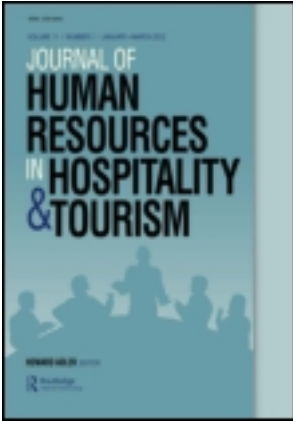


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Human Resource and Organizational Management Content in the Hospitality Curriculum: How the Professionals View It

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In this study the authors investigate the importance professionals working in the hospitality industry attach to key content areas taught in hospitality human resource and organizational management courses as they relate to the success of hospitality graduates. The authors also sought to determine if differences existed between various demographic subgroups based on industry segment, position, industry experience, and educational attainment. Results indicated practitioners perceived both human resource and organizational management expertise as critical but placed greater importance on organizational management knowledge. Analysis of the demographic subgroups identified differences in perception but only a few of these rose to the level of significance.

KEYWORDS *Hospitality curriculum, hospitality human resources, hospitality organizational management, curriculum development*

As a major contributor to and a key component of the U.S. and world economy, the hospitality industry continues to increase in complexity and sophistication. Logic would imply that graduates of hospitality programs will need to acquire a set of skills, abilities, and knowledge that corresponds to this increase in order to ensure their long-term success. Thus, it is necessary for hospitality programs to periodically review the relevance of their curriculum and closely evaluate the extent to which it prepares graduates to function in a complex and results driven environment. Current realities

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would also dictate that curricular evaluation must not take place in isolation but with the advice and insight of professionals working in the industry.

The need for frequent curricular review is well acknowledged in the literature. For example, Pavesic (1993) noted that review and development of curriculum should be ongoing with attention given to “any signs that students, graduates, industry, and general economic trends are calling for a change in course or program emphasis” (p. 291). Nelson and Dopson (2001) further proposed that “curriculum relevancy to industry needs is one of the top strategic concerns in hospitality education” (p. 58). Many hospitality schools are cognizant of the need to adapt to a changing environment and taking steps to revise curricula, better utilize technology, and network with the industry so that students are better equipped to achieve success and meet the needs of industry (Freed, 2010).

Similarly, as the industry evolves, graduates need to not only excel in managing day-to-day operations, but also possess the capability to understand and apply the business disciplines that comprise the industry. According to Rappole (2000), the complex nature of the industry coupled with present day economic realities and concerns, has resulted in many programs adopting curricula that not only focus on traditional management and operations course work, but which also include a comprehensive approach to the “business of hospitality”. Key components of the business aspects of hospitality are the understanding of the elements that comprise human resource management and the various components of management practice and theory. Knowledge in these areas is critical not only for operating managers but also for managers and professionals in most capacities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the authors in this study is to investigate how industry professionals view the human resource and organizational management portion of the curriculum and the elements that comprise it. As hospitality human resource and organizational management curricula are developed, attention must be given to balancing industry requirements with student needs. Those charged with developing such curricula must recognize that hospitality graduates’ success is substantially dependent upon their ability to meet industry expectations. Therefore, it is critical to gain an understanding of the level of importance hospitality professionals place on various content areas frequently offered in the human resource and organizational management curriculum. With this knowledge, hospitality educators should be better equipped to develop and deliver a curriculum that is pertinent to industry realities. The research questions below were designed to investigate how practitioners perceive the importance of individual content areas as well as to test for differences in viewpoint based on demographic differences between respondents.

Research Questions

1. What specific *human resource* and *organizational management curriculum content areas* do hospitality professionals perceive as being the most and least important in contributing to the long-term success of hospitality graduates?
2. Do perspectives of specific *human resource* and *organizational management curriculum content areas* differ between various demographic subgroups based on industry segment, position, industry experience, and educational attainment?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature widely acknowledges that human resources and organizational management are critical components of the hospitality curriculum. As curriculum is developed and assessed, research strongly supports the need for having a well-defined process involving multiple stakeholders with attention given to the competencies necessary to succeed in the industry.

Industry Involvement in Curriculum Development

As the hospitality curriculum evolves, both educators and industry professionals have a stake in its quality and relevance. Although the content of the curriculum will not ensure success, the literature widely supports the notion that graduates must acquire the skills, abilities, and knowledge that will equip them to succeed (Chung-Herrera, Enz, & Lankau, 2003; Dopson & Nelson, 2003; Kay & Russette, 2000; Solnet, Kralj, Moncarz, & Kay, 2010; Williams, 2005).

Ricci's (2010) finding that lodging recruiters consistently had higher expectations of newly hired hospitality graduates, than new employees from other sources, lends further support for involving industry perspectives in curriculum development. In a similar vein, but in a general sense, Paulson (2001) observed that colleges and universities need to reach a partnership with business and industry in order to develop workers who are both educated and competent. The notion of industry support for and participation in curriculum planning has gained currency as educators better understand the wisdom of developing a curriculum that reflects industry realities (Assante, Huffman, & Harp, 2007; Cavanaugh, 1994; Dopson & Nelson, 2003; Solnet, Robinson, & Cooper, 2007).

To ensure academic relevancy, Milman (2001) suggested that curriculum development should involve three levels—the institution, the hospitality program, and both the program and the institution's external constituents. All three levels must be acknowledged and addressed accordingly to ensure that an appropriate curriculum is developed and resources are utilized

effectively. Assante, Huffman, and Harp (2010) posited that program quality indicators are most frequently found in three broad areas: (1) students and alumni, industry support, and faculty; (2) facilities and curriculum; and (3) research. They suggested that these indicators could be used for program evaluation, planning, and development.

Others have proposed models for developing curricula that are influenced by industry. Dopson and Tas (2004), for example, proposed a model of curriculum development based on skills, abilities, and content deemed to be important by industry professionals, students, and faculty. Similarly, Gursoy and Swanger (2004) proposed a curriculum model for hospitality programs located in business schools accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). The suggested curriculum included specific courses that were based on industry professionals' perceptions of the importance of course subject matter. In a follow-up study, they proposed specific content areas that should be addressed in each course subject area based on industry perceptions (Gursoy & Swanger, 2005). Specific human resource content areas, however, were not addressed in the hospitality curriculum but were instead a part of the core business curriculum. Conversely, organizational management concepts in the same study were identified and the authors recommended that they be embedded throughout the entire hospitality curriculum. They also noted that research data in their study was only examined in aggregate form and did not take into account strata such as industry segment, position in the industry, years of experience, or educational attainment. Their work, however, does demonstrate how industry input can be used to inform curriculum decisions.

Other research has cautioned against educators developing curriculum without the benefit of industry consultation. Tsai, Chen, and Hu (2004) found, discrepancies frequently exist between academics and industry professionals with respect to what should be included in course content. Thus, for the curriculum to be relevant to industry, academics cannot assume they know what industry needs in regards to course content. Nevertheless, these models indicate that an opportunity exists to develop subject matter that includes hospitality industry participation at different levels of involvement.

Importance of Human Resources Competencies

Developing appropriate, relevant human resources and organizational management curricula supports not only the needs of industry, but more importantly contributes to the future success of graduates. In a study conducted by Casado (1993), hospitality industry professionals indicated "principles of management" and "hospitality human resources" were two of five key courses that contributed to hospitality graduates' future success. Kay and Russette's (2000) research further supported the importance of human resources skills to a manager's success. In their study, employee-centered leadership

competencies were found to be critical to front desk managers as well as food and beverage managers. From these findings, Kay and Russette suggested human resources skills are imperative in operational areas where large numbers of employees are supervised.

Regardless of the level of industry experience, possessing human resources capabilities appears to be important for success in the industry. In the lodging industry, Tas (1988) uncovered a number of human resource competencies essential for hotel management trainees. Learning these competencies at an early stage in one's career may prove beneficial to future career success. Kay and Moncarz (2004) found upper-level executives in the lodging industry reported that human resources knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) as the area in which they possessed the most competence and the area that they perceived to be the most important to past career success. Middle-level lodging managers in that study had similar perceptions about human resources KSAs. Formal education does play a role in how managers rate their abilities in human relation competencies. For example, research has found general and upper-level managers (excluding senior executive) and middle-level managers perceive formal education as positively impacting their leadership and management competencies (Solnet et al., 2010).

Comparable results have been found in the foodservice industries. Research conducted by Okeiyi, Finley, and Postel (1994) found human resources to be one of the most important competencies for food and beverage managers to possess. Rivera et al., (2008) found multi-unit managers in the restaurant industry perceived a need for additional training in the area of human resources in order to meet the demands of their current job and to receive a promotion to the next level of management. In a similar vein, Enz's (2004) research on the issues and concerns of restaurant managers and owner-operators, noted that managing human resources was of primary importance for managers and owner-operators alike. In particular, recruitment and retention of skilled employees were paramount.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative approach was used to carry out this study. By using quantitative methods, researchers can collect and analyze large amounts of statistical data in an efficient manner (Patten, 2007) while remaining independent of the results (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Collecting and analyzing data from a large sample provided the opportunity to generalize the findings and contribute to the body of undergraduate hospitality curriculum research.

Sample and Data Collection

Quantitative research requires researchers to collect a sufficient amount of responses from a quality sample. To achieve a desirable response rate, re-

quests for participation in the study utilized two approaches. First, an email was distributed to 190 contacts from a departmental hospitality industry partners' database inviting potential participants to complete a web-based survey pertaining to curricular issues. In the email, the purpose of the study was described, the intended use of the results was given, and a website link was provided which allowed participants to begin the survey. Individuals invited to take part in the study were nationally dispersed representing 18 states and were employed in various segments of the industry including hotels and resorts, food and beverage, convention and meeting planning, club management, tourism and entertainment. The identified participants held differing industry positions including senior management, operations management, and support services.

In addition, a snowball sampling technique was employed. Snowball sampling, also called referral sampling, is a non-probability sample technique that is useful in studies where subjects are difficult to locate and the population is difficult to specify (Fink, 2006). Although non-probability sampling techniques are sometimes criticized as being less representative than probability samples (Cooper & Schindler, 2001), they are useful when wider representation of subjects is desired, particularly in formal organizations (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad, 2010). While some question the generalizability of results (Brewerton & Millward, 2001; Gliner & Morgan, 2000), snowball techniques, when properly employed, can aid in increasing sample size and encouraging stratification of subjects. Ravichandran and Arendt (2008) observed that snowball sampling is useful in increasing the number of participants in hospitality curriculum-related research.

To conduct the snowball sampling for this study, participants from the industry partner database were invited to forward the web survey link to other potential industry participants. Those recruited using the snowball method could also directly access the survey by launching the web link. All data from the instrument was collected and stored using web survey software. This software allowed participants' responses to remain anonymous and removed any identifying information. Protecting the anonymity of participants is an important inducement to fostering participation. It did, however, prevent the detection of which respondents were from the original invitations and which ones resulted from snowball sampling.

Instrumentation

The survey developed for this study elicited hospitality industry professionals' responses regarding human resource and organizational management content in the hospitality curriculum. Data for other curriculum content areas, however, were also collected as the human resource and organizational management content areas were only one part of a larger survey designed to better understand industry's view of the Accreditation Commission for Programs

in Hospitality Administration's (ACPHA) recommended common body of knowledge (2008). The purpose of this body of knowledge is to ensure that programs in hospitality administration deal with what the community of interests feels are the common elements that will contribute to graduates' success. This common body of knowledge not only includes knowledge of human resources and organizational management but other areas such as marketing, operations, and accounting procedures. Since the accreditation process is dependent upon mission and vision of each accredited program, these areas are purposely left broad and open.

The general and broad nature of ACPHA's requirements in each knowledge category required that a systematic method (Hein & Riegel, 2011) be constructed and used to determine the specific curriculum content areas that constituted each dimension of the common body of knowledge. This systematic process involved an analysis of courses in these knowledge areas offered by four-year hospitality programs across the United States, analysis of leading texts reflecting hospitality treatment of these knowledge areas, as well as analysis of general texts in these areas, and finally reviews by content area specialists. Curricular content for each area of ACPHA's common body of knowledge was developed using this systematic approach.

With the proposed curricular content established, a survey was then designed to better understand the level of importance hospitality professionals place on each content area's contribution to the long-term success of hospitality graduates. Of particular importance for this study, were the 13 items that addressed human resource content, the eight items that addressed the organizational management areas, and four demographic variables. Participants reported the degree to which they believed each area was important to the long-term success of hospitality graduates. Response selections for each area were based on a five point Likert scale of 1–5 (1 = *not necessary*, 2 = *of little importance*, 3 = *moderately important*, 4 = *important*, and 5 = *essential*). Respondents were also encouraged to note, through open-ended questions, any additional subject matter they believed to be important.

Data Analysis

The statistical analysis of data for this study was conducted using the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 17.0 edition. Frequency analysis was used to determine the demographic characteristics of participants. Overall mean scores were computed for both the perceived importance of human resource knowledge and the perceived importance of organizational management knowledge. Multiple statistical analysis methods were then used to analyze the 21 content area mean responses.

Descriptive statistical analyses were conducted to determine which human resources and organizational management content areas were perceived as being the most and least important to the long-term success of

hospitality graduates. The means for each content area were then presented in rank order and comparisons between the highest and lowest scores were made.

Next, analyses were performed to determine if there were any significant differences in content area mean responses among demographic sub-groups including industry segment, position in the industry, years of industry experience, and educational attainment. The analysis of the first sub-group—industry segment—involved computing independent samples *t*-tests for the 21 content area means to determine if significant differences existed in the human resources and organizational management content area mean responses of hotel and resort professionals compared to food and beverage professionals. An alpha level of .05 was used for each analysis.

A series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) analyses were then performed to compare the content mean responses of the remaining demographic sub-groups which included position, years of experience, and educational attainment. One-way ANOVA is utilized to compare means of more than two groups, whereas the independent samples *t*-tests only allows for comparisons of means between two groups (Field, 2009). Position groups were divided into senior management, operations management, and support services. Years of experience were classified as less than 7 years, 8–15 years, 16–23 years, and more than 24 years. Finally educational attainment was broken down into associate's degree or lower, bachelor's degree, or master's degree or higher. Like the *t*-tests, an alpha level of .05 was used for the one-way ANOVA comparisons.

RESULTS

The survey web link remained active for participants to access for four weeks. At the close of the survey, 103 useable surveys were received. However, since respondents were not required to answer every question, not all response categories included in the data analysis equal 103.

Demographics

When examining the hospitality industry segments represented, 46.6% ($N = 48$) of the participants were from the hotels and resorts segments and 27.1% ($N = 28$) were from the food and beverage segments. Respondents appeared to have considerable experience in the hospitality industry with an average of 12.5 years of industry experience and 40.8% ($N = 42$) holding senior management positions. Additionally, 79.6% ($N = 82$) of the participants had obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. A fuller depiction of these data is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Summary of Demographic Data

	Frequency	Percentage
Industry segment ($N = 103$)		
Hotel and resorts	48	46.6%
Food and beverage	28	27.1%
Convention and meeting planning	7	6.8%
Tourism and entertainment	5	4.9%
Club management	3	2.9%
Other	12	11.7%
Position Held in Industry ($N = 103$)		
Senior management	42	40.8%
Operations management	17	16.5%
Support services	36	35.0%
Other	8	7.7%
Years of Experience in Industry ($N = 103$)		
1 to 7 years	42	40.8%
8 to 15 years	21	20.4%
16 to 23 years	21	20.4%
24 years or more	19	18.4%
Level of Education ($N = 101$)		
Associate's degree or lower	19	18.4%
Bachelor's degree	68	66.0%
Master's degree or higher	14	13.6%

Overall Assessment of Content Areas

The general mean responses suggest that the respondents gave greater weight to organizational management knowledge ($N = 103$, 4.17) than to human resource comprehension ($N = 102$, 3.99). However, when each content area is examined individually, a clearer perspective emerges. To address research question one, mean responses were computed for each of the 13 human resource content areas and the 8 organizational management curriculum content areas. With respect to human resources, *training and development* ($N = 102$, 4.64) was perceived to be most important, followed by *selection of employees* ($N = 102$, 4.49), and *evaluating employee performance* ($N = 102$, 4.44) respectively. *Labor unions and collective bargaining* received the lowest mean score of 3.40 ($N = 102$), which given the scale indicates the area is perceived as *moderately important*, but not necessarily *essential* to graduates' long-term success. Table 2 depicts the mean responses for all of the human resource content areas in rank order.

When examining the organizational management content areas, *employee motivation* ($N = 103$, 4.78) had the highest mean score. This was followed by *conflict resolution* ($N = 103$, 4.69) and *team development* ($N = 103$, 4.66). *History and development of leadership research* ($N = 103$, 3.09) received the hospitality professionals' lowest mean response. Table 3 illustrates the mean responses for all of the organizational management content areas in rank order.

TABLE 2 Human Resource Content Area Mean Responses

Human resource content areas	N	Mean	Std. deviation
Training and development	102	4.64	.594
Selection of employees	102	4.49	.641
Evaluating employee performance	102	4.44	.669
Turnover and discipline	102	4.22	.712
Social responsibility and ethics	102	4.19	.767
Employee orientation	102	4.16	.767
Planning and recruiting	102	4.00	.731
Compensation structures	102	3.80	.784
Health safety and employee assistance programs	102	3.75	.884
Job analysis and design	102	3.62	.718
Incentives and benefits administration	102	3.58	.906
Overview of employment legislation	102	3.55	.698
Labor unions and collective bargaining	102	3.40	1.017

Note: Likert scale: 1 = Not Necessary, 2 = Of Little Importance, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, and 5 = Essential.

TABLE 3 Organizational Management Content Area Mean Responses

Organizational management content areas	N	Mean	Std. deviation
Employee motivation	103	4.78	.441
Conflict resolution	103	4.69	.486
Team development	103	4.66	.552
Leading organizational change	103	4.16	.789
Cultivating a diverse workforce	102	4.11	.757
Organizational culture	102	4.00	.758
Power politics and negotiating in the workplace	102	3.89	.807
History and development of leadership research	103	3.09	.853

Note: Likert scale: 1 = Not Necessary, 2 = Of Little Importance, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, and 5 = Essential.

Differences in Perspective

Further analysis was then conducted to identify mean response differences between respondent groups for each content area. As previously mentioned, independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to examine the content mean differences between hospitality professionals working in *hotels and resorts segments* compared to those in *food and beverage segments*. This analysis revealed significant mean differences in two content areas—*selection of employees* [hotels and resorts mean = 4.48, *sd* = .714; food and beverage mean = 4.74, *sd* = .447; $t(72.089) = -1.949, p = .05$] and *employee orientation* [hotels and resorts mean = 4.10, *sd* = .751; food and beverage mean = 4.44, *sd* = .698; $t(73) = -1.932, p = .05$]. These results indicate that food and beverage respondents placed significantly more importance on these two areas than hotel and resort respondents with respect to graduates' long-term success in the industry.

Next, a series of one-way ANOVA analyses were completed in order to better understand the content area differences of three demographic sub-groups including *positions in the industry*, *years of industry experience*, and *educational attainment*. Regarding *position in the industry*, only one significant difference, *evaluating employee performance*, ($F(2;93) = 3.052, p = .05$), existed between the three position groups. A review of the data indicated those in support services positions ($m = 4.65, sd = .588$) perceived *evaluating employee performance* as more important than those in senior management ($m = 4.31, sd = .680$) or operations management ($m = 4.29, sd = .772$).

Results pertaining to *years of industry experience* revealed only one significant difference which was in the *job analysis and design* content area ($F(3;98) = 2.677, p = .05$). Further analysis of the data revealed that those with 1 to 7 years of experience ($m = 3.83, sd = .581$) viewed the *job analysis*

TABLE 4 Summary of Significant Differences in Content Area Mean Responses by Demographic Sub-groups

Content area	Demographic sub-group	N	Mean	Std. deviation	t-test for equality of means		
					t	df	Sig.
Selection of employees	Hotels & Resorts	48	4.48	.714	-1.949	72.089	.05
	Food & Beverage	27	4.74	.447			
Employee orientation	Hotels & Resorts	48	4.10	.751	-1.932	73	.05
	Food & Beverage	27	4.44	.698			
Content area	Demographic sub-group	N	Mean	Std. deviation	One-way ANOVA sig.		
Evaluating employee performance	Senior management	42	4.31	.680	.05		
	Operations management	17	4.29	.772			
	Support services	37	4.65	.588			
Job analysis and design	<1-7 Years	42	3.83	.581	.05		
	8-15 Years	21	3.57	.746			
	16-23 Years	21	3.33	.796			
	24 Years or more	18	3.50	.786			
Labor unions and collective bargaining	Assoc. degree/Lower	19	2.95	1.079	.05		
	Bachelor's degree	68	3.56	.968			
	Master's degree/higher	13	3.23	1.092			
	Assoc. degree/lower	19	3.89	.737			
Health safety and employee assistance programs	Bachelor's degree	68	3.82	.863	.01		
	Master's degree/higher	13	3.08	.954			
	Assoc. degree/lower	19	3.37	.761			
Power politics and negotiating in the workplace	Bachelor's degree	67	4.04	.747	.003		
	Master's degree/higher	13	3.92	.760			
	Assoc. degree/lower	19	3.37	.761			

and design content area as being more important to the long-term success of graduates than those in any other experience group.

Finally, the analysis concerning *educational attainment* indicated significant mean differences in three content areas. A difference was found between the *educational attainment* groups' mean responses to the *labor unions and collective bargaining* content area ($F(2;97) = 2.959, p .05$). The analysis indicated those with a bachelor's degree ($m = 3.56, sd = .968$) perceived the *labor unions and collective bargaining* content area to be more important than did those with an associate's degree or lower ($m = 2.95, sd = 1.079$) or those with a master's degree or higher ($m = 3.23, sd = 1.092$). Second, significant differences among the groups' mean responses were apparent in the *health, safety, and employee assistance program* content area ($F(2;97) = 4.565, p .01$). Analysis of the mean responses revealed those with an associate's degree or lower ($m = 3.89, sd = .737$) or a bachelor's degree ($m = 3.82, sd = .863$) perceived knowledge of *health, safety, and employee assistance programs* as more important than did those with a master's degree or higher ($m = 3.08, sd = .954$). The last significant difference detected was in the *power, politics, and negotiating in the workplace* content area ($F(2;96) = 6.003, p < .01$). The data suggested that those respondents with a bachelor's degree ($m = 4.04, sd = .747$) perceived the content area of *power, politics, and negotiating in the workplace* to be more important than did their counterparts with an associate's degree ($m = 3.37, sd = .761$) and more central to long-term career success than did those with a master's degree or higher ($m = 3.92, sd = .760$). Significant differences detected in the one-way ANOVA analyses of the three demographic sub-groups are summarized in Table 4.

DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to put the discussion into context, it is probably best to first discuss the limitations of this study. To begin, this study is preliminary to a great extent. Others have probed the importance of some curricular content areas, but there has been limited investigation of human resource and organizational management areas and no research into the perceived importance of specific content areas. As a result, a systematic way of defining these areas had to be developed. While the process used to do this was carefully planned and implemented, there was no prior work to build on. Thus, the delineation of these content areas should be subject to scrutiny and further validation. However, it should also be noted that most, if not all, of the content areas defined in this article are taught in hospitality human resource and organizational management courses.

Second, though a sample size of over 100 is large enough to gather meaningful results for the entire sample; it may have been too small to garner meaningful results from some of the demographic subsets. Thus, while this

study provides a good start in understanding how professionals view human resource and organizational management content areas, it is inconclusive when it comes to describing differences of opinion between various subsets. With that being said, it does suggest a path for future research.

On the other hand, this investigation lends strong support to the notion that, for the most part, industry practitioners do see human resource and organizational management as important elements of success for hospitality graduates. The results indicate a preference for organizational management skills over knowledge of human resource content but to a certain extent that may be understandable. This, of course, is speculation, but management skills may be seen as more critical to the success of the operating manager than human resource competencies which are frequently handled by professionals outside of the realm of day-to-day operations. The human resource knowledge that was deemed as important, such as *training and development* and *selection of employees*, relates more to the work of the operating manager. Similarly those knowledge areas that were deemed as less important, such as *job design and analysis* or *incentives and benefits administration*, are more specialized and frequently managed by the human resources department. It would be interesting for future research to investigate whether or not this viewpoint is more prevalent in operating managers or human resource staff.

Although the probing of subsets within the sample produced few significant differences, there were, nevertheless, some substantial differences between groups. Future research should investigate these difference using larger and more homogenous sub-groups. If actual differences of viewpoint could be detected, this would be invaluable for curriculum planning, as the need for more in-depth and specialized knowledge likely increases as managers move forward in their careers.

Future research might also concentrate on the perceived ranking of human resource and organizational management knowledge and skills with respect to their impact on the long-term success of hospitality graduates in comparison to other content areas such as accounting and finance or marketing. It would also be worthwhile to determine the reasons for such a rank ordering, if it exists. Also, as mentioned earlier, a validation of the individual content components that comprise the fields of human resource and organizational management should be undertaken. This would aid in determining whether these constructs do capture the essence of the fields and could also be useful in shaping future curricula in these areas.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATORS AND INDUSTRY

The results of this investigation have inferences for both educators and practitioners. For educators, the results indicate that industry professionals view

both organizational management skills and knowledge of human resources as essential to graduates' success. Although initial analysis suggests that organizational management is perceived as more important than knowledge of human resource knowledge, it is clear that both are seen as important. With respect to organizational management knowledge, an understanding of *employee motivation*, *conflict resolution*, *team development*, and *leading organizational change* were deemed as the most essential. Similarly, the study suggests that industry professionals saw *training and development*, *employee selection*, *performance evaluation*, *turnover and discipline*, *responsibility and ethics*, and *employee orientation* as important human resource concerns. These content areas clearly warrant consideration for inclusion in the curriculum. However, the remaining content areas in each category were all considered to be moderately important in contributing to graduates' success and should be considered as well. Even though some graduates may not deal with content areas such as *employment law*, *job analysis and design*, or *organizational culture* directly, an understanding of these content areas provides a good backdrop for understanding the broader organizational content.

Also, it is interesting to note that there were minimal significant differences based upon demographics such as industry segment or position. While the analysis of these differences merits further investigation, the results indicate that there might be a sense of unanimity among hospitality practitioners representing differing industry segments or background in regards to what content areas are important to include and receive emphasis in the hospitality curriculum. For educators, this sense of agreement means the curriculum in the two knowledge areas need not vary according to student career aspirations.

With respect to industry, this research is meaningful in that it points to the areas that professionals believe are critical to the long term success of new hires. Thus, it could have implications for prospective manager screening as well as for training and development. Although selection of managers is a complicated and multifaceted process, it is almost always based, in part, on the applicant meeting the organization's requirements for knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs). Ensuring that management candidates have a firm understanding of key areas in both human resources and organizational management could help ease graduates' transition into their first management positions. For example, exposure to human resource concerns in the classroom may help future professionals address conflict with established employees and ensure judicious personnel decisions are made early in their career. As a result, this knowledge may improve the likelihood of future career success and ultimately advancement in the organization.

Likewise, the important content areas identified in this study, point the way to topics in training and development initiatives. Although it may seem obvious, training in areas such as employee motivation, leading change, or

employee selection will possibly lead to significant improvements in employee retention, performance, and general welfare. Similarly, training and development initiatives in areas such as employee discipline and evaluating performance should result in enhanced compliance with employment legislation as well as a perceived improvement in equity and fairness in the workplace.

In summary, through this study the authors strongly suggest that industry professionals view knowledge, abilities, and skills in human resource management and organizational management as necessary to the career success of hospitality graduates. This is consistent with the viewpoints of both researchers and curriculum developers that business related skills are necessary to create a curriculum that meets the needs of an increasingly complex industry. Organizational management knowledge seemed to be valued over human resource knowledge but a cursory examination of the data would suggest that this may be due to the fact that management skills are more closely related to the jobs of managers. The results have implications for both educators and practitioners that can result in improved curricular development, manager selection, and training and development. Finally, although only a handful of significant differences among the various demographic subgroups were detected, differences do exist and future research is needed to test the significance of these differences on a larger scale.

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