GRADUATE EDUCATION IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to secure information from hospitality managers and educators concerning their expectations for competencies of graduates with advanced degrees in hospitality management. The study sample of 183 managers and 296 educators was asked to classify 46 competency statements according to educational level and experience required for competency development. Seven competencies were found not to be related to level of education and 27 were identified at the bachelor's level. All competencies in both groups were considered to require up to three years of experience for competence development. Five competencies were classified as requiring a master's degree, 4 of which were considered to require more than three years of experience to develop competency.

The final analysis involved a comparison of educator and manager responses to determine the extent of agreement on level of education. The groups tended to agree on about three fourths of the competency statements. ***Key Words:*** *Hospitality graduate education, Competency-based education, Curriculum development.*

INTRODUCTION

Graduate students seeking master's degrees in our field range from those who desire the degree as a prerequisite to obtaining a doctorate and entering the teaching profession to those who wish to attain expertise in a specific area, such as human resources, marketing or finance. The Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE), however, does not specify curricula for the master's degree.

In a study concentrating on graduate education in foodservice systems management, Seal, Spears, Vaden and Hoyt (1983) queried administrators of dietetic services and educators concerning their expectations of dietitians with an advanced degree. Sixty-five competency statements were evaluated by the study sample according to educational and experience levels required for competency development. Only nine competencies were identified obtainable solely by graduate study and included: conducts and/or directs research, demonstrates specialized knowledge, utilizes industrial engineering techniques, utilizes mathematical forecasting, uses financial analysis techniques, evaluates job descriptions, develops computer-

ized systems, applies research methodology, and evaluates new developments. The researchers also found that up to three years of experience was considered necessary for development of the nine graduate level competencies. These results were considered helpful in developing standards and objectives for graduate programs (Seal et al., 1983).

Hospitality educators have been concerned about the effectiveness of graduate programs in hospitality management. Pizam (1985) addressed these concerns in an editorial in the *Hospitality Education and Research Journal.* Among the concerns raised by Pizam was whether our graduate programs are equipped to offer a variety of in-depth courses that will advance students' knowledge beyond what they have already acquired in their undergraduate work. Another concern was the need for graduate programs to meet with the needs of industry.

CHRIE's Graduate Programs Technical Committee represents the interests of graduate education among CHRIE members (Calnan, 1988). A survey for the committee was conducted by Umbreit and Pederson (1989) to assess the current status and development of hospitality education graduate programs. Specifically, the committee was interested in enrollment trends, sources of enrollment, types of degree programs, placement information, and how the programs were administered by the institution. Results indicated the existence of 16 graduate programs in hospitality education, with 13 other schools planning to develop a graduate program in the near future. Although significant interest was shown in developing graduate programs in hospitality management, the research did not identify curriculum emphasis of these programs (Umbreit and Pederson, 1989).

Engel (1989) identified three types of graduate programs in the hospitality area: professional programs, research programs, and combination programs. Professional programs prepare students for upper level management positions, supervision of multi-unit operations, consulting, and education. Research programs lead to a Master of Science or Ph.D. degree and are for those interested in teaching and research. Combination programs provide both professional studies and the research component by including a thesis option.

Several studies have been made on determining essential competencies for entry level hospitality managers. Significant among them were Mariampolski, Spears and Vaden (1980), Burgermeister (1983), and Tas (1988). Each of these studies contained implications for development of hospitality management curricula at the undergraduate level. Currently, no study has been conducted on the competencies needed by hospitality managers with a master's degree.

The purpose of this study was to secure information from hospitality managers and educators concerning expectations of competency for graduates with advanced degrees in hospitality management. Specific objectives of the research were to differentiate competencies appropriate for development at the bachelor's degree level, the master's level, or through experience on the job; to identify the extent of experience required to develop competency; and to compare ratings provided by hospitality managers and educators who evaluated the competency statements.

METHOD

Sample

The sample for the study included hospitality educators at institutions granting baccalaureate degrees who were active members of CHRIE as of spring 1988 (N=296). Current mailing addresses were obtained from the Interim Directory of CHRIE Members (Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education, 1988). Also included in the sample were officers, directors, and past presidents of the National Restaurant Association (NRA) and trustees of the Educational Institute of the American Hotel and Motel Association (AH&MA). Current mailing addresses for these study participants were obtained from the *Who's Who in The Foodservice Industry 1988-89* and the Educational Institute of the AH&MA, respectively (N=183). These hospitality managers were selected for their dynamic leadership in the industry.

The Instrument

The research instrument for the study consisted of two sections: Part I, 46 competency statements for classification according to education level and experience necessary for performance; and Part II, items to provide demographic information about the respondent and the respondent's present position.

Competency statements for Part I of the instrument were derived from studies by Mariampolski et al. (1980) on entry-level competencies for commercial foodservice managers, Burgermeister (1983) on competencies needed by beginning hospitality managers, Seal et al. (1983) on competencies of dietitians with advanced degrees in food service systems management, and Tas (1988) on entry-level hotel manager trainee competencies. After competency statements from each source (239 in all) were collated and similarities among statements deleted, 46 items remained on the instrument. Each statement was then abridged to facilitate time in completing the questionnaire while still maintaining comprehensiveness of the competency list.

Two scales of measurement adapted from a study by Seal et al. (1983) were used for assessment of the competencies. Scale A related to level of education required to perform each competency:

1 = expectation depends on individual's professional experience; not related to level of education
2 = expected of the hospitality manager with a bachelor's degree
3 = expected of the hospitality manager with a master's degree

Scale B, originally a six-point scale, was derived for identifying level of professional experience required to achieve each competency:

1 = no work experience necessary
2 = less than 1 year of work experience
3 = 1 to 3 years
4 = more than 3 years

The draft instrument was validated by a pilot study group consisting of 8 hospitality managers and 4 hospitality educators. The group's evaluation of the

questionnaire resulted in no significant changes.

Distribution of the Instrument

A questionnaire, a postage-paid return envelope, and a cover letter were mailed to the study participants. Each questionnaire was numbered to identify non-respondents for purposes of follow up (Dillman, 1978). After initial and follow-up mailings, 166 research instruments (34.6%) were returned, 100 from educators and 66 from hospitality managers. Incomplete forms reduced the data pool to 88 educator and 52 manager responses.

Data Analysis

Programs and routines in the Statistical Analysis System (*SAS User's Guide,* 1982) were used for all analyses. The 46 competency statements in Part I of the instrument were classified according to the consensus response (at least 50% or more agreement) on educational and experience levels required for competency development. Chi-square analysis was used to determine the extent of agreement between manager's and educator's responses on educational level required for competency development. Frequency distributions were calculated for all demographic variables in Part II of the instrument.

RESULTS

Characteristics of the Survey Participants

Characteristics of the study participants are shown in Table 1. Seventy-six percent of the managers held bachelor's degrees, while just over 10% had completed their graduate study, all at the master's level. Not surprisingly, educators were more likely than managers to hold graduate degrees, with the majority (61.4%) at the doctoral level.

The largest number of managers had over 20 years of experience in the hospitality industry, while most educators had less than 20 years of experience. Regarding years of educational experience, however, the majority of both educators and managers had less than 20 years of experience. Most managers were over 50 years of age, while the majority of educators were in their 40s.

The primary position title of most educators (76.1%) was full, associate, or assistant professor. The second most frequent position title was dean or associate dean (10.2%), followed by instructor (7.9%). Almost 5% of educators reported they were also employed in the industry as either hotel or restaurant managers.

The largest percentage of managers (55.8%) were in upper management positions of chief executive officer, president, or vice-president within their organizations. Nearly one fourth reported their primary position title as manager of human resources, hotels, or food and beverage operations. About 16% of managers reported they also held faculty teaching positions.

Table 1
Characteristics of the Survey Sample[a]

Characteristic	Managers (N=52) N	%	Educators (N=88) N	%
Highest Degree Earned				
High School	5	9.6	--	--
Bachelor's	39	75.0	2	2.3
Master's	6	11.5	32	6.4
Doctorate	--	--	54	61.4
Years of Industry Experience				
0-9	3	5.8	36	40.9
10-19	10	19.2	27	30.7
20-29	15	28.8	15	17.0
30-39	10	19.2	--	--
40 or more years	12	23.1	2	2.3
Years of Education Experience				
0-9	11	21.2	37	42.0
10-19	13	25.0	33	37.5
20-29	1	1.9	9	10.2
30-39	--	--	4	4.5
40 or more years	2	3.9	1	1.1
Age				
20-29	1	1.9	2	2.3
30-39	9	17.3	25	28.4
40-49	9	17.3	43	48.9
50-59	16	30.8	13	14.8
60 or more years	17	32.7	4	4.5
Primary Position Title[b]				
CEO/President/Vice-President	29	55.8	--	--
Human Resource Manager	5	9.6	--	--
Hotel General Manager	6	11.5	3	3.4
Food & Beverage/Restaurant Manager	1	1.9	1	1.1
Executive or Sous Chef	1	1.9	--	--
Dean/Associate Dean	--	--	9	10.2
Full/Associate/Assistant Professor	2	3.9	67	76.1
Instructor/Lecturer	5	9.6	7	8.0
Adjunct Faculty	1	1.9	--	--
Other	9	17.3	5	5.7

[a]N varies because of nonresponses.
[b]Some respondents held dual positions in industry and education; thus, totals will be greater than 100%.

Area of Study by Level of Education of Survey Participants

Area of study by level of education of the survey sample is shown in Table 2. For purposes of data analysis, level of education indicated highest degree earned at two levels: undergraduate, which includes respondents with a bachelor's degree, and graduate, which includes respondents with a master's or doctoral degree. At the undergraduate level, most managers (26.8%) held degrees in business administration, followed by hotel, restaurant and tourism management (25%) and other (15.4%). Both educators at the undergraduate level held degrees in hotel, restaurant and tourism management. At the graduate level, the three main areas of study for educators were business administration (30.7%) hotel, restaurant and tourism management (25%), and education (17%). The 6 managers with graduate degrees included 2 in hotel, restaurant and tourism management, and 1 each in foodservice systems, business administration, education, and other.

Table 2
Area of Study by Level of Education of Survey Sample[a]

	Level of Education							
	Undergraduate				Graduate			
	Managers		Educators		Managers		Educators	
Area of Study	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hotel/Rest./Tour.	13	25.0	2	2.3	2	3.9	22	25.0
Foodserv. Systems	1	1.9	--	--	1	1.9	10	11.4
Business Admin.	14	26.9	--	--	1	1.9	27	30.7
Education	3	5.8	--	--	1	1.9	15	17.0
Other	8	15.4	--	--	1	1.9	12	13.6

[a]N varies because of nonresponses.

Analysis of Competencies by Educational Level and Experience

Table 3 summarizes the responses on educational and experience levels *required for competence in hospitality management* based on combined ratings of educators and managers. The 46 competency statements were classified according to consensus response on levels of education and experience.

The four classifications of consensus responses for level of education were defined by the researcher as not related to education, bachelor's, master's, and no consensus. Those competencies for which 50% or more of the respondents indicated competency development was dependent on professional experience and was not related to level of education constituted the first classification. If 50% or more agreed that a baccalaureate or master's degree was required, those competencies

Table 3
Summary of Consensus Responses on Level of Education and Degree of Experience Required for Competence in Hospitality Management

Competency by Education Level[a]	Experience Level yr.[b]
Not Related to Education	
implements policies and procedures	≤3[c]
evaluates guest satisfaction	≤3
supervises personnel effectively	≤3
monitors standards and procedures	≤3
solves employees grievances	≤3
hires personnel	≤3
maintains professional and ethical standards	≤3
Bachelor's	
conceptualizes managerial responsibilities	≤3
develops department goals and objectives	≤3
develops policies and procedures	≤3
develops employee production standards	≤3
coordinates use of equipment and personnel	≤3
develops effective merchandising techniques	≤3
utilizes industrial engineering techniques	≤3
analyzes operation's cost, volume, and profit	≤3
coordinates intra and interdepartmental functions	≤3
designs purchasing, production and service control	≤3
evaluates effectiveness of operation	≤3
utilizes situation analysis in decision making	≤3
establishes a guest security system	≤3
maintains financial records	≤3
plans budget	≤3
analyzes financial statements	≤3
plans orientation and training programs	≤3
develops job descriptions	≤3
conducts job analysis	≤3

Table 3 (continued)

Bachelor's	
coordinates management team	≤3
delegates appropriate functions to personnel	≤3
initiates performance appraisal program	≤3
develops equipment specifications	≤3
evaluates use of computer	≤3
determines facility layout and design	≤3
maintains effective union management relations	≤3
utilizes principles of materials management	≤3
Master's	
conducts and/or directs research	>3
prepares funding proposals	≤3
manages all legal aspects of operation	>3
applies research methodology and results to operations	>3
utilizes appropriate investment management methods	>3
No Consensus[d]	
develops a strategic marketing plan	>3
utilizes mathematical forecastingtechniques	≤3
implements energy conservation	≤3
provides motivational environment	≤3
communicates effectively, both verbal and written	≤3
maintains effective employee, guest, and community relations	≤3
evaluates new developments in hotel and restaurant management	≤3

[a]Fifty percent or more of respondents agreed on the responses indicated, unless no consensus is specified. Scale; 1 = not related to level of education, 2 = bachelor's, 3 = master's.

[b]extent of professional experience required for competency development. Scale; 1 = no experience necessary, 2 = less than 1 year, 3 = 1 to 3 years, 4 = more than 3 years.

[c]The four experience levels were collapsed into two: ≤ 3 years and > 3 years.

[d]less than 50 percent agreed on a response.

were classified at the bachelor's or master's level, respectively. A no consensus classification included those competencies for which fewer than 50% were in agreement on level of education.

A subsequent analysis of data involved identification of experience levels in relation to educational levels (Table 3). This analysis permitted identification of competencies which are primarily the responsibility of educators versus those for which responsibility for development is shared by educators and employing firms.

The 4 experience levels on the research instrument were combined into 2 levels. Few respondents specified that no work experience was necessary for developing any of the competencies. Also, the less than 1-year experience and the 1- to 3-year levels were combined. The resultant categories were:

- 3 or less years
- more than 3 years

Not Related to Education Classification

Seven competencies were found not to be related to level of education but dependent upon individual's professional experience (Table 3). Up to 3 year's experience was specified for each of these competencies.

Bachelor's Level Competencies

Twenty-seven of the competencies were classified by the majority of respondents as being developed at the bachelor's level (Table 3). Each of these competencies were identified as requiring up to 3 year's experience for proficiency.

Master's Level Competencies

Five competencies were classified as requiring a master's degree (Table 3). Three or more year's experience was considered necessary for development of four of these competencies, and up to three year's experience was indicated for the other competency.

No Consensus Classification

Respondents were unable to agree on level of education for development of seven competencies; therefore, these were classified in the no consensus group. Four of the competencies were seen by many of the respondents as being either a function of experience and not related to level of education or requiring a bachelor's degree. These included implementing energy conservation, providing motivational environment, communicating effectively, and maintaining employee, guest and community relations. Evaluating new developments in hotel and restaurant management was apparently acquired mostly through the bachelor's level, and competence in developing a strategic marketing plan and utilizing mathematical forecasting techniques were divided between the bachelor's and master's levels. All but one of the competencies from the no consensus group were indicated as requiring up to 3 year's experience. Only one, developing a strategic marketing plan, was specified as requiring more than 3 year's experience.

Comparison of Educator's and Manager's Responses

Results of chi-square analysis indicated significant differences between educator's and manager's responses on educational level required for competency development ($p \leq .05$). Concerning the competencies classified as not related to education level, educators and managers disagreed on evaluating guest satisfaction and solving employee grievances. In both instances, a higher percentage of managers than of educators believed educational level was not related to competency development.

Educators and managers disagreed regarding level of education to develop proficiency in six competencies classified as requiring the bachelor's degree. Greater proportions of educators than of managers believed that conceptualizing managerial responsibilities, utilizing situation analysis in decision making, and developing equipment specifications were competencies that could be attained at the bachelor's level. The role of experience in developing competency was emphasized to a greater degree among the managers than among educators with regard to developing job descriptions, evaluating use of computer, and determining facility layout and design.

Concerning the competencies requiring a master's degree, educators and managers disagreed on conducting and/or directing research, preparing funding proposals, and applying research results to the operation. In each instance, a higher percentage of educators than of managers specified master's level.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to obtain information from hospitality managers and educators concerning their expectations as to competencies of graduates with advanced degrees in hospitality management. Although interest in developing graduate programs in hospitality management is growing (Umbreit and Pederson, 1989), little if any research is available which would assist in formulating guidelines and developing curricula for graduate programs.

Classification of competency statements according to educational and experience required will be useful in developing guidelines for graduate education in hospitality management. The five competency statements indicated as requiring a master's degree provide a basis for developing objectives in graduate programs.

Clarification of bachelor's level competencies will serve to direct graduate curricula away from these areas of competency and toward the more appropriate areas identified as master's level. Also, the differentiation of bachelor's level competencies by extent of experience required provides a framework for identifying performance areas for which the educational institution is primarily responsible and those for which responsibility should be shared by educators and employers. Educators and employing firms should share responsibility for competency development in the performance areas addressed by the seven competencies for which no consensus was reached on educational level.

Finally, any guidelines or standards that may be developed for graduate education in hospitality management should be flexible. Educators must be

permitted to develop programs based upon the unique strengths available at an institution.

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