The skills profile of the hospitality supervisor in South Africa

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Abstract

The hospitality industry in South Africa is faced with challenges such as increased competition – nationally and internationally – economic recession, downsizing, the need to work smarter and not necessarily harder, but most of all, the challenge of managing diversity. The aim of this study was to determine the skills profile of the supervisor according to their own experience. A survey research approach was followed and research was conducted through self-administrated questionnaires that was based on competencies (core performance dimensions) related to the managerial aspects of a supervisor, namely – managing others (operational). Convenience sampling, comprising a population of hospitality supervisors working in hotels in South Africa was used. Six major hotel chains participated in this study. Responses were received from 141 hospitality supervisors. The researcher relied on descriptive and inferential statistical procedures to analyse the quantitative data. Results show that the performance dimension Guest and relationship is ranked as the most important performance dimension/attribute. This is not surprising as the responsibilities of the hospitality supervisor include a guest-focused culture.

Keywords: Generations, guest relations, hospitality, profile, skills, supervisor

Source: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-Uz2eAabZu6Y/UhNP3OpYQPI/AAAAAAAAAGs/-VEjZlSECxc/s1600/

Introduction

The hospitality industry is about the skills of the employee and the behaviour of the guests, who interact to deliver the product and the service. Finding qualified and skilled employees to meet these requirements is becoming more complex, as the industry currently accommodates three generations of employees: Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y.

The hospitality supervisor is seen as a key frontline employee when it comes to the quality of the product and service rendered by a hospitality organisation. Unfortunately there are so many different factors that could influence the efficacy of this person. Identifying the person in terms of age, gender and race could provide insight into job attitudes, and requires physical abilities and perceptions of the skills needed to be an efficient supervisor. Due to the competitiveness among hospitality organisations, human resource managers have realised that supervisors who are matched to the job are key when it comes to improving the quality of service and labour productivity. Unfortunately the hospitality industry is characterised by a workforce with relatively low levels of skills. The industry still has the reputation for not retaining labour (high staff turnover) while in some countries they even experience problems recruiting skilled labour due to poor working conditions or no career prospects (Marchante, Ortega and Pagan, 2007; U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2006-7). According to Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000) the hospitality industry needs a well-educated, well-trained, skilled, enthusiastic and committed workforce, as the service provided by the industry is human performance-based.

Foundations for this study

The hospitality supervisor has a cardinal role in fostering a culture of service delivery. It is expected of the supervisor to have an extensive knowledge of customer behaviour traits and expectations (Burke, 2001). It is critical that the supervisor enhance the quality of both staff and staff performance. This is generally done through formal and informal training, as well as staff development programmes (Burke, 2001). Only a manager with a specific profile will be in a position to meet such demands. Unfortunately research suggests that supervisors are often reliant on gut feeling, speculation and their own limited experience regarding those key factors that could ensure success of innovation in a hospitality organisation (Chang, Gong and Shum, 2011).

In light of the above, it is worthwhile focussing on the supervisor in the hospitality industry in South Africa as he/she is a key frontline person who has the authority to influence the operations of a hospitality organisation. Literature reveals that hospitality organisations should adopt a hire-for-skill, as well as a train-for-skill approach to gain a competitive edge in the industry. There is no need for this person to rely on gut feeling, speculation or limited experience in the effort to reach organisational goals (Chang *et al.*, 2011). The main aim of the study was to compile a demographic profile of the hospitality supervisor currently occupying this position and to carry out an investigation into the variables regarding the importance of experience of those competencies (performance dimensions) essential to performing the duties of a supervisor. For this specific research, the researcher will focus on the skills identified according to own experience of the supervisor currently occupying this position in South African hotels.

Literature review

As hospitality organisations are classified as part of the service industry, their employees and supervisors need to know how to interact with guests/customers (Baron, 2007). Labour in the hospitality industry is a fundamental part of the service product delivered (Marchante*, et al.* 2007). How to handle a complaint or deal with a difficult guest/customer requires

interacting with and influencing other people to modify their behaviours or attitude. One could train a supervisor in techniques to handle the abovementioned situation more competently, but supervisors who naturally interact with and influence other people will find it easier to acquire these techniques. They would use these techniques effectively whereas a supervisor that is less outgoing or more task-oriented than customer-focused would find it more difficult to learn these techniques. A supervisor with a personality that suits the requirements of the role or job will be more likely to benefit from the training than someone who does not really fit the role or the job. Personality could be important when one needs to judge if a supervisor will be successful in a specific job, but it is also very relevant if one needs to determine how well the supervisor will fit into the organisation – as each organisation has its own culture, and its way of doing things (Baron, 2007).

To find a supervisor who fits the role and suits the job, is becoming a high priority issue among hospitality organisations and their management. Richardson (2010) notes that most of the interaction between guests/customers and hospitality employees are face-to-face exchanges, therefore a supervisor's attitude, performance and behaviour are the main determinants of service quality. This attitude, performance and behaviour of the supervisor are linked directly to guest/customer satisfaction. Employers are finding it difficult to recruit and select supervisors with 'soft skills', which are a pre-requisite for the success in a guest/customer service-oriented field (U.S Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2006-7).

The hospitality industry seeks to employ supervisors with a good personality and positive attitude, who will enjoy serving the guests/customers. Richardson (2010) confirms that these organisations use their employees and supervisors as a mechanism to gain advantage over their competitors. Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000) add that if hospitality establishments do not have supervisors with a positive attitude towards their job, it will be impossible to provide guest/customer satisfaction and earn loyalty.

What is attitude? Attitudes can be divided into three components – *think, feel and behave*. This means that a person is in a certain state to respond in a particular way, favourable or unfavourable to an object, behaviour, person, institution or event. Understanding the attitude of a supervisor is important, as it could explain and predict their behaviour. For hospitality organisations and their managements it is important to understand the attitude of their workforce, as studies indicate that employment in the hospitality industry is not seen as a long-term career. This is especially true when employees and managers are in possession of degrees or diplomas. Qualified supervisors leave the industry due to low job satisfaction and the absence of motivating factors (Kusluvan and Kusluvan, 2000; Mullins, 1994).

Studies indicate that there are fundamental and major differences in the work values of the three generations present in the hospitality workforce (Chen and Choi, 2008 Sirias, Karp and Brotherton, 2007). Members from the younger generation (Generation Y) are gradually filling managerial positions vacated by Baby Boomers and Generation Xers. Due to the diversity and the generational diversity in the workforce it is vital for hospitality organisations and their managements to have an understanding of the work value differences as well as the similarities between older and younger managers. Work-related constructs of the supervisors from the three generations could differ depending upon the nature of the work, as well as the departments in which they are working (Chen and Choi, 2008).

The 'value systems', including the work values of the three generations in the workforce, are important to organisations as these have an impact on an individual's work related behaviour. Research shows that 'work values' have been identified as the critical variables in an employee's career development process (Chen and Choi, 2008). Sirias *et al.* (2007) note that an individual's work habits start developing in their early teen years and the

economic and political climate prevailing during those developing years could influence an individual's work values. A person's work values could change with maturity, but generational experiences tend to have a stronger influence on these values. As work values will reveal preferences and beliefs that will indicate the factors that should satisfy an employee's career choices, these will affect their job behaviour. Work values should not be confused with job attitude. Values are seen as the end-values regarding satisfaction, quality or the rewards employees seek from their work. There are four unique work value dimensions perceived by the hospitality supervisor, namely comfort and security, professional growth, personal growth and work environment. By satisfying the work value dimensions, personal and professional growth, hospitality organisations and their management could increase long-term employee retention, as well as establishing a satisfied professional managerial workforce (Chen and Choi, 2008). The supervisor is the person who is responsible for managing people, who in turn are responsible for making products and delivering services (Miller, Walker and Drummond, 2002).

Methodology

A survey research approach was followed and the research was conducted through self-administered questionnaires.

Research instrument

The questionnaire was based on a 'performance standards' document which is used by one of the largest hotel chains in South Africa. The 'performance standard' document is used in the context of training, development and skills building of staff. This 'performance standards' document is based on the concept of *"leadership pipeline"* – how to build the leadership-powered company. Major organisations constantly headhunt 'stars' from other organisations. Recruiting employees for management positions could suggest that the leadership pipeline in a specific organisation is dysfunctional, because internal training, mentoring and other developmental programmes are not keeping the pipeline full (Charan *et al.* 2001). The questionnaire consists of questions and statements related to five performance dimensions (Leadership and people, Guest and relationship, Financial and business, Management and operations and Innovation and improvement) on how respondents perceive their own experience to be able to perform in their job as a supervisor and to reach the organisational goals (Table 1), as well as a section gathering biographical details of the respondent. The reason for the demographic profile was to determine the age group, gender and level of education of supervisors currently working in the industry.

To achieve the required results through and with others, influencing skills are critical. Supervisors who are skilled influencers are clear and firm about the outcomes they need to reach (Yemm, 2008). An even scale of 1 – 6 was used, with 1 being not important and 6 always important. The reason for presenting respondents with an even number of response categories was to compel respondents to 'lean' towards one end or the other (Bradburn, Sudman and Wansink, 2004).

It is important to determine whether respondents lean towards the same competencies, as this will provide the researcher with relevant information regarding knowledge, skills and behaviour that are required of a supervisor. A combination of these competencies could create a competitive advantage for any hospitality organisation (Jauhari, 2006). If a link between specific competencies is found, organisations will be able to develop and use selection techniques that have greater validity and reliability (Worsfold, 1989; Jauhari, 2006). To improve reliability of data during this study the researcher chose the option of pilot-testing

Table 1: Summary of the measurement instrument (Importance of experience regarding the five performance dimensions and attributes to reach organisational goals)

VARIABLE (PERFORMANCE DIMENSIONS)	SUBSCALES/ATTRIBUTES
Leadership and people performance	Vision, values and goals Team performance Skills level of self and staff (training and coaching)
Guests and relationship performance	Guests' satisfaction measures and indicators Guests' needs and service Subordinate and manager relations Suppliers/stakeholders/customer liaison
Financial and business performance	Quantity/volume of work Quality and turnaround time Product and service promotion Cost awareness and expenditure
Management and operational performance	Staff and resource planning Execution review and corrective action Process, systems, standards, protocols, procedures – implementation, audit and compliance
Innovation and improvement performance	Improvements to standards Share ideas and provide relevant feedback Continual improvement

Data collection and data analysis

Convenience sampling, comprising a population of hospitality supervisors working in hotels in South Africa was used. Six major hotel chains participated in this study. The researcher cannot provide a total number of respondents to whom the questionnaire was distributed to as some of the hotels chains did not provide that information. Responses were received from 141 hospitality supervisors.
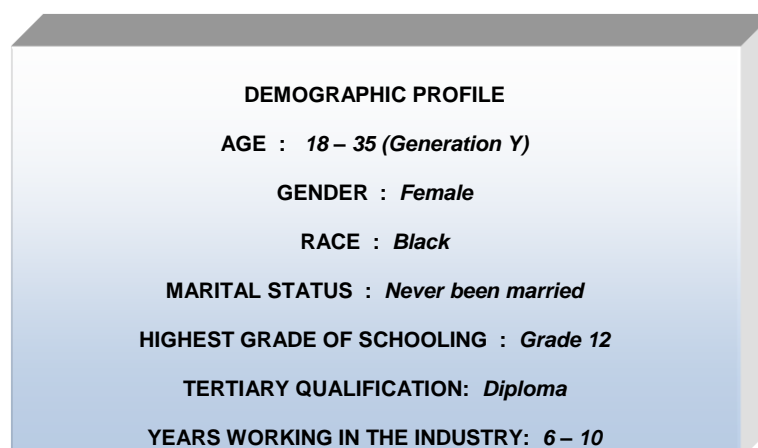
The researcher relied on descriptive and inferential statistical procedures to analyse the quantitative data. The results of the study yielded a demographic, as well as a skills profile. Exploratory factor analysis was used to measure the perceptions of respondents regarding the supervisor's personal experience, knowledge and skills required to achieve organisational goals. Based on the results, a demographic profile of a supervisor currently occupying this position in South Africa was identified, as well as the importance of experiences.

Results and discussion

Demographic profile
Collecting the demographic characteristics from the sample group indicated to the researcher the type of person currently occupying the position of supervisor in the hospitality industry. See figure 1 for a summary of the demographic profile

Figure 1: Demographic profile of the supervisor currently working in the hospitality industry in South Africa

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

AGE : *18 – 35 (Generation Y)*

GENDER : *Female*

RACE : *Black*

MARITAL STATUS : *Never been married*

HIGHEST GRADE OF SCHOOLING : *Grade 12*

TERTIARY QUALIFICATION: *Diploma*

YEARS WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY: *6 – 10*

The supervisor's own experience regarding the five performance dimensions to reach organisational goals

The subscales for the five performance dimensions were obtained by calculating the mean of the items indicated by previous research to add on to each of the subscales or factors. For the performance dimension, leadership and people performance, the mean calculation was done only if at least three of the five items (subscales) had valid values. For the second performance dimension, Guest and relationship performance, the mean calculation was done only if all three of the items had valid values. To ensure reliability, a decision not to calculate item 2.17 as part of the abovementioned performance dimension was made. For the performance dimensions, namely Financial and business and Management and operational, the mean calculation was done only if at least three of the four items (subscales) had valid values. For the fifth performance dimension, Innovation and improvement, the mean calculation was done if at least four of the six items (subscales) had valid values. The five performance dimensions are presented in table 2. All, but two, performance dimensions demonstrate acceptable internal consistency as illustrated by Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics: Importance of experience in achieving performance dimensions

PEFORMANCE DIMENSIONS	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Importance of Leadership and people performance to accomplish organisational goals	140	3.20	6.00	5.0721	.70660
Importance of Guest and relationship performance to accomplish organisational goals	140	3.33	6.00	**5.4738**	.58227
Importance of Financial and business performance to accomplish organisational goals	139	3.25	6.00	5.1385	.66769
Importance of Management and operational performance to accomplish organisational goals	139	2.75	6.00	4.9155	.73509
Importance of Innovation and improved performance to accomplish organisational goals	140	2.83	6.00	5.0321	.69683
Valid N (list wise)	139				

Respondents indicated that having experience, as well as knowledge and skills regarding Guest and relationship performance, with a mean of 5.478, is the most important dimension needed when delivering a service. Commitment to service quality depends on employees as they are part of the product and service delivered by a hospitality establishment (Presbury *et.al,* 2005)*.* Understanding a guest's expectations could offer supervisors effective and efficient solutions when delivering a service (Moshin and Lockyer, 2010). Kamdampully (2006) adds that it is getting more difficult to provide product differentiation, therefore hospitality organisations are forced to compete on the basis of service.

Guests'/customers' loyalty to a hospitality organisation relies more on service delivered, therefore service is no longer merely an add-on, but should be seen as an essential component of any hospitality business. According to Bharwani and Butt (2012) the hospitality industry is a human resource-centric industry, in which managers and employees fulfil a crucial role as they become part of the service product. They will be responsible for projecting the image of the hospitality organisation. Thus the role of the supervisor depends on the employees of the organisation to deliver quality service commensurate with the needs, wants and expectations of their guests.

The second important performance dimension regarding the supervisory experience, knowledge and skills needed to achieve organisational goals, is Financial and business performance with a mean of 5.139. Hospitality organisations depend on return business and especially on word-of-mouth recommendations. For these organisations to remain competitive and financially viable the importance of providing quality service to meet guests' /customers' expectations is increasing and has become a strategic issue. Establishments need to re-invent themselves by reducing costs and enhancing guests'/customers' satisfaction (Presbury *et al.*, 2005).

Leadership and people performance with a mean of 5.072 is the third important dimension relating to supervisory experience, knowledge and skills needed to achieve organisational goals. The ability to influence employees to willingly accept guidance, soliciting followers and to be able to influence them in setting and achieving organisational goals are characteristics that make a supervisor a leader. Supervisors are seen as formal leaders as they are formally appointed by the organisation to this position. In general, it could be said that if a hospitality supervisor has high expectations, employees are likely to be highly productive in the organisation (Rue and Byars, 2004). Unfortunately organisations have the tendency to promote their employees to supervisory level with the expectation that they have the knowledge and skills to handle the position of a supervisor, whereas they need the knowledge and skills to handle that particular level of leadership (Charan, *et al.,* 2001*)*. One challenge faced by hospitality organisations is the fact that modern workplaces are more diverse than ever before. Although three generation groups (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) are represented in industry, Generation Y was identified as the majority group currently occupying the position of supervisor. This diversity has a major impact on leadership styles followed by hospitality establishments, as there are significant differences in the value system of employees in their 20s, employees in their 40's and employees from 55 to 60.

The Innovation and improvement performance dimension (with a mean of 5.032), which has been identified as the fourth perceived supervisory experience with regard to the achievement of an organisation's goal, has become a critical issue in sustaining a competitive advantage in organisations today. Finding new ways of developing the hospitality organisation's products and services or finding a new source of supply are a few examples of innovation. These types of innovation can be viewed as key determinants for the survival or success of an organisation. However, one crucial aspect when it comes to innovation, is trust between employees and leaders (Ellonen, Blomqvist and Puumalainen, 2008). According to the authors, (2008) lateral trust (trust among employees) could be positively and negatively related to organisational innovation, meaning that employees will make an effort to be innovative by generating ideas and implementing them, if they are met with positive responses from their colleagues. Vertical trust (trust between employees and leaders) is positively related to innovation. Trust in a supervisor has a positive correlation with an employee's innovative behaviour. Employees' trust in a supervisor will create an innovation-supportive culture due to the fact, that trust enables a person to take risks without the fear of failure. As organisations no longer rely or support knowledge work only, but demand entrepreneurship, decision-making and speed of action from their employees, one can expect that institutional trust will support an organisation's actions. To create a culture of innovation, individuals, teams and management should be given the opportunity to come up with new ideas. This can only be done by establishing interpersonal and impersonal organisational trust.

The supervisor's own experience regarding the attributes related to the five performance dimensions to reach organisational goals

The attributes (subscales) linked to each of the five performance dimensions were investigated to determine which of these attributes could be identified by respondents as always important, or extremely important, factors to achieve the goals in the hospitality organisation. Table 3 is a summary of the supervisors' response to questions and statements on how they rated the attributes in the workplace.

Table 3: Summary of the performance dimensions rated as the most important attributes according to the experience of the supervisor

VARIABLE (PERFORMANCE DIMENSIONS)	SUBSCALES/ATTRIBUTES	Always important attribute chosen by the respondents %	Mean
Leadership and people performance	Vision, values and goals Team performance Skills levels of self and staff (training and coaching)	63.6 52.1 37.4	5.41 5.24 5.06
Guest and relationship Performance	Guest satisfaction measures and indicators Guest needs and service Subordinate and manager relations Suppliers'/stakeholders'/customer liaison	66.0 66.4 55.3	5.56 5.53 5.33
Financial and business performance	Quantity/volume of work Quality and turnaround time Product and service promotion Cost awareness and expenditure	47.1 56.8 43.2	5.20 5.39 5.10
Management and operational performance	Staff and resource planning Execution review and corrective action Process, systems, standards, protocols, procedures – implementation, audit and compliance	49.6 51.1 58.6	5.11 5.20 5.39
Innovation and improvement performance	Improvements to standards Share ideas and provide relevant feedback Continual improvement	- 46.4 45.7 48.6	- 5.12 5.29

As a scale of 1 – 6 was chosen to measure the importance of each attribute (subscale), all mean scores of 5.0 and above are rated as most important, or as extremely important, attributes by respondents to perform their duties in a hospitality establishment. Two of the attributes relating to the performance dimension Guest and relationship show the highest mean score. In both cases 66% of the respondents rate guest satisfaction measures and indicators, and guest needs and service as always important. The attribute vision, values and goal relating to the performance dimension Leadership and people, is also identified as an important attribute when performing supervisory duties

Mean scores regarding the attributes (subscales) relating to the performance dimension, Innovation and improvement, however, indicate some of the lower overall mean scores. A maximum of 40.3% of respondents reported that improving standards in the organisation or sharing ideas and providing relevant feedback to their employees, peers or management, are important attributes when performing their duties. See table 4.

Table 4: **Summary of the performance dimensions linked to the less important attributes according to the experience of the supervisor**

VARIABLE (PERFORMANCE DIMENSIONS)	SUBSCALES/ATTRIBUTES	Always important attribute chosen by respondents %	Mean
Innovation and improvement performance	Improvements to standards	35.5, 40.3	4.80
	Share ideas and provide relevant feedback	37.9	4.99

Although not depicted in the tables it was documented that the lowest mean score (3.99) linked to the attribute staff and resource planning, which forms part of the Management and operational performance dimension is a surprising outcome. Various authors have categorised the complex work of the supervisor into four functions of supervision, namely planning, organising, leading and controlling. Planning is seen as the most important function of supervision. It involves formulating effective means to achieve the work that needs to be done by the team of employees (Smit, *et al.,* 2008; Rue and Byars, 2007).

Exploratory factor analysis regarding the supervisor's experience to achieve organisational goals

Questions and statements used to measure the perceptions of respondents regarding a supervisor's experience, knowledge and skills to achieve the organisation's goals, were examined by subjecting the items to Principle Axis Factoring (PAF) using SPSS20.

The research variables of interest include 23 questions representing different aspects imperative to achieving goals of the organisation. Prior to the performing of PAF, the suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed. The relationships among the 23 variables were measured on a scale of 1 – 6. The importance participants attached to the different aspects was investigated by using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure that the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticy were not violated. Inspection of the correlation matrix results (Pearson Correlation Coefficients) confirmed the presence of many coefficients of 0.3 and above. The factorability of the correlation matrix was further supported by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was 0.879, which exceeded the recommended minimum value was 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) that reached significance p<001. Using only 21 items revealed the presence of four factors with eigenvalue exceeding 1, cumulatively explaining 49,02% of the variance in the data after rotation. Inspection of the scree plot revealed an inflection point at the sixth factor. Using Catell's (1966) scree test, it was decided to retain an additional factor with an eigenvalue of 0.992 for further investigation. One of these factors consisted of one single item. For ease of interpretation and to assess the scientific utility of the five uncovered factors, Varimax rotation was used to demonstrate a simple structure (Thurstone,1947). Each of the five factors were supported a number of strong loadings with acceptable internal consistency as illustrated by Cronbach's Alpha coefficients.

Orthogonal rotation was chosen since the analytical procedure was better developed than thoseof Oblique rotation. Varimax rotation was chosen since it results in a clearer separation of factors. See Table 5.

Table 5: Rotated Factor Matrix: Principal axis factoring with Varimax rotation (Kaiser Normalization)

Section B: Questions and statements	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
2.15_The supervisor should provide technical skills and instruct the team on the execution of daily operations in the department	.688				
2.11_A positive teamwork environment should be established to ensure effective results in the execution of the daily operations	.646		.498		
2.10_A supervisor should encourage the team to put forward suggestions to improve current operational standards	.599				
2.14_Team efficiency and effectiveness should be monitored continually	.540				
2.13_The team to should be motivated to achieve product and service promotion targets	.488				
2.16_A positive teamwork environment leading to enhanced employee performance should be created by the supervisor	.477				.436
2.21_Formal upward (from lower- to middle- to top management) communication as a means to achieve successful performance development should be in place		.678			
2.20_The supervisor should aim to improve continually on the standard of work delivered		.641			
2.18_Quality of the product or service delivered by you and your team should be a concern at all times		.608			
2.17_The supervisor needs to establish sound relationships with suppliers, guests (customers) and stakeholders		.534			
2.22_Downward (from top-, to middle- to lower management) communication, as a means to ensure successful performance development needs to be in place		.505			
2.19_There should be performance development with regard to the successful execution of your job		.468			
2.9_Staff and resource plans should be in place. These include a staff roster, stock control, availability of equipment and workflow			.641		
2.4_The supervisor needs to maintain certain standards relating to systems, processes, services, solutions and assets in the work environment			.554		
2.6_Measurable objectives which relate to the performance of the supervisor should be clearly formulated			.519		
2.8_A thorough knowledge of cost and expenditure related to daily operations is essential			.482		
2.12_The supervisor should insist on high standards of guest satisfaction			.474		
2.7_The supervisor needs to establish a relationship with employees, managers and peers as well as with other departments to whom a service is delivered			.432		
2.2_The supervisor's team has to understand a guest's needs and meet expectations				.789	
2.1_A supervisor needs to have knowledge and an understanding of the vision of the organisation that employs him/her				.727	
2.5_A supervisor should listen to and act on ideas from his/her team					.705

- Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
- Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
- Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

The subscales for the four extracted factors were obtained by calculating the mean of the items being loading on each of the factors. The fifth factor consisted of only one item and this item's values were used. For the first three factors, the mean calculation was only done if at least four of the six items loading on each one had valid values. This resulted in five actors being calculated and named: See Table 6.

- Factor 1:   Team building
- Factor 2:   Mediation
- Factor 3:   Operational facilitation and performance monitoring
- Factor 4:   Customer orientation
- Factor 5:   Encouragement of team creativity

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of the importance of experience as a supervisor for the five calculated factors

CALCULATED FACTORS	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q2_F1: Team building	138	2.83	6.00	5.0234	.78552
Q2_F2: Mediation	138	2.83	6.00	5.1558	.69619
Q2_F3: Operational facilitation and performance monitoring	140	3.00	6.00	5.1679	.69124
Q2_F4: Customer orientation	139	3.50	6.00	5.4892	.71594
Q2_F5: Encourage team creativity	139	2.00	6.00	4.7986	1.18676
Valid N (list wise)	138				

The results in general, according to Table 6, show a high mean score for all five factors. Factor 4 however has the highest mean score of 5.4892, which indicates that the respondents perceive experience to the responsibility of customer orientation as very important when performing their duties to reach organisational goals. This correlates with the results of the supervisor's own experience as well as the supervisor's perceived importance with the performance dimension Guest and relationship.

Factors 3 and 2 of Operational facilitation and performance monitoring, as well as Mediation, have mean scores of 5.1679 and 5.1558 respectively. According to the supervisor's own experience of the performance dimension, Management and operations, the outcome indicates that respondents' perceived own experience as less important in this dimension, but the factor analysis indicates that importance of experience is much higher, as this forms an important part of their daily activities. Encouragement of team creativity has the lowest mean score of 4.7896. This correlates with the supervisor's perception of personal experience regarding the importance of the dimension Innovation and improvement performance.

Conclusion

Hospitality supervisors play a strategic role in a hospitality organisation as they are the linchpin cementing the employee, guest/customer and management relationships. Their expertise will have an influence on the productivity of the employee and this in turn will have a direct influence on the level of guest/customer satisfaction and return on assets. A younger generation hospitality labour force is emerging and is currently occupying the position of supervisor. Those technical skills associated with a supervisory level in the past, are not necessarily the same skills needed by this generation to perform their duties.

The hospitality industry expects the supervisor to be a 'people person', with above-average communication skills, who is dedicated to quality and good service, is a team player, and has the ability to work efficiently under pressure. Happy guests/customers drive an organisation's business.

Results however indicate a specific ranking of the five performance dimensions and their attributes according to the experience of current supervisors in the hospitality industry in South Africa. Guest and relationship was identified as the dimension most highly rated. This is not surprising as service in the hospitality industry has been and will always be about interactions and transactions between guests and employees. Supervisors are the frontline employee that needs to know and understand their guests expectations, how to meet or even exceed these expectations. The skills profile could be used as a guideline and control mechanism for South African hospitality organisations as part of the developing and training process that supervisors have to undergo.

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