations in imperative mood. Not surprisingly, it appeared that the subjunctive mood, representing only 9% of the cases, was less frequently used in the corpus, since it is a marked form of the verb. Yet, also in the case of verb mood, the total number of cases was enough to proceed to the quantitative analysis. Table 1 displays the frequencies of all study variables.

Results

To explore how the use of modes of address and verb moods differed across the levels of the two identified contextual factors (communicative situation and social relationship), a series of logistic regression analyses was performed. Tables 2 and 3 show the results.

Modes of address
It was explored how and to what extent the type of communicative situation (conflictive or non-conflictive) and the social relationship between speakers (relatives or non-relatives) separately and jointly determine the use of mode of address (*T* or *V*). In addition, it was more specifically tested whether hospitality situations (defined as non-conflictive interactions between non-relatives) differ from non-hospitality situations (all other situations) in the use of mode of address. To do so, a binary logistic regression analysis was performed. This type of regression analysis is particularly suited when the dependent variable is categorical and dichotomous (Field, 2009), which is the case in this model (mode of address has two categories: *T* and *V*).

To this end, the separate effects ("main effects") of the two independent variables (communicative situation and social relationship) were estimated as well as their combined effect ("interaction effect") on mode of address (Table 2).

To ease interpretation, the main elements (Table 2) will be explained, starting with *B* and Exp(*B*). Because the dependent variable in a logistic regression analysis is categorical, and the analysis therefore models logarithmic instead of linear effects, the exponent of the regression weight *B* (Exp(*B*), also known as the odds ratio) indicates the strength of each effect. In our analysis, Exp(*B*) is the likelihood that *V* is used instead of *T* (given that *V* is coded as 1 and *T* as 0) across different levels of communicative situation and social relationship. To illustrate, if

TABLE 1: Descriptive statistics of the study variables

Study variable	Category	*n* (% of total)
Communicative situation	Conflictive	98 (7%)
	Non-conflictive	1 375 (93%)
Social relationship	Relative	607 (41%)
	Non-relative	866 (59%)
Mode of address	*T*	673 (46%)
	V	800 (54%)
Verb mood	Indicative	768 (52%)
	Subjunctive	134 (9%)
	Imperative	571 (39%)

TABLE 2: Logistic regression of mode of address on communicative situation and social relationship

Parameter	*B* (SE)	Wald χ^2 (1)	*p*	Exp(*B*)
Constant	−0.47 (0.26)	3.40	0.07	0.63
Communicative situation (0 = conflictive; 1 = non-conflictive)	0.01 (0.27)	0.00	0.97	1.01
Social relationship (0 = relatives; 1 = non-relatives)	0.29 (0.43)	0.44	0.51	1.33
Communicative situation × social relationship	0.84 (0.45)	3.48	0.06	2.30
Overall model statistics				
−2Log likelihood	1 923.44			
Nagelkerke R^2	0.09			

Mode of address is coded such that 0 = *T* and 1 = *V*

TABLE 3: Multinominal logistic regression analysis of verb mood on communicative situation and social relationship

Parameter	Imperative			Subjunctive		
	B (SE)	Wald χ2 (1)	Exp(*B*)	*B* (SE)	Wald χ2 (1)	Exp(*B*)
Constant	0.34 (0.26)	1.65ns		−1.61 (0.49)	10.79**	
Communicative situation (0 = conflictive; 1 = non-conflictive)	−0.73 (0.28)	6.86**	0.48	−0.18 (0.51)	0.13ns	0.83
Social relationship (0 = relatives; 1 = non-relatives)	−0.53 (0.45)	1.42ns	0.59	−0.53 (0.89)	0.35ns	0.59
Communicative situation × Social relationship	0.63 (0.46)	1.87ns	1.89	0.61 (0.92)	0.45ns	1.84
Overall model statistics						
−2Log likelihood	39.78					
Nagelkerke R^2	0.01					

Exp(*B*) of the main effect of communicative situation equals 1, this means that conflictive and non-conflictive situations do not differ in their likelihood that *T* and *V* are used. If Exp(*B*) for this effect is higher than 1, the probability that *V* is used instead of *T* is higher in non-conflictive situations than in conflictive situations (given that non-conflictive situations are coded as 1 and conflictive situations as 0). If Exp(*B*) is lower than 1, the probability that *V* is used instead of *T* is lower in non-conflictive situations than in conflictive situations (again, given that non-conflictive situations are coded as 1 and conflictive situations as 0). Finally, the Wald statistic indicates the significance of all estimated effects.

It appeared that there was no main effect of communicative situation on mode of address, Wald χ^2 (1) = 0.00, p = 0.97, indicating that *T* and *V* were as likely to be used in conflictive as in non-conflictive situations. Similarly, there was no main effect of social relationship on mode of address, Wald χ^2 (1) = 0.44, p = 0.51, indicating that *T* and *V* were as likely to be used among relatives as among non-relatives. However, these effects were qualified by a marginally significant interaction effect (Figure 1) of communicative situation and social relationship on mode of address, Wald χ^2 (1) = 3.48, p = 0.06.

The left vertical axis depicts the probability of *V* occurring, whereas the right vertical axis depicts the probability of *T* occurring. Fitting with the fact that speakers either use *T* or *V*, these probabilities are inversely related to each other, such that the higher the probability of *V*, the lower the probability of *T*, and vice versa. It appears that among relatives, regardless of whether the situation was conflictive or not, *T* was more likely to be used (61% of the utterances) than *V* (39% of the utterances). Among non-relatives, however, *T* was more likely to be used in conflictive situations (54% of the utterances) than *V* (46% of the utterances), while *V* was more often used in non-conflictive situations (66% of the utterances) than *T* (34% of the utterances).

From this analysis, it is concluded that in hospitality situations (if defined as interactions between non-relatives that are non-conflictive in nature) *V* is more likely to be used than *T*,

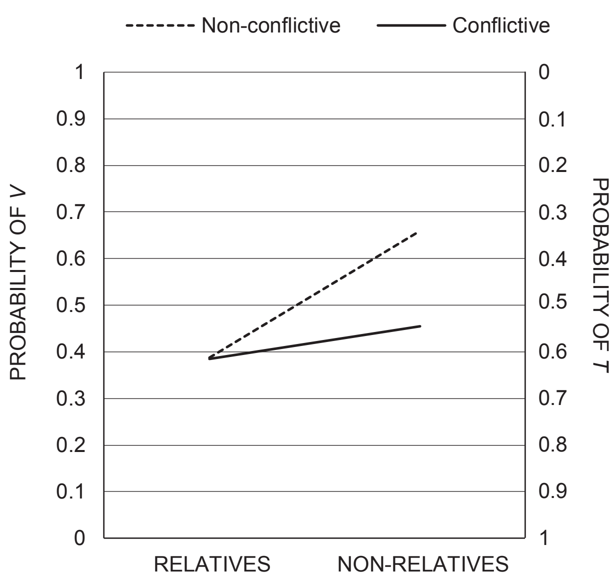

FIGURE 1: Mode of address as a function of social relationship and communicative situation

whereas in non-hospitality situations (all other combinations of communicative situation and social relationship) *T* is more likely to be used than *V*. Thus, in hospitality situations, speakers tend to use a polite instead of an informal mode of address, such as *usted* "you" versus *tú* "you" in Spanish, or *u* "you" versus *jij* "you" in Dutch.

Verb moods

It was furthermore investigated how and to what extent the type of communicative situation (conflictive or non-conflictive) and the social relationship between speakers (relatives or non-relatives) determine the use of verb moods (indicative, imperative, and subjunctive). In addition, it was specifically tested whether hospitality situations (defined as non-conflictive interactions between non-relatives) differ from non-hospitality situations (all other situations) in the use of verb moods. Therefore, a multi-nominal logistic regression analysis was performed (Table 3). This type of regression analysis is particularly suited when the dependent variable has more than two categories (Field, 2009), which is the case in this model (verb mood has three categories: indicative, subjunctive, and imperative). Because the most commonly used verb mood is the indicative, this was chosen as reference category. This means that the use of subjunctives and imperatives relative to indicatives was compared.

The only significant result that was found concerned the main effect of the communicative situation on the use of imperative mood conjugations relative to indicative mood conjugations, Wald χ^2 (1) = 6.86, $p < 0.01$. This indicates that when leaving out subjunctive mood conjugations, in conflictive situations the imperative mood (54%) is used more often than the indicative mood (46%). The reverse is true for non-conflictive situations in which the indicative mood (58%) is used more often than the imperative mood (42%). As reflected in the absence of a significant interaction effect between communicative situation and social relationship, this effect is similar for relatives and non-relatives. Figure 2 visualises this pattern of results. The left vertical axis depicts the probability of the imperative mood occurring, whereas the right vertical axis depicts the probability of the indicative mood occurring. Note that when leaving the subjunctive mood out of consideration, these probabilities are inversely related to each other, such that the higher the probability of the imperative mood, the lower the probability of the indicative mood, and vice versa.

From this analysis, it is concluded that hospitality situations (defined as interactions between non-relatives that are non-conflictive in nature) do not necessarily differ from non-hospitality situations in the use of verb moods. Thus, in hospitality situations, speakers do not tend to use a specific verb mood over another, such as an invitation in imperative mood (cf. example [1]) as opposed to an invitation dressed up as a negative question with the indicative mood (cf. example [2]).

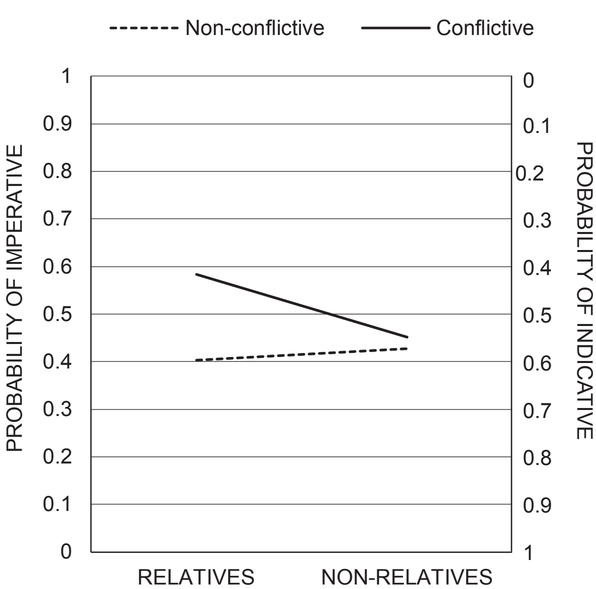

FIGURE 2: Verb mood as a function of social relationship and communicative situation (imperative versus indicative)

Discussion

This study aimed to measure language usage in hospitality situations. To this end, it was first assumed that situations in which hospitality strategies are more likely to be applied can be defined as interactions between non-relatives that are non-conflictive in nature. Then, a series of quantitative analyses was performed. These analyses showed that the formal form of address *V* is more likely to be used than the informal form *T* in hospitality situations. In contrast, no evidence was found that hospitality situations differ from non-hospitality situations in the use of verb moods.

On one hand, the results have to be interpreted with caution, since there may be other factors that influence the outcome, such as the differentiation between types of social relationships other than between relatives and non-relatives. Moreover, the findings cannot be generalised to the Spanish-speaking community in real life, since the findings are based on an early twentieth-century Colombian Spanish novel.

On the other hand, these findings are in line with a recent study on the tasks in the domain of a hotel receptionist's job in an English-speaking environment (Malicka, Gilabert Guerrero, & Norris, 2019). Specific focus is on the relationship between the kind of tasks done in this domain, and the language usage that is associated with these tasks. According to the informants that took part in this study, specifically in hospitality (business) situations successful communication depends on politeness. Malicka et al. (2019) report on a reception desk employee telling a new colleague how to politely ask for the guest's credit card, see the request in (4):

(4) Could I have your credit card, please? (Malicka et al., 2019, p. 89)

Thus, the reception desk employee in (4) uses an interrogative sentence structure, followed by "please". Knowing how to be friendly and polite may very well be seen as part of the hospitality strategy. It is considered to be more important than having a proper knowledge of context-related vocabulary of a foreign language, which is very well expressed by a non-native English speaking employee:

> Knowing technical vocabulary [e.g. technical vocabulary related to the malfunctioning of a device (Malicka et al., 2019)] is not the most important thing…if you don't know a word, there is another word that says more or less the same…maybe you can be polite without being a very good speaker of English (Malicka et al., 2019, p. 89).

In this light, it is not surprising that the quantitative analyses have shown that *V* forms (the polite form of the verb) are more likely to be used in hospitality situations than *T* forms (the informal form of the verb).

While this may be true, in the same study by Malicka et al. (2019) it was also observed that not all interactions between reception desk employees and guests could be characterised as being polite. Especially with regard to the check-in procedure, in which the reception desk employee needs to ask the guest several questions, imperative utterances as in (5), or utterances openly expressing the receptionist's need as in (6) were not uncommon:

(5) Come here (Malicka et al., 2019, p. 89)

(6) I need your passport (Malicka et al., 2019, p. 89)

The examples in (5) and (6) reveal that, although the reception desk employees mentioned being polite as one of the most important aspect in the interaction with guests, in practice, these interactions were sometimes quite direct, showing deficiencies in politeness (cf. Malicka et al., 2019). Clearly, it could be argued that the lack of politeness expressed in (5) and (6) may be due to a lack of either English speaking skills or of experience with the check-in procedure. Yet, other speech acts that are typically related to hospitality situations, such as invitations, are commonly performed using direct sentence structures, such as imperative mood conjugations (compare example [1]). Indeed, no evidence was found in the quantitative analyses that hospitality situations differ from non-hospitality situations in the use of verb moods.

Together, these findings serve to illustrate how the use of language may shape hospitality experiences. They suggest that hospitality may be related to different linguistic systems interacting with the context. Supporting the results of the qualitative study presented in Schreurs (2017), it is concluded that hospitality and language seem to be inextricably entwined, yet so far it remains difficult to (intuitively) relate a specific verb mood to hospitality situations, such as has been the case with modes of address (viz. *V* forms). Therefore, future research could be conducted to give a theoretical explanation of the empirical patterns presented in this article. Specifically, the issue of how it is possible that invitations — expressions of hospitality — have an imperative force as part of their meaning, but do not function as idiomatic orders — in contrast to invitations rather hostile acts — needs to be further examined to gain a better understanding of language usage in hospitality situations.

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Exploring the key components of a contemporary hospitality servicescape: Architecture, theology and community

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to contribute to the theoretical understanding of the hospitality servicescape. Through this analysis this article makes recommendations to managers on how they can set about creating a genuine sense of welcome and hospitality in a contemporary setting. It uses a case study of *Jabixhûs*, a "prayer house" in the northern Dutch city of Leeuwarden to investigate how religious convictions can blend with architectural expertise and a lifetime love of hosting "the other" to create a hospitable space where people can share experiences. The location of *Jabixhûs* on the actual historical pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela and socially within the community in Leeuwarden provides a combination of influences on the religious hospitality experiences offered. As well as extensive observations, a phenomenological interview was conducted with its owners, designers and operators, supplemented by feedback posted on the accommodation's Airbnb listing. The three theoretical servicescape-related themes identified are the provision of hospitality through architecture, theology and community. Management recommendations include the suggestion that the closer personal motivations and the hospitality offering are aligned, the easier it is to deliver a meaningful experience. A clear and authentic hospitality servicescape can help to ensure that this occurs.

KEYWORDS: architecture, community, hospitableness, hospitality, religion, servicescape, theology

Introduction

The idea for the study originated because one of the authors was staying at *Jabixhûs*, which provides accommodation and meeting and reflection spaces in Leeuwarden, a city in the north of the Netherlands. It was created by two people with a deep Christian faith and a lifetime of experimenting with buildings and spaces and reflecting on how they can create welcoming communities which facilitate shared experiences. In 2019, they had a bed capacity of 700 nights and filled 580, a very respectable occupancy rate of over 80%. It is home to them and their family, as well as a space for gatherings, prayer and reflection for those in the local community. It is located at the start of the centuries-old pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in Spain where the Apostle St. James' tomb is found, and is also a highly rated Airbnb-listed accommodation. When combined, these factors laid the foundations for a fascinating case study of a modern interpretation of the ancient responsibility to welcome strangers. After an overview of the nature of hospitality and the history of hospitality and religion and how this is represented in the servicescape of *Jabixhûs*, this study reports on an analysis of all the data collected which includes a phenomenological interview with the founders of *Jabixhûs*, and considers what modern (commercial) hospitality management can learn from a form of hospitality which many people seek but few can still find in the branded quality-assured offerings of multinational corporations.

The nature and history of hospitality

The nature of hospitality (domestic, civic and commercial) has become a subject of regular and constructive debate for almost half a century (Nailon, 1982; Brotherton, 1999; Hemmington, 2007; O'Gorman, 2007a; 2007b; 2009; 2010; Lashley, 2008; 2015; Lugosi, Lynch, & Morrison, 2009). Largely uncontested in this debate is the fact that hospitality has many historical connections with religious obligations to look after "the stranger" and travellers (Nouwen, 1975), although O'Gorman (2006a) points out that French philosopher Derrida questions whether hospitality can ever be truly unconditional, and that each party to a hospitality exchange will need to compromise, concluding that "the true gift of hospitality is an act of generosity experienced by the 'guest', which turns a stranger into a friend for a limited period of time" (O'Gorman, 2006a, p. 56).

The concept of hospitality has been extensively debated and redefined since the 1990s (see, for example, Patten, 1994; King, 1995; Lugosi et al., 2009; Blain & Lashley, 2014; Kelly, Losekoot, & Wright-St Clair, 2016; Golubovskaya, Robinson, & Solnet, 2017). While some textbooks claim that hospitality (management) was invented in the 20th century in the USA, other more academic sources generally agree that the word itself means "to provide care or shelter for travellers". Early definitions focused on commercial hospitality and the hospitality industry (Nailon, 1982; Brotherton, 1999) and were about the satisfaction of hotel guests at a fair price for all concerned. Others noted that in order to be successful in providing such services these organisations must also show internal hospitality to their employees (King, 1995), and that the "managerialist" approach misses important elements in a memorable hospitality experience and that that the act of paying for services rendered changes in the relationship between host and guest (O'Connor, 2005; O'Gorman, 2010). Gunnarsson and Blohm (2011) also brought a new term to the debate — "hostmanship", which they explain in the sub-title of their book as "the art of making people feel welcome".

O'Gorman (2007b, p. 17) refers to hospitality as having "an ancient origin and honourable tradition", and Zandberg (2019, p. 185) points out that "in the Middle Ages, inns and monasteries already offered lodging facilities to guests". There is an increasing amount of evidence that hospitality has a long history (since Greek and Roman times certainly, but arguably much longer) of turning strangers into friends, although it is noted that in the modern commercial hospitality industry front-line staff face the challenge of "the strains of making friendly welcoming relations with a succession of strangers" (Nailon, 1982, p. 140). Many religions regard the welcoming and protection of strangers as a sacred duty. Ancient Greeks such as Homer, Plato, Aristotle and Euripedes described and debated the duties and obligations of those offering and those receiving hospitality. O'Gorman (2005; 2007a) categorises these ancient hospitable moments into domestic, public and commercial forms of hospitality, and also provides a clear link to religious motives *for* (you might be entertaining angels sent by God) and instructions *about* hospitality. Protection of the vulnerable in society is a common link to hospitality in religious writing. A Catholic priest and scholar, Nouwen (1975, p. 46) writes from a Christian monastic perspective, and argues that travellers are often on "a painful search for a hospitable place", and that those who receive them in monasteries or other non-religious establishments have a responsibility "to offer an open and hospitable space where strangers can cast off their strangeness and become our fellow human beings".

Religious hospitality

Travellers in ancient times were in real danger, and one would not venture far unless it was for a serious mission or a pilgrimage (O'Gorman, 2007b). It is therefore not surprising to find many references in religious texts to the sacred duty to look after strangers and travellers. The early inhabitants of Eden could eat whatever and however much they wanted — with one exception, of course, the apple from the forbidden tree. There are further parables in the Old Testament about the importance of hospitality in Leviticus (19:33–34), Genesis (18:2–8), 2 Kings (6:22–23) and Job (31:32), all emphasising the importance of and rewards for welcoming strangers. The New Testament also contains a section in Matthew (25:32–37) which says: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome...". O'Gorman (2007b, p. 30) argues that "professionalism and greater expertise can surely come from a deeper understanding of the dimensions of hospitality, that have been evolving since antiquity, and on which the industry now relies". Monastic hospitality, and in particular the rule of St Benedict (ca A.D. 530), is regarded by hospitality scholars as the foundation of the hospitality industry we have today, particularly around the reception of guests. He wrote twenty-four "rules" about how guests should be greeted and looked after, but also how guests should not interrupt the business of a monastery, prayer and reflection. These rules could be categorised into enduring hospitality principles around the guest, management, staffing, and the business of hospitality. Other religious orders such as the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem dedicated themselves to charity and to giving hospitality to travellers and the sick.

In England, the dissolution of the monasteries by Acts of Parliament as a result of Henry VIII's changes to the Church in England brought an end to most monastic hospitality, but other changes were also happening in Scotland and Germany (O'Gorman, 2006b; O'Gorman & MacPhee, 2006). As O'Gorman and MacPhee (2006, p. 18) note, hospitable activities "became separated from their Christian roots as the state increasingly took over responsibility" for hospitals, the poor and refugees, although Conti, O'Gorman and McAlpine (2008, p. 28; emphasis in original) use the phrase "hospitality *in necessitude*" to describe the provision of hospitality to those in need, rather than to those who have the ability to reciprocate. Nor was this requirement to provide hospitality to those in need restricted to Christianity — Muslims are required to engage in alms-giving (*waqf*), and caravanserai were safe staging posts for travellers in Persia, built by the wealthy in recognition of their good fortune in this life. Kirillova, Gilmetdinova and Lehto (2014) suggest that the interpretation of hospitality across religions shows many differences, but that there are also common threads about the treatment of friends, relatives, neighbours and strangers across Christianity, Islam and Buddhism and that "while representation of hospitality may not be exactly the same across religious contexts, the meanings ascribed to the acts of hospitality are all variations of care of one person for another" (Kirillova et al., 2014, p. 32).

In an interesting parallel for this article, the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in Spain starts in Friesland, just a short distance from the *Jabixhûs* accommodation which is the subject of this study. Conti et al. (2008) report that the hostel built at the end of the route in Santiago de Compostela as a hostel for pilgrims, is now *El Hostal de Los Reyes Católicos*, a five-star hotel.

Servicescape, space and community

This final section of the literature review cuts across the disciplinary boundaries of hospitality, geography and architecture (as advocated by Lugosi, 2020), just as the background of the *Jabixhûs* founders cuts across hospitality, architecture and religious beliefs. Hospitality usually takes place in a physical space — a hotel, restaurant, hostel, airport, hospital, museum, etc. It has long been recognised (Kotler, 1973; Bitner, 1990; 1992) that the physical space or "servicescape" influences how people feel and behave, either attracting them and encouraging the feeling of community, welcome and safety, or doing the opposite (Augé, 1995; Adey, 2006; 2007; Gordon, 2008; Venkatraman & Nelson, 2008). Breazeale and Ponder (2013) suggest that people shop in places they identify with or aspire to, something that Neill, Johnston and Losekoot (2016) also discuss with regard to food choices on holiday. The physical environment affects not just the customer but also the employee. The idea of the space influencing the development of a community is explored by Treadwell (2005) and Morris (1988). They argue that motels are seen as temporary shelters not connected to a community (not even a temporary community of other travellers) because of the lack of a communal area or gathering place. Writing of

Edward Hopper's painting *Western Motel*, Treadwell (2005, p. 218) argues that "a motel that is nothing more than an amalgam of road, car and bed". This article will attempt to show how the creators of *Jabixhûs*, using their life experiences, Christian faith, understanding of hospitableness and architectural and design backgrounds, make *Jabixhûs* into a meaningful experience which is much more than Treadwell's (2005) view of a resting place for travellers. As such it contributes to our understanding of the hospitality servicescape, and creates an opportunity for hospitality management practitioners to reflect on how their guests' experience is created (Harkison, 2017).

Methods

A case study approach (Stake, 1995; Andrade, 2009; Woodside, 2010) is appropriate for this study as it is a clearly bounded study using just one establishment. This fits the interpretivist approach that we felt to be most suitable for this study. The collected data includes over 130 hours of direct observation over a six-month period (including interaction with other guests and informal contact with the owners and managers), and a phenomenological interview, about 2.5 hours long, resulting in an edited transcript of over 3 500 words. 280 reviews on the airbnb.nl website for *Jabixhûs* were also downloaded and analysed. These reviews also include their previous property in Kollumerzwaag, and it is interesting to see that very similar comments were made in terms of welcome and hospitableness in their previous listing, although architecture plays a minor role in those previous postings compared to *Jabixhûs*. This study uses a variety of sources of information — documentation, photographs, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical evidence — to make sense of the experience of hospitality at *Jabixhûs*. We participated in the interview, agreed on the transcript and then individually coded the data before coming together to agree on the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman & Bell, 2011). The interpretations were shared with the interviewees to gain respondent validation and therefore improved accuracy and credibility. These themes were then linked to the literature, supported by quotes from the interviews and from other relevant postings on social media about guests' experiences at *Jabixhûs*, and evidence gathered during direct and participant observation by the researchers. This study has a number of limitations including the fact that it is only based on one establishment and no direct guest interviews were conducted. However, their voices are heard in the (unsolicited and therefore presumably unbiased) social media postings used to support the findings.

Findings and discussion

The learning derived from the literature review, combined with findings from the interview, social media postings and research notes collected through participant observation led to the identification of a number of themes, and this section reports on and discusses those.

Hospitality through architecture

Jabixhûs is an experiment in designing and building spaces that facilitate welcome, and a feeling of togetherness. The incorporation of those hospitable values in design, layout and facilities, including the use of colour, lighting, practicality, works of art, and a sense of freedom, is a reflection of the Christian values of its creators. One of them had studied construction and architecture and had been a member of a Christian student association. As she reflected:

> *We had a group studying building, interior decoration and architecture. We used to meet and eat together and then we had lots of discussions about Christian ethics and how that could be represented in buildings. How do you create human-sized spaces? Which architecture makes people feel small and which makes people feel comfortable? What kind of architecture facilitates meeting and which is designed to impress? It is about hospitality in architecture.*

Their emphasis was on creating communities where things were shared. As she noted: "If you eat together it becomes easier to understand each other and get on with each other". They explained that in one place where they lived they had built a space with accommodation for 35 people, with a communal hall leading off to individual apartments, so that there was a smooth flow of "public space, semi-public space and private space" in which it might be easier for people to have contact with others — spaces that reflected such values. She remembered that:

> *We philosophised about what buildings do to people and what values they represent. The norm is private space and then a front door leading on to public space. If there was some shared space in between that might facilitate community.*

After having lived in several other places across the Netherlands, they finally decided the time was right to settle in Leeuwarden. A long search for the "right" building eventually led them to the current *Jabixhûs*, an old school (closed in 1994) in a formerly very deprived area of Leeuwarden with many social issues. The building is on the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela and so also provides a meaningful link to the past, as well as an opportunity to build a community into the future. As the current owners explained:

> *We were keen to be part of the Santiago de Compostela walkway. We wanted to be part of the pilgrimage route along with other guest houses. We are also a member of a cycling network — they are often older people. They often come with great stories — one gentleman was photographing every train station in the Netherlands.*

Other aspects such as lighting and colours were also considered important, and could facilitate interaction with others in shared spaces. As one of them noted: "as a teacher we were taught to stand by the door and greet our students — that sets the tone". Bringing people closer to satisfy their need for togetherness while preserving their right to privacy was a common theme as they described the fact that while much of *Jabixhûs* is designed to facilitate interaction, there is also private space so people can withdraw if they want to — including for them as a family. They noted that they still had one child living at home and that therefore it was also important for them to have their own private family space, nevertheless visitors were often invited in to their living room for a chat or a drink. As they said: "it is interesting to see that the things we were busy with all those years ago in terms of colours and shapes are actually being used now in the design of *Jabixhûs*". The lighting outside *Jabixhûs* is created to draw people in and give a welcoming impression, as well as to highlight the foundation stone of the building, telling visitors a little of the history of the place. The tiles in the bathroom were chosen "to reflect the dust of the road people have travelled". Inside the building, furniture has a role to play too. They pointed out the table we were sitting at was oval, and that was not a coincidence. As they explained:

> *A round table means people sit far away from each other so you can only talk to the people beside you. A rectangular table leads to one person sitting at the "head" of the table. An oval table in contrast means everyone can talk to everyone, but no-one is in charge.*

A noticeable feature of *Jabixhûs* is the artwork, and we were particularly struck by a woodcarving which is in the centre of the "prayer room". Carved by someone whose work they admired, they had asked them to make "something" which would fit their vision for *Jabixhûs*. More than a year later the artist called to say he had made them a piece and invited them to come and have a look. As shown in Figure 1, it is a wood carving of two bare feet. Some see it as Jesus walking across the Sea of Galilee, as a reference to the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela, as a metaphor of their journey which led them to this place of peace and reflection, or just as a very tactile piece of art — we instinctively reached out to touch it, and the owners smiled and said that is a very common reaction.

One final aspect which is to do with the spiritual rather than the physical architecture of *Jabixhûs* is the desire of the owners to see it as a place of temporary rest. The fact that there are more (semi)public spaces than private spaces is by design — unlike commercial hotels, they do not want people to create their "own" space which would by definition exclude others. They explicitly stated that they did not want people to book every Monday for three months "as that would stop others coming. We are set up for people who are moving through". What this study shows is that 21st century hospitality does not need to be delivered in a monastery or an alms-house to be authentic, purposeful and "from the heart". The servicescape they have created encourages visitors to find themselves, to share with others, and to find genuine hospitality.

Some of the coding is included to further illustrate the themes. For example, Table 1 shows selected quotes from social media showing unsolicited visitors' thoughts on the aspect of "hospitality through architecture". There are similar tables included in the next two sections.

Hospitality through theological commitment

Both founders of *Jabixhûs* had studied philosophy and theology in addition to their architecture and teacher training. One had spent time studying in London at an international community with 200 people of all ages from 50 countries and 60 different churches. As she reflected: "that is also a common theme — the internationalisation of cultures that we have found in each place". They described the incorporation of Christian belief in offering shelter, refuge, caring for the needs of others, seeing Christ in others, but stopping short of missionary work — perhaps out of a sense that that would be inhospitable? Recognising the benefit of community, of sharing social space for exchange of experiences and getting to know others have been very important to them. Describing the bible study community in London, she reflected:

> *People are interesting but in very different ways. We had a group of Nigerians who thought everything we did was hysterical. And the Koreans thought the Dutch were incredibly lazy — when we went to bed they started studying again. The Brits were happy to go to the pub after a day's bible study, but the Americans were horrified at the thought of alcohol. It was a fascinating experience — to realise that what was normal for you was nothing of the sort for others.*

FIGURE 1: Carving of feet

TABLE 1: Visitor quotes related to the hospitality-through-architecture theme

Review comments	Theme	Code
Super amazing place, very well equipped		Furnishings
Everything you need and more, luxurious bathrooms		
Beautifully converted school: spacious, light and great facilities		Light
The prayer space and music room make it unique.	Architecture	Space
A beautiful and peaceful space		
This is a magical space. It's an old school that's been re-opened as a learning place… it's full of art and music and love.		
A great conversation with Jeannet about the different spaces and their plans for future projects.		

The commercial pressure to pay bills incurred in running *Jabixhûs* is certainly something they feel, but as they noted:

> *You also need faith — faith that it will be okay. We also relied on many friends — we asked all those people who enjoyed the idea of sharing and doing things together. Many of them we had met at a Christian folk festival Flevofestival where we used to help out.*

At the festival people from all walks of life joined in, irrespective of their background or occupation, and this was what they wanted to re-create at *Jabixhûs*. When they invited some of these people they found:

> *they came here and were really at ease. They left everything behind. That atmosphere is an important part of hospitableness — it is about shared values.*

When asked about their attitude to hospitality and the connection to their faith, they explained "from a theological perspective Jesus welcomed people, and wants to be present — we try to find Jesus in people". They then went on to also say "from a sociological perspective you want to find out what someone needs and then to provide that". However, they recognised that every guest was different:

Our accommodation is not so expensive, so young people who want to get away can afford this but not a hotel. They do not really want to get to know you, but just want something that is clean and where they can come and go as they want. You can do what you like here so long as you do not disturb others. Other people arrive and are clearly burdened by something. It is surprising how open the discussions are — people will never see each other again so they are more open with others. We have people talking about relationship breakdowns and all sorts of personal issues. You give them the space because they need to unburden themselves.

Table 2 shows that visitors often do not see an explicit link to the personal religious beliefs of the owners, but the sense of welcome, peace and tranquillity which accompanies these beliefs is clear in many small ways, and makes a difference to those who come to stay.

Hospitality through community

By offering space and facilities for prayer, contemplation, reflection, music, group discussion, courses and community events a sense of community is created. An example of this are the specially designed rooms set up for these purposes in *Jabixhûs*. Events include a regular 24-hour prayer marathon dealing with creative ideas on how to pray together. It was attended by 34 people from the Leeuwarden area. As the owners explained:

> *A few years ago suddenly prayer houses started to spring up. There is now a global network of these prayer houses where people plan prayer marathons. The idea was to have a permanent prayer being said somewhere around the world. Some people call these "boiler rooms". Every year around 1 500 people get together to pray — we met a 2m tall Irishman with red hair who was running a prayer house in China. Someone else set one up in Ibiza where they go out at night to look after youngsters under the influence. We were suddenly regarded as "religious leaders" in Leeuwarden.*

International guests are also drawn together, sharing their different cultural values. This again came out of the owners' experiences when they previously lived in Delft in a relatively poor area where "a lot of stuff happened in the street because all the houses were too small to host anyone". In another area they lived there were large numbers of refugees and immigrants with young children "where families looked after each other" in a very international community. Internationalisation is not, however, something they leave to chance. *Jabixhûs* has its own website (https://www.jabixhus.nl/), and a listing on Airbnb (Leeuwarden Pilgrimsguesthouse Jabixhûs). For this listing they consciously decided to only post it in English, thereby attracting people who at least speak English as a foreign language.

> *We only placed English adverts because we wanted to attract English speakers who were looking to meet people. It is about creating that atmosphere of openness, hospitality, acceptance and an interest in "the other".*

They believe this leads to a much more international group of visitors, a fact reflected in their furniture, fittings and equipment like the home-made globe lightshades shown in Figure 2.

This commitment to activities also extends to the local community. They were keen not to become a "social housing" project or a long-term refuge as that would perhaps alienate the local community. They explained that as they developed their project "people started to notice these lived values". Neighbours Days were a great opportunity to open their doors and show local people around. They ran marriage preparation courses, and when a neighbour wanted to have a birthday party for her mother, they made one of the spaces available for that.

We were keen to explore payment, as O'Connor (2005) speaks of the dread of that moment — the point when one realises that people are only being hospitable because you are paying them to do that. They acknowledged that "there is a bit of tension between our commercial and charitable activities". The cyclists who are part of a national association pay a fixed amount, the

TABLE 2: Visitor quotes related to the hospitality-and-theology theme

Review comments	Theme	Code
Amazed by the hospitality, beautiful space and wonderful comfort	Theology	Transcendental
A wonderful atmospheric space where you are welcomed with hospitality and where you have the space to make music or meditate		Transcendental
Jeannet and her family have given a new meaning to hospitality through their personal attention.		Personal disposition
A very home-from-home feel		Spiritual
Jeannet is a very warm and friendly host.		Friendship
Jeannet is a lovely host. Super helpful and always up for a chat		Personal disposition
This is a lovely place to rest, relax and meet others.		Spiritual
It is a meeting place for other travellers.		Journeying
Meaningful spaces. Perfect for people who want to have more than just a bed for the night		Spiritual

FIGURE 2: Home-made lightshades made of globes

Airbnb people pay online so no money changes hands on the day and "for the rest, we have envelopes and people can put some money in". They are very keen that a lack of funds should not deter people from being able to stay, and note that because they are so reasonably priced guests take extra effort to look after their environment, leave things clean, and tidy up after themselves. This also saves time and cleaning costs.

The final section explores thoughtful "little touches" that *Jabixhûs* does in order to facilitate the creation of a temporary community. Riley (1984, p. 107) writes a little disparagingly about what he saw as the "wholesale substitution of personal services by 'things' and 'touches'", but Table 3 shows that visitors appreciate the many little touches that the owners have reflected on and provided as part of the experience. The owners were at pains to stress the lengths they had gone to in order to anticipate people's needs and desires — in a way that would challenge many corporate hotel operations. One example that is very much appreciated by visitors is that they will fly the national flag of the visitors who come to stay. As they noted: "We hang out the national flag for visitors who come here to stay — they love that. The Korean was bowled over by it". Other things were the large bathrooms with baths for people who had been walking or cycling all day — but they had also been designed to be easy to clean. Bathmats are provided to avoid people standing on their towels and unnecessarily soiling them. Likewise all the beds had bedspreads as they had learned that people put (dirty) suitcases on the bed thus marking the sheets — bedspreads protect the sheets. Linen has been carefully sourced (much of it ex-hotel) and all the bathrobes (provided for all guests so they can comfortably move around the shared spaces) are ex-Sheraton. The owners also provide maps, brochures and other information about the local area, much as one might expect from a hotel concierge. These are all things that could easily (and sometime are) done in commercial hotels, but at *Jabixhûs* they are clearly done from the heart, not because the brand manual requires it.

Conclusion

This article presents *Jabixhûs* as a contemporary hospitality servicescape where architecture, theology and community come together to create a sense of hospitality and hostmanship. By creating an environment where strangers can feel at home and at peace, meaningful hospitable moments are created. Careful reflection on the architecture creates an environment where people want to share, experience and learn from others. Bitner's (1990; 1992) servicescape model speaks of the environment creating a desire to remain, join and feel a part of something, or to avoid and leave as quickly as possible. The architecture (both physical and social) of *Jabixhûs* contributes to this sense of hospitableness and belonging. While theology is not a common theme in the 21st century commercial hospitality industry, a desire to give an authentic and welcoming experience is. Community is coming to the fore again as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic that is spreading as this article is being written, and with it an increased awareness that our neighbours and community need support and can in turn support us. Wanting to be part of something and being able to interact safely has never seemed more important at a time of enforced social and physical distancing as a result of Covid-19. These are all things that hospitality managers can use to ask themselves: "Where does my business do these things?".

The link between what O'Gorman (2005; 2007a; 2007b; 2009; 2010) reported and *Jabixhûs* is the idea of hospitality based on and driven by values, not economics. Surely commercial hospitality is about people leading to profit, and not simply profit from people? What *Jabixhûs* offers is different as it avoids an active, proselytising role in terms of Christian focus on beliefs, in favour of offering facilities to socialise, interact, reflect and learn (Butler, Curran, & O'Gorman, 2013). The guest is invited into a mix of social and private space geared to recognise their needs. This recognises an intrinsic human need to overcome a sense of

TABLE 3: Visitor quotes related to the hospitality-through-community theme

Review comments	Theme	Code
Very atmospheric with all modern conveniences: from bathrobes to cooking utensils	Community	Food
A bit unexpected, they offered everything I needed in terms of breakfast.		
Jeannet and her husband are outstanding hosts. They glow with a genuine interest in the people they meet flowing through their centre. They engage with the lives and destinies of their guests without in any way encroaching on their privacy or plans.		Engagement
For the first time in my 72 years of life, I saw the flags of Tanzania and of Norway flying side by side, thanks to my hosts honouring both my countries of birth and of citizenship.		

isolation, as identified by Nouwen (1975). The nominal charge is a pre-indication of priorities (it is not all about the money), a message to the guest that they are valued as a guest above and beyond their economic or financial worth to the business. The created environment recognises an intrinsic human need to overcome a sense of isolation. The traveller does not have their local social network close by, so is physically, spiritually and socially in need (Nouwen, 1975). *Jabixhûs* offers a shared space for social interaction where the need for shelter is satisfied on a generous scale at minimal cost. Lashley (2015, p. 1) speaks of the desirability of blurring the commercialism of the modern hospitality industry and that

> at one end, hospitality is offered in the hope of personal gain in response to the hospitality provided, while at the other extreme hospitality is offered merely for the pleasure of giving other people pleasure.

The concept underlying *Jabixhûs* is essentially Christian, drawing on the tradition of the Good Samaritan, and on the instruction to love your neighbour as yourself. However, this creation comes from an ecumenical perspective deeply held by its designers and owners, as it is devoid of any intention to impose opinion or to convert in terms of religious belief. It is simply a provision of the spiritual space to socialise and be liberated from social isolation.

The question hospitality academics and practitioners should be asking themselves is: does this have an application to other forms of hospitality? Or is it simply the purest form of hospitality and can be used as a way to understand the essence of hospitality? Perhaps the findings from *Jabixhûs* give insight into what enables hospitality to work. To be at its best, hospitality goes beyond facilities and allows social interaction (at a comfortable distance for those involved), building a sense of belonging and togetherness. In *Jabixhûs*, the facilities, ambiance, hostmanship (Gunnarsson & Blohm, 2011), decor, lighting, layout, attitude and activities are all imbued with hospitable Christian values. There is no suggestion that large-scale commercial hospitality operations should (could?) emulate the sense of hospitableness that the owners have succeeded in creating, but it could perhaps hold up a mirror which any reflective practitioner in our industry would benefit from looking in. This is perhaps what Lugosi et al. (2009, p. 1474) meant when they urged researchers to have "some awareness of relevance to a broader set of stakeholders".

Further research could be conducted with owners and in particular with guests of other *stadskloosters* or *gebedshuizen* (city monasteries or prayer houses), or utilising a quantitative approach using surveys to improve the validity, reliability and generalisability of this type of research. Another research opportunity would be to capture the "stories" of travellers. The owners of *Jabixhûs* were amazed by the variety of backgrounds and motivations of the people who chose to stay with them — for example, someone who had been bought out of their business and was spending a year travelling on a boat they purchased; a lady researching a story about two young girls who had rescued horses from the Waddenzee and who wanted to make a film of it; a group of climbing specialists who were in town for a while to build a commercial climbing wall; lots of artists who stayed during Leeuwarden's year as European Capital of Culture 2018. Just as this article has focused on the "story" of the "proud parents" of *Jabixhûs*, hospitality businesses could collect the stories of their guests to better understand and connect with them.

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Exploring the concept of hostmanship through "50 cups of coffee"

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ABSTRACT: This article explores how hospitality academics and students understand, interpret and experience hostmanship. Building on a literature review which outlines and discusses the development and definition of hospitality, this exploratory study is framed by an interpretivist approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 46 hospitality academics, staff and students (50 were initially invited). Each individual interview focused on uncovering the individual's understanding of and attitude towards hostmanship, and was transcribed before being analysed by both researchers in order to identify themes that could be used to investigate the concept of hostmanship. Findings show that a genuine connection, the pro-active behaviour of the host, and surprises led to a welcoming feeling for the guest. An unwelcome feeling was mostly created when protocols and systems were prioritised above the human being and, on occasion, specific, unpleasant behaviour of the host. When people were asked to define hostmanship, the following aspects were mentioned most: being and acting sincerely from the heart, and creating a true connection between people.

KEYWORDS: genuine connection, hospitality, host-guest interaction, hostmanship, qualitative research, touchpoints, welcoming feeling

Introduction

This article explores how employees and students of the Department of Hospitality in a university of applied sciences in the Netherlands understand the concept of hostmanship. In doing this, the study draws upon the Yin (2009) guidelines to design a case study survey based on "guided conversations", although this study adopts a qualitative interpretative approach in posing the research question: "How do hospitality education staff and students interpret hostmanship?".

Primary data was collected based on personal experiences in the domain of hospitality, covering both private and commercial settings. The original purpose of having "50 cups of coffee" with employees and students at this university was to get an insight into what it is that makes people feel welcome. It was also an opportunity to ask people about experiences that do *not* make them feel welcome. The idea was to find common themes and characteristics of these (extraordinary) positive or negative feelings as a result of a "hostmanship" experience.

Despite the fact that Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008) identified "hostmanship" more than ten years ago, defining this concept as: "The art of making people feel welcome", there is still little academic research on this topic. Therefore, this article aims to fill this literature gap, developing a deeper understanding of the "hostmanship" concept through an exploratory investigation based on primay data. A theoretical reflection on the concept was published by Gelter (2013). To date, no publications have been found based on empirical data about this concept. It appears to be a rather new concept in academia and therefore interesting to explore further and to contribute to the body of knowledge about hospitality, hospitableness and hostmanship. Recent work by Golubovskaya, Robinson and Solnet (2017) shows the importance of staff understanding not only *what* should be done in a hospitality operation, but also the value of understanding *how to connect*.

Literature review

In preparation for a discussion of the concept of hostmanship, it is important to understand the earlier concepts that it builds on. Perhaps the best-known definition of hospitality management is that of Brotherton (1999), who wrote of a voluntary exchange involving food, drink and accommodation in a mutually beneficial way. While he received considerable criticism for focusing on the "management" of hospitality, Nailon (1982, p. 141) did the same some 15 years earlier when he wrote that "[i]ts purpose is to provide physiological and psychological comfort and security as a business activity at a defined standard of service through the provision of facilitating goods". King (1995) added to this but also warning that if a business was to be able to deliver hospitality to its paying customers, it should extend the same thinking to its own staff, providing them with an environment in which they in turn show hospitality to others. O'Gorman (2007, p. 201) moves away from this purely commercial perspective by arguing that

> [h]ospitality is not a matter of objective knowledge. Hospitality exists within the lived experience; it is a gift given by the host to the guest which is shared between

> them. The true gift of hospitality is an act of generosity experienced by the guest, which turns a stranger into a friend for a limited period of time.

This perspective mirrors the earlier writings of Nouwen (1975) who argued that Christians should "offer an open and hospitable space where strangers can cast off their strangeness and become our fellow human beings" (p. 46) and that "hospitality, therefore, means primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy" (p. 51). Hemmington (2007) supports this approach, suggesting that merely "meeting expectations" (or even slightly exceeding them) will not result in loyal customers who will become ambassadors for the organisation in person (or now on social media). Instead, he proposes that hospitality organisations should try to create "sparkling moments" which will live in people's memories in a way that Carlzon (1987) would call a "moment of truth". Twenty years ago, Pine and Gilmore (1999) argued that there has been a shift from traditional consumption of goods and services towards consuming experiences or even a step further where people are demanding personal transformations and personal growth through experiences. They suggested this development was a new "economic offering". According to Ottenbacher, Harrington and Parsa (2009), there is no single definition or unified framework of hospitality. But what different approaches have in common is that hospitality implies two key actors — the host and the guest — and their social relationship. This is confirmed by Grönroos (2011) stating that hospitality is embodied in a customer-employee interaction. Risdon (2013) studied the concept of these interactions as a "touchpoint". He defined this as a point of interaction involving a (1) specific human need in a (2) specific time and place. It is about an interaction, be it a conversation or an interface control. A specific human need refers to knowing what is driving these interactions. But which need of the guest is the host supporting? A specific time and place refer to the fact that the host needs to understand the context that is surrounding that need. An interesting and widely acknowledged framework, proposed by Lashley (2000), identifies three domains of hospitality — private, social and commercial — and displays various modes of hospitality with their overlaps and convergences. Private hospitality refers to private homes where hosts welcome guests generously without financial motives (King, 1995). This relationship is based on mutual obligation and reciprocity and is characterised as the most selfless and pure form of hospitality, according to Telfer (2000). Social hospitality refers to the broader social norms and codes of civility and trust that can potentially be endorsed in commercial and private spaces (Bell, 2007). Generally, in this domain the host deals with strangers. Commercial hospitality, in contrast, aims to provide pleasure and to satisfy guests to facilitate their repeat visits. The paradox is where the essence of the generosity of hospitality meets the commercial economic relationships focused on profit. Lashley's (2000) three domains illustrate the complexity and diversity of the hospitality concept and also show its occurrence in a wide variety of contexts. This is perfectly in line with the approach of this article, since the interviews were taken from a broad range of settings — private, social and commercial — in which hospitality experiences were shared.

According to Schmitt (2003), today's consumers are not function-driven, but rather value-, experience- and emotion-driven, and more interested in how an offering transforms, entertains and contributes to personal branding and self-fulfilment. It is in this context that the concept of "hostmanship" as defined by Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008) is now described and investigated.

The concept of hostmanship

In alignment with this gradual but global development of hospitable experiences, Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008) created the philosophy of *hostmanship*, or as they note in the sub-title of their book, "the art of making people feel welcome". Their concept is illustrated through a series of stories or parables of people demonstrating "hostmanship": a bar tender in a pub in Disney's Epcot Centre in Florida who shares the secret of a magic trick; a Persian airport bus driver in Sweden who insists on driving people to where they want to go rather than staying on his bus route; a McDonald's manager asking everyone to wait for their fast food meals so he can fulfil a large order for people trying to catch a train, etc. They refer to six choices that together define hostmanship. At first, these were called the six "pillars" or "values" of hostmanship. Recently, they were changed into "choices", and one more was added — 'joy', where the host has the choice to act according to these or not. The seven choices are therefore now:

- Serving others. A sincere serving attitude based on mutual respect and equality. There is a genuine interest in someone else's well-being.
- Taking responsibility. Being aware of your personal role and responsibility, which is about being on the other person's side and helping them. Having the courage and taking responsibility to act on the personal wishes of your guests.
- Perceiving wholeness. The Big Picture which refers to your actions that reflect the entire business the host is working for.
- Being caring. Acting considerately and being compassionate to others — humanity is key.
- Practising dialogue. Listening to and understanding the guest is key, instead of sticking to our own habits and preconceptions.
- Seeking knowledge. Seeking and being curious about the guest's wishes and habits to be able to respond to their needs. Being knowledgeable and knowing the ins and outs of your workplace and using your ability to use your knowledge in the context of another person's needs.
- Joy. Doing what you love and loving what you do.

In the *art of hostmanship*, three dimensions can be distinguished: welcoming yourself; welcoming others; and welcoming the guest (Gunnarsson & Blohm, 2008). Where in previous literature about providing hospitality, the focus lay mainly on treating the guest properly, in the philosophy of hostmanship, taking care of yourself in terms of work-life balance and a healthy and happy life and joy in your work is as important as "welcoming the other". Welcoming others refers to good co-operation with your colleagues or other people around you. After all, it is about treating yourself and others in a welcoming way that will contribute to your willingness to welcome guests.

According to Gelter (2013), the difference in the hostmanship approach with concepts like service and hospitality lies mainly in the fact that hostmanship is more individual and focused, thereby creating a personalised experience. It could be argued that this is more in line with the discussion by Derrida (2005), who proposed that real hospitality is unconditional, but that such unconditional hospitality is impossible, leading him to coin the phrase "hostipitality" by which he meant that every act of hospitality has its limits and is therefore is not actually "unconditional", despite how it may appear.

Looking more specifically at the behaviour or characteristics of the host, De la Mar (2019) describes aspects of being an excellent host. The list of the following nine items is interesting, since these align with some of the literature and findings of this research:

- Being and acting authentically;
- Being motivated and passionate;
- Representative;
- Attentive from the heart;
- Service attitude;
- Proactive, attentive and helpful;
- Friendly and clear communication, with appropriate manners;
- Being knowledgeable, having expertise; and
- Taking responsibility for the guest and team performance.

There appears to be an overlap with the seven choices of Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008) here as well. The authors seem to agree on what an excellent host should be. Perhaps the differences are a matter of the interpretation of the different concepts.

Nevertheless, to provide a deeper understanding of the characteristics of a good host, it is helpful, by contrast, to look also at the characteristics and situations providing guests with a bad experience. De la Mar (2019) identified seven of them: indifferent employees; dirt and mess; uncomfortable environment; waiting; having to make an effort; procedures and rules come first; and finally, negative communication with the guest. De la Mar (2019) calls them *experience killers*.

This section has identified, summarised and compared the rather limited literature on hospitality and hostmanship. The next section will outline the research methods employed for this study.

Research methods

From the start of this research, the aim was to have open conversations with the research participants about the concept of hostmanship and to explore their understanding of the idea of making people feel welcome. This exploratory and qualitative approach is in line with much research in hospitality (Gummesson, 2003; Laverty, 2003; Lugosi, Lynch & Morrison, 2009; Pernecky & Jamal, 2010). The context was not specifically given, meaning that people could choose any context for their experience. The purpose was to identify stories which express this concept of hostmanship and that were memorable experiences (either positive or negative).

"50 cups of coffee" was conceived as an approach in which 50 people were invited to have a cup of coffee with the researchers in an informal setting. The intention of the "guided conversations" (Yin, 2009, p. 106) was to have short conversations of approximately ten minutes. While Yin (2009) set a positivist approach to the construction of a research case study and to the structure of a guided conversation, his critical thinking was nonetheless useful in informing the methodological approach of this study. In practice, 10 minutes was found to be far too short once people started enthusiastically describing their experiences, and the interviews lasted at least thirty minutes and sometimes longer. We decided to expand the time slot in order to welcome and respect the interviewees' stories. Once people started sharing their experiences around the concept of hostmanship, it was hard to contain them. The interviewees were very open and shared personal and sensitive stories that related extremely well to the subject under investigation.

The instrument that was created for the conversations was interviewing based on only a couple of questions. Since the approach was mainly exploratory, the questions asked were very basic. The first set of questions were more general, the second set of questions applied to the specific organidational setting, but these are not the focus of this article. The first question was: "Could you describe a situation that you have experienced in which you felt extremely welcome?" Supplementary questions included: "What was the context of this experience and which behaviour created this feeling of being welcome?"; and "What did the person say to you or how did the person act?".

The second question was: "Could you describe a situation that you have experienced in which you felt extremely unwelcome?" Again, the supplementary questions sought to dig deeper: "What was the context of this experience and which behaviour created this feeling of being unwelcome?"; and "What did the person say to you or how did the person act?". The third question that was asked was: "How would you define or formulate 'hostmanship'?".

As the context of the research was a school of hospitality in the Netherlands, it was the aim to have a broadly representative group of people who work for the institute, rather than a strictly "representative sample". The study included all types of staff. The staff were invited based on different job categories: support staff; management; lecturers; industry support staff; thesis supervisors; and students and staff from the student-run hotel. They were personally approached by one of the researchers, informed about the study and invited to participate. The interviews took place in a specially created, relaxed area in a room with two comfortable seats, 60s-style decoration with a plant, table, carpet and old-style radio. Refreshments and snacks were served. This cosy, homey atmosphere was supposed to make people feel welcome, relaxed and comfortable. During the interview, one of the researchers would lead the interview, while the other made notes about the conversation and asked for additional information when relevant. The notes of the interviews and recordings were transcribed after the interview and checked by both researchers. Most of the interviews were conducted in Dutch and coding was done in Dutch too in order not to lose the sense of the conversations in translation. Using thematic coding, initial and axial coding was conducted, and themes identified (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The obvious limitation of this study is that it was conducted among a carefully selected group of people involved in hospitality education, so could not be considered "representative" either of the institution or the wider population. Nor did the researchers attempt to distance themselves from the research as would be required in a positivist approach. However, as the aim of this study was to develop an insight into people's memorable moments of hosptmanship, not to test a conceptual model, this approach was felt to add the most value in identifying new insights and understanding.

Findings and discussion

This section presents the results of the interviews and addresses the main question: "How do hospitality education staff and students interpret hostmanship?". In total, 47 interviews were conducted, even though the aim was to have conversations with 50 people. The final three people cancelled the interview and, under time-pressure, the data collection needed to be completed. It was therefore decided that 47 cases would be sufficient, even if it does not literally cover the "50 cups of coffee" approach. The results in this article are based on 46 interviewees, since one respondent withdrew permission to use the data of that interview. From these 46 interviews, notes were turned into 24 pages of text. In total, the transcripts consisted of 11 998 words for analysis.

Demographics show that the division of male to female respondents show a majority of females (60.9%), while males represent 39.1% of the interviewees. Educational staff is the largest group (lecturer, placement/thesis supervisor) and is in line with the population of the hospitality school. Other positions included support staff, staff from the learning company/student hotel and school management. Students represent 17% of the total sample, but the main purpose of the conversation was focused on staff, so this was not a concern for the researchers. The nationality of the staff is mainly Dutch (76%) and 24% were international. The average age is 44 years. Table 1 shows an overview of these data.

The next section discusses the main themes to emerge from the research — feeling extremely welcome, not feeling welcome at all, and hostmanship defined.

Feeling extremely welcome

The first question in the interview was: "Could you describe a situation that you have experienced in which you felt extremely welcome?" Supplementary questions included: "What was the context of this experience and which behaviour created this feeling of being welcome?"; and "What did the person say to you or how did the person act?".

Before going into detail, it is important to mention the context of the examples. Most stories are based on experiences in the hospitality industry, thus in the commercial domain. Also, examples from the private and partly social domains are mentioned, but less frequently.

From the interviews, three main categories of answers could be identified: genuine connection; pro-active and re-active behaviour of the host; and the surprise effect.

Genuine connection (host-guest interaction)

This true authentic connection between host and guest is mentioned most frequently. The interaction between two people, the touchpoint, is where most of the extraordinary experiences take place. It could clearly be related to the host's behaviour or "way of being" that make guests feel welcome. The host shows true understanding for the guest, and guests feel at ease and comfortable. The host gives attention to the guest, has eye contact, and is friendly and caring. The host is able to create a warm atmosphere, having all the time and is therefore able to give the guest a feeling that they are appreciated. It is a sincere attitude that is felt by the guest. One of the respondents captured this attitude as "a smile from within".

> *On my first working day in a new department, I was expected. First, I received a kind welcoming mail that a working place was already arranged for me and there was some info about the first day. Colleagues gave me a feeling of being welcome, because they were looking forward to seeing me and working with me. When meeting them, they were so friendly, enthusiastic, friendly and happy that I had arrived.*

When the host is acting on behalf of a group of people or when invited or welcomed by a group, this feeling of being welcome is even stronger. Examples from stories are found in the social and private domain: the whole team was present when I started my new job; the whole team welcomed me as an intern on my first day; I was invited to Christmas with the family of a colleague as I was far away from home. Another person said that she was welcomed by the neighbours after moving there. The message of these groups was "It is so wonderful to have you here with us". This refers to the feeling of belonging and being part of a group or community. This can be seen to touch the hearts of the respondents deeply.

> *During my internship I was very impressed by the fact that during the induction period of my introduction, the whole management staff was there to welcome me. I know that I am not that important but that was not what I felt. I had the feeling that I was taken seriously. It was an overwhelming feeling. I felt that I was taken care of. It was formal and systematic, but they hosted me very well and that gave me an informal feeling.*

One could say that this dimension would cover several dimensions of Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008). In the description of the respondent's stories, serving others, being caring and practising dialogue show strong similarities, although the description of the dimensions of Gunnarsson and Blohm give room for interpretation. See the dimensions described under (1), (4) and (5) above. In addition, these findings seem to confirm the pivotal role that service attitude, being attentive from the heart, being friendly, having clear communication and being and acting authentically have in defining a good host, according to De la Mar (2019).

Pro-active and re-active behaviour of the host

This refers to a category into which many stories and experiences

TABLE 1: Overview of demographic data

Characteristics		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	18	39.1
	Female	28	60.9
Position	Student	8	17.4
	Management	4	8.7
	Support staff	6	13
	Lecturer	11	23.9
	Placement/thesis supervisor	11	23.9
	Staff learning hotel company	6	13
Nationality	Dutch	35	76.1
	European other	6	13
	Asian	3	6.6
	African	2	3.3
Age	Average	44.3	
	Standard deviation	12.9	

fit. It has to do with the pro-activity of the host, meaning serving without asking and meeting the guest's needs. In many of the stories, the willingness to serve the guest based on the initiative of the host is mentioned. It is clear that people appreciate the initiative of the host and consider this as a feeling of being welcomed. There were many situations where the guest did not have to take care of anything and they were completely guided and taken care of by the host. There was no need to ask for anything (else) and that gives a pleasant feeling.

Another aspect that surfaced from the stories is that the actions are mostly multiple actions in a row during a visit and not only one action. This shows consistency of the host and shows that the host is focused on the guest constantly.

> *Upon arrival at the hotel, the receptionist asked whether I would like to enjoy a relaxing neck-massage. That was a nice gesture and I said "Yes" immediately.*
>
> *When I was on a placement visit, I felt really bad and ill. My biggest wish was to get into bed as soon as possible. A young host noticed my discomfort and asked if I was alright. She straight away took care of parking the car, arranged the check-in and passed the room key to me. A moment later, she brought a cup of tea to the room, which was highly appreciated.*

Re-active behaviour is also mentioned as a possible extraordinary experience. When the guest asked for something, immediate action was taken, and things were arranged far beyond what was requested. And this "far beyond" mostly referred to the speed of response and the willingness to serve the guest. To create a "wow" experience in this situation needs much more effort, because the request comes from the guest and they already have expectations of the host. But when the host goes the extra mile for the guest and with a lot of pleasure, a great experience can still be achieved. Another aspect that is of great importance here is that the internal (communications) structure works well.

> *It almost seems that there are little gnomes everywhere, running around to take care of everything that the guest needs, without necessarily having to ask for it.*

Although this aspect leaves room for a wide interpretation, it is specifically about the behaviour of the host. Referring to Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008), the dimensions of taking responsibility, and searching for knowledge would be mostly in line here. See points (2) and (6) above. De la Mar (2019) also discusses being knowledgeable and taking responsibility as important aspects of hosting. Also, here the empirical findings show a confirmation of literature results.

Surprises

A positive surprise is mentioned in most of the cases. Moreover, the level of this surprise is not just *exceeding expectations* – it is far beyond that. Respondents were surprised in a way that they would never even think of and strong positive emotions were encountered. At the core of this is the personal touch towards the guest. The host shows that they have a sharp eye for the guest by seeing possibilities as soon a personalised surprise can be arranged. Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008) refer to this as *the art* of making people feel welcome. Art refers to the personal interpretation of the host when creating surprises for the guest. Generally, this is a very strong intervention, since it appears in the moment – spontaneously – based on what is happening or what specific information or observation comes across to the host. The act that follows can create a significant and unforgettable experience. It was noticed that in these cases the host dares to take responsibility and act in the best interest of the guest. The host is empowered to do so (even though the protocols may say something else).

> *I had an amazing example in a restaurant where simplicity was key. As a guest, I was taken to the kitchen and could choose and point out what we would like to eat. It was nice to be invited backstage. It was a pure and spontaneous act from the chef. He welcomed me in his kitchen and when he knew that I used to be a chef too, he treated me accordingly. When we had chosen our dishes, he said "this is too much for today, so you have to come back again". It was such a nice experience and surprise.*

Another aspect that was mentioned frequently in terms of the "personal" is when mentioning the name of the guest. This refers mostly to commercial settings and was appreciated (regardless of the fact that there might be a system behind this). In general, respondents appreciate when their name is used.

Linking this surprise aspect to the literature is a bit more challenging. One could say that the "joy" dimension of Gunnarsson and Blohm comes close. "Joy" being the joy that is created for a guest (surprise effect) or also the joy that is created by the initiator. De la Mar (2019) refers to being motivated and passionate as a host. It is not exactly the same as "joy" as such, but the assumption that motivation and passion would lead to joy could be made here.

Generally, for this first section of what makes people feel welcome, our research findings confirm the conceptualisation of hostmanship provided by Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008) and the description of the host by De la Mar (2019). Also, referring to the notion of touchpoints, (the customer-employee interaction) it could be said that touchpoints are crucially embodied in hostmanship as well as in hospitality, as Grönroos (2011) states.

Not feeling welcome at all

The second part of the interview was: "Could you describe a situation that you have experienced in which you felt extremely unwelcome?" Again, the supplementary questions sought to dig deeper: "What was the context of this experience and which behaviour created this feeling of being unwelcome?"; and "What did the person say to you or how did the person act?". It is interesting to analyse the answers to these questions, because these are not necessarily the other side of the same coin as the abovementioned aspects of feeling welcome.

Some of the experience "killers" mentioned by De la Mar (2019) are perfectly in line with the findings of the interviews. First, the stories show that systems and protocols are in control (instead of the guest). Second, the negative behaviour of the host creates strong negative feelings, and thirdly — and this is not as such mentioned by De la Mar — is "a big no". The aspect that comes close to the last aspect is having to make the effort as a guest to get attention or to be served. But the experience here is beyond that: the response to the request is: "No".

System and protocols are in control

The foremost complaint has to do with the fact that the guest is not seen as a fellow human being. Especially in commercial transactions, hosts tend to hold on to their systems and protocols. In hospitality, these are the so-called SOPs (standard operating procedures). In situations where employees as hosts are busy, they tend to focus on "work" instead of the person or guest standing in front of them. There is a lack of connection and as a result people do not feel very welcome. Even worse, people have a very negative emotional experience. Most of the examples refer to governmental bureaucratic organisations, so are in the social/civic domain.

> *Not so long ago, I was at the parcel service company to pick up a parcel. Two parcels were on their way and one had already arrived, which I wanted to pick up. I was at the desk anyway and thought "let me ask if the second parcel has maybe arrived already". The response was: this is not how we work, lady. You have not received a message yet, so the parcel is not here. The person was not even willing to check anyway. I will never go there again, and felt so mistreated.*
>
> *When I was in the hospital, I had to come back four times before I received a diagnosis. I was sent to different departments and desks all the time. There was no co-operation between them and I as the patient/guest was the one that had to "shop around". Especially in a medical situation, this makes you feel very bad.*
>
> *In a school canteen, I wanted to order a sandwich just after closure. The girl mentioned that the kitchen had closed six minutes ago. Mentioning these six minutes made me feel even worse, even though I knew I was late. So, there was no sandwich for me.*

This particular aspect of a bad guest experience could be considered more as the "absence" of some connection-related dimensions of Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008). De la Mar (2019) actually refers explicitly to the negative side of guest experiences. The aspect of "procedures and rules come first" shows a clear reflection of the experience killers.

Behaviour of the host

Many real "ouch" moments were described that were related to the inappropriate behaviour of the host. Again, here it seems to happen in situations where the host is extremely busy or under pressure. In those moments, the host can easily lose their temper and hostmanship. Also, impersonal and disrespectful behaviour is mentioned. This leads to the fact that guests are not "seen" or there is a lack of attention to serving the guest in an appropriate way. This can be connected with De la Mar's (2019) experience killers, referring to an indifferent attitude and also negative communication with the guest.

> *During an art festival on the islands it is always extremely busy on the terraces. Every year again, it seems that the hosts are surprised with the number of people waiting to be served. Everywhere it is a big "ouch" on the island: you almost have to apologise that you are a guest and are disturbing the host by asking them to bring you a drink or some food. We had to wait for 1.5 hours for an omelette. It felt as if they do not care about having you as a guest, very unwelcome.*
>
> *If I have an appointment with someone, and the person is ten minutes late without any reason, it gives me a very unwelcoming feeling. It doesn't matter if this is in a private or corporate setting.*
>
> *Once, I went to a restaurant in a village and it was pretty busy. I asked if there was still a table available for us. The host responded: "Can't you see that yourself? We are full". That response was so negative and unpleasant to start a nice dinner.*

Big "no"

This category has to do with a situation where a guest has a specific request for something. This can be a service, drink, food or anything else. It could be expected that the host will look for possibilities to satisfy the guest and make their wishes come true. In this category, the opposite happens. After a request, the host clearly says no and refuses to provide what is asked for. It could also be situations where no follow-up is provided (repeatedly) after a request.

> *In summer we saw a nice terrace where we wanted to have come coffee and cake. Part of the terrace was full, and another part seemed empty behind a small fence. I asked if it would be possible to have seat there. The host had to ask her boss first if that would be fine, but the response was a clear NO. No alternative was offered, and we could leave again… and never come back.*
>
> *In a hotel in London we celebrated the 25th anniversary of my parents' marriage. Everything was so disappointing. The hosts said that we have to leave the bar without offering an alternative. We felt as if we were in their way and disturbing them. The next night, we wanted to sit in the bar again, but we were not allowed to stay any longer than opening time. We also requested a nice surprise for my parents, which was never taken on board. Anything we were asking was a "no". It was such a disappointing experience for such a special occasion.*

This particular finding of "big no" cannot be found explicitly in the literature. Again, from the perspective of "the absence of…", it is included in the literature review above. It refers to the non-willingness to serve a guest and satisfy their needs.

We believe this "big no" is an interesting result, because it is a very powerful one. It leads to an extremely bad experience and negative emotions. On reflection, there are opportunities to transform a "no" into a "yes". This phenomenon could be interesting to research, making the impossible possible by seeing opportunities.

Hostmanship defined

The third question that was asked was: "How would you define or formulate 'hostmanship'?" Although the respondents might not have been particularly familiar with the word, they were all familiar with the hospitality industry context and had an idea of what it could mean. Also, after asking the first two questions of "feelings of being (un)welcome", they could consider their stories as ingredients for defining hostmanship. Most respondents came up with a number of keywords rather than a full definition or sentence.

Based on the keywords that were mentioned, a word cloud was created to see which words occur most frequently (Figure 1). These were that hostmanship should be *sincere from the heart* and based on a *true connection between people*. Also, receiving *genuine attention* from the host is key. The *surprise effect* is another aspect, as well as *listening and being available*. These all relate to the earlier first question in which positive experiences of being welcomed were identified.

FIGURE 1: Word cloud from "How would you define hostmanship?"

Further research

As has been noted, no previous empirical research has been done about the philosophy of hostmanship. From an instrumental and more quantitative perspective, it could be interesting to develop a validated instrument that measures hostmanship. What would the key indicators be, and are the seven "choices" that are determined by Gunnarsson and Blohm (2008) also quantitatively the key factors for an item scale development?

Since there are different approaches about what an excellent host should be (Gunnarsson & Blohm, 2008; De la Mar, 2019), from an academic point of view it would be of added value to see which main factors could be distinguished based on combined empirical quantitative data and qualitative data. Which factors are key? And could the importance and weight of several factors be identified?

The theory of surprises could be interesting to further investigate. This aspect came out of this research in a positive way. The psychology of surprises in relation to hostmanship is worth researching. Also, the negative side of it would be relevant too (negative surprises lead mostly to disappointing experiences).

A question that remains unanswered, although it was not the purpose to focus on this aspect, is the idea of welcoming yourself (referred to by Gunnarsson and Blohm, 2008). What are important aspects to welcome yourself and if these are met, how does this affect the level of hostmanship that is shown by an employee?

Conclusion

In this article, the concept of hostmanship was explored from an empirical exploratory and qualitative approach. Respondents were asked about the exceptional experiences of feeling welcome. The examples that were mentioned came from different contexts and domains, although most stories refer to the commercial hospitality settings. The positive stories refer to private settings too and the examples in which people did not feel welcome mostly do not refer to the private domain, but the social domain most frequently. Especially governmental and other non-profit organisations show poorer hostmanship. Generally, it can be stated that hostmanship or feelings of being welcome are experienced in all kinds of settings. This implies that this concept is not only and purely relevant for the hospitality industry. Research in all domains would be interesting to find common denominators of hostmanship.

A crucial aspect of hostmanship is the true and sincere connection between two people. This is key to the experience of feeling welcome and is closely dependent on the behaviour and choices of the host. They will be triggered by time or work pressure whether to act in a welcoming manner or not. Another major trigger is finding a balance between the system and protocols and seeing the other person as a human being. The human connection should be leading instead of the system and protocols (which happens a lot) if the purpose is to safeguard the positive experiences of the guest. Systems should be supportive towards the needs and wants of the guest and not the other way round. This aspect is found also more in governmental and non-profit sectors.

Key for the experience is the interaction between host and guest, often called a touchpoint. The quality and experience of this interaction seems to have a major impact on the overall hostmanship experience. It is mentioned in every single conversation referring to authenticity, sincerity and coming from the heart. These interpersonal touchpoints are of strong added value for people (in any setting) and are a huge contribution to the sense of well-being of our fellow human beings.

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On the challenges of making a sustainable kitchen: experimenting with sustainable food principles for restaurants

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ABSTRACT: Concerns with the sustainability of food have moved from the margins of the gastronomy world to a much more central stage, mirroring a growing concern by citizens around food origins, carbon footprint and social practices in value chains. Evolving literature on food sustainability addresses many of these challenges, with macro and systemic approaches that have proved valuable in certain domains, such as food policy. However, professionals from the hospitality industry are still very under-informed on the methods adopted by researchers investigating food sustainability. This article tries to fill this gap by presenting an approach on how micro-level practices in restaurant kitchens can be informed by sustainable principles derived from the conceptual lens of food sustainability. It demonstrates the identification of principles and the definition of sustainable practices with two empirical cases: Hermann's restaurant in Berlin, and Mesa pra Doze gastronomic project, in Brasília. Comparing those two different experiences, similar and dissimilar challenges were found. Contrary to common thinking, the higher costs normally associated with sustainable sourcing were diluted by the higher margins and low weight of sustainable ingredients in the total operational costs. Access to these, in terms of time and availability, proved to be the real challenge, given their less developed distribution channels. Lastly, the high degree of freedom and meaningful deliberation which the kitchen team benefited from, in both cases opened the possibility to more coherent and comprehensive definitions of sustainable principles and practices.

KEYWORDS: food sustainability, food systems, sustainable kitchen, sustainable gastronomy

Introduction

There is a growing interest in the gastronomy world on issues related to sustainability. More and more chefs, sommeliers, gastronomes, restaurant owners, managers, food journalists, and many other professionals in the hospitality industry deal directly with themes such as food sourcing, food miles, fairness, energy and water conservation, and waste reduction, among others. These topics have moved from the margins of this industry to much more centre stage and the evidence of this is considerable. To name a few examples, one can notice world-leading restaurants became famous for their focus on certain aspects of food sustainability: Noma and the New Nordic Cuisine movement certainly may come to mind for many readers; a growing number of lists and awards to business and professionals that take the lead in this area, such as the Sustainable Restaurant Award of the World's 50 Best List; and sustainability featuring prominently in the agenda of many food festivals, symposiums, and seminars — from MAD in Copenhagen, to Madrid Fusión in Madrid, and Mistura, in Lima.

The interest in sustainability in gastronomy mirrors evolving dynamics in society with its relationship with food. Citizens are also more and more concerned about food origins, carbon footprint, social practices in the value chain and integrity of their food (Krystallis, Grunert, de Barcellos, Perrea, & Verbeke, 2012; Micheletti & Stolle, 2012). How far these concerns will change the various unsustainable practices that still prevail in the global food industry is an open question (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006; Van den Berg, 2016). Still, to anyone in the food industry, sustainability cannot be ignored anymore.

Unquestionably, food sustainability is not being ignored by researchers, considering the growing scientific literature on the subject approaching the very same previously mentioned issues. A great part of this research adopts systemic lenses to investigate the sustainability of the food industry (Ericksen, 2008; Colonna, Fournier, & Touzard, 2013). That is, borrowing the concept of food systems, certain authors investigate how the different parts of this system perform better or worse when it comes to certain sustainability criteria (Ericksen et al., 2010; Marsden & Morley, 2014).

This macro and systemic approach adopted by researchers has proved valuable in certain domains. Food policy, for example, must necessarily generate wide impacts on food production and consumption practices to be successful, thus the systemic approach is vital. To be informed by good research adopting this perspective is potentially very useful for policymakers.

On the other hand, chefs, managers and other professionals in the restaurant industry tend to carry a much more micro-level focus in their business practices. For them, the systemic overview might be useful for contextualisation, but it is of little practical use when making decisions on how to operate their kitchens or how to adopt more sustainable procedures in their operations. In other words, professionals from this industry are being informed by diverse sources of knowledge — from exchange among peers, to events and specialised media — but very little by the macro and systemic approach adopted by researchers investigating food sustainability (Cavagnaro, 2013). This is worsened by the scarcity of approaches linking the macro-lenses of food system sustainability with the micro-practices of operating kitchens, in particular by how assessments so far show a very limited comprehensive understanding of sustainability (Higgins-Desbiolles, Moskwa, & Wijesinghe, 2019).

Hindley (2015) shows how the rise of this term in gastronomy was marked by stylised and stereotypical conceptions that do not do justice to the increasing conceptual complexities surrounding sustainability. There have been efforts to address these intricacies through the development of better-informed definitions and practical principles, such as approaches used by green certification schemes (Barneby & Mills, 2015), and research-led assessments of sustainable performance of restaurants (Rimmington, Carlton Smith, & Hawkins, 2006; Legrand, Sloan, Simons-Kaufmann, & Fleischer, 2010; Schulp, 2015). Still, the lack of unified methods and the complexity of this challenge calls for simpler blueprints that are sufficiently manageable at the level of individual restaurants. In other words, methods that facilitate self-construction of simple guidelines, so these can be rightly informed by sound science and able to capture the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainability (Cavagnaro, 2015).

This article tries to fill the gap already identified in the literature (Jacobs & Klosse, 2016) by presenting and discussing evidence from two empirical cases where this link between macro- and micro-levels of food sustainability were explored. The first case takes place in a major global cosmopolitan city — Berlin, Germany — where a new restaurant experimented with an internal exercise of adopting ten self-constructed sustainable food principles. I was the first head chef of this restaurant. I tried to organise kitchen procedures based on these ten principles, drawing strongly from the literature on food sustainability. The second case takes place in Brasília, the regional centre and capital of Brazil. Inspired by the challenges found in Berlin, in Brasília I operated a smaller 12-seat twice-a-week pop-up restaurant, where similar sustainable food principles strongly shaped the menus and the restaurant operations.

Comparing those two different experiences, similar and dissimilar challenges were found, which are worth documenting and discussing within the wider scientific and gastronomic communities. Thus, this article aims to provide a double contribution. Firstly, one to the research community of food science and gastronomy, by demonstrating an empirical way in which the macro-level of food systems can be analytically linked with the more micro-level of restaurant operations through the development of sustainable food principles and practices at the micro (restaurant) level. Secondly, to the professionals of the restaurant industry, by discussing practical challenges that might be faced when pursuing similar goals in their operations.

Almost completely based on self-experience, my positionality in this article is clear. It is not my intention to provide comprehensive overviews of how food sustainability in restaurants can or should be achieved. It is rather the results of self-reflection and discussions with peers — mostly social scientists and chefs — on how to bridge the two worlds, by chance, two worlds that pertain simultaneously to my career. Moreover, all sources of data are based on my non-consecutive participatory self-observation over the past three years. More specifically in two situations: i) when I led the kitchen of Hermann's Eatery Berlin[1] as the first executive chef (May 2017 to February 2018); and ii) when I headed the pop-up diner restaurant Mesa pra Doze[2] (November 2018 to December 2019). Numerous exchanges with kitchen peers, managers and recurrent clients of these two business complement the sources of data. This approach of relying on observation and self-reflection as sources of data is very much in line with anthropological autoethnographic studies (Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2016; Spry, 2018) as well as transdisciplinary studies (Hadorn et al., 2008; Lang et al., 2012) which try to limit or even eliminate the distance between subject and object. In transdisciplinarity, more specifically, authors suggest that better research is achieved when researchers clearly declare their positionality and desist from seeking impartial knowledge (Rosendahl, Zanella, Rist, & Weigelt, 2015).

The article is structured as follows: after this introduction, the next section reviews the debate on food system sustainability. This step is useful for approaching the current status of literature on the subject, and for contextualising the schools of thought that influenced the approach for adopting principles of food sustainability. These principles are presented in the following section, which links the thinking on food sustainability at the macro-systemic level to kitchen operations, briefly describing their scientific basis. The results and discussion section presents the main challenges found when these principles were put into practice when opening Hermann's Berlin and Mesa pra Doze in Brasília. The focus of this section is to highlight similar challenges that might be faced by others in trying similar approaches in cosmopolitan cities. Finally, the conclusion discusses some of the implications for chefs, professionals in the food industry, and researchers.

Reviewing the debate: What does food system sustainability mean?

Food system sustainability is an emerging concept that links the main ideas of *sustainability* with the concept of *food systems*. Food systems, in turn, are in line with the evolution of yet another relevant and always evolving concept: *food security*.

The use of the term food security, while initially conceptualised as mostly a single dimension of food supply, gradually evolved to reflect policy thinking throughout the twentieth century by incorporating other dimensions and concerns (Maletta, 2014). This evolution culminated in the widely used definition consolidated by the 1996 World Food Summit: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations — FAO, 2006). Thus, by the beginning of the current century, it became commonly accepted to apply the term when considering four dimensions: availability, access, utilisation and stability. Reflecting growing analytical complexity, the four dimensions of food security do justice to the many aspects relevant to policy. It also relates directly to many traditional disciplines addressing food: from agronomy to economics, nutrition and health, to environmental studies.

More recent literature has explored the connection between the concept of food security with system perspectives (Ericksen et al., 2010; Colonna, Fournier, & Touzard, 2013). System studies investigate the interdependence between levels and scales, for example, the effect of the global phenomena of food price volatility coupled with a local-scale problem of monopolistic behaviour of food distributors in a certain area. It also addresses short and long terms, for instance, the trend of growing urban population — long term — interacting with a local economic recession. And it can also point to cross-sectoral trade-offs — for example, the frequently mentioned trade-off of immediate food production increase versus long-term decreasing natural capacity of the environment in delivering ecosystem services (Misselhorn et al., 2012).

Studies that applied systemic thinking to food security analysis were particularly concerned with understanding how food security outcomes are produced by the interaction of the different parts of systems. Therefore, the term *food system* began to be applied in reference to the different actors, processes and institutions that interacted and shaped how food is grown, produced, processed, transported, and consumed. Under this analysis, special concern is given to how certain effects (internal or exogenous to the system) influence actors' interactions and generate outcomes. Additionally, one of the main implications of understanding food security as outcomes of food system interactions is the increasing complexity and non-linearity of outcomes (International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems — IPES FOOD, 2015). In other words, when one assumes that food security derives from an uncountable number of multiple interactions between actors operating at different levels and scales, outcomes become too complex to be foreseen, modelled and/or analysed (Foran et al., 2014).

In terms of empirical studies, authors propose different categorisations when describing food systems. Colonna, Fournier, and Touzard (2013) suggest the *co-existence* of diverse food systems, which can be classified according to certain typologies: "local", "regional", "agri-industrial", or "differentiated quality", for example. The main contribution of this approach is to recognise overlaps between different food systems. Using an example from the restaurant industry, a certain actor — a restaurant — might acquire part of its inputs from a global/industrialised food system, while other inputs might be bought from a local/artisanal one. Interactions between these different food systems might generate complex outcomes in terms of income generation, distribution, social and environmental impacts, among others (International Fund for Agriculture Development — IFAD, 2013).

Analysis of food system outcomes have not been limited to the descriptive performance of systems, but frequently have been linked to political economy approaches. Normative rules provided by right-to-food approaches (Golay, 2010) or analysis on inequality and poverty impacts (Swinnen, 2007) can assist us in analysing food system outcomes. The debate on food system performance has also been linked to concepts such as environmental integrity and socio-ecological resilience (FAO, 2013; Tendall et al., 2015). Finally, food system *governance* has been another addition to this canon (Marsden, 2011; Candel, 2014), presenting evidence on how decision-making processes in food systems shape its outcomes, contributing to ongoing food debates such as those around food sovereignty (Sage, 2014) and food democracy (Renting, Schermer, & Rossi, 2012).

The integration of all these different approaches into the analysis of food system outcomes has been calling for an umbrella concept that: i) encompasses the complexities of systems; and ii) adopts normative principles to which food system outcomes can be measured and the overall performance of food systems can be compared. This is where the frontier of *food sustainability* is currently found. Several initiatives have been exploring approaches that contribute to the building up of the food sustainability concept. These efforts to conceptualise food sustainability show one important similarity: the definition and adoption of principles as normative rules to which food systems can be compared in terms of sustainability performance. Some useful examples are presented in Table 1.

As can be easily noticed, these different approaches carry some similarities and overlaps. They are not necessarily analogous and comparable, considering that they mark a departure from different epistemic origins and are organised for different purposes. Still, some dimensions of food sustainability are noticeably equally presented in all mentioned examples.

One of the most important differences of these approaches is their level of analysis, that is, how far they can be rendered applicable to specific cases, such as one particular food system. When operationalising food sustainability at this level, Jacobi et al. (2018) derive indicators to assess specific dimensions of the concept of resilience, therefore demonstrating how a more general and macro concept can be rendered applicable at a territorial level. The operationalisation of food sustainability principles into measurable indicators and composed indexes is also one approach tested by food system researchers (Allen, Prosperi, Cogill, Padilla, & Peri, 2019; Augstburger, Käser, & Rist, 2019). These efforts suggest that general food sustainability principles must be deconstructed into more specific elements in order to be applicable.

This leads us to the question initially asked by this article: how can one render useful principles of food sustainability constructed at the macro-level to the micro-level of day-to-day kitchen practices? The next section investigates the challenge of linking those two levels by suggesting one approach that adopts principles and derives practices that can be assessed by restaurant managers, owners or employees.

From systems to kitchens: principles for a sustainable kitchen

The previous section reviewed the emergence of food sustainability concepts and how this currently influences research and policy endeavours that seek to contrast and compare the performance of different food systems. Inspired by this theoretical background, this section presents one approach that links the macro-level of systems with the micro-level of a single restaurant. The main intention behind this exercise is to build up a tool that: i) is theoretically grounded in the literature about food sustainability; ii) is applicable at the restaurant level; and iii) allows the identification of restaurants' own contribution to more sustainable food systems. Through this exercise, it is expected that professionals from the hospitality industry can rely on a comprehensive set of principles that are coherently and theoretically connected, reducing the risks associated with fragmented and intuitional knowledge.

TABLE 1: Examples of food sustainability conceptualisation

Source	Principles	Used as
Research programme "Towards Food Sustainability" – Centre for Development and Environment, University of Bern (CDE, 2015)	i) food security ii) the right to food and other related human rights iii) reduction of poverty and inequality iv) environmental integrity v) socio-ecological resilience	A method to comprehensively compare the performance of co-existing food systems across different regions and scales
Chaudhary, Gustafson, & Mathys (2018)	i) food nutrient adequacy ii) ecosystem stability iii) affordability and availability iv) sociocultural well-being v) resilience vi) food safety vii) waste and loss reduction	Principles for assessing global food systems performance
Research programme "Urban-Driven Innovations for Sustainable Food Systems" (URBAL, 2017)	i) food security ii) nutrition iii) governance iv) economic v) environmental vi) social	A participatory methodology for practitioners and policymakers in the identification of innovation pathways and their evolution towards sustainable food systems
Global Alliance for the Future of Food (2019)	i) renewability (integrity of natural and social resources) ii) diversity iii) healthfulness (health and well-being of people, society and nature) iv) resilience (adaptive capacity) v) equity (sustainable and just livelihoods) vi) interconnectedness (interdependence while in transition) vii) inclusiveness (in decision-making and governance)	Principles reflecting values shared by members of the Alliance, which shape the work of the organisation

The approach consists mainly of two simple procedures: i) the identification of sustainable food principles that could normatively guide re-orientation and innovation of food practices at restaurant level — thus adopting principles in a similar fashion to those presented in the second section, but at a more applicable scale and contextualisation for restaurants; and ii) the choice of sustainable kitchen practices that organise the principles into actions, also at a restaurant level.

Sustainable kitchens: Ten principles

To arrive at a final list of principles and the choice of practices, an iterative and informal process was developed, drawing strongly from participatory approaches. Initially, I worked on a draft, which was subsequently complemented and adjusted after several consultations, interactions and informal discussions with the wider restaurant team. The goal was to use the available scientific literature as a guide for discussion and to jointly construct a "target knowledge", that is a commonly agreed understanding of the "need for change, desired goals and better practices" (Pohl & Hadorn, 2007, p. 9). In that sense, the final list of principles represents both information and values that are informed by literature, as well as a jointly constructed vision shared by the team in a particular kitchen.

This approach was implemented in more detail in the first case — Hermann's Eatery Berlin — as this business had a more standardised restaurant structure and a much larger staff. The second case was slightly simpler. Departing from the accumulated experience at Hermann's, I, as chef and owner of Mesa pra Doze, adapted the principles and practices designed at Hermann's to the specificities of the new business in Brasília. The differences between those two cases in terms of challenges while using the principles and practices in motion is explored in the discussion section of this article.

Even though these principles and practices are the result of a participatory and iterative process and are grounded in literature, limitations to this approach must be highlighted. First, the principles are not complete nor comprehensive answers to how to achieve sustainability in kitchen operations. They focus on certain aspects of kitchen operations, such as sourcing, and therefore might overlook other relevant dimensions (e.g. labour issues, residue treatments, and other issues which the team was less familiar with). Moreover, they are solely focused on the operations part of the regular domain of a kitchen chef, therefore anything related to service (front-of-house) and administration is out of the scope of this exercise. One must note, however, that it was not the intention of all involved in this exercise to design a comprehensive list of principles that would deal with every single aspect of food sustainability and kitchens. Other restaurants and teams might have a different view on the issues and would certainly adopt different principles if a similar exercise were to be conducted.

Against this background, the ten principles for food sustainability are:

- Embrace **diversity and seasonality** as the basis for food sustainability;
- Cook **real food**: minimal processing, and prioritising wholesome, fresh and nutritious products;
- Prioritise **local**, but do not close borders;
- Prefer **organic** and/or agro-ecological food; labels are important, but what really matters is how food is produced;
- Adopt a **vegetable-oriented diet**, but keep in mind that many food systems require animals for achieving sustainability;

- Favour **small producers**: their personal efforts pay off in quality, while income stays in the local economy and the benefits will be more fairly shared across the food system;
- Reduce **waste** to a minimum: reduce, reuse, recycle. Be efficient and adopt a nose-to-tail approach to cooking;
- Be **innovative**, but do not always reinvent the wheel; in many situations, being innovative means returning to our roots and **traditions**;
- Consider that the food industry needs **fixing**, but we are addicted to it. Radical solutions inspire but do not always lead us to a needed gradual transformative change; and
- Change recipes, techniques, ingredients: never sacrifice **taste**.

To demonstrate that the principles presented above are grounded in theoretical and/or empirical evidence found in the food systems' literature and practice, Table 2 briefly outlines some of the factual bases that underpin each principle.

From principles to practices

Going further with this exercise of identifying principles that are applicable by restaurants, kitchen practices are also identified. In many cases, kitchens are organised around certain procedures, protocols, and practices. While some of these refer closely to day-to-day routines that chefs follow, others can provide a certain frame of reference to the employees in which directions and ranges they can make their decisions; for example, decisions on which ingredients to buy, quantities, and from whom. In the case of this exercise, these practices represent more pragmatic operational choices which translate the previously mentioned principles in kitchen operations. Table 3 presents those.

The identification of principles and practices is just one initial step for shaping kitchen organisation and procedures towards sustainability. It is expected that many challenges will be found whenever these are put into action. The next section discusses some of the challenges I found when these principles and practices were tested in the two cases under discussion: Hermann's Eatery in Berlin, and Mesa pra Doze in Brasília.

Results and discussion: challenges found when implementing principles and practices

Before presenting the main challenges, it is necessary to provide context for the two empirical cases explored in this article, as the business format brings important implications in terms of facilitating or challenging the choice and execution of certain sustainable practices.

Hermann's Eatery in Berlin

Hermann's Berlin is a daytime café and restaurant located in Rosenthaler Platz, a central and hip district in ultra-cosmopolitan Berlin. The place is generally open from morning to afternoon (approximately 09:00 to 17:00), serving items that are normally offered in cafés (sandwiches, soups, salads, cakes, etc.), but also offering lunch specials and brunches during the weekends. Hermann's can sit 70 customers — which can be considered a medium-size restaurant (or a large café) for Berlin standards — even though many clients consume mostly coffee items or use the space as a work area.

To define the type of food served at Hermann's was very challenging in the beginning — when I was invited to lead the kitchen — so, to present the origins of the restaurant might be useful for contextualisation.

Hermann's was opened in early 2017 as an initiative supported by the family-owned German multinational giant Bahlsen. For a long time, the company had been exploring new business areas where potential was envisioned, as a long-term strategy of diversification from the core business of cookies, sweets and pastries. Bahlsen therefore decided to create Hermann's as an exploratory laboratory to test new ideas, ingredients and processes with Berlin clients. The business was organised into two parts: i) a support B2B consultancy (called Platform) that linked small innovative start-ups with the big players of the food industry; and ii) the restaurant, where clients could be received, recipes could be tested, and events could be held. Thus, both the Platform and the restaurant were set up as a unique, independent, self-managed subsidiary of the Bahlsen Group. With the motto "looking for the future of food", Hermann's was established with the mission of being innovative, bold, exploratory and risky, with a well-funded budget and a very comfortable timeline to create positive operational returns.

Though this part of the concept was indeed clear, imprecise guidance on how exactly the vision would translate into food offerings created several challenges in forging a clear concept and menu. On one hand, there was substantial freedom to test and suggest many diverse recipes, but on the other hand clients (and even the team) had difficulties in understanding what the restaurant really offered in terms of cuisine.

This imprecision is linked with the design of the ten principles presented in the previous section. Hired as the head chef and facing this imprecise definition, I took the initiative to start discussing with peers some guidance for the kitchen team. Thus, I started drafting and discussing principles that should guide the "future of food", drawing strongly on the understanding that the future of food is sustainable food.

In line with the general manager — who was responsible for all other aspects of the business, from the front-of-house management to budget and human resources — and with the experimental character of the firm, a great level of freedom was offered to the chef. Nevertheless, it was also made clear from the beginning that no expectations should be created in terms of using the principles for communicating with clients, nor that the principles would influence the Platform part of the business. In other words, everything directly related to kitchen organisation was under my influence — and therefore could be guided by the principles — but those should be considered as internal orientations only and not really part of the business concept.

Over time and through more internal discussions, Hermann's food concept slowly started to take shape. Today, the restaurant uses the following to describe its food concept to clients.

> *In our mission to make food not only delicious but also truly nourishing, we draw inspiration from cultures around the world, and strive to deepen our knowledge with every bite.*
> *Our food is free from refined sugars and flours and full of goodness. We bake, cook, smoke, cure and ferment all of our ingredients in-house.*
> *Whether local or global, we only work with suppliers that share our vision and values in shaping a good future of food.*
> *We are proud to support them in the food we serve.*
> *We're exploring gut health, prebiotics and probiotics, fermentation and fibre to restore our inner ecosystem.*
> *We want to see a food system that is more circular with*

TABLE 2: Principles of food sustainability applicable to sustainable kitchens and their factual bases

	Principle	Basis
1.	Diversity and seasonality	Diversity is the main factor driving resilience. Diverse food systems react better to shocks and adapt to long-term changes. Non-diverse food systems and their inability to withstand shocks were reasons for many famines (Fraser, Mabee, & Figge, 2005). Seasonal produce means using the existing natural base/landscape and not going against them. Seasonal products tend to use less inputs (e.g., energy, greenhouse gases) (Van Hauwermeiren, Coene, Engelen, & Mathijs, 2007) and taste better.
2.	Real food	High consumption of ultra-processed foodstuffs (refined sugars, refined wheat, etc.) are indicated as one of the main reasons for malnutrition or obesity (under consumption of micronutrients and overconsumption of calories) worldwide (rich and emergent countries) (Monteiro, Moubarac, Cannon, Ng, & Popkin, 2013; Canella et al., 2014) Besides being more tasty (or naturally tasty, in opposition to food with added chemical flavour components), real food (minimal processing and/or home-processed, fresh) retains more vitamins and minerals present in the food that we need for a healthy life, thus it is more nutritious.
3.	Local food	Local production is strongly linked with seasonality and quality. Many local foodstuffs are produced by small farmers who trade in alternative/preferential markets, with a higher share of profits for producers across the different actors of the value chain (Van der Ploeg, Jingzhong, & Schneider, 2012). Local production can have smaller CO^2 footprints, although this is very much dependent on how food is transported (dry goods transported in bulk [cargo ships], for example). One option would be to exclude goods transported by aeroplane, which has a much higher carbon footprint (Mundler & Rumpus, 2012). Also, many smaller and poorer farmers elsewhere depend on international markets for their livelihoods (e.g., coffee, cocoa, tropical fruits, etc.), one more reason for not closing borders (Burnett & Murphy, 2014).
4.	Organic	There are hundreds of reasons why organic products are better for our planet and for our bodies. As organic products become more established in the food market and the mainstream, less effort is needed to communicate their advantages (Crinnion, 2010). Agro-ecological food is a more general term that does not require third-part certification (label) as a proof of bio-production. Certification is costly and it can be a major barrier for farmers in developing nations. Besides focusing on the reduction of input use, agro-ecological food focuses on the diversity of crops, ancient varieties, and traditional vegetables and breeds, thus helping to sustain our planet's biodiversity (Gliessman, 2014).
5.	Vegetable-oriented diet	Less consumption of meat is strongly linked to both reduced environmental pressure (planet) and better nutrition (health) (Godfray et al., 2018). Complete absence of meat (vegetarianism) or animal protein in the diet (veganism) is a personal option by many, but there is less evidence and more controversy for its environmental and nutritional benefits (Baroni, Cenci, Tettamanti, & Berati, 2007; Hallström, Carlsson-Kanyama, & Börjesson, 2015; Rosi et al., 2017). Many sustainable agricultural systems require animals for nutrient recycling (e.g., compost substituting industrial fertilisers in integrated production systems), for controlling wild stocks (e.g., sustainable fisheries), or for increasing production efficiency (e.g., natural grazing in large areas) (Wanapat, Cherdthong, Phesatcha, & Kang, 2015).
6.	Small producers	In the quest for scale and efficiency, many food systems gradually evolve to exclude small farmers as sources of food. Small family farmers might have lower economics of scale, but they have higher economies of scope, implying that they tend to focus more on details that lead to high-quality produce. Besides, small family farmers tend to have more diverse and seasonal production systems (Principle 1) (Nayak, 2018). Favouring small production also keeps more income in the local economy, and it allows family farmers to capture a higher share of profits that are distributed across the value chain, thus it is an ethical decision to support them (Hebinck, Schneider, & van der Ploeg, 2014).
7.	Waste	Approximately US$ 1 trillion is lost per year due to food waste. Food waste is an economic, ethical and environmental issue (Gustavsson, Cederberg, Sonesson, & Van Otterdijk, 2011). Reduce, reuse and recycle are three mantras for any kitchen aiming to increase its sustainability performance. This is also linked to developing recipes that use produce in its totally – a nose-to-tail approach (e.g., less fancy cuts of meat, use of bones and carcasses for stock, vegetable skins for broth, re-use of oils for dressing, etc.).
8.	Innovations and traditions	For transforming our food systems, we will need to constantly innovate. But there is more and more evidence that many of the solutions we need will be found in the notebooks of our grandmothers and in our traditions, rather than in fancy laboratories. As in times of less abundance, families used to follow pretty closely the principles that we are setting for our kitchen (diversity, seasonality, local, waste reduction, etc.) (Altieri, 2004).
9.	Fixing food systems	To say that the food industry is broken is no longer a radical statement, but many critics of the food industry do not accept that our post-modern urban society is addicted to the vast benefits that food industrialisation brought us (convenience, abundance – to name just two things that our society is unlikely to renounce). Like any addiction, simply cutting its intake from one evening to the next morning will likely fail. Additionally, a large number of people do not accept that our societies are addicted to the food industry, which calls for gradual transformations. Alternative radical options are inspiring examples but have proved successful only on a small and marginal scale. There are many examples of "small revolutions" in the food system: food hubs, community-supported agriculture (CSA), agro-ecological transitions, progressive food policy, among others (Baker, Gemmill-Herren, & Leippert, 2019).
10.	Taste	Never sacrifice taste, because first and foremost, food must be delicious.

TABLE 3: Practices of food sustainability applicable to sustainable kitchens

	Principle	Practices
1.	Diversity and seasonality	1.1 Design the menu first by considering the best ingredients available in that particular season in that area, and later thinking of specific recipes
2.	Real food	2.1 Avoid buying processed ingredients. Strongly avoid buying ultra-processed ingredients
		2.2 Make your own flavour bases (stocks, sauces, preserved vegetables, jams, etc.)
		2.3 Whenever possible, opt for wholesome flours, sugars, and unrefined ingredients
3.	Local food	3.1 Buy first from local and personally known producers, second from distributors, and only third from major retailers
		3.2 When buying from retailers, communicate with them about your buy-local policy
4.	Organic	4.1 Buy first from local and personally known organic producers
		4.2 Only buy non-organic when organic produce is unavailable or significantly more expensive (more than a certain rate or price, for example)
		4.3 Only require labelling if buying from distributors and retailers
5.	Vegetable-based diet	5.1 Use animal protein mostly to season vegetables
		5.2 When serving animal protein as a main dish, serve smaller portions and larger vegetable garnishes
		5.3 Culture, cure and ferment animal protein to increase its nutritional availability, and its flavour potential (thus contributing as a seasoning agent, rather than a sole ingredient)
		5.4 Do not adopt a fully vegetarian or vegan diet without reflection, as those can be as unsustainable as a regular diet if not complemented by other sourcing principles
6.	Small producers	6.1 Buy first from local and personally known small producers
		6.2 When buying from retailers, communicate with them about your policy of buying from small producers
7.	Waste	7.1 Seek a "zero-waste" policy when using vegetables and animals. Be creative and look for recipes for using skins, bones, leftovers, etc.
		7.2 Before throwing anything out, consider dehydrating, fermenting, preserving, etc.
		7.3 Monitor waste production, water disposal, and energy consumption
		7.4 Always give preference to "leftover" over "prime" cuts, "non-conventional cuts and animals" to "highly valued animals"
8.	Innovation and traditions	8.1 Use traditional cookbooks as main sources of information and recipes
		8.2 First research cooking traditions when using preserving techniques
		8.3 Critically reflect on the "newest trend" before adopting it
9.	Fixing food systems	9.1 Do not be ideological, since flexibility is important, and change is gradual
		9.2 Listen to your clients needs and wishes before posing an argument
10.	Taste	10.1 If a recipe follows all other nine principles, but does not taste good, do not add it to the menu

> *reintegrated by-products and rediscovered ancient ingredients.*
> *We believe this will lead us to more diversity, less waste and higher nutritional profiles. We believe that to be truly sustainable you must also be accessible, approachable and affordable, but without forgetting the true value of food (Hermann's, 2020).*

Challenges when implementing sustainable food principles at Hermann's

Diverse challenges, achievements and limitations were found when implementing the ten sustainable food principles at Hermann's. The discussion below reflects some of those in the period I headed the kitchen (May 2017 to February 2018).

Principle (1) — diversity and seasonality, practically a mantra of good food accepted by most chefs — was achieved well, but not without certain pitfalls along the way. While the practices associated with this principle call for designing the menu by first thinking of the best ingredients available during a particular season, there was resistance both in management and from certain clientele not to include ingredients and preparations that are easier to sell, while definitely not seasonal. For example, tomatoes, aubergines, zucchinis, strawberries, cherries and other summer fruits and vegetables are grown in greenhouses in the Netherlands or Spain during the harsh northern European winter. This was even more challenging considering the focus on healthy soups and salads, as part of the food offering. The way to address this challenge was to increase focus on winter vegetables and preserving techniques, such as fermentation, pickling, and dried and canned preparations. In the end, this was made relatively easy due to the growing interest in Berlin for local and seasonal food and the consequent effort of major retailers in finding local winter vegetables to distribute to restaurants in the city.

Principle (2) — real food — calls for avoiding processed ingredients, practically banning ultra-processed foods, and a focus on self-made flavour bases and wholesome flours, sugars, and unrefined ingredients. This was achieved well at Hermann's. Not only was this identified as one of the goals of the restaurant and the food concept right from the start of the business, but there was also a clear alignment between the chef's willingness to experiment and the vision that the leadership had for the restaurant. Thus, ultra-processed foods were very rarely part of any preparations, and processed foods were used with caution. The kitchen even experimented with completely banning refined sugar and flours, which in turn required a lot of adaptation and turned into a long, but worthwhile learning curve. One word of caution: to prepare our own flavour bases was only possible because the company had resources for covering the additional labour costs involved in making things in-house. For most food preparations, these costs were significantly higher than using ready-made products, in some cases doubling or more the total operational costs for a dish. Certainly, not all restaurants are in the same favourable position to implement this.

Principles (3), (4) and (6) — preferably buy local food, organic and from small producers — were very challenging to implement, and in the end, were only partially achieved. In terms of organic sourcing, gradually the proportion of organic produce was increased when more commercial contacts were formed with producers and distributors. Thus, at the beginning of the operation, standard retailers offering organics were preferred. This was not necessarily due to price differences. In fact, the price of these quality-differential ingredients was rarely more than 20% higher than standard ones. Since the cost of ingredients was between 15–18% of the total operating costs of the restaurant, the margins were more than sufficient to pay more for local, organic ingredients from small producers.

The main problems therefore were not pricing, but inconsistent availability and distribution difficulties. Standard retailers had an important competitive advantage in terms of order timing and delivery. They could guarantee to deliver 90% of their portfolio at restaurant doors by 09:00 at the latest, even if one placed the order at 23:59 the previous day. Retailers working with local and organic products were far from being able to offer that. And since the team was small and opening hours were during the daytime, it was virtually impossible to dedicate someone from the kitchen team as responsible for direct purchasing (a strategy that many restaurants follow), as labour was needed in the kitchen from the early hours. In a city where labour is costly, very few hours could be dedicated by the kitchen team to purchasing.

The solution to partially achieve these principles was the following: Specific recurrent ingredients such as flours, dry goods and dairy were purchased directly from producers or small retailers. Other non-recurrent ingredients were purchased from major retailers, but clearly informed and communicated around the restaurant's preferences. Eventually, we noticed that they increased their own portfolio of these goods, as they could also monetise on the higher margins offered by these ingredients. After implementing these solutions, 80–90% of all dry goods and 40–60% of fresh produce purchased were either organic, local and/or from small producers.

Principle (5) — vegetable-based diet — refers to reduced use of animal protein, mostly in smaller portions or as flavour agents to vegetables, and to a reflective adoption of full vegetarian and/or vegan diets. This principle was very well achieved, as it had been one of the key elements of the food concept and menus since the restaurant opened. It was decided early on that the food offering should be composed of diverse vegetarian, vegan and restrictive diets (low gluten, no lactose, no fructose, etc.), even though the restaurant should not follow one or other diet restrictively. The team achieved several successful experiments with light dishes where animal protein was not the star, but rather acted as a flavouring ingredient for vegetables.

Initially, the main concern was that the clientele would not be able to understand the concept, but this quickly proved to be unfounded. Traditional German cuisine is very much centred in the triad of meat-carbohydrate-vegetable and to twist this was well understood and supported by consumers. This was obviously easier in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Berlin and the restaurant's location, where classical cooking has a reduced presence in favour of more internationally oriented restaurants.

Principle (7) — seek zero-waste — suggested creative uses of leftovers, including experimenting with dehydration, fermentation and preservations, as well as a monitored and controlled production of waste. There was little achievement in terms of this principle, despite the efforts by the kitchen team to tackle this challenge. Comparable to other more conventional restaurants where I have worked before, the waste produced was relatively small. However, it was still a long way from a zero-waste policy because, irrespective of the many different strategies tried, many kinds of waste were still being generated.

There was very little waste in terms of prepared food. Due to good kitchen management, much of the food left was consumed by the team as staff meals. We also experimented with many different techniques to re-use parts that would normally go in the bin. Thus, the organic waste generated was also reasonably small and conditioned in adequate organic marked bins that converted them into compost — also due to the very good German policy on waste treatment.

Nevertheless, there was an impressive amount of recyclable and non-recyclable non-organic waste, from boxes, plastic, cartons and the like. With time, the team gradually managed to reduce part of this waste, either changing brands, increasing recyclable separation or buying more in bulk and discussing other options with suppliers. Still, the restaurant was far from achieving minimal waste generation.

With an effort to achieve this principle, I even studied restaurants that claimed to have achieved zero-waste.[3] They tend to share certain characteristics, such as a rotating menu structure, direct purchases with producers and more thoughtful recycling strategies. This somehow assisted in some solutions. One final comment on the issue is that the move to increase organic ingredients in the offerings did not improve waste generation, as many organic brands contained the same packing policy as standard ones.

Principles (8) innovation and traditions, (9) fixing food systems, and (10) do not sacrifice taste — represent values and approaches to how food system change can occur. Principle 8 calls for efforts in researching cooking traditions as a source of information and recipes, as well as a critical reflection on "newest trends" before adopting them. This principle was not achieved. Right from the start, there was a clear misalignment of expectations between the kitchen team and the general business strategy of the company. Hermann's was a family-owned multinational willing to follow the newest trend to be well-positioned in the food market. It was not in their interest therefore or they did not want to use their resources on critically assessing these trends vis-à-vis the other sustainability principles. The different motivations created noise, but very little interest in researching cooking traditions, and early on I realised that to push for this principle without support from the upper levels would not be fruitful.

Principle (9) calls for flexibility and listening to client's needs and wishes, before posing catechism arguments. This was very well achieved. It was shared by both the team and management levels that the food system transformation would be gradual and would accumulate from a growing network of small, specific changes and that this critical mass is created by interactions. This reflected more gradual improvements on many sustainability aspects of the kitchen, as demonstrated in the previous paragraphs. This benefited greatly from suggestions given by the team, clients and partners. Additionally, regular events were organised with a wider community of people interested in the subject in Berlin, which brought new insights that were frequently tested at Hermann's.

Finally, the last Principle (10) called for keeping taste as a pillar for food to achieve its many social roles. It is an indirect response to many food industry strategies that sacrifice taste and general food quality for longer shelf-life, and lower production and distribution costs, etc. This principle was relatively well achieved. It was one of the main ideas agreed in the food concept — to be proud of what was offered — as well as one of the main plans for establishing a regular clientele. On some occasions, the internal pressure of constantly changing the menu as a commercial strategy and the need to use fancy innovative ingredients that represented the latest food trends challenged the kitchen in delivering this principle. But high ratings and reviews on food items and a growing clientele proved that this challenge was achieved.

Mesa pra Doze pop-up restaurant in Brasília

As in the previous section, before moving into the discussion of challenges, the case of Mesa pra Doze is contextualised. Mesa pra Doze is a twice-a-week pop-up restaurant in the Asa Norte neighbourhood of central Brasília. It differs from a normal restaurant that has its own premises, and the project works through a collaboration between the chef and a café called Antonieta, which opens daily from 09:00 to 21:00, from Monday to Saturday. On Fridays and Saturdays, the café closes its operations earlier, at 19:00, and the team of Mesa pra Doze set up their stations and re-open the space at 20:00 to run dinner under this brand.

The dinners are composed of between five to seven course, fixed tasting menus and offered to a maximum of 12 to 13 seats only (thus the name Doze, 12 in Portuguese). I set up this business after some years of experience and training in fine dining restaurants around Europe and Latin America. Inspired by other places where seasonal, local and organic food is offered in tasting menus for a limited number of people, I decided to organise a small, mobile gastronomic project where complete freedom of expression was possible. The project size was also kept very small number due to the limited investment available. Additionally, one of the main goals of Mesa pra Doze has always been to experiment with how far sustainable principles could inform the kitchen operation and menu offerings. Thus, it was supposed that this would be more easily achievable at a small scale first.

At the time that the project was being conceptualised (the second half of 2018), I had already worked with the ten principles for a sustainable kitchen at Hermann's. Therefore, one of the initial tasks when designing Mesa pra Doze's food concept was to adapt those principles into three main issues: i) the context, narratives and terminologies of Brasília in terms of food sustainability; ii) the scale of a 12-seat pop-up restaurant; and iii) a language that would be easy to communicate and could be used in marketing pieces. When adapting those to this context, Mesa pra Doze adopted seven principles for a sustainable kitchen (Table 4).

As can be easily noticed when comparing these with the ten principles at Hermann's, some aspects were merged, while others were adapted to the context. As previously mentioned, the formulation of the principles and practices at Mesa pra Doze was less a group exercise and more a self-reflection on how to adapt the principles to a much smaller-scale pop-up restaurant in a different regional context. On the one hand, the degree of freedom to select principles and practices was higher, favouring higher levels of coherence, a better fit to the local context of the city, and bolder, more straightforward ideas. On the other hand, as there was no direct consultation or a dialogue with peers for their adaptation, it is even more difficult to assess how far these principles could be adapted and applicable in other kitchens. With these in mind, the next section reflects on the challenges found when putting these seven principles into action.

Challenges when implementing sustainable food principles at Mesa pra Doze

Principle (1) — zero waste — calls for adopting a nose-to-tail and root-to-leaves approach, where by-products of cooking are valued and re-used, and prime cuts and leftovers are innovatively explored. As in the case of Hermann's, the issue of waste management was one of the most challenging and difficult to achieve. A lot of effort was put into making this principle operational at the scale of Mesa pra Doze, and yet, it was only partially achieved.

On the one hand, a nose-to-tail/root-to-leaves approach informed much of the cooking style adopted in the project in fact. Bones, skins, fat, roots, etc. were consistently used in recipes. Complete freedom to create and experiment facilitated this process, as I could adapt and change recipes accordingly. This process was also supported by the blind menu structure of Mesa pra Doze, where the use of by-products could be experimented with, with almost no limitations due to potential client refusal. Thus, I had the opportunity to test and use techniques to re-use by-products in a way that gave Mesa pra

TABLE 4: Principles of food sustainability adopted by Mesa pra Doze

	Principle	Description
1.	Zero waste	Adopt a nose-to-tail/root-to-leaves approach Value and re-use by-products produced when cooking
2.	Non-conventional food plants	Use native, foraged plants and non-conventional food substantially Rescue traditions and regional cuisines
3.	Agro-ecology	Cook and serve food without poison (agrochemicals) Prefer organics, bio-dynamics and agroforestry produce
4.	Seasonality	Respect the time of nature Source key seasonal produce
5.	Farm-to-table	Forge relationships with family farmers, cooperatives and associations Search local suppliers and distributors, from the city and surroundings
6.	Brazilian socio-biodiversity	Use ingredients from the local biome, that is, *Cerrado* (Brazilian savannah) substantially Showcase typical ingredients from Brazilian socio-biodiversity
7.	Sustainable diets	Offer a vegetable-oriented cuisine, where animal protein is used mostly to season and not as main ingredients on a plate Only cook real food

Doze a growing reputation in certain gastronomy circles in Brasília. I was invited to organise workshops and events focusing exclusively on these techniques. Additionally, it was a project where the exact number of portions was known in advance (24—28 pax/week), and so, with time and experience, the team managed to produce almost exact quantities for serving with virtually no food left over.

Still, even with all this effort, it was not possible to achieve a zero-waste status. Firstly, some organic waste will always be generated. Restaurants that are experimenting with a zero-waste policy normally compost this waste in bins that can process a certain amount of prepared waste in 24 to 48 hours. Others sign partnerships with companies dealing with compost, as is the case with many restaurants in Brasília. The fact that Mesa pra Doze was relatively small in this case, worked against this principle, as it was not possible to find a company that would receive such a minimal amount of organic waste.

Nevertheless, the really key challenge was that there was still a lot of non-organic waste being produced. With such a small project, I made efforts to handle fresh produce directly from farmers without disposable plastics or cartons. However, all dry goods (flours, grains, spices) were bought in small portions, usually in packages of 1kg, half-kilo, 2kg, etc. and recycling these materials was very limited. There are disposal areas where garbage is selected and treated by cooperatives, but this required me to transport this garbage independently with my own car, using time and storage space that was not available in most situations.

Principles (2), (3), (4) and (5) — non-conventional food plants, agro-ecology, seasonality, and farm-to-table — were successfully achieved. These principles suggest using native and foraging food plants substantially, as well as rescuing traditions and regional cuisines. They also call for buying seasonal, organic, biodynamic and agroforestry produce, which is more easily achieved when relationships with family farmers and cooperatives are forged. Two main reasons contributed to achieving these principles: i) the principles fit very accurately with the format of Mesa pra Doze; and ii) there is dynamic growth in seasonal and agro-ecological supply in Brasília.

In terms of format, to open only twice a week provided enough time for me to dedicate to sourcing, researching and selection of high-quality ingredients, at prices that in many cases were not more costly than those found at retailers and supermarkets. I was the one responsible for purchasing and for designing the constantly changing menu, so it was simple to adapt according to seasons and to what was available at the time. Discussion with other chef colleagues in Brasília revealed an agreement that this model is very difficult to reproduce on a large scale, due to the unreliable availability of ingredients and the standard structure of fixed menus.

Concerning the growth in supply, it is evident by the mushrooming number of small farmers' markets focused on organic produce in the city. These are connected with a dynamic network of community-supported agriculture (CSA) projects and similar initiatives, supported by the high GDP per capita of Brasília, which is well above the national average. Since 2015, once a week, the largest wholesale marketplace — the public-owned CEASA — has held a family farmers-only market in one of its warehouses, alongside a standard farmers' market that is visited by thousands of people. Facilitated by this supportive environment, Mesa pra Doze gradually cultivated very good relationships with certain family farmers, which resulted in a supportive synergy between the project and these networks.

Principle (6) — Brazilian socio-biodiversity — calls for substantially using typical ingredients from national biomes, in the case of Brasília, the *Cerrado* [a tropical savanna/dry-forest habitat that covers most of central Brazil], while also acquiring ingredients from other biomes produced by traditional communities with sustainable extraction regimes. This principle was well achieved, but certainly not without considerable effort. In terms of demand, there is a growing interest for these products, clearly noted in discussions with several clients. City dwellers are increasingly curious about foraging, with many linking these typical ingredients with past memories of home, as these ingredients became scarcer to find due to the industrialisation and homogenisation of food systems.

In terms of costs, the price of these ingredients is fair, as it fits the concepts of Mesa pra Doze and, when acquired through organised fair-trade-like cooperatives, the money spent on acquiring them goes directly to those populations that depend on sustainably harvesting these resources.

The major challenges are availability and regularity of supply. With notable exceptions, the value chain for Brazilian socio-biodiversity products is extremely disorganised, with large-scale informality, dubious intermediaries, and severe logistical problems in terms of correct conditioning, transport and processing. Some family farmers and traditional populations' cooperatives have been working for many years at organising this value chain, in many situations very successfully. But this is still more the exception than the norm for these products, and it was surprising how the enormous gastronomic potential of Brazilian socio-biodiversity is still vastly unexplored. Mesa pra Doze used these as much as possible, but still suffered from difficulties in planning.

The final principle (7) — sustainable diets — suggests a vegetable-oriented cuisine, where animal protein is used mostly to season and rarely as main ingredients in a dish, besides the concern in cooking only real food, minimally processed food and nothing ultra-processed. This principle was very well achieved. As in the case of Hermann's, the initial concern was whether clients would take the chance of moving out of their comfort zone — considering that this approach is substantially different from the usual carnivorous offerings of Brasília's food scene.

In fact, the vegetable-oriented menus of Mesa pra Doze were very well received by the clientele. There is a notable growing trend in health and conscious eating that is also linked with the networks of family market fairs and CSA. For years, Brasília's centre has had several restaurants serving "natural food" — a category that generally denotes more healthy options and food rich in leafy greens, fibres and light animal protein. This category is even noted in many of the city's food guides. Nevertheless, these restaurants tend to focus on lunch service only. Mesa pra Doze was the first to focus on a complete dining experience that targeted this specific niche, being completely flexible to accommodate any dietary requirements and preferences.

Conclusion: What are the implications for chefs and food researchers?

How can restaurants assess their practices in terms of achieving sustainability inside their kitchens? This article explored one analytical possibility by using principles informed by the evolving literature on sustainable food systems. Two cases discussed the challenges of putting these principles into practice: the restaurant-café Hermann's in Berlin, and the Mesa pra Doze gastronomic project in Brasília.

The cases have shown that some principles were much more easily achieved than others and that these differed from one case to the other, according to the specificities of the business and the area it is located. For example, at Hermann's, challenges were found in ensuring a complete seasonal menu, and in sourcing ingredients directly from small suppliers. At Mesa pra Doze, on the other hand, this was much more easily achieved, due to both its scale and the format of a business that offered much more available time for researching and sourcing ingredients. In both cases, to achieve zero waste was extremely challenging, in particular due to packaging.

By showing one approach to assess sustainable practices conducted by restaurants, this article provided a double contribution. For the research community of food science and gastronomy, it demonstrated an empirical way of linking the levels of food system analysis (macro) with the more micro-level of restaurants or businesses in general. The design of principles can provide guidance to kitchen teams to follow certain practices aligned with the concept of food sustainability. The key point here is not to suggest that studies necessarily use the same principles adopted in this article, as they certainly have to be adapted to the context. Instead, it shows that the principles chosen must be grounded in the scientific literature of food sustainability, reducing the risk of choosing incoherent principles by chance or ones that only fit marketing purposes. In the future, similar exercises could demonstrate more clearly how one single action adopted by a restaurant contributes to a wider societal goal of food system change.

The second contribution relates to professionals in the hospitality industry, by discussing challenges that might be faced when pursuing similar goals in their operations. The experience of Hermann's and Mesa pra Doze provided some useful lessons. The challenge of scale was evident in how it was easier for Mesa pra Doze to achieve more coherent sourcing, by buying sustainable produce directly from suppliers and producers. It was also apparent in both cases that the higher costs associated with sustainable produce are not necessarily a challenge per se. In many cases, organic/small-scale and local ingredients were not more expensive than standard ones. And in the cases that they were, the higher margins and low weight of these ingredients in the total operational costs diluted their costs. The greatest challenge was in the time required to access those ingredients, since their distribution channels are underdeveloped compared to more conventional food chains. For actors working to support sustainable food systems, this carries an important implication: how to pay a fair price to agricultural producers while improving the accessibility of their products with more efficient distribution channels?

Finally, the cases suggest that the relatively high degree of freedom the kitchen team had opened the possibility for more coherent and comprehensive definitions of principles and practices. In other words, a meaningful discussion on how to achieve sustainability in restaurants was not only made possible, but supported by a great deal of deliberation by Hermann's management while the restaurant was defining its food concept. In the case of Mesa pra Doze, I enjoyed complete autonomy in defining the menu. Freedom from constraints — be it financial, conceptual or marketing-related, for example — in a context where kitchen staff are committed and enjoy space for free and authentic deliberation favours higher levels of sustainability. Aligned with recent studies on the frontiers of food democracy (Behringer & Feindt, 2019; Bornemann & Weiland, 2019), authentic deliberation and emancipation can assist our food systems in their transformation towards sustainability.

Notes

1. www.hermanns.com/hermanns-eatery/
2. www.mesapradoze.com
3. The most famous being Silo, now based in London, UK

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The effect of employees' behaviour on organisational competitiveness in hospitality

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this research was to establish the effect of employee behaviour on organisational competitiveness in the hospitality industry. A sample of 51 employees took part in the study. Results show that employee attitude and perceptions towards various aspects of hotel operation are key antecedents that shape employee behaviour. It was established that employee behaviour has a direct effect on organisational competitiveness. For future improvements, it is recommended that managers within the hospitality establishments make conscious efforts to involve employees in operational decision-making, communicate ideas in a way that is easy to understand, and lastly the salaries of employees should be adjusted periodically following key inflation factors such as the prices of essential commodities.

KEYWORDS: employee attitude, employee behaviour, employee perception, organisational competitiveness

Introduction

For organisations to be competitive, employees must develop a close networking relationship while performing daily operations (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). In a typical hospitality business operation, creation of memorable experiences for the guests should be the goal of every employee. Despite the recognised need for departments to work together, often negative behaviour by some employees such as tardiness results in guests being disappointed by having to wait to be served at different touch points of service. If there is a communication gap between housekeeping and front office staff such as prioritisation of the cleaning and inspection of a room in a timely manner, it may lead to the guest having to wait in the lobby which affects the guest's check-in experience.

Other observable forms of negative employee behaviour which affect organisations' competitiveness include employees' emphasis on exaggerating the seriousness of other staff mistakes, especially from different departments, instead of directing their efforts in working together to achieve a common goal of creating memorable guest experiences. Some employees have the habit of discussing another colleague's poor performance without their input, and this kind of employee behaviour contradicts the core values of service improvement and prevents developing the confidence of those affected to perform their duties effectively.

Ignoring employees with such negative behaviour leads to more incidents of bad experience for the guests which results in reduced repeat business for the organisation besides creating a hostile working environment for other employees, and a negative impact on the hotel's reputation. Therefore, understanding employees' behaviour is critical in identifying, analysing, and comprehending factors that impact the way different employees react to different operational situations at work (James & Jones, 1976). This research therefore tests the effect of negative employee behaviour on organisations' competitiveness. Understanding negative employee behaviour allows management of hospitality organisations to take actions aimed at minimising negative employee behaviour, which allows the hotel to turn potential guests into loyal customers and encourage repeat business.

Literature review

According to Judge (2009), behaviour is the ultimate product of attitude, and to understand behaviour, one has to understand that there are hidden factors that shape an individual's attitude. Attitude is defined as the position that one assumes towards objects, people, events, or situations (Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2019). Attitudes can be positive or negative and they reflect how a person feels about a certain situation or thing.

According to Judge (2009), attitudes manifest in three ways: cognition, affect, and behaviour. Cognition involves making sense of the situation and describes how it seems. For instance, an employee asserting that the pay at the organisation where she or he works is low is a description of the situation. And, the description of the situation (cognition) determines how one will be influenced by it. The second aspect, also known as the affect, is the emotional reaction towards the cognition and reflects how one feels about the situation that has been described. For instance: "The pay at my organisation is low, I dislike working in my organisation." The cognition of the situation leads to a certain feeling, which in this case is dissatisfaction. Finally, the third aspect is the behavioural outcome which is motivated by emotion. For example: "The pay at my organisation is low, I dislike working", and therefore, "I will not give my best effort". The preceding examples help to address the complexity of attitudes which aids in the understanding of individual employee job behaviour.

Robbins and Judge (2014) posit that organisational behaviour is shaped by peoples' perception of, rather than the actual, reality – the reason why individuals often look at the same thing and perceive it differently. This outcome can be attributed to three main factors: the perceiver, the target, and situation which influences an individual's perception of reality and determines their behaviour. When the perceiver encounters a certain situation, their perception is influenced by their personal characteristics, attitude, reasons, past experiences, and beliefs. For instance, if an employee expects the managers to be arrogant based on past experiences, they may perceive the next manager as such without even meeting them.

The "target" describes the characteristics of an individual and how they influence his/her perceptions. For instance, the most vocal employees are more likely to be noticed in a group of shy individuals. In this case, the perceiver might see the vocal employees as potential team leaders or they could also perceive them as obnoxious, based on their personal characteristics as a perceiver (Robbins & Judge, 2014).

Lastly, the "situation" provides the time, conditions, and location that surrounds an event that influences the attention of the perceiver. If an employee has to attend briefings every morning at 8 o'clock and he/she knows that there are traffic jams except on Thursdays. They would have to wake up an hour earlier on Thursdays to make it on time. Therefore, having to wake up an hour earlier on Thursdays would change their perception about morning briefings on Thursdays because of the different circumstances (Robbins & Judge, 2014).

Unlike Robbins and Judge (2014), Hofstede, Pedersen and Hofstede (2002) argue that behaviour is influenced by observations and interpretations. The main attribute that one needs to cultivate when interacting with other people is the ability to distinguish between observations and interpretations. Employees need to understand that sometimes what they see does not reflect what they think it means. Different signs, body language, and behaviours have different meanings across the globe, which is why not everything that one observes reflects one's interpretation accurately. It is imperative that one keep in mind that a person's understanding of a situation is based on their own environment and experiences. Sometimes, to make the right interpretation of a certain situation, one needs to neglect past experiences and see things from a different perspective.

Alblas and Wijsman (2011) have a different opinion: that employee behaviour can be attributed to emotional commitment. The level of devotion that workers have towards their organisation determines the way they behave. Employees that are not committed to their organisation find it harder to deliver what is expected of them, let alone go the extra mile to make things happen. In addition, employees' behaviour is determined by how the employer invests in the employees to ensure their satisfaction (Stone, 2014).

Organisational competitiveness

Ukabuilu and Igbojekwe (2015) opined that hotels need to meet guests' expectations to earn their trust. When guests are satisfied with the services and products provided by the hotel, they talk about it favourably and this influences the creation of a positive image of the company. Having a good image allows the hotel to charge premium prices that guests will pay, and allows the company to differentiate itself from competitors in the market. Organisational competitiveness can be achieved through developing outstanding human-relations skills such as excellent communication, good staff cooperation, creative problem-solving, democratic management, and good decision-making. An effective implementation of these five human-relations skills allows hospitality organisations to reduce employee turnover, increase respect among peers, increase staff morale, employee confidence, and productivity, which drives more sales. Neglecting staff involvement in decision-making can affect both workers and customers. It could lead to an increase in complaints regarding service, the staff, and accidents may occur more often (Ukabuilu & Igbojekwe, 2015).

Stipanovic and Baresa (2008) advocate that organisational competitiveness is determined by the way guests perceive the product and service quality. Guests determine this quality based on the treatment they receive from employees during their stay at the hotel. Employees interact with the guests regularly, and have to attempt to be mindful at all times to avoid exhibiting negative behaviour in front of the guests. Organisational competitiveness is achieved by delivering unique services so that guests can make a distinction from the competition. Developing innovative ideas allows the company to cement its position as one of the key players in the market.

Pesic, Melic and Stankovic (2012) suggest that there is a connection between employee behaviour and organisational competitiveness. They argue that in order for an organisation to be competitive, it needs to invest in the knowledge and competencies of the employees through providing further education and practical training. This would orient employees to ensure that they focus on the company goals, and ensure constant awareness of changes in the market, consequently improving their adaptability to a competitive environment.

Finally, Pioch and Gerhard (2014) support Pesic et al. (2012) by asserting that to achieve competitiveness a company needs to capitalise on its human resources to create a unique value proposition for its customers. Excellent organisations concentrate on maintaining supportive human relations, showing that they care for the employees, and showing willingness to adjust to their needs (Tromp & Blomme, 2014). Competitive organisations understand that they have to rely on the employees to deliver what is expected of them to achieve the company goals. Therefore, competitive organisations take care of their employees and enable them to deliver the best performance. The company needs to find a balance between monetary and non-monetary benefits. Although financial increments are a good way to boost employee motivation, employees also seek recognition, security and a sense of belonging (Burnes, 2009).

Conceptual model

The conceptual model in Figure 1 illustrates that a mixture of attitude and perception of employees in an organisations influences employee behaviour, which influences organisational competitiveness.

Research objectives

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To determine the impact of negative attitudes on employee behaviour;
2. To establish the effect of employee perception based on assumptions on employee behaviour; and
3. To determine the effect of employee behaviour on organisational competitiveness.

The research questions that flowed from these objectives are:

1. What is the impact of employee attitude on employee behaviour?;
2. What is the effect of employee perceptions on employee behaviour?; and
3. What is the effect of employee behaviour on organisational competitiveness?

Methods

To achieve the objectives of the study, an explanatory research design was adopted and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were applied.

Population and sample size

The population for this research study included all employees from job bands 7 to 10 at an upscale branded hotel in the Middle East. The total number of employees in these job bands was 270 employees. A sample of 159 employees was used based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample determination table. However, the number of returned and usable questionnaires was 51, representing a response rate of 32%. The sample of 51 was considered large enough to conduct statistical tests because a minimum of 30 respondents is usually sufficient (Lind, Marchal & Wathen, 2015).

Instrument development

A survey was chosen for this study because it allows the researchers to limit the responses and ensures objectivity when conducting empirical research. In this study, captive group surveys were the most suitable technique adopted because it enables one to study a group of individuals who belong to the same organisation, and their availability could be guaranteed. A captive environment allows the researchers to provide a detailed explanation of all the questions in the survey and therefore allows the respondents to have full understanding of the questionnaire (Veal, 2011).

The study variables were measured using items developed from the literature review and each question was anchored on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = "Strongly disagree" and 5 = "Strongly agree". Employee attitude was measured using six items with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of ($\alpha = 0.884$), employee perception with six items ($\alpha = 0.893$), employee behaviour was taken to be a composite variable by computing the mean scores of employee attitude and perceptions with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of ($\alpha = 0.938$), and organisational competitiveness with three items ($\alpha = 0.871$). According to Nunnally (1978), alpha values above 0.70 are sufficient and therefore the scales were considered reliable.

Data analysis

Data was analysed using the statistical software SPSS version 25. To determine the relationships among variables in this study, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted, while determination of causality between the study variables of employee behaviour and organisational competitiveness was carried out using a simple regression analysis.

Limitation

It is important to note that half way through the research, the company went through a management crisis related to negative employee behaviour that the researcher had already identified. This incident resulted in employee contracts having to be terminated. This led to employees' reluctance in completing the questionnaire, hence the low response rate recorded. However, the reliability of the questionnaire was considered to be adequate and results can still be used to make valid recommendations.

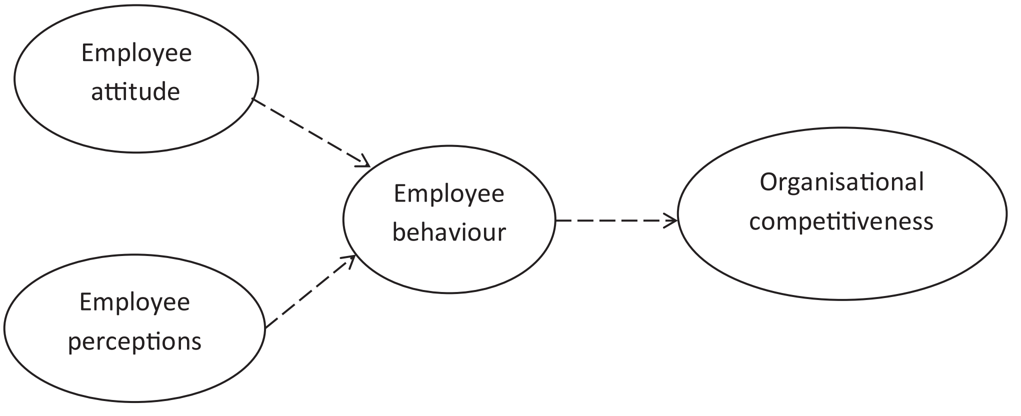

FIGURE 1: Conceptual model

Results

Demographic characteristics of the sample

Results show that 72% of the respondents involved in the study were male and 28% were female. Furthermore, 63% of the respondents were within the age group 18–29 years, 35% in the age group 30–45 years, and 2% in the age group 46 to 59 years. For the education aspect, 4% of the respondents had only completed primary school, 43% had completed up to high school, 49% had a university degree and the remaining 4% had completed some other kind of education. For employee job bands, 41% of the employees were in job band 7, 16% were in job band 8, 39% in job band 9, and 4% were in job band 10. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents involved in the study.

Descriptive statistics of the variables in the study

The main variables of the study are employee attitude, employee perception, employee behaviour and organisational competitiveness. Employee attitude was measured using six items, as shown in Table 2.

The results in Table 2 show that most employees strongly agreed to being proud to work at an upscale, branded hotel in the Middle East (M = 4.31, SD = 0.83) representing 86% of the respondents. The least-rated item was whether benefits at the hotel are as good as or better than other companies (M = 3.25, SD = 1.23). For this question, only 59% of employees agreed that they had better benefits when compared to other companies, 22% answered neutrally to this statement, and 20% did not think the benefits were as good as other companies.

TABLE 1: Characteristics of the respondents involved in the study (N = 51)

Characteristics	*n*	%
Sex		
Male	37	72
Female	14	28
Age group		
18–29 years	32	63
30–45 years	18	35
46–59 years	1	2
Level of education		
Primary school	2	4
High school	22	43
University graduate	25	49
Other	2	4
Employee job band		
Job band 7	21	41
Job band 8	8	16
Job band 9	20	39
Job band 10	2	4

Descriptive statistics for employee perceptions

For this variable, the measurement item that was required to rate whether employees get the information they need to perform their duties was scored positively, with 82% agreeing (M = 4.15, SD = 1.00). The least-rated question was whether employees were given enough opportunity to develop their careers. The number of employees that agreed with the statement decreased to 66%, while 12% were neutral in this regard and a significant number of employees (20%) disagreed that they were getting enough opportunities to develop their careers. The rest of the descriptive statistics are presented in Table 3.

Descriptive statistics for organisation competitiveness

Table 4 shows that a majority of employees agreed that they had trust in the company where they work (M = 4.07, SD = 0.95). Another question that was asked to measure organisational competitiveness was whether employees saw other colleagues as being caring. Again, 70% of the employees agreed with the statement (M = 4.01, SD = 1.02), while 12% were neutral, and 18% disagreed that they see other employees showing that they care.

Relationship between employee attitude, employee perception, and organisation competitiveness

In order to establish the relationship between the study variables, a composite variable were created by computing the mean values of the items for each variable. A Pearson correlation was used because the data fulfilled the requirement for normality based on the skewness and kurtosis values that were all within the normal range. According to West, Finch and Curran (1995), skewness values that are above 2 and kurtosis statistics above 10 are not acceptable. This study adopted Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham's (2010) and Kline's (2011)

TABLE 2: Descriptive statistics for employee attitude (N = 51)

Items	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
I am proud to work at this hotel.	4.31	0.836	−1.512	3.454
I feel happy to come to work here.	3.94	0.947	−0.762	0.536
The way I am treated makes me willing to put in extra effort at work.	3.90	1.237	−0.863	−0.475
I can see myself working at this company for the next two years.	3.55	1.205	−0.619	−0.427
I get paid fairly for the job I do.	3.29	1.205	−0.456	−0.749
Benefits are as good as or better than other companies.	3.25	1.230	−0.243	−1.069

TABLE 3: Descriptive statistics for employee perceptions (N = 51)

Item	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
I get the information I need to do my job.	4.16	1.007	−1.305	1.292
My manager thanks me for the work I do.	4.06	1.156	−1.089	0.304
My manager makes me feel valued.	3.92	1.146	−0.920	0.035
Everyone communicates messages in a simple way.	3.88	1.143	−0.849	−0.069
My manager creates a strong team spirit.	3.82	1.276	−0.918	−0.203
I have been given enough opportunities to develop my skills for the future.	3.69	1.273	−0.770	−0.489

TABLE 4: Descriptive statistics for organisation competitiveness ($N = 51$)

Item	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
An upscale branded hotel in the Middle East is a company that I trust.	4.08	0.956	−1.162	1.339
I see colleagues showing they care.	4.02	1.029	−1.300	1.596
I see colleagues doing the right thing	3.80	1.184	−0.733	−0.454

recommendation of skewness <3 and kurtosis <7 to reflect normally distributed data.

The assessment of multivariate normality for the final measurement instrument used in this study shows that the skewness values ranged from −0.243 to 1.512, while kurtosis values ranged from 0.035 to 3.454). These values are all below the recommended value of 3 and 7 respectively (West et al., 1995; Hair et al., 2010; Kline, 2011), which demonstrates that the responses were normally distributed. Table 5 shows the results of the correlation analysis.

Results from the Pearson correlation analysis in Table 5 show that there is a significant positive relationship between employee attitude and employee perceptions ($r = 0.826$, $p < 0.001$). In addition, there was a positive and significant relationship between employee attitude and organisation competitiveness with ($r = 0.776$, $p < 0.001$). Lastly the relationship between employee perceptions and organisation competitiveness was also strong and significant with ($r = 0.804$, $p < 0.001$).

The effect of employee behaviour on organisation competitiveness

The variable employee behaviour was operationalised using the summated scale of employee attitude and employee perceptions. When these two variables were regressed on employee behaviour, the variance explained was 100%. Therefore a simple linear regression analysis was used to establish the effect of employee behaviour on organisation competitiveness, and results show that employee behaviour explained 68.4% of the observed variance in organisational competitiveness ($R^2 = 0.684$, $\beta = 0.891$, $p < 0.001$).

Discussion

The relationship between employee attitude, employee perception, and organisation competitiveness

Emotional commitment is an important factor that helps in shaping employee behaviour. Lack of emotional commitment from some employees is the possible explanation for the negative employee behaviour observed in the hotel. Results show that 86% of employees were proud to work with the hotel, which indicates that a relatively significant number of employees are emotionally committed to the hotel. Although the majority of employees are emotionally committed to the company and show positive employee behaviour, they are likely to be influenced by the 14% who often display negative employee behaviour.

In addition, employees who lack emotional commitment and often display negative behaviour could also be influenced positively by the ones that are emotionally committed. These findings are in line with previous research studies carried out by Alblas and Wijsman (2011), who suggested that employees that are not emotionally committed to the company have a hard time delivering what is expected of them — let alone going the extra mile to achieve something that benefits the hotel. However, it should be noted that not all incidents of negative employee behaviour are caused by those who are less emotionally committed to the hotel, but rather this finding indicates that those that are less committed are more inclined to display negative behaviour.

Another reason that causes negative employee behaviour in the hotel is the "uneven distribution of" monetary benefits and non-monetary benefits. Previous research by Pioch and Gerhard (2014) indicates that in order for employees to perform well, the company needs to find a balance between monetary and non-monetary benefits. Based on results provided by the study at hand, it can be seen that almost half of the employees in job bands 7 and 10 in the hotel do not agree that the salary they earn is equivalent to the jobs they perform, which leads to negative attitudes and possibly negative employee behaviour ultimately. In fact, only 53% of employees think they are paid enough money to perform their duties. Almost half of the employees feel exploited as far as pay is concerned. Consequently, they perhaps do not feel compelled to perform to the best of their abilities, and instead they expend the least amount of energy required to get through the day.

These findings are supported by previous research studies (Bhaskar & Khera, 2013) which stated that when companies fail to invest in employees, this prompts negative employee attitudes which lead to negative performance and as a result company failure. While financial incentives are an effective way to motivate employees, there are other incentives that are equally important, including recognition, security and belonging. Having said that, results show that a relatively high number of employees receive recognition for the job they do ($M = 4.05$). However, there are more employees that receive recognition for the jobs they do as opposed to employees that earn enough money for their contribution in the hotel. In fact, the representative sample suggests that 80% of the employees think they have enough recognition, but only 53% of the employees think that they are paid fairly. The gap between pay and recognition indicates that not all employees who receive recognition perform well because

TABLE 5: Correlation analysis ($N = 51$)

	Employee attitude	Employee perceptions	Organisation competitiveness
Employee attitude	1.000		
Employee perceptions	0.826**	1.000	
Organisation competitiveness	0.776**	0.804**	1.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) those same employees are part of those who believe that they do not get paid enough for their jobs.

Finally, the results show that almost half of the employees do not think they belong in the company — in fact, only 58% of employees can see themselves working in this company in the next two years. This result perhaps indicates that there is a lack of empowerment and encouragement for employees to be involved in decision-making (Chang, Chiu & Chen, 2010). Lack of involvement in decision-making demotivates employees and they end up feeling left out and as a result they do not always buy into what the managers say, which can be reflected in employees undermining managers. Based on the results, it is paramount that managers in hospitality should endeavour to show employees that they care about their personal and career goals by encouraging them to expand and grow in terms of knowledge. This is likely to create employee commitment, which is an important facet for organisational competeiveness.

The effect of employee behaviour on organisational competitiveness

The management team at the hotel needs to make a conscious effort to improve employee behaviour. Results show that employee behaviour has an impact on organisational competitiveness ($R^2 = 0.684$, $\beta = 0.891$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, when employees display negative behaviour, this affects the hotel because guests choose to stay at competitor hotels. Ukabuilu and Igbojekwe (2015) stressed that organisational competitiveness is achieved by developing outstanding human-relations skills, including excellent communication, good staff cooperation, excellent problem-solving, good decision-making and democratic management. These claims confirm what the results reflect of the hotel. The results show that management often fails to provide enough information to employees and as a result they end up making wrong assumptions about situations that happen in the hotel. The results also show that a larger number of employees say that communication in the hotel is not simple to absorb. Therefore, employees cannot understand essential information that they require to do their jobs. This situation forces employees to rely upon themselves to figure things out.

We can attribute some of the gap of information sharing between management and employees to language barriers given the fact that not every employee has good understanding of the English language. The managers have to make more effort to ensure that every colleague understands the information that they are trying to pass on to them. In fact, the results show that only 82% of employees receive all the information that they need to perform their duties. The remaining 18% of employees in job bands 7 and 10 rarely have all the information that they need to do their jobs. When managers hold back essential information, it prevents employees from delivering services up to the standards that guests expect. To support this finding, Ukabuilu and Igbojekwe (2015) opined that hotels need to exceed guests' expectations to earn their trust.

Satisfied guests tell their friends favourable things about the hotel. Consequently, more guests come to the hotel, which allows the company to increase its market share and to gain a competitive edge in the market. Based on the results, it can be seen that team managers do not create strong team spirit among the employees. In fact, 32% of employees felt this. To improve team spirit, mangers need to involve employees in the decision-making process, especially when the decision affects them. Pre-existing knowledge (Pesic et al., 2012) suggests that in order for employees to not lose focus of the goals set by the management, they need to be informed about changes taking place in the hotel to ensure their adaptability. Managers need to communicate their willingness to adjust to the needs of the employees because this will increase team morale, confidence and productivity.

Conclusion

To minimise negative employee attitudes, the hotel managers need to show employees that they are an important resource to ensure employee commitment to the organisation. This is because employees who are not committed to the organisation do not perform as expected. Based on these results, it was found that half of employees did not see themselves working in this hotel in the next two years ($M = 3.54$, SD = 1.20) which shows that they were looking for employment elsewhere, or they could be persuaded to leave the organisation. To resolve this problem, managers need to treat employees better so that they may feel encouraged to make extra effort. Likewise, the imbalance between non-monetary and monetary benefits needs to be resolved so employees may feel that they are getting rewarded for the valuable contributions that they bring to the hotel.

For employee perception to improve, there is a need to involve all employees at different levels in decision-making. This allows them to know what is happening in the company at all times. As a result, this awareness will improve their ability to handle problems because they will make decisions based on useful information provided by managers. This will also allow them to feel empowered because their managers trust them to make important decisions. It is important for managers to eliminate the gap in communication to avoid employees making the wrong assumptions. Managers need to make sure they communicate what is happening in the company and ensure that messages are understood by all employees.

This study conceptualised that that employee behaviour is the outcome of attitude and perception. Therefore, by eliminating negative attitude and perception based on assumptions, employee behaviour in the company is likely to improve. There is a strong and positive relationship between the variables of employee attitude and employee perceptions ($r = 0.826$, $p < 0.001$) and also a strong and positive relationship between employee perception and organisation competeiveness ($r = 0.804$, $p < 0.001$). The results clearly show that when employee behaviour is positive, it is likely to increase employee commitment to the organisation, which translates into organisation competeiveness (Wang, Wang, & Liu, 2018).

In addition, the study has also identified that employee behaviour at an upscale branded hotel in the Middle East has an impact on organisational competitiveness ($F(1, 49) = 106.156$, $p < 0.001$) with an $R^2 = 0.684$. Therefore, the less negative behaviour employees display, the more competitive the company becomes. It can be concluded that negative attitude and perception (assumptions) lead to negative employee behaviour and if not addressed this can lead to reduced organisational competitiveness. Given this conclusion, employees need to be encouraged to work as a team. Managers need to highlight the importance of sharing opinions and asking questions, especially on work-related issues. This will allow both managers and employees to expand their knowledge, improve the working relationship and find new ways to get the work done. Another aspect that is recommended based on findings is to identify ways to communicate difficult ideas in a simple way that every employee can understand.

Finally, information sharing should be done in a logical step-by-step sequence regardless of its simplicity or complexity because the level of understanding varies from one employee to another. It is imperative that every employee understands what is happening in the company at all times because this gives a sense of involvement and as a result they become more committed to the hotel. The company should offer competitive salaries because money is an instrumental motivator for improving employee behaviour and organisational competitiveness because it is a tangible measure that provides a sense of recognition and is often perceived as a measure of achievement.

Recommendations for further research

For future consideration, a study that considers the influence of cultural diversity on organisation competitiveness and employee behaviour should be conducted. Culture has an impact on how individuals interpret certain situations. Research about leadership styles in an effort to improve organisational culture would add value to this current study. This will assist the company to create a system that allows every colleague to identify the dos and don'ts within the hotel and as a result find new ways of living and doing things.

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Luxury consumption in tourism: the case of Dubai – Part 2

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ABSTRACT: 2016 was a year of critical discussion and reflection for Nadkarni and Heyes as they considered the luxury image of Dubai in this journal. Discussions outlined the theoretical nature of luxury while also addressing the current hotel industry statistics coming out of the Emirate. Now four years on, Nadkarni and Heyes look to deliver this critical reflective research note to readers and researchers on what is and has happened in Dubai, looking to examine whether the luxury image of the destination is being progressed, maintained or diluted.

KEYWORDS: destination, hotel pipeline, luxury hotels, management, marketing, reputation

Introduction

In 2016, we had an article titled "Luxury consumption in tourism: The case of Dubai" published in this journal. The article outlined the possible negative effects of Dubai's extensive expansion plans for its luxury hotel market. Three years on, and with extensive developments happening in the intervening period, it is now time to see how the inferences that we drew were reflected, based on the data set pertaining to Dubai.

To re-cap briefly on the first article, (Nadkarni and Heyes, 2016) we explored the nature of luxury in a philosophical context. To remind the readers, luxury is very much seen from an individual standpoint (Berry, 1994; Choi, 2003; Weidmann et al., 2009), with common variables associated with the phenomenon, including high price, exclusiveness and high quality (Frank, 1999; Thomas, 2007; Bellaiche, Mei-Pochtler, & Hanisch., 2010; Hoffmann & Coste-Manière, 2012). What is interesting to note, however, is how luxury is very much seen from a present-day standing; that is to say the concept can be considered very much ephemeral — what is luxury today is not necessarily going to be luxury in 10 or 20 years time — despite the arguments of Dubois and Paternault (1995) that for anything to be considered luxurious it should hold an element of history and tradition. The move towards more modern and contemporary luxury powered by sustainability and innovation (Gardetti, 2015) is argued to be the present and future takes on luxury.

The variables of price and exclusiveness were discussed in the 2016 article. We looked to critically construct an argument based on the luxury literature, outlining how Dubai's extravagantly constant development may be putting its so-called "luxury reputation" in jeopardy. While it could be suggested that Dubai started out the larger vision for its tourism industry with the hope of becoming the optimal luxury tourist destination, it could be suggested that time and subsequently the extra development have pushed Dubai's luxury image, especially exclusivity, to the brink of breaking point. Furthermore, we discussed how such developments are likely to impact on the Emirate's luxury hotel industry from a rack rate/average room rate (ADR) perspective at the time and into the future (to the present day).

Now three years later, we are pleased to showcase the actual live data set coming out of Dubai's luxury hotel industry and to see if we were in fact correct in our predictions. There will also be further critical discussions leading into Dubai's future tourism pathways.

The image of Dubai (2016 re-cap)

The extract below is to remind the reader of Dubai's progress in its tourism developments:

> With reports in 2007 speculating that Dubai's oil reserves would quickly run dry and are predicted to be depleted by 2020 at the rate of extraction at the time (Oxford Business Group, 2007), a government-funded strategy against "putting all eggs in one basket" has seen Dubai complement its revenues from the oil industry by hedging on the service sector as a key growth driver of its economy. In comparison to its other co-prosperous GCC peers, Dubai's economy is far more diversified, with the service sector contributing 38.3% to the GDP. Hospitality's share of the GDP as of 2015 stood at 5.6 % (Emirates NBD Bank, 2016).

The increasing emphasis on tourism as an engine of Dubai's economic growth is a logical consequence of the iconic brand that Emirates Airlines has evolved into since its inception in 1985 with two leased aircraft, scaling up rapidly to an all wide-bodied fleet of 236 aircraft in service with over 250 on the order book as of June 2016 (Emirates, 2016). This transportation, some would say, is driving Dubai forward in attracting and delivering high numbers of visitors, year after year. From 14.2 million international visitors (Dubai Statistics Centre, 2016) in 2015, the Dubai Government's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM, 2015) aims to take this figure to over 20 million by 2020 per its Tourism Vision for 2020 master plan, defying industry benchmark forecasts that peg the figure at a little over 16 million.

But questions which have circulated in academia about Dubai's successful bid to host the Expo 2020 have provided a stimulus to the non-oil economy as a whole, in particular to the tourism and hospitality industry, against the backdrop of rapid economic growth the Emirate has achieved in recent years (Nadkarni & Jauncey, 2014), making the illustrious target by 2020 achievable. The optimism for achieving the set target despite the economic and political headwinds in its extended geography is fuelled by scalable developments in the domains of logistics, infrastructure, connectivity and the knowledge economy (LICK). Academics have historically used Dubai as a focal point for their case study research. While many are likely to be impressed by the growth in numbers, most notably those businesses looking to capitalise on future investment dealings within the city, others have looked to question the sustainability of the city's growth patterns (Bagaeen, 2007).

Since the 2017 publication, large numbers of projects and hotel development opportunities have been conducted in Dubai. Most notable are the opening of hotels and resorts such as Royal Atlantis Resort and Residence, Paramount Hotel Dubai and Legoland Dubai. Further projects said to be in the pipeline are that of a USD 1.2 billion development, consisting of a 2 200 key hotel, an extension to the Wild Wadi Water Park, 200 luxury apartments and entertainment for all ages. The extravagant nature of resort building make us authors continue to question Dubai's luxury image, possibly suggesting that Dubai is looking to take on a Las Vegas-type of image with mega resorts fit for all. Is exclusivity being enhanced, maintained or diluted? Based on these numbers, it could be assumed that higher numbers are very much in line with that of Dubai's Multiple Commodity Centre (which upholds Dubai's continuous progress in the tourism and hospitality industry based on the wishes of Sheikh Mohammad).

Similarly, an interesting concept which has arisen from Dubai's demand for more affordable luxury is the development of brands such as Rove Hotels by Emaar (Emaar, 2020). The appealing nature of luxury tangibles and intangibles assisted by a more relaxed contemporary and modern style can be said to attract guests from the millennial and Generation Z markets. Such developments suggest that the luxury hotel market in Dubai is further expanding, this time through product and price differentiation. While the concept and definition of luxury is still seen from an individual perspective (Berry, 1994; Choi, 2003; Weidmann et al., 2009), there is still no international definition of a luxury hotel (Slattery & Games, 2010), Dubai's hotel market can be seen to be expanding or stretching its luxury hotel offerings considerably to accommodate a wider customer base with a wide range of different offerings. Nevertheless, to stretch the country's offerings from a luxury hotel product perspective to what could be described as "affordable luxury" again raises further discussions to the already hotly debated topic of Dubai's hotel categorisation system.

From a pricing and occupancy perspective, Dubai's luxury hotels are floundering. The increase in room inventory topped with an unstable economic market made worse by political and other matters around the world (e.g. Brexit, Trump administration, Covid-19, etc.) can be seen to have affected Dubai's hotel market financially, as can be seen in Table 1.

In line with the analysis of the original article, Table 1 validates the conjecture that the number of hotels in Dubai continues to remain skewed towards luxury properties. That said, data on available rooms across categories of hotels provides a slightly different picture. As shown in Table 2, the total available keys in the budget category has actually registered an increase. Albeit this increase is more modest in comparison to the corresponding figures in the premium segments, it is a reflection of the efforts on the part of Dubai's tourism authorities to augment available budget accommodation in the run-up to Expo 2020 which is due to commence in October 2020.

The overall increase in supply notwithstanding, STR data (November 2018–November 2019) shows occupancy in 2019 (74.2%) being at similar levels to the corresponding figure in 2018 (74.9%), implying growth in the number of tourists has been proportionate to the growth in the supply for rooms. However, this growth has come at the expense of revenue metrics. With ADR in 2019 at USD 146.48 and RevPAR at 108.67, these metrics showed a year-on-year drop of 12.6% and 13.5% respectively. As can be seen, however, the continuous rise in data has continued to effect the luxury 5-star segment, stretching Dubai's luxury hotel inventory and making it more accessible to experience.

Critical discussion

The classic conundrum of achieving growth in occupancy at the cost of revenue metrics is particularly accentuated in a luxury-heavy market such as Dubai. Despite falling revenue metrics resulting from growth in capacity, occupancy levels have remained steady. Furthermore, the 2019 edition of the Mastercard Global Destination Cities Index (Mastercard, 2019), which was also referenced in the original study, pegs Dubai as the fourth most-visited destination city, trailing only Bangkok, Paris and London in that order. The same study places Dubai at the top of the list for international visitor spending, which stood at USD 30.82 billion in 2019. In contrast, at a revenue spend of USD 20.09 billion, Makkah was a close second. What the updated analysis shows is that irrespective of economic drives, brand Dubai continues to be associated with luxury. There is a conscious attempt by Dubai's authorities to drive innovation and sustainability at the top of the agenda which is amply reflected in the theme and organisation of the upcoming Expo 2020 (Nadkarni & Teare, 2019) slated to commence in October 2020. The moot point is whether luxury finds a place

TABLE 1: Dubai hotel inventory

Establishments	2018	2019	% change
5 star	113	128	13.27
4 star	146	158	8.22
1 to 3 star	260	258	−0.77
Hotel apartment [deluxe/superior]	68	68	0.00
Hotel apartment [standard]	129	129	0.00

Source: STR & GlobalDATA (2019)

TABLE 2: Dubai room inventory

Rooms	2018	2019	% change
5 star	38 543	43 133	11.91
4 star	29 908	33 120	10.74
1 to 3 star	22 634	24 491	8.20

Source: STR & GlobalDATA (2019)

in the innovation-sustainability matrix as Dubai moves ahead to position itself as the most sought-after destination on the global tourism map.

As of 2019, Dubai was rated the Digital Capital of the Middle East (smartdubai.ae, 2019), a fitting peak considering 2020 is the year of Expo 2020. With hotel inventory being expanded to accommodate the international visitors from over 192 countries — expected numbers into the Emirate are greatly debated, varying from 11 million (Reuters, 2019) to 25 million (*GulfToday*, 2019) — questions remain based on what will happen to existing hotels once footfall into the Emirate returns to "normal". It is suggested that such real estate will potentially be transformed into residential apartments or office blocks. What is relatively unknown, however, is how and which hotels may be sacrificed. Will the Dubai government look to eliminate some of the cities 5-star hotels to increase exclusivity and assist in an increase in revenue, ADRs and RevPARs for the remaining 5-star hotel market, or will the Dubai government look to eradicate a number of budget hotels to increase Dubai's quality image? Only time will tell.

Conclusion

This article was an opportunity to reflect on our critical discussion written in 2017. Examining and critically analysing Dubai's luxury status, and considering a drastic increase in luxury hotels across the Emirate, this article has helped to offer a more contemporary look at the current state of Dubai's luxury hotel market.

Questions still remain based on Dubai's luxury status. With Expo 2020 coming later this year, considerable questions remain on the trajectory of Dubai after the world event. With inventory (hotel room) numbers likely to be lowered, how Dubai will look to market itself to the world after the event is still to be seen. Will it wish to "return" to luxury ways, or will it look to continue its extravagant promotions as becoming a leading family and resort destination. Until our next update, let's watch and see what happens in Dubai.

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The future of hospitality jobs

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ABSTRACT: This article reviews the literature on artificial intelligence (AI)-driven technology and looks at its effects on the future of hospitality jobs, and the skills needed for the future. The purpose of this article is to understand and describe how developments in AI-driven robotics and automation will shape the future of hospitality jobs, the skills in demand, and their impact on the design of education and training. Various input parameters are significant in understanding the future of hospitality jobs. For an optimised understanding, literature has been critically reviewed and investigated from different angles, namely academics, technological advancements, developments in the industry, and governments and policymakers. The literature reveals that AI-driven technology is developing at a very high speed and shows its extensive application in tourism and hospitality management and other related industries. Many of today's jobs will be lost to AI, automation and robotics, and new jobs with new skill-set requirements will emerge. Education establishments will have to adopt a new futureproof educational system or risk becoming obsolete. This review article will be beneficial for industry and education. The article reveals the detailed literature review on jobs that are at high risk of disappearing and offers an insight into what future jobs might be and what skills and competences will be required.

KEYWORDS: artificial intelligence, employment, skills, hospitality, human resources, training and education

Introduction

Technological advancements today are significantly affecting the way humans lead their lives and run their businesses. Artificial intelligence (AI) is at its centre, and we can see it everywhere, starting from the effect on the quality of human relationships and interactions (Facebook, Tinder and other social or dating applications), to the influence on consumer behaviour (through algorithms, embedded cookies and targeted advertisements), to the impact on culture and entertainment (Netflix, Youtube, Spotify), to urban surveillance and panopticism through facial recognition, to the transportation sector (autonomous vehicles) and even its impact on armed conflicts and human rights through the use of autonomous drones and smart weaponry (Rocheleau-Houle, 2019).

Artificial intelligence

AI, as a term, was first introduced by the American computer and cognitive scientist, Professor John McCarthy, in 1955 (Moore, 2019). McCarthy defined AI as

> the science and engineering of making intelligent machines, especially intelligent computer programs. It is related to the similar task of using computers to understand human intelligence, but AI does not have to confine itself to biologically observable methods (McCarthy, 2007, p. 2).

Since 1955, AI has gone through many changes and developed so far that today we can observe many advancements and tools implemented across different industries. These developments are creating a lot of benefits and risks, including many ethical concerns (Floridi et al., 2018). In January 2015, a conference in Puerto Rico brought together the world's leading AI scientists from academia and industry. The conference, titled "The Future of AI: Opportunities and Challenges", resulted in an open letter that has collected nearly 7 000 signatures in support of more research into the benefits of AI while avoiding the potential pitfalls. These almost 7 000 signatories included academics, entrepreneurs and AI scientists, like Elon Musk and Stephen Hawking. The letter concluded that developments in AI have the potential to bring extraordinary benefits to humankind, and thus it is vital to research how to maximise the benefits while avoiding negative impacts. Equally, the growing capabilities of AI are significantly impacting human society; therefore, it is up to AI researchers to ensure that the future impact is beneficial (Russell, Dewey & Tegmark, 2015). Stephen Hawking clearly expressed his concerns when he described AI as "the best or worst thing ever to happen to humanity" (Hern, 2016, Para. 1).

Ethical concerns around the implementation of AI-driven technology remains a hot topic. In January 2020, both the European Commission and US lawmakers called for a ban on the use of AI-driven facial recognition technology in public spaces for up to five years (BBC, 2020a; 2020b). Companies like Google, Facebook, Microsoft, and Amazon are among the many that are currently working on developing technology related to facial recognition. Facial recognition allows technology to recognise a face using biometrics to map facial features from a photograph or a video and compares it to a database to help verify personal identity (Symanovich, n.d.). This technology could be considered a threat to personal privacy and data rights. The technology is still inaccurate as a recent study shows, especially when it comes to identifying African-American and Asian faces in comparison to Caucasian faces (BBC, 2020a). While the West remains cautious about this technology, China is a big supporter, implementing the technology across the country and more recently in pharmacies in Shanghai to prevent potential abuses from drug addicts or criminals (*Tech Wire Asia*, 2020)

Risks and opportunities

Frey and Osborne (2017) conducted one of the first studies on AI, and its effect on employment. The research considered technologies currently being used in 702 different jobs in the USA. The study concluded that 47% of activities linked to employment are at a high risk of being lost to automation in the next two decades and that the salaries are inversely proportional to the probability of automation. It proposes that automation will come in stages: first, a blockage concerning a technology will lead to a technological breakthrough, that will, in turn, lead to automation (Frey & Osborne, 2017).

The 2019 edition of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) report *Employment Outlook: The future of Work* presented new evidence on the effect of automation and AI on job stability (OECD, 2019). This report provides an annual assessment of key labour market developments and prospects for OECD member states.[1] The study concluded that the risk of automation to employment exists, but will vary from country to country. 14% of jobs are likely to be completely automated, while 32% will significantly change. While new technologies will make specific occupations obsolete, it will also create new roles.

A study published in July 2019 by McKinsey Global Institute titled the *Future of Work In America* confirms that daily tasks could change in the future for all jobs as intelligent machines become an essential part of the American work environment. The study analysed more than 3 000 counties[2] and showed that millions of jobs would cease to exist by 2030 (Lund et al., 2019).

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, "the advent of cyber-physical systems involving entirely new capacities for people and machines" (Davis, 2016, para. 4) has introduced AI, automation, and robotics and has led to their strategic implementation in the hospitality industry, intending to solve many of the daily management challenges (Makridakis, 2017). Hotels today are using more and more AI to modernise their operating procedures and render flawless processes traditionally provided by the employees in guest relations, check-in/check-out, room service, bartending, chatbots, reservations and bookings management, and virtual avatars (Cain, Thomas & Alonso, 2019; Ivanov, 2019; Ivanov, Gretzel, Berezina, Sigala, & Webster, 2019; Pesonen & Neidhardt, 2019; Tussyadiah & Miller, 2019). AI-driven robots are quickly becoming an essential asset of many hospitality establishments, driven by shortages in staff, the need for increased multilevel communication, and the need to create a memorable guest experience through flawless use of available customer data (Bowen & Morosan, 2018).

Even though today's technology cannot fully replace employees, developments in AI, automation and robotics are significantly influencing the human element. Significant effects are already reflecting on job profiles, hours worked, employee relationships with their peers and managers, and compensation packages. Hotels today are more likely to implement new technologies involving AI to positively impact economic growth by improving efficiency in the workplace (Li, Bonn & Ye, 2019). AI, automation, and robotics are starting to directly change low-skilled positions, although the majority of jobs requiring human interaction remain extremely difficult to automate (Brougham & Haar, 2018). Yet, supercomputing might even have an impact on cognitive tasks such as those of doctors, people working in healthcare, or even lawyers, judges, lecturers and researchers (Salla, Pikkarainen, Leväsluoto, & Blackbright, 2018). Café X in San Francisco has invested USD 25 000 in a new consumer-friendly robotic barista that can serve 120 cups of coffee per hour, fulfilling 300 to 400 orders a day (Hochman, 2018). The risk of being put out of business by automation is much higher for a barista in comparison, for example, to a barman (although robot cocktail-making machines were on display at the recent HORECAVA trade fair in Amsterdam). It could be argued that while the barista's job is about mixing and serving drinks, the barman job is interactive, unpredictable and involves conversing with customers (Kosslyn, 2019). With a high demand and curiosity factor, more cafés and restaurants across the world are investing in robotic baristas, an example of which can be found at Mr Mofongo Distillery in Groningen, the Netherlands, where the primary objective behind this investment was to attract more visitors (RTV Noord, 2013). Kosslyn (2019) believes two kinds of jobs are more challenging to automate: tasks involving emotion, and taking context into consideration. Emotion plays a vital role in verbal and nonverbal communication; it helps humans prioritise and contribute to the decision-making process. Context as well can be quickly taken into account by humans while making decisions, but is a challenge for automation (Kosslyn, 2019).

On 28 November 2019, Erik-Jan Ginjaar, the General Director of Postillion Hotel group (six hotels and three conference centres in the Netherlands), introduced "Michiel" to a group of academics representing the Dutch hotel schools in Amsterdam (El Hajal, personal notes, November 2020). Michiel is the Artificial Intelligence reservation employee of Postillion Hotels, and with "him" the hotel group has taken the lead in deploying AI in the hospitality industry. Michiel provides a flawless response to all sales lead requests with a correct e-mail, and a customised offer letter after all options are taken into account. This state-of-the-art "AI-colleague" as Ginjaar called him, uses natural language processing techniques such as named entity recognition and classification (NERC) and deep learning to read an e-mail and translate it into a quotation. Michiel is linked to reservation systems and can make offers 24 hours a day, seven days a week and within a few minutes. In one year, Michiel has achieved a significant reduction in employee costs and created an increase in financial turnover. Ginjaar expressed that Michiel can do much more and that this kind of innovation brings him one step closer to his dream of a hotel without back offices, but with people focused on delivering sincere hospitality (van Laatum, 2019).

The impact on human resources

The hospitality industry remains explicitly labour-intensive and requires a vital face-to-face exchange between guests and hospitality professionals. Because of these intense interactions, academics and service industry executives alike underline the importance of putting employees at the centre of a company's focus (Heskett, Jones, Loverman, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 2008), emphasising that this human element is a critical factor in driving profitability in the delivery of service (Hogreve, Iseke, Derfuss, & Eller, 2017). The hospitability of the human element is what makes a product unique and differentiates between one service provider and another (Tasci & Semrad, 2016). Yet, AI is also affecting the way companies manage human resources. It is argued that through continually evolving smart technologies and tools, managers will be free of tasks deemed difficult or less exciting and will instead be focusing on tasks that are perceived to be more stimulating, leading to a combination of reduced staffing costs, improved staff satisfaction with their jobs, and happier guests and customers. AI will allow managers to predict individual performance, facilitate the recruitment process, facilitate workforce planning, and analyse employee satisfaction.

A report published by the Ethics Committee of the Government of Quebec in August 2019 presents what the commission considers to be the two most critical impacts of AI on human resource management practices from an ethical perspective. The first impact is about predictive behaviour and performance of employees, and the second concerns the supervision and control of employees (Rocheleau-Houle, 2019). Through the combination of machine learning and people analytics, managers can discover relations and tendencies between, for example, job applicants and staff turnover intentions (Strohmeier & Piazza, 2015). Even though predicting behaviour is a form of control, new developments in text, voice and facial recognition are already being used to supervise and control employees. A more intrusive form of AI follows, monitors and measures the productivity of employees through wearables (clothing or accessories) that monitor physical movements or use software that measures the speed and efficiency of an employee doing their job.

In July 2019, *Time*, published an article describing how Amazon is treating its employees working at its fulfilment centres (warehouses), as employees were protesting the dehumanising day-to-day treatment in the workplace. In addition to having to walk more than 24 kilometres a day, employees found it appalling to be held to the productivity standards of a robot. Amazon was using AI technology to enforce a "no-room for inefficiency" workplace policy. Employees were required to carry scan guns with them at all times. The scan guns measure how much time the employee requires to complete the job in addition to the time off employees take to go to the bathroom or have a drink of water. The article described that this harsh system pushed employees into a constant state of low-panic, and the isolation and monotony drove them to their breaking points (Guendelsberger, 2019).

A report published by the *Guardian*, a British daily newspaper, describes how dozens of companies based in the United Kingdom are using AI to monitor staff activity and how labour unions and academics are warning that the use of such systems increases work pressures and distrust among staff (Booth, 2019). The AI tool discussed (Isaak) was developed by a London-based company called Status Today that obtained the award for the Best AI Startup in 2017 (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020). As per the company website, Isaak offers real-time well-being insights into employees: from e-mail overload to focus hours, management can use this software to "understand" employee email responsiveness, work that is being done outside working hours, and time spent without distractions (*Isaak | AI-Powered People Analytics*, n.d.). Isaak provides insight into who the critical influencers and change-makers are in an organisation, but at the same time is used by companies to track employees in real-time, looking at who is exchanging emails, working on specific files and even who meets whom and when (Booth, 2019; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020).

AI is affecting the relationship between employees and machines and, as experts predict, by 2030 robots will make up 25% of employees working in the hospitality industry. Bowen and Morosan (2018) believe that the adoption will be a disruptive paradigm shift as it will lead to the success of many hospitality establishments, but also the ruin of many. Robots will have different roles in the working place; they will assist, manage, and work alongside human employees.

New advances

In 2019, the Chinese e-commerce giant, Alibaba opened a hotel in Hangzhou, China, that it describes as a "290-room ultra-modern boutique hotel, where technology meets hospitality" (Biron, 2019, Par. 1). Robot butlers make the rounds delivering toiletries and food. Chinese users can check in to the hotel using facial recognition and, instead of traditional keys, the hotel uses facial recognition technology for guests to access their rooms and the elevators.

Hotel companies in Singapore also started testing facial recognition technology, linked to the city-state's immigration authorities. This technology is being piloted in three hotels, allowing their guests to check in using their phones or dedicated booths. This procedure is reducing check-in time from five minutes to approximately one, and guests are delighted (Rajagopal, 2019). This system, called E-Visitor Authentication (EVA), was launched in November 2019. The Singaporean Minister of State for Trade and Industry, Chee Hong Tat, announced that he expects the EVA system to save more than 11 000 hours annually for front-office staff at a large hotel, freeing them to focus on engaging with customers (*Business Times*, 2019). In addition to saving time, facial recognition will help hotels generate more revenue by contributing to a more personalised customer experience, expanding a hotel's customer database, and increasing security (Rajagopal, 2019).

Changes in demand for services jobs

In the USA, trucks are responsible for much of the goods transportation, and the old industry saying still applies: "if you bought it, a truck brought it". In 2017, trucks shipped more than 70% of all goods transported both in terms of value and weight of freight. The "Amazon Effect", or door-to-door delivery services, is one of the main reasons behind the expansion of the trucking industry (Joseph et al., 2019). With fast-developing AI, many companies like Boston-based, Emabark Trucks, already started moving freight autonomously between Los Angeles and Arizona (Barack, 2019). Long-haul trucks that drive themselves on the highway will be available in the next five to ten years. With key players like Otto, Volvo, and Daimler heavily investing in these new technologies, the pay of 1.7 million truck drivers in the USA will decrease, and AI will eventually replace them altogether (Freedman, 2017). With the trucking industry in the USA supporting thousands of gas stations, highway hotels, motels and diners, AI-automated trucking will impact and reshape the face of many roadside hospitality establishments.

Future-proof skills

Employees and leaders in the future AI-created roles will need a new set of skills. Learning and development will be the key to ensure the humans are well developed to understand AI, and develop strategic objectives that incorporate interrelated functions of technology, knowledge management and the AI it initiates (Moldenhauer & Londt, 2019). But how can we futureproof and prepare today's students for the jobs of the future? If we look back to the rate at which AI is developing, it would be impossible to foresee precisely how the jobs of the future will look and what technical skills they would require exactly. One approach could be to identify a broader set of abilities and aptitudes, ones that robots are unlikely to master, and look to develop those further in today's students and thus as some would argue, give them a crucial skill for the future: the ability to adapt (Wade, 2019). Wade describes and divides the skills of the future into three categories: cognitive, interpersonal, and attitudinal, and sums these up as the ability to recall, the ability to understand and apply, the ability to analyse, the ability to evaluate and the ability to create. Clearly, the need to develop critical thinking has never been more important in education because the continuing advances in artificial intelligence (AI) increase the need to cultivate skills required to work with and complement AI. This is where critical thinking skill sets come to the fore because the skill sets include analysis, and the ability to question everything, including algorithms.

In the last decade, many researchers have studied and identified what is foreseen to be the desirable skills of the future, skills like entrepreneurship and ICT competencies (Cincera et al., 2018; Crișan, Joița, Zwaga, & Sebea, 2014; Miller, Wesley & Williams, 2012; Zupan & Nabergoj, 2016) leadership (Iordanoglou, 2018; Mumford, Zaccaro, Connelly, & Marks, 2000; Schad & Smith, 2018; Virick & Greer, 2012), communication and critical thinking (Chikeleze, Johnson, & Gibson, 2018; Kek & Huijser, 2011; McCafferty, 2014) and innovation (Gelinas, 2016; Peschl, 2019).

A national survey by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (where the respondents include 400 US-based employers with more than 25 employees and 613 college students) published in 2015 shows that 91% of employers agree that the ability of a candidate to demonstrate critical thinking skills, communication skills, and an ability to solve complex problems is more important than his or her undergraduate major. 96% of employers agree that all college/university students should learn how to solve problems with different-minded people. 78% of employers believe that students should gain intercultural skills. When selecting a potential candidate, all employers placed the most urgent priority on proficiency in skills like written and oral communication, teamwork, ethical decision-making, critical thinking and the ability to apply knowledge in a real-world setting (Hart Research Associates, 2015). In 2018, the same survey showed that employer priorities in terms of sought-after skills did not change as the most practical skills sought remained oral and written communication, teamwork skills with a diverse group, critical thinking and analytic reasoning, complex problem-solving, information literacy, innovation and creativity, technological skills and quantitative reasoning (Hart Research Associates, 2018).

Education for the future

In November 2017, the Australian government published a plan for Australia to thrive in the global innovation race. The *Australia 2030: Prosperity through Innovation* plan has highlighted five significant areas of development to make Australia one of the best places in the world to undertake innovation, science and research. The development areas that were highlighted are education, industry, government, and research and development. When it comes to education, the plan sets as an imperative the ability to adapt to the changing nature of work by equipping all Australians with skills relevant to 2030. The essential skills for 2030 highlighted by the report are science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), basic digital literacy skills and advanced digital skills. By 2030, jobs will require employees to spend more time using 21st century skills including interpersonal, creative, problem-solving and entrepreneurial skills. Workers of the future will spend less time on predictable physical and administrative tasks, but instead will communicate and empathise with other workers and customers. Today's education system needs to evolve to support both STEM skills and humanities, art and sciences skills (Innovation and Science Australia, 2017).

The Worldwide Educating for the Future Index, commissioned by the Yidan Prize Foundation and compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit, ranks fifty of the world's biggest economies, representing the majority of the world's population, on how they are equipping people aged between 15 and 24 with skills for the future. The 2019 report showed that the 50 indexed communities agreed to the vital roles of critical thinking, creativity, communication, entrepreneurship and digital skills to help students meet the challenges of the future. The report offers evidence of this accord as governments change their national educational policies. The report underlines the need to develop the ability to analyse, reason and question decisions, including those made by algorithms (AI). The report also discusses the rise of nativism and nationalism in 2018, making it more urgent for students to apply these future-oriented skills to fight back (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2019).

The importance of education and training is paramount, and digital technology will significantly change the way education is delivered. With an increase in the demand for complex problem-solving skills in the workplace of tomorrow, lecturers are more likely to spend less time preparing for and lecturing, while devoting more time to one-on-one tutoring (Payton & Knight, 2018). Many schools and universities today are still not able to adapt to this fast pace of change and, unfortunately, they are still preparing students for jobs that might no longer exist. Learning institutions should adjust their approaches to learning to the business ecosystem of the future. Schools and universities need to adapt to the skillsets of the future world or face the risk of becoming obsolete (Tarabasz, Selaković, & Abraham, 2018).

Future research — the next step

This review article is the first phase of a longitudinal research project with a descriptive design that will use quantitative methods to look at how university students in hotel management perceive the future of hospitality jobs and the new set of required skills. The study will also consider the perceptions of lecturers and support staff of the same hotel school. The sample of this research will comprise students, lecturers and support staff of a Dutch hotel management university of applied sciences.

We will conduct a survey with the cohort of hospitality management students in years one, two, three and four. The survey will make a distinction between the students at different stages of their academic journey. The objective is to understand at each step the student awareness and perception of the future of hospitality jobs and the necessary future-proof skills they will need. The research aims to identify a potential gap in perception among students themselves and between students and educators, and thus recommend ways to dimish it by comparing, contrasting and connecting the findings to current literature, industry developments, policy and future trends. The study will contribute to educational and curriculum redesign and highlight potential areas for staff, student and institutional development.

Conclusion

So, to conclude: this review article has given an insight into artificial intelligence (AI)-driven technology and its effects on the future of hospitality jobs, and the human skills needed for the future. Technological advancements today are affecting significantly the way humans lead their lives and run their businesses.

The changes brought about by AI and technology will change job descriptions and job design in the future. This will increase and change the demand for human resource management (HRM). New thinking will be required by HR managers and the strategies relating to people analytics will need to change. Developing the future-proof skills needed will be just one of these demands. HR managers will be able to use AI to predict and measure individual employee performance, and hence facilitate the future recruitment process and workforce planning.

Recent articles have described in detail the dehumanisation of employees treated more as autonomous workers. Artificial intelligence (AI) is at the centre of this disruption. Dozens of companies based in the United Kingdom are using AI to monitor staff activity, and trade union leaders and academics are warning that the use of such systems increases work pressure, work-related illnesses and creates distrust among staff (Booth, 2019).

Governments are waking up to the changes AI and technology bring, and many government are now working on strategies and plans to help them thrive in global innovation development. Many of these strategies include developing changes to employee skill sets to 2030 through education policy, these include; science, technology, engineering and mathematics; the so-called STEM skillsets. Clearly, the importance of education and training is paramount to future success, and digital technology will significantly change the way education is delivered.

Many schools and universities today are not able to adapt to this fast pace of change and, unfortunately, they are still preparing students for jobs that might no longer exist in the near future. Learning institutions should adjust their approach to learning to the business ecosystem of the future. Schools and universities need to adapt to the skillsets of the future world or they will face the risk of becoming obsolete in the future.

Notes

1. OECD member states are Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.
2. The United States of America has 3 141 counties and county equivalents.

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Happiness at work: a phenomenological study of the experiences of hospitality industry employees

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ABSTRACT: Though happiness might be an interesting factor to consider in the discussion on retaining employees, only a limited number of studies on happiness of hospitality employees has been done. This master's thesis study, rooted in the tradition of the interpretative phenomenological analysis, unpacks the connection of work experiences and feelings of happiness of five hospitality employees aged between 20 and 30. In-depth interviews revealed that happiness is found in moments of external recognition of professional achievements, while contributing to the company's performance or to guest experiences. We see that these moments reinforce a high-performance attitude that, however, could also create a form of addiction. We recommend integrating appreciative feedback of staff achievements on a regular base during operations. Furthermore, we suggest staff coaching with the aim to develop self-awareness and self-acknowledgement.

KEYWORDS: added value, external recognition, happiness, interpretative phenomenological analysis, transient level

Introduction

During my undergraduate internship in a Dutch hotel, I, the first author, observed a paradox. I saw unhappy colleagues in an industry that strives to make its guest feel welcome and happy (Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2016). This triggered the idea for a study of happiness in work. A positive outcome from a quantitative study on happiness among 582 Dutch hospitality employees using the Oxford Happiness Scale — 8.1 on a scale of 1 to 10 (Consumatics, 2018) — reinforced the idea of the paradox. Despite their aim of making guests feel welcome, comfortable and satisfied, hospitality companies seem to struggle with making and keeping its staff feeling happy (Brown, Thomas, & Bosselman, 2015). Though happiness might be an interesting factor to consider in the discussion on retaining employees (Vasquez, 2014), only a limited number of studies on happiness of hospitality employees has been done. The phenomenon is, however, often researched from the perspective of job satisfaction, job performance and organisational commitment (Lee, Back, & Chan, 2015; Tsai, Cheng, & Chang, 2010; Yang, 2010), addressed by Fisher (2010, p. 386) as the "person level". This phenomenological master's thesis research followed the so-called "transient level" looking into the "within-person level" (Fisher, 2010, p. 386) as it aimed to explore the experiences, articulation and sense-making of happiness at work.

Conceptualisation and critique

Attention to staff happiness in organisations emerged in the wake of the rising positive psychology in the 1990s (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Besides psychologists, economists and sociologists also became interested in the topic (Frawley, 2015). From definition by Kashdan, Biswas-Diener and King (2008), it becomes clear that the conceptualisation of happiness revolves around two original ethical principles from Aristotle: *hedonism* with a focus on pleasure, and *eudaimonia*, developing internal virtue, bringing life to its fullest potential. In Aristotle's own words,

> ... a man should [...] if he wants to become good, have been well-bred and have acquired good habits, and then continue to live his life with righteous pursuits, and neither intentionally, nor against his mind do evil deeds (Aristotle, X.10 1180a15)

This is a definition of a good life, leading to happiness.

Nevertheless, in general it remains difficult to define happiness. In her comprehensive meta-study on happiness at work, Fisher (2010, p. 386) identifies three levels that decide the perspective on happiness: the "transient" or "within-person level", the "person level", and the "unit or organizational level". She concludes that happiness must be seen as an important factor for employee functioning. As Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) state, staff happiness is essential for better moods and physical health in the workplace. This affects staff development, guest/customer satisfaction and thus organisational performance (Fisher, 2010; Kerfoot, 2012).

According to Frawley (2015), a focus on happiness and happiness research is not unbiased. She identifies three main points of critique, namely a limited focus on the cultural embedding of the phenomenon, the chosen scientific approach, and the instrumentalisation of human characteristics. Another point of critique addresses the neo-liberalist societal emphasis on happiness (De Wachter, 2019) that is rooted in hedonism that is very much reinforced by social media. It can be argued that though positive psychology tried to move away from diseases (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), a turn to happiness might have created a new problematic condition, perhaps a new illness (De Wachter, 2019).

Methodology

A constructivist ontological and epistemological belief guided our choice to embed the study in the tradition of the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). This approach — developed as an alternative to quantitative methodology in psychological research — is rooted in phenomenology, hermeneutics and ideography. IPA is a

> dynamic process with the active role of the researcher who influences the extent to which they get access to the participant's experience and how through interpretation they make sense of the subject's personal world (Pietkiewicz & Smith 2014, p. 8).

Moreover, IPA aims to create thoroughly explored individual and "first-person accounts" which can then be used to elaborate on the lived experience in further research.

We conducted 90-minute semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1983; 2007; Rubin & Rubin, 2011) with five participants aged between 20 and 30 years. Immersing oneself in the life-world of participants requires one's full attention, which led to the decision to limit the number of participants to five. The five participants essentially formed a convenience sample from the first author's network, supported by well-considered selection criteria. Initially, some of them were personal acquaintances on a professional level. Others were recommended by professional acquaintances because they demonstrated an interest in the subject. Besides interest, the other selection criterion was working in the hospitality industry (irrespective of the job position).

The interviews included questions to create trust and rapport, to explore the factual experiences and to connect related feelings with metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). While the interviewer immersed herself in the participant's life world, the participant put themselves in the position of the researcher, becoming self-reflective and giving voice to feelings and experiences. Interpretation and understanding gradually developed through intensive reading of the transcripts and listening to the recordings guided by note-taking. Notes were transformed into a thread of emerging themes, while seeking for patterns and connections within and between the stories (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun, Clarke, & Weate, 2016). All interpretations and emerging themes were discussed with the participants before the final conclusions were drawn.

Results

The interviewing author turned her impressions of each interview into five personalised poems and narratives or so-called vocative texts (Nicol, 2008, p. 317; Van Manen, 1997). Two of them are published here as examples.

In the picture

It feels like any other day at the office until a higher ranked male manager enters the office — immediately the atmosphere changes. As I am very sensitive to what happens around me, colleagues moving around distract me from my work and I look up. Everyone's attention is centred around him: it is wonderful to see the authority and power radiating from his skin. Tasks are dropped, and my colleagues gather around him to say: "Hello!". I shake his hand, "Hello, nice to meet you!" is what I say while trying to control my nerves. "Oh, so this is you! You are the one that brings in all the revenue at our groups department. You are doing a great job!". I feel my body getting warm, my face turning red, I feel more energetic and prouder: I AM THE ONE THAT RECEIVES THESE COMPLIMENTS! I also feel confusion. This moment in front of colleagues, I feel embarrassed; yes, I like to be seen, but I feel uncomfortable with all these faces looking at me. Once the big boss has left the room and I am back at my desk, I cannot stop smiling — I feel like a powerful woman able to conquer the world. A jolt of awareness flows through my body, a sense of purpose, meaningfulness. It is ME that contributes to the success of the company. And it is ME who is seen and recognised. This jolt and pride, however, slowly fade away over the rest of the day. But, the energy stays and keeps me going. It is like an addiction, ready to keep going, longing for the next compliment. It feels like an acknowledgement. People recognise me and see me. I'm more than a robot just doing the tasks. I am needed and a part of the company.

It is the sparkle in her eyes, the speed in her voice
When she is not seen as a second choice.
It is the energy, pride and a sense of flow
When her colleagues make her glow.
It is the recognition of her own abilities,
the confirmation of her capabilities.

Teamwork creates dream work

It is a hot summer's day; the sunlight reflects on the quiet water of the harbour and some sailing boats move slowly on the rippling waves. I walk to the entrance of the pretty restaurant I work at and realise how beautiful its location is. It is the best location and restaurant I can think of. I am looking forward to again entertaining our guests and making them feel at home. But today I have a special mission as well. As it is still early, it is not busy yet. This is my moment. I go to the chef: "Chef, do you have some time? I have a perfect idea..." I start pitching my gin and tonic idea. He immediately responds enthusiastically, and we discuss some ideas, add ingredients from the herb garden at the back of the restaurant, taste the drink. Excited, I present the cocktail to the first guest, and before we know it the whole terrace is brightly coloured by the new cocktail in everyone's hands. I see that our regular guest and famous television-chef has taken a seat in the sun on the terrace. I cannot wait to tell him about the cocktail: "Let's give it a try; it looks delicious", he replies with a face full of joyful expectation. First, my colleagues and I take the empty plates from another table: together we quickly clean the terrace, so I can start making another gin and tonic with our chef. Our famous guest is surprised when taking a sip, he gives me a compliment: "It's delicious; let's post a picture on my social media!" As I walk to the kitchen to share his positive reaction with our chef. I feel this tickling in my belly, this kind of butterflies feeling. I can hardly hide the proud smile on my face; the energy and feeling of power is almost overwhelming: "We did it!" I joyfully call out — the warm feeling in my belly remains for a while. I am happy: it is the teamwork, it is my colleagues and it is pleasing guests with the high quality that we deliver.

It is the feeling in his belly, the smile on his face
When perfection is achieved at his workplace
It is the power, energy and pride
He feels when his guests thank him out loud
Together he feels stronger,
becoming better fulfils his hunger.

Discussion

The interviews gave different perspectives on the emerging importance of recognition of personal achievements and contribution to a company's performance and guest satisfaction.

Explicit appreciation for adding value to the company — especially from people in the hierarchy — and to the guest experience, meant to them that they were more than just a passing presence. One participant explains that he derives moments of happiness from creating his own high standards regarding the quality of provided products and service, while imposing upon himself very high standards that he can achieve most of the time. To him, the standard for quality and for his behaviour is located within himself, and that it is not just his desire for praise. A further external source of happiness is seeing the team working together and providing the best quality and service: the feeling of "doing it together". When talking about their feelings, the participants talked about having pleasure, feeling pride and excitement, and feeling energised. Non-verbally, they started to smile; they raised their voices and spoke at a higher pace; and their eyes started to shine.

The conversations also illustrate the transient character of feelings of happiness. This was already mentioned in earlier research (Fisher, 2010; Harter & Gurley, 2008). Fisher (2010, p. 396) states that feelings of happiness are not caused by (a series of) momentous events, "but rather by individuals' perceptions, interpretations and appraisals" of these circumstances. This finding makes us concerned for two reasons. On the one hand, the employee can develop a form of addiction striving for external recognition. We fear that this form of addiction might lead to a constant inner focus on high performance, while accepting periods of high work pressure, long working days and unsociable working hours. It might be questioned whether hospitality managers that welcome this so-called excellent attitude explore underlying drivers that when known give a different understanding. On the other hand, an organisation's human resource management policies might — consciously or unconsciously — reinforce the need for recognition. We see in only one interviewee something of an internalised feeling of goodness that guides his actions and gives him the feeling of "doing the right thing".

Conclusions

Immersing oneself in and correctly understanding the life world and experiences of participants was quite challenging. The risk of subjectivity had to be avoided. Therefore, the interviews were used to discuss explicitly with the participants the role of recognition in combination with the actual innate need for moments of happiness. Moreover, we constantly questioned and reflected on our interpretation in the light of the process and texts.

The results emphasise the importance of cautious attention to the phenomenon of happiness at work. On the one hand, recognition could be integrated in daily operations and in the supervision and coaching of staff. For instance, focus on timely appreciative feedback might contribute to a more constant feeling of happiness. Current practice of performance appraisals might be reconsidered. Besides evaluating the person and giving feedback on how to improve performance, appraisal conversations could also integrate explicit identification of what makes an employee happy in the job. On the other hand, it might be relevant to strengthen the self-awareness of employees regarding the innate needs for inner and outer recognition to become more autonomous. Considering a lack of qualitative designs in happiness studies and the fruitful phenomenological research in both participants and industry, we advise to continue phenomenological research on this particular topic and for hospitality research in general.

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