

# Managers from heaven: how do hospitality employees describe good managers?

Trishna G. Mistry

*School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of South Florida,  
Tampa, Florida, USA*

S. Kyle Hight

*Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration, Georgia State University, Atlanta,  
Georgia, USA*

Fevzi Okumus

*Rosen College of Hospitality Management, University of Central Florida, Orlando,  
Florida, USA, and*

Abraham Terrah

*School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of South Florida,  
Tampa, Florida, USA*

## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this study was to empirically investigate the characteristics of good hospitality managers and the core causes that lead to developing such characteristics.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Using a qualitative inquiry approach, 93 line-level hospitality employees were surveyed online regarding their experiences about the characteristics of good managers.

**Findings** – The research findings revealed five key themes of good managerial characteristics, including interpersonal skills, communication skills, supervisory skills, leadership skills, and positive personality and professionalism. Additionally, the root causes of these managerial characteristics were also analyzed. The good managerial characteristics were perceived to have developed from having worked under either a great manager or a terrible manager.

**Research limitations/implications** – This study advanced the literature on managerial characteristics by confirming several existing categories from the viewpoint of hospitality industry employees.

**Practical implications** – Human resource managers should be considerate of these findings in terms of recruitment, hiring, and training, development, and promotion of employees in their companies.

**Originality/value** – This is one of the first studies to analyze the perceived reasons behind the development of these characteristics.

**Keywords** Interviews, Online surveys, Good manager causes, Good manager characteristics, Good managers, Qualitative research design

**Paper type** Research paper

## Introduction

At both the supervisor and executive levels, effective management is a major contributor to the success of a hospitality firm (Liang *et al.*, 2017; Shum *et al.*, 2018). This is especially true concerning supervisory managers who oversee line-level employees, as these managers interact daily with their subordinates. A recent Gallup study concluded that employee



---

engagement relies heavily on the manager in charge, accounting for at least 70% of the difference in employee engagement (Fuller and Shikaloff, 2016). Furthermore, prior research has indicated that employees believe their managers are not adequately prepared for their role as a boss (Alexakis and Jiang, 2019; Hight *et al.*, 2019). This could contribute to the fact that turnover in the hospitality industry is historically higher than in other industries (National Restaurant Association, 2017). Thus, research on managerial effectiveness is crucial because poor management is deteriorating employee engagement and firm performance (Fuller and Shikaloff, 2016).

Research on managerial characteristics has a long history in the scholarship of organizational studies and has identified that effective managers can improve employee attitudes, improve firm performance and reduce turnover (Jiang and Alexakis, 2017; Tracey and Hinkin, 1998; Weber *et al.*, 2013). Strong managerial acumen is especially critical in the hospitality industry because hospitality employees must successfully navigate a myriad of customer needs that require both hard (i.e. technical know-how) and soft (i.e. emotional delivery) skills (Liang *et al.*, 2017; Testa and Sipe, 2012). Furthermore, enhancing positive managerial characteristics is a critical strategy in reducing employee turnover (Yang *et al.*, 2012) and improving recruitment and hiring practices (Tesone and Ricci, 2006). It has been used in hospitality education programs to produce a more competent and effective managerial workforce (Jiang and Alexakis, 2017).

Research on effective hospitality managers has gained prominence over the last 2 decades (Jiang and Alexakis, 2017). During that time, scholars have focused on essential managerial skills (Kay and Russette, 2000), views of scholar, practitioners and hospitality graduates (Gross and Manoharan, 2016; Tesone and Ricci, 2006), and the involvement of managerial skills in hospitality curriculum (Gursoy and Swanger, 2005). Researchers have also investigated managerial competencies based on different management levels (Shum *et al.*, 2018). Yet, despite this surge in research, there remains a gap in effective management characteristics in the hospitality industry. Therefore, the current study seeks to address the following shortcomings of prior research.

First, scholars have encouraged future research to be conducted on effective management skills when there is a substantial shift in either the industry or the work environment (Suh *et al.*, 2012). Prior research on generational cohorts and management skills have followed the “changing of the guard” in terms of a new generational cohort becoming more populous in the workforce, such as recent research that has focused on the emergence of Generation Y. Recently, Generation Z has begun to enter the workforce in large numbers, and they now comprise a majority of the workforce, alongside Generation Y (Goh and Lee, 2018; Sakdiyakorn and Wattanacharoensil, 2018). Most prior research has not focused on Generation Z within the context of effective managerial skills. This, coupled with the fact that Generation Xers and Baby Boomers are working past their retirement age (Sakdiyakorn and Wattanacharoensil, 2018), illustrates that managers must successfully oversee employees across four generational cohorts. Thus, new research on effective managerial skills within this business context is needed.

Second, prior research remains inconclusive about whether it is hard skills or soft skills that are more effective for managers to possess. Early studies stressed the importance of a manager’s soft skills (Chung-Herrera *et al.*, 2003), while subsequent studies touted the importance of hard skills in the workplace (Kay and Moncarz, 2004). Furthermore, industry professionals denote more importance on interpersonal competencies, while educators tend to give technical competencies higher importance (Millar *et al.*, 2010). Thus, researchers need to uncover a consensus of which characteristics are favorable in today’s business environment, to facilitate training, and to align with current education curriculums.

Third, much of the research on effective management characteristics has ignored the perspective of line-level, non-supervisory hospitality employees. Prior studies were primarily

---

conducted through the viewing lenses like that of senior management, educators, scholars and practitioners (Gross and Manoharan, 2016; Gursoy and Swanger, 2005; Tesone and Ricci, 2006). Given the high turnover in the industry, which is primarily derived from line-level employees, it seems prudent that the actual employees working under these managers be evaluated.

Fourth, the most recent study that sought to profile favorable managerial skill requirements was conducted by Suh *et al.* (2012), well before the workforce's recent demographic shift. Furthermore, their study and the majority of prior studies on effect managerial skills utilized a quantitative methodology, namely, survey-based research. Quantitative methodology, while notable for their large sample size and generalizability, often fall short when the results are broad and are not able to elucidate upon certain responses. For example, in the Suh *et al.* (2012) study, the researchers uncovered that interpersonal skills were critical for managers to possess. Furthermore, "interaction with subordinates" was found to be a sub-dimension of interpersonal skills. But, what does "interaction with subordinates" really entail? Does it refer to employee development, or that a manager gives praise to employees, or that a manager takes the time to learn about the employees' personal life? Given the change in workforce demographics, a qualitative methodology is needed to uncover the beliefs and perspectives of this workforce. Additionally, there is a lack of scholarship on the core reasons at the root of effective management characteristics. Since good managers are rare (Beck and Harter, 2014), these are important to investigate to foster the creation of more good managers and aid in developing a robust workforce in the hospitality industry.

Hence, the purpose of this study is to explore the characteristics of good managers in the hospitality industry. The first research objective of this study is to analyze positive managerial characteristics as identified by line-level hospitality employees. Furthermore, the study seeks to investigate the perceived core source for developing these characteristics among hospitality industry managers. Specifically, this study surveyed line-level hospitality employees to address these research questions:

- RQ1. According to the frontline employees, which managerial skills or characteristics describe good hospitality managers?
- RQ2. What are the perceived root causes which enabled the evolution of the preferred managerial characteristics?

This study aims to create a holistic profile of good managers and their characteristics by identifying several themes and dimensions of good managerial characteristics as identified by hospitality industry employees. The findings will benefit the scholarship on management in the hospitality literature as well as hospitality firms in recruiting and training good managers. These perceived characteristics, along with their perceived root causes, can also help hospitality educators prepare the next generation of hospitality industry managers by incorporating the findings in their curriculum.

Relevant literature from general and hospitality scholarship is analyzed and discussed in the following section. Findings regarding managerial characteristics sourced from various stakeholders' perspectives within the hospitality industry are also discussed. The qualitative research design and analysis techniques are described in the methodology section. This section is followed by findings regarding good managerial characteristics and their perceived core reasons. Additionally, theoretical and practical implications are discussed in the concluding section, followed by future research suggestions.

## Literature review

### *Managerial characteristics in general management literature*

Management competencies have been an area of scholarly interest in a variety of industries, including organizational studies, project management, and hospitality (Tracey and Hinkin,

---

1998; Beck and Harter, 2014). Characteristics of good managers have first been analyzed through the lens of leadership skills, and their behaviors typified as relations-oriented for those displaying a concern for people and task-oriented for those exhibiting a concern for production (Blake and Mouton, 1982). As macro-categories in the general management literature, the task-oriented behaviors were manifested through planning, clarifying, and monitoring, while relations-oriented behaviors included supporting, developing, recognizing, consulting, and empowering (Yukl *et al.*, 2002). Yukl *et al.* (2002) contributed to the literature to provide an additional category: change behaviors, influenced by external threats and opportunities, and comprising external monitoring, envisioning change, encouraging innovative thinking, and taking personal risks.

One of the most notable taxonomies of managerial behaviors in generic management literature was developed by Yukl (1990), including 14 managerial categories, and which was further developed into the Managerial Practices Survey (MPS) scale (Tracey and Hinkin, 1998). This scale, created to integrate several previous empirical and theoretical studies on effective managerial behaviors, had significant overlap with transformational leadership competencies, which is initially characterized by the motivation of employees by attracting ideals and higher moral values (Bass and Avolio, 1994). This, then, suggests that soft interpersonal skills were of paramount importance in effective management. Additionally, Sandwith (1993) identified five competency domains for management training, including conceptual/creative, leadership, interpersonal, administrative and technical.

According to Wimbush (1999), managers' specific responsibilities involve creating and managing expectations, norms and reward systems aimed at compelling compliance behaviors from employees to achieve those expectations. A prominent area of employee behavior research is that of deviant behaviors. It can be argued that employees' behaviors are a function of influences exerted on them by managers (Hughes *et al.*, 1993; Wimbush, 1999). Displaying fairness and supportiveness to employees can help managers and organizations to reduce the incidence of employee deviant behaviors (Everton *et al.*, 2007). Hence, good management competencies include several strategies to avoid encouraging deviant behaviors among employees. Managers must create an ethical environment at work, encourage relationships based on trust and respect rather than fostering negativity or mistrusting attitudes (Litzky *et al.*, 2006). Managers must also communicate and execute fair rules and reward systems as part of their corporate climate. Furthermore, discouraging and reprimanding of deviant behaviors has also been documented in the generic management scholarship as an attractive managerial competency.

Beck and Harter (2014) used a relevant Gallup study to enumerate the core competencies required for being a good manager. They blame the lack of availability of required talent for becoming a good manager for the scarcity of great management candidates. The taxonomy of talents they identify comprises motivating and engaging employees, being assertive about achieving outcomes, creating an environment of transparency and accountability, building a culture of trust, and making productive decisions based on just motives instead of political ones.

#### *Managerial characteristics in hospitality management literature*

Siu (1998) identified 11 competencies for hospitality managers, which include leadership, communication, team building, team membership, results orientation, personal drive, planning, efficiency, commercial concern, decision-making and customer concern. Communication was regarded as the most critical managerial competency overall. Along with conceptual, interpersonal, administrative and technical managerial competencies, leadership skills and capabilities were also found to be important characteristics of effective managers in hospitality (Sandwith, 1993; Kay and Russette, 2000). Managerial hard skills can

be assimilated to task-oriented competencies gained through education and training, while soft skills are exhibited with effective communication and interaction with employees and customers (James and James, 2004). Even though this set of skills (hard vs soft) are both important for hospitality managers, soft competencies have been assessed in the literature as more essential than hard competencies (Christou, 2002; Sisson and Adams, 2013). Also, there is a consensus in the literature regarding the importance of human resource skills as a critical competency for hospitality managers (Suh *et al.*, 2012).

Through their leadership-competency model for the lodging industry, Chung-Herrera *et al.* (2003) identified eight categories of managerial competencies, including self-management, strategic positioning, implementation, critical thinking, communication, interpersonal and leadership. Contrary to previous studies, self-management was considered to be the most desirable skill, while leadership and communication skills were not ranked highly. The self-management managerial factor also included ethics and integrity, time management, flexibility and adaptability, and self-development dimensions (Chung-Herrera *et al.*, 2003). Further highlighting a changing priority, Kay and Moncarz (2004) identified human resources management competencies as being more critical in comparison to marketing, financial management and information technology competencies. Knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) in terms of information technology were also considered core beneficial traits for lower-level management. In terms of senior executives, financial knowledge also surfaced as an essential competency in the hospitality context (Kay and Moncarz, 2004).

Tesone and Ricci (2006) investigated the managerial competencies that were deemed critical from the perspectives of practicing managers themselves. Their study identified three major categories consisting of knowledge (professional image, comprehension of performance standards and realistic job/career expectations), skills and abilities (emphasizing teamwork, listening skills, verbal and writing skills, empathy with others, guest/customer services), and attitudes (pride of service, prioritizing needs of others over needs of self, preference for seeking possibilities, and empathetic tendencies). Being able to work as a team member and effectively communicate was given high importance in addition to putting others' needs in front of their own. Integrating existing literature and using an empirical approach, Petkovski (2012) found "energy, mobility, self-confidence, originality and creativity, communication skills and ability to set and track goals" (p. 91) to be highly ranked managerial characteristics in the hospitality and tourism industries. These findings further highlight the inconsistency among micro categories while maintaining the macro-categories of the task and relation-based competencies as being crucial for defining good managers.

Sisson and Adams (2013) investigated crucial managerial competencies that must be included in hospitality management curriculums based on different hospitality industry sectors. Their analysis suggested that 86% of the competencies that were identified as crucial for a good hospitality industry manager related to possessing and enhancing soft skills. There was relatively high overlap in terms of competencies identified as important for managers of various industry sectors, including lodging, food and beverage, entertainment, etc. Hence, soft skills were believed necessary within a variety of job settings. Furthermore, incorporating a human resources management perspective in identifying the critical soft skills, Weber *et al.* (2013) recognized performance management and leadership as the most important soft skills required by hospitality managers. Although the literature is extensive in terms of managerial competencies, a majority of the studies have assessed characteristics of good and effective managers from the standpoint of managers, failing at including a broader perspective from other stakeholders, i.e. employees.

#### *How do different stakeholders view managerial characteristics?*

A prominent stream of research within the realm of management characteristics has included comparison studies between different stakeholder perspectives of such characteristics.

---

Millar *et al.* (2010) conducted interviews with hospitality professionals and educators and highlighted discrepancies in terms of management competencies within the model, including five categories of conceptual, leadership, interpersonal, administrative, and technical. They found that industry professionals focus more importance on interpersonal competencies, while educators tend to give technical competencies higher importance. These gaps were more evident in the lodging industry as compared to the food and beverage industry (Millar *et al.*, 2010).

Jiang and Alexis (2017) conducted a comparison study between hospitality industry managers and students and found significant differences in the perceived importance of various managerial competencies. Managers ranked willingness to learn and being able to work in a team environment more highly than students. In contrast, the latter ranked time management skills and hospitality industry knowledge as more important than the former did. However, Riggs and Hughey (2011) undertook a similar comparison of the perceptions of effective managerial competencies between hospitality students and hospitality management professionals and found limited differences in categories and competencies. These inconsistencies in findings further highlight the disagreement in scholarship about meaningful and relevant managerial competencies.

In an attempt to highlight best practices in employee development, Costen *et al.* (2010) highlighted the need to customize the managerial competencies deemed ideal to the company's specific requirements or business unit. They suggest creating a list of core competencies critical for effective leadership in the particular organization to be used to measure employees' managerial potential and further create a tailored development plan for career mapping (Enz and Siguaw, 2000). Employee development and leadership potential has been included in several effective management competency lists and must be advanced further by adapting it to the needs of the industry, sector, and organization. Moreover, Johanson *et al.* (2011) conducted a review of the evolving competencies for hospitality industry leaders over 25 years. By analyzing various studies in different hospitality industry sectors, they found the knowledge of core functionalities of management, including recruiting, training, and customer satisfaction, as highly essential competencies of hospitality industry managers. Furthermore, motivation and communication skills, along with customer relations, were cited as important themes in their review as well (Johanson *et al.*, 2011).

Relating the management characteristics to leadership styles, Testa and Sipe (2012) sought to identify managerial characteristics based on service leadership in the hospitality industry. Their study concluded three broad leadership dimensions, including business savviness (managing the business), people savviness (interacting with others), and self-savviness (managing self). Suh *et al.* (2012) confirmed findings from previous studies through their research, identifying six factors -interpersonal skills, supervisory skills, hospitality skills, leadership, communication skills, and food and beverage management skills as being important competencies for the hospitality industry managers. In particular, listening skills were deemed as the most important within communication skills, confirming previous research. Furthermore, their study also highlighted the importance of understanding cultural variations by knowing a second language.

Managerial characteristics can also be assessed from the lens of hospitality workforce demographics characteristics, which has been a commonly recurring but yet under-represented theme in the literature (Baum *et al.*, 2016; Baum, 2010; Lucas and Jeffries, 1991; Solnet *et al.*, 2012). This consideration is pertinent because demographic and generation changes always have had an impact on the hospitality workforce (Goh and Lee, 2018). For instance, the past decade has witnessed a paradigm shift, denoted by the incursion of younger generations, including Millennials and Generation Z staff (Lancaster and Stillman, 2010), occurring at the time when the Baby Boomers generation is retiring (Gupta, 2019).

---

A report from the American Hotel and Lodging Association indicates that Millennials are projected to account for 44% of the country's workforce in 2020 and assessed that this group would represent the dominant generation within the next five years (AHLA, 2020). Individuals from the primary generational cohorts differ fundamentally; as they belong to different eras, their views regarding managerial competencies are also different according to the given generation. In this context, it is relevant to include understanding Millennials and Generation Z perspectives of managerial competencies and characteristics as they represent today a substantial part of the hospitality workforce. This perspective is missing in the literature, pointing out the need for an updated inquiry of managerial characteristics as perceived by the current hospitality workforce.

Understanding the characteristics of these generational cohorts is a relative viewing angle in the discussion about good and effective managerial characteristics. By definition, Millennials are those individuals born between 1981 and 1994, while Generation Z represents the ones born after 1995. They come after Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980, and Baby Boomers born between 1946 and 1964 (Marzullo, 2019). For Millennials, relationship with managers is one of the most important motivation factors in the workplace (Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Kim *et al.*, 2009; Millar *et al.*, 2014). They desire to perceive support from managers in terms of training, tools, processes and materials necessary for success (Frye *et al.*, 2020). In terms of managerial preferences, Generation Z individuals desire a leadership figure at the workplace rather than a mentor as compared to other generations (Peterson, 2014). Nonetheless, both generations usually expect high levels of interaction with their managers (Jenkins, 2019). Yet, they could encounter difficulties in performing well in collaborative environments, which suggests that they may need guidance regarding their interpersonal skills at the workplace (Goyette, 2019).

General management and hospitality industry literature have taken a more mutually inclusive approach to research regarding managerial competencies and managerial characteristics; however, they are separate inquiries. By definition, managerial competencies are concerned with the ability to perform the essential tasks of being a manager (Siu, 1998). Competency models, hence, typically measure the skills and abilities required to perform a specific job (Chung-Herrera *et al.*, 2003). These competencies are usually related to performance and human resources-based outcomes such as recruitment and selection, performance appraisals, reward systems, and career development (Chung-Herrera *et al.*, 2003). However, a mastery of competencies does not always guarantee performance; this can be explained current state of competency literature is more reflective of management's perspective at the expense of employees' vistas (Graham and Tarbell, 2006).

Nonetheless, a critical viewpoint on the managerial inquiry is regarding the characteristics of good managers that are deemed desirable by the employees subordinate to them. This is in addition to the competencies deemed desirable by the organization regarding the managers' performance. Consequently, this study aims to uncover employees' perspectives on good management characteristics and competencies. In short, it is evident from the existing literature on managerial characteristics in general management as well as the hospitality industry that managerial characteristics are fluid and have evolved. There is a lack of consensus in findings of the most desirable management characteristics in the hospitality industry. This is partially due to the dynamically changing characteristics of the hospitality industry workforce. This research gap is further aggravated by the lack of frontline hospitality employees' perspectives in identifying ideal managerial characteristics. This study aims to fill this research gap by adopting a qualitative approach in identifying good managerial characteristics as perceived by hospitality industry employees as well as the perceived root causes behind these characteristics.

---

## Methodology

### *Research design*

This study is based on the interpretive framework of social constructivism or interpretivism. This worldview is often utilized in qualitative research, especially for phenomenological studies (Creswell, 2013). It is referred to as interpretive research because the researcher intends to interpret the meaning others have about the world (Creswell, 2013). This approach is usually used to analyze the interaction among individuals, which is the purpose of this study. Additionally, phenomenological research is used to study several individuals who have shared an experience, where the data is analyzed for significant statements, meanings, and themes (Moustakas, 1994).

Hence, an exploratory qualitative research method was chosen for this study. This method permits the collection of rich data to yield significant insights into the phenomenon under examination (Herington *et al.*, 2013). Although the characteristics of good managers have been investigated previously, they have not been investigated systematically from the perspective of non-managerial hospitality employees. A qualitative research design was deemed appropriate to address this gap because it provided a systematic exploration of the good managerial characteristics as deemed important by line-level hospitality employees.

### *Sample and data collection*

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to recruit participants (Creswell, 2014) who had ample knowledge and experience working in the hospitality industry. A purposive sampling technique was chosen so the participants could provide detailed and valuable information about their perceptions of good managers (Babbie, 2016). Hospitality industry employees with at least 12 months of work experience were sampled for this study. Alumni from a major university in the Southeastern United States were first approached to participate in this study (Hight *et al.*, 2019). 155 alumni who had graduated no longer than 12 months prior to the data collection were contacted via email for this study. Recent alumni were chosen to include an understanding of Millennials and Generation Z perspectives of managerial competencies and characteristics, as they represent an extensive part of the hospitality workforce today. The snowballing technique was used to recruit additional participants linked to the alumni that were initially recruited (Zikmund *et al.*, 2013). The participants were asked to share the study with other eligible employees in the hospitality industry following the snowballing technique. Purposive sampling, along with the snowballing recruitment technique, allowed for the recruitment of highly appropriate experienced employees to provide their perspectives on good managerial characteristics (Bogicevic *et al.*, 2018). The participants were recruited from various hospitality industry sectors, including lodging, food and beverage, and attraction management, to conduct an overall exploration of effective management characteristics and their sources in the industry.

To collect the data, the researchers conducted qualitative surveys with hospitality industry employees. Asynchronous online surveys were used for this study because they permit the participants to respond to the questions at their own pace and convenience while maintaining the anonymity of the respondents (Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015). Furthermore, conducting surveys online and asynchronously could help to reduce power bias, which has been found in previous studies where respondents knew that their manager had given researchers approval to approach the staff (Janghorban *et al.*, 2014). Thus, this method allowed the respondents to answer the survey questions without worry about their manager's knowledge that employees were participating in the survey. In other words, the respondents may have felt inclined to unduly praise their manager if they believed that their manager knew about the survey questions. Online surveys have been known to cause some limitations, such as a delay in receiving data and a lack of social cues, especially with



---

follow-up questions (Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015). However, since the nature of this research was not time-sensitive, and only two major questions were asked, these limitations did not hinder the quality of the data for this study.

The link to the qualitative survey was shared with hospitality industry employees who were recruited for this study. Using a qualitative data collection approach, open-ended questions regarding the management qualities deemed desirable by hospitality industry employees based on their previous and current experiences were included in the online survey. The following questions were asked:

- (1) Think about the best manager you have had so far and explain why she/he is (was) the best manager. Describe the characteristics that make him/her the best manager you have had so far.
- (2) In your opinion, how or why did this person become a good manager? What are the actual reasons she/he has become a good manager?

Hence, participants were asked to describe their “best managers” based on their previous and/or current experiences and also why they became a good manager. Additional demographic information was also collected during these online surveys.

#### *Data analysis*

Responses from both open-ended questions were analyzed independently from each other. The first step in analyzing the qualitative data was open coding to obtain a broad idea of good managerial characteristics from hospitality employees’ perspectives. Information provided by the respondents about their managers was analyzed and divided under different titles. Open coding was used to identify the major themes and categories from each question independently. Then, axial coding was used to identify subthemes from the major themes by grouping them based on each broad group (Creswell, 2013). The qualitative survey data were coded separately by two researchers and verified for consistency by performing members’ consensus (Yang *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, the researchers developed a link between good managers’ characteristics and the perceived root causes behind these characteristics by comparing the responses. Due to the qualitative nature of the data collected, the responses were rich enough with information to facilitate such a comparison and linkage.

#### **Findings**

The final sample included data collected from 93 employees working in the hospitality industry. The participants were approximately 75% female and 25% male, which aligns with the current hospitality industry demographics (Baum and Cheung, 2015). Additionally, a majority of the population (79.6%) was under the age of 30, in line with the Millennial and Generation Z focus of this study (Goh and Lee, 2018). The demographic makeup of the participants is included in Table 1. The research findings are presented under two areas: managerial characteristics and core reasons for being a good manager.

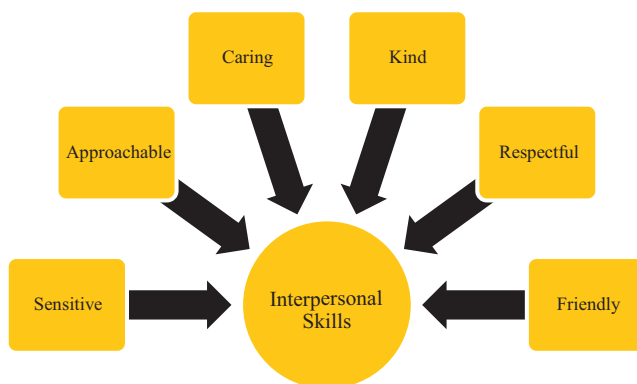
#### *Managerial characteristics*

Five main categories of closely related managerial characteristics emerged from the data analysis. They are interpersonal skills, communication skills, supervisory skills, leadership skills, and a positive personality and professionalism.

*Interpersonal skills.* The first category of good managerial characteristics was interpersonal skills, including qualities such as approachability, understanding, sensitivity, caring, kindness, respect and friendliness. Figure 1 highlights the main themes of interpersonal skills. This category enlisted some of the most common qualities that were

	<i>n</i>	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	24	25.8
Female	69	74.2
Total	93	100
<i>Age</i>		
20–29	74	79.6
30–39	15	16.1
40–49	1	1.1
50–59	3	3.2
Total	93	100
<i>Race</i>		
Black/African American	4	4.3
Asian	2	2.2
Hispanic or Latino	20	21.5
Pacific Islander	1	1.1
White/Caucasian	58	62.4
Other	8	8.6
Total	93	100

**Table 1.** Demographic details of respondents



**Figure 1.** Interpersonal skills

perceived by hospitality employees as crucial in a good manager. The idea of an approachable manager resonated well with hospitality industry employees, with one respondent mentioning, “When you go to her to ask a question, she always makes you feel welcomed and will answer any question and give you her full attention.” In addition to being approachable, being helpful, and willing to assist in situations of crises was also deemed important by respondents. “I always felt that I could go and talk to her about any problem or concern I had, and she would do her best to assist me” was a sentiment described by a respondent in stressing the importance of being approachable and helpful.

Furthermore, being caring and respectful were also included in the category of interpersonal skills. One respondent mentioned that it was important to express this caring sentiment to the employees by saying, “He cares about his team and works hard to show how much he cares.” Additionally, respondents also appreciated managers who respected them as equal in the workplace. One respondent stressed this by stating, “She always respects me and treats me like her partner, not her employee.” Practicing and

expressing sensitivity was also included in the category of interpersonal skills, with one respondent describing, “She makes others feel very comfortable in discussions by listening carefully and showing sensitivity to their points of view.”

Several respondents also listed acknowledgment and appreciation of a work-life balance as being a crucial aspect of being a good manager in terms of interpersonal skills. Being able to understand and accommodate employees’ needs to provide a decent work-life balance was appreciated by hospitality employees. One respondent mentioned, “He understands work-life balance and is an amazing role model.” Finally, being kind and compassionate towards the hospitality industry employees also emerged as a sub-theme of interpersonal skills. Respondents equated compassion with loyalty by noting, “Showing compassion for your employees is one of the best ways to obtain loyal employees who appreciate all the little things you do, and in turn will go the extra mile for you.”

*Communication skills.* Qualities related to communication skills included setting clear goals and expectations, desiring and valuing employee feedback, providing positive criticism, and providing an opportunity to disagree with the manager comprised of the communication skills category, as shown in Figure 2. Although this study did not specifically investigate the varying importance of good managerial characteristics among hospitality industry employees, communication skills, along with interpersonal skills, were identified most frequently as desirable qualities in a good manager. An employee noted the sheer power of communication and transfer of information by stating, “The best manager I have worked for really understood the power of teamwork and making sure everyone was on the same page. So often there is miscommunication or complete lack of communication between managers and employees, and it is obvious in operation.”

Respondents also appreciated open communication in terms of positive and negative feedback provided by their good managers. Acknowledgment of what they were doing right was just as important to employees as that of what they were doing incorrectly. One respondent observed, “Whenever something needs improvement, he finds a very good way to mention the negative with positive feedback so that you do not get discouraged in the process.” Hence, positive criticism can lead to a boost in employee morale and motivation, further benefiting the operations of the hospitality enterprise. In addition to receiving feedback from their managers, employees also appreciated a bottom-up approach of communication where they could express their opinions and ideas without fear of being reprimanded. Being able to communicate their concerns and ideas made the employees feel valued and trusted as one participant noted, “He values our opinion and takes in our feedback and truly does what he can to make changes to help us do our jobs better.”

*Supervisory skills.* The respondents also included supervisory skills as important for good managers. These are highlighted in Figure 3 and comprise hard and soft skills, both including

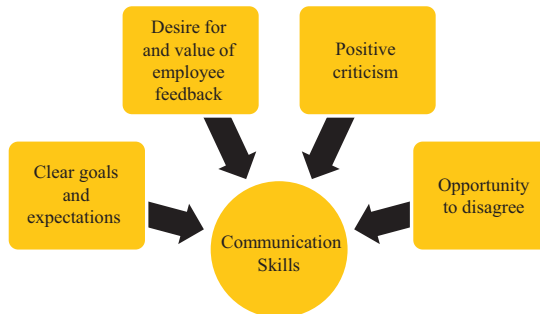


Figure 2.  
Communication skills

qualities like problem-solving abilities, delegation, fairness, organization and involvement in daily operations. The last quality was appreciated by several employees, as noted in quotes like “Without hovering, she will work alongside us when the team is busy and makes herself available when needed” and “He knew each job inside and out and helped employees.” Being fair and just to all employees was identified as a trait of good management by hospitality employees, as stressed by one respondent in expressing, “She did not have any favorite employees, and if she did, she did not show it.” Employees also appreciated managers who were organized and prepared to delegate. The following statement from one respondent about their good manager sums up this sentiment “He is very organized, he knows how to delegate wisely, and his work ethic is unmatched.”

Employees highlighted that they appreciated their managers for trusting them and not micromanaging. One participant mentioned they appreciate this quote utilized often by their manager, “I am suggesting, not setting direction,” in terms of trusting their employees. In addition to being involved with daily operations, employees cherished managers who practiced as they preached. This can be stressed by one participant mentioning, “This specific manager stood out to me” because she always leads by example rather than just giving orders like everyone else. Customer service skills and being familiar with the jobs done by their employees were also included in the supervisory skills desired in hospitality managers.

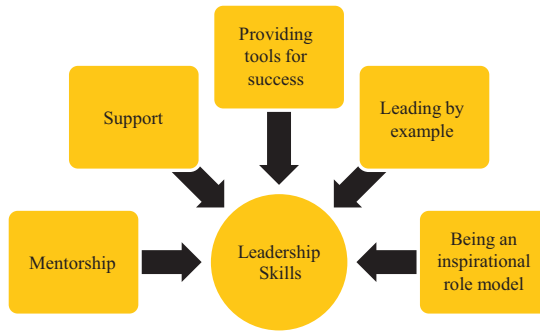
*Leadership skills.* Another important category was leadership skills comprising of qualities such as mentorship, support, and being an inspirational role model. These qualities are highlighted in Figure 4. Employees appreciated managers who provided their employees with tools to succeed in their jobs and careers and led by example. One respondent described their current manager as a “constant guiding light” in their professional lives. “She was encouraging without being fake in her demeanor” is what a respondent noted about their current good manager highlighting the critical need for genuine caring and being a true driving force for employees.

Employees valued their managers who extended their managerial expectations by also becoming exceptional leaders. In mentioning the importance of extraordinary leadership skills, one participant stated, “She is not only a boss but a leader; someone who consistently strives to maximize team and guest morale.” Leading by example in maintaining their fiduciary duties was also deemed crucial by hospitality industry employees for good managerial traits. This was highlighted by a respondent who indicated, “The ability to act honestly in all forms of business and management will allow a manager to be respected by peers, employees, and customers.” Outstanding leadership not only leads to employee



Figure 3. Supervisory skills

Figure 4.  
Leadership skills



satisfaction and morale, but also guest satisfaction as observed by hospitality industry employees.

*Positive personality and professionalism.* The final category was introduced as a result of this study and included managerial personality traits and professionalism, as shown in Figure 5. These comprise of possessing a strong character and work ethic. Additionally, positive personalities, as described by hospitality employees, also contain creativity, dedication, genuineness, confidence, enthusiasm, honesty and a positive attitude. Echoing the sentiment of several respondents regarding the importance and outcome of a positive attitude, one participant observed, “She always had an uplifting attitude, which in tough situations made it worth it.” Further summarizing the personality attributes required by good hospitality industry managers, one participant noted, “She is straight-forward, open-minded, and always confident in herself and her decisions.” Employees described such an attitude as being “contagious” and positively affecting the operational outcomes of the hospitality firm.

Employees highlighted a strong passion for the industry and in serving people as a subcategory of the ideal managerial personality. “Her undying love for the hospitality industry is honorable, and something I want to mirror in my career” was expressed by one respondent and motivated them to strive better at their jobs. This kind of passion and personality was identified as a funneling characteristic to the rest of the team and workplace. “He puts a lot of passion into his work, and it shows because he can get the job done and encourages his team to do the same,” as an observation further highlights that the motivation did not merely result in cognitive satisfaction, but also behavioral efficiency.

Figure 5.  
Positive personality  
and professionalism



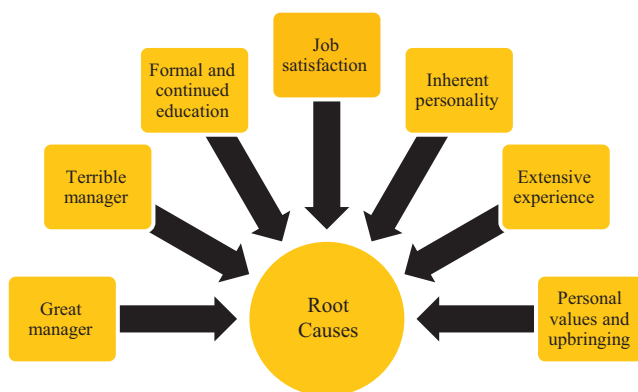
*Core reasons for being a good manager*

Hospitality employees were also asked about their perceived reasons for these effective management characteristics. In other words, this study wanted to dig deeper to find out how managers can develop such good managerial characteristics and become good managers. A variety of crucial core reasons emerged; however, these were consistently saturated. Figure 6 illustrates the different themes that emerged as the core causes of the development of good managerial characteristics.

Most respondents seemed to have very similar perceptions of the core reasons for the good managers developing these desirable characteristics. Several participants highlighted the oxymoronic idea of having worked under either an awesome manager or an awful manager themselves. The participants cited both reasons as having molded a good manager. Employees noted that their managers were trained and molded by exceptional managers, and this led to them striving to mirror their role models and becoming good managers in that process. As one participant expressed, “Good leadership begets good leadership in return.” Contrary to this idea, employees also noted that their managers had experience working under bad managers, and they strived to be different and better. “These awful managers have taught her first-hand what it can feel like to treat your employees awfully, so she decided to set out to be the opposite” was an observation made by a hospitality employee when asked to describe how their manager became a good manager.

Extensive experience in the hospitality industry also led to an empathetic evolvement of an effective manager. One respondent noted, “that their experience is what makes them so great they continue to take things that they have learned along the way and incorporate them in their everyday lives.” Longevity in the hospitality industry, coupled with formal and continued education, was also identified as core reasons for good managerial characteristics by hospitality industry employees. “Through continued education and with experience of working, they have become the manager they are today,” noted one respondent. Hence, the respondents focused on both formal education and informal growth within their positions as part of the core reasons for the foundation of good managers.

Empathizing with the employees because managers navigated the same path as the employees by “starting at the bottom” was a crucial answer to how they became good managers. “They have become a good manager because she started from the ground up and worked her way to the top” was cited as a reason for the cultivation of empathy and good managerial traits in hospitality industry managers. Respondents believed managers having trodden the same waters of the hospitality industry and developed a professional path make them more susceptible to the hard and soft skills required in the industry for good management.



**Figure 6.** Causes of good managerial characteristics

Additionally, satisfaction with and support from the company they were employed with, as well as inherent personality, personal values, and upbringing, were all core sources of creating a good manager. Respondents believed the idea of continuing to work under good management and obtaining the necessary support and backing from the organization enthused their managers to pay it forward to the frontline employees. As highlighted by the positive personality and professionalism category of good managerial characteristics previously, having an inherent personality that is aligned with a management role was also the backbone of molding into a good manager.

## Discussion

### *Conclusions*

The purpose of this study was to investigate effective managerial characteristics as identified by hospitality employees. Line-level hospitality employees were surveyed online to investigate their perceptions of good managerial characteristics. Additionally, the core reasons for the formation of these good managerial characteristics were also explored. Several conclusions can be drawn from the study findings. Five categories of management characteristics comprising of interpersonal skills, communication skills, supervisory skills, leadership skills, and a positive personality and professionalism evolved as a result of this study. Although participants were not asked to rank the categories based on importance, interpersonal skills along with communication skills were identified by a majority of the respondents, and hence ranked as extremely important.

The first research question sought to identify the characteristics of good managers in the hospitality industry as perceived by line-level employees. Not only were the findings consistent with previous research in managerial literature, but they also allowed for the emergence of a new category. On the one hand, findings of prior studies have been supported in this study: interpersonal skills (Kay and Russette, 2000; Sandwith, 1993; Suh *et al.*, 2012), communication skills (Chung Hererra *et al.*, 2003; Petkovski, 2012), supervisory skills (Suh *et al.*, 2012), and leadership skills (Chung-Hererra *et al.*, 2003; Sandwith, 1993; Weber *et al.*, 2013). On the other hand, this study allowed to unveil another category, positive personality, and professionalism, that could likely be resulting from the recent demographic shift in the hospitality workforce.

It has been assessed that interpersonal skills are more preferred by industry professionals and are critical for managers in the hospitality industry (Millar *et al.*, 2010; Suh *et al.*, 2012). According to Sandwith (1993), interpersonal competence refers to those skills needed to have effective interaction with others. In service-settings industries like hospitality and tourism, interpersonal skills are essential for managers not only in their interactions with customers but also their subordinates. Kay and Russette (2000) affirmed that essential competencies for good managers in hospitality fall within the categories of leadership and interpersonal skills. These results, along with communication skills, are also consistent with Chung-Hererra *et al.* (2003). Supervisory skills have mainly been discussed by Kay and Moncarz (2004), Raybould and Wilkins (2006), with a highlight on human resource skills' importance.

This study also investigated the perceived root causes or reasons why these managers developed good managerial characteristics as the second research question. Several causes, including having worked under a great or terrible manager themselves, emerged as a result of this study. Extensive experience in the hospitality industry and as a manager and formal and informal education were also highlighted as core causes for the formation of good hospitality industry managers as perceived by frontline employees. Hospitality industry employees had fairly consistent perceptions regarding the root causes of good managerial characteristics.

Ultimately, this study aimed at creating a profile of good managers and their characteristics as identified by hospitality industry employees. One of the main

---

contributions of this study was the uncovering of positive personality and professionalism dimension, which may be attributed to the actual composition of the hospitality workforce, predominated by Millennials and Generation Z members. Thus, the results study can be of great use for hospitality educators in training individuals towards attaining desired characteristics and practitioners that now have at disposal a profile of good managers from an employee perspective, one that matters much for organizations.

### *Theoretical implications*

The present study provides several and significant theoretical implications for the hospitality industry literature. This study identifies the major categories of good managerial characteristics from the viewing lenses of the hospitality industry employees themselves. Although managerial characteristics have been investigated in the hospitality literature, they have been investigated from various lenses of managers and educators (Jiang and Alexis, 2017; Millar *et al.*, 2010) and seldom from the perspective of hospitality industry frontline employees. This is an exciting and relevant perspective for the identification and analysis of good managerial characteristics.

This study confirmed and provided additional insights on some of the major categories found through the viewing lenses of other stakeholders like managers, students, and educators like communication and interpersonal skills. Managerial characteristics such as interpersonal skills, leadership skills, and communication skills were deemed very important by hospitality industry employees to create a good manager. However, a continual renewal of such characteristics is required in the hospitality industry due to the workforce's dynamic nature and changing demographics (Baum *et al.*, 2016). The hospitality industry workforce is continually shifting, which creates a necessity to regularly update the understanding of good managerial characteristics. Strong work ethic and customer service orientation have been identified as crucial managerial characteristics in recent times (Lou *et al.*, 2019).

Suh *et al.* (2012) combined the findings of previous research conducted in terms of good managerial characteristics and concluded six categories of characteristics. However, an updated investigation of managerial characteristics was necessary based on the updated demographic makeup of the current hospitality industry workforce. The present study advanced the literature on managerial characteristics by confirming several existing categories from the viewpoint of hospitality industry employees. Additionally, a new category of a positive personality and professionalism was also added to good managerial characteristics as a result of this study. This updated finding that contrasts with existing literature further highlights the need for a continuously renewed investigation of managerial characteristics as prescribed by Suh *et al.* (2012).

Furthermore, this study sought to characterize the root sources of good managers in the hospitality industry as perceived by frontline employees. While it is essential to understand which managerial characteristics are considered favorable by employees, this study asked respondents to opine how their managers achieved said favorable qualities. Based on social information processing theory, employees will use information derived from their work environment to influence future actions (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978). This is especially true in dyadic relationships where employees perceive strong leadership qualities within their boss (Qian *et al.*, 2020). Hence, employees with strong organizational leaders will model similar behavioral qualities in future interactions (Boekhorst, 2015; Lu *et al.*, 2019; Wang *et al.*, 2018). Given this logic, it is vital to understand how employees perceive their manager attained strong leadership qualities because they may follow a similar path in their own leadership development. This categorization is a significant leap in the scholarship on management characteristics and a major contribution of this study.

Hence, while previous literature has analyzed managerial characteristics, the core reasons behind the development of good managers have not previously been investigated.



This stream of managerial research is crucial in the hospitality and tourism industry to train and create good hospitality managers who result in effective organizational leadership (Jiang and Alexis, 2017). Good managers have been pinned at the core of several organizational benefits such as employee wellbeing (Kara *et al.*, 2013), employee creativity (Wang *et al.*, 2014), innovation (Slatten and Mehmetoglu, 2015), organization commitment, and employee turnover intention (Gatling *et al.*, 2016), and organizational citizenship behaviors (Özduran and Tanova, 2017). In addition to identifying employees' perceptions of the core reasons behind good managerial characteristics, this study identifies a linkage between said managerial characteristics and their perceived causes. Table 2 illustrates the relationship between categories of good managerial characteristics and their core causes identified by hospitality industry employees, as investigated by this study.

*Practical implications*

Hospitality organizations can benefit from this study in several ways. The role management plays in supporting the organization's goals highlights the need to hire and train managers with desirable characteristics. Human resource managers should be considerate of these findings in terms of recruitment, hiring, and training, development, and promotion of employees in their companies since a good and positive managerial environment encourage employee engagement within hospitality organizations (Huertas-Valdivia *et al.*, 2018). As highlighted by this study, interpersonal and communication skills were included in desired managerial characteristics in addition to more technical and leadership skills. Hence, the focus should be on the desired combination of both hard and soft skills when defining critical managerial characteristics. An inherent positive managerial personality was also identified as a critical managerial characteristic and hence must be considered in times of hiring and selection. Hospitality companies must deliberate on the person-job fit while hiring external employees and promoting from within. Merely possessing the technical qualifications or hard skills does not ensure the success of a good manager. Companies must ensure their potential managerial candidates possess both hard and soft skills to ensure success in a managerial role (Bharwani and Talib, 2017).

Previous research has assessed employees do not really depart from an organization but rather decide to leave their line managers (Lipman, 2015). This implies employees' perceptions of their managers is very determinant in their turnover intentions; subsequently, it can be conceived that employees having good relationships with their managers are less likely to quit than employees who would refer to their supervisors as "bad managers." Hight *et al.* (2019) reported that high turnover, low motivation, high psychological distress, and high burnout are symptoms whose cause could be traced to their managers' behaviors. That being said, this study identified interpersonal skills, communication skills, supervisory skills,

Good manager characteristics	Root causes
Interpersonal skills	Great manager; awful manager; same path; job satisfaction; company support; inherent personality
Communication skills	Great manager; awful manager; formal/continued education; the same path
Supervisory skills	Great manager; awful manager; extended experience; formal/continued education; company support
Leadership skills	Great manager; awful manager; formal/continued education; same path; job satisfaction
Positive personality and professionalism	Same path; inherent personality; personal values/upbringing

**Table 2.**  
Linking characteristics to causes

---

leadership skills, and positive personality and professionalism as characteristics of good managers.

It is of utmost importance for managers, especially in the hospitality industry, to possess strong interpersonal skills. For increased productivity, better relationships among employees on the one hand, and between employees and customers, on the other hand, hospitality managers need to build a positive work environment. Managers also need to have good communication skills to convey instructions and directions to employees in a concise manner. Not only to be good at communicating, but hospitality managers also need to display capabilities in active listening. This aspect lies in the same continuum of communication skills, as one needs to listen carefully to be able to communicate effectively.

A related benefit is the potential of considerably reducing the occurrence of misunderstandings among employees. Thus, with regard to their leadership position, hospitality managers also need to be proficient in various communication channels but also have a good understanding of verbal and emotional expressions. In such an atmosphere in which employees know that they are listened to by managers, they are more willing to collaborate and exchange ideas. Furthermore, the roles of a manager include setting tasks and leading teams towards the achievement of those tasks. Certain teams may lack clear direction and thus be ineffective. Often, supervisors have their share of fault in such situations, as their role also involves coordinating the team's activities, managing conflicts, and monitoring results. Teams whose managers perform weakly in terms of supervision are doomed to fail.

Moreover, the managerial characteristic of positive personality and professionalism may point to shifting preferences in terms of managerial competencies, driven by the growing numbers of Millennials and Generation Z individuals in the hospitality workforce. As mentioned previously, relationships with managers are among the most important motivation factors in the workplace for Millennials (Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Kim *et al.*, 2009; Millar *et al.*, 2014). For example, Millennials and Generation Z employees have indicated a preference for a better work-life balance, open communication, and a focus on overall wellbeing (Goh and Lee, 2018). Therefore, a manager displaying negativity at work as a result of their personality could have adverse effects on individual employee wellbeing and for the organization as a whole. The emergence of this factor as desired managerial characteristic in hospitality also signals Millennials and Generation Z are generations on which the future of hospitality rests. As such, their considerations must be taken into account by the business when hiring and training managers.

The current study is the first of its kind to explore the fundamental sources and reasons for the evolution of effective managerial skills in good managers in the hospitality industry as perceived by frontline employees. Hospitality companies should utilize these to develop good managers further. This study highlighted that good managerial skills usually pass down as a legacy from one good manager to another. Hence, such a positive work culture should be encouraged for the development of additional good managers. This study also highlights the importance of formal and informal training to develop good managerial characteristics. Hospitality businesses should ensure their employees are up to date on both formal and informal education and training to utilize their management potential to the fullest extent.

#### *Limitations and future research*

This study has several limitations, which offer opportunities for future research. The findings of this qualitative inquiry may not be generalized among various sectors of the hospitality industry. The study also did not focus on a particular sector, and narrow investigation by sector might lead to richer and more relevant results for the specific sector. Also, different hospitality industry sections might have different perceptions of good managers and requirements from their managers, and hence a more focused study might be necessary.

Furthermore, the differences in the definitions of competencies and characteristics posed a challenge in defining the study's purpose and outcome and linking it with current literature. Researchers should refrain from using the terms as mutually inclusive and identify the differences between the two in their studies to overcome such challenges for future research. Additionally, the use of asynchronous qualitative surveys, which is a new and non-traditional method of data collection, could have altered the quality of the findings. However, all possible precautions were taken to avoid compromising the quality of data through the use of asynchronous online surveys by ensuring that the questions were clear, concise, and not requiring any follow up questions (Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015).

The study was conducted from the perspective of frontline employees. Although employees' perceptions regarding their managers are determinants of employee outcomes such as turnover intention (Lipman, 2015), the findings must be incorporated into academic and organizational curriculum with the appropriate precaution and understanding. The next steps of the study include incorporating perceptions of human resource managers, educators, as well as executive leaders about effective managerial characteristics and their sources. These must further be analyzed for importance through an empirical investigation, thus leading to a typology of good managerial characteristics and their core causes. Several management characteristics can be empirically analyzed based on their importance, as hospitality industry employees deemed using survey-based empirical research.

## References

- Alexakis, G. and Jiang, L. (2019), "Industry competencies and the optimal hospitality management curriculum: an empirical study", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, Vol. 31 No. 4, pp. 210-220.
- American Hotel and Lodging Association (2020), *Millennials in the Hotel Industry*, available at: <https://www.ahla.com/Millennials-hotel-industry>.
- Babbie, E. (2016), *The Practice of Social Science Research*, 14th ed., Cengage Learning, Boston, Massachusetts.
- Bass, B.M. and Avolio, B.J. (1994), *Improving Organizational Effectiveness through Transformational Leadership*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, California.
- Baum, T. (2010), "Demographic changes and the labour market in the international tourism industry", in Yeoman, I., Hsu, C., Smith, K. and Watson, S. (Eds), *Tourism and Demography*, Goodfellow, London.
- Baum, T. and Cheung, C. (2015), "Women in tourism and hospitality: unlocking the potential in the talent pool", *White Paper, Launched at the Women in Tourism and Hospitality Forum in Hong Kong*.
- Baum, T., Kralj, A., Robinson, R.N. and Solnet, D.J. (2016), "Tourism workforce research: a review, taxonomy and agenda", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 60, pp. 1-22.
- Beck, R. and Harter, J. (2014), "Why good managers are so rare", Harvard business manager online, available at: <https://hbr.org/2014/03/why-good-managers-are-so-rare> (accessed March 7 2020).
- Bharwani, S. and Talib, P. (2017), "Competencies of hotel general managers: a conceptual framework", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 393-418.
- Blake, R.R. and Mouton, J.S. (1982), "Management by grid principles or situationalism: which?", *Group and Organization Studies*, Vol. 7, pp. 207-210.
- Boekhorst, J.A. (2015), "The role of authentic leadership in fostering workplace inclusion: a social information processing perspective", *Human Resource Management*, Vol. 54 No. 2, pp. 241-264.
- Bogicevic, V., Bujisic, M., Cobanoglu, C. and Feinstein, A.H. (2018), "Gender and age preferences of hotel room design", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 30 No. 2, pp. 874-899.

- 
- Bowden, C. and Galindo-Gonzalez, S. (2015), "Interviewing when you're not face-to-face: the use of email interviews in a phenomenological study", *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, Vol. 10 No. 12, pp. 79-92.
- Christou, E. (2002), "Revisiting competencies for hospitality management: contemporary views of the stakeholders", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 25-32.
- Chung-Herrera, B.G., Enz, C.A. and Lankau, M.J. (2003), "Grooming future hospitality leaders: a competencies model", *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 44 No. 3, pp. 17-25.
- Costen, W.M., Johanson, M.M. and Poisson, D.K. (2010), "The development of quality managers in the hospitality industry: do employee development programs make cents?", *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 131-141.
- Creswell, J.W. (2013), *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California.
- Creswell, J.W. (2014), *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California.
- Enz, C.A. and Siguaw, J.A. (2000), "Best practices in human resources", *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1, pp. 48-61.
- Everton, W.J., Jolton, J.A. and Mastrangelo, P.M. (2007), "Be nice and fair or else: understanding reasons for employees' deviant behaviors", *The Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 26 No. 2, pp. 117-131.
- Frye, W.D., Kang, S., Huh, C. and Lee, M.J.M. (2020), "What factors influence Generation Y's employee retention in the hospitality industry?: an internal marketing approach", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 85, 102352.
- Fuller, R. and Shikaloff, N. (2016), "What great managers do daily?", available at: <https://hbr.org/2016/12/what-great-managers-do-daily> (accessed March 7 2020).
- Gatling, A., Kang, H.J.A. and Kim, J.S. (2016), "The effects of authentic leadership and organizational commitment on turnover intention", *The Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 37 No. 2, pp. 181-199.
- Goh, E. and Lee, C. (2018), "A workforce to be reckoned with: the emerging pivotal Generation Z hospitality workforce", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 73, pp. 20-28.
- Goyette, K. (2019), Generation Z requires a different managerial approach. Here are 3 ways to elevate your boss game, available at: <https://www.business2community.com/leadership/generation-z-requires-a-different-managerial-approach-here-are-3-ways-to-elevate-your-boss-game-02241252>.
- Graham, M.E. and Tarbell, L.M. (2006), "The importance of the employee perspective in the competency development of human resource professionals", *Human Resource Management*, Published in Cooperation with the School of Business Administration, The University of Michigan and in alliance with the Society of Human Resources Management, Vol. 45 No. 3, pp. 337-355.
- Gross, M.J. and Manoharan, A. (2016), "The balance of liberal and vocational values in hospitality higher education: voices of graduates", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, Vol. 28 No. 1, pp. 44-57.
- Gupta, V. (2019), "Talent management dimensions and their relationship with retention of Generation-Y employees in the hospitality industry", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 31 No. 10, pp. 4150-4169.
- Gursoy, D. and Swanger, N. (2005), "An industry-driven model of hospitality curriculum for programs housed in accredited colleges of business: part II", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, Vol. 17 No. 2, pp. 46-56.
- Herington, C., McPhail, R. and Guilding, C. (2013), "The evolving nature of hotel HR performance measurement systems and challenges arising: an exploratory study", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, Vol. 20, pp. 68-75.

- Hight, S.K., Gajjar, T. and Okumus, F. (2019), "Managers from 'hell' in the hospitality industry: how do hospitality employees profile bad managers?", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 77, pp. 97-107.
- Huertas-Valdivia, I., Llorens-Montes, F.J. and Ruiz-Moreno, A. (2018), "Achieving engagement among hospitality employees: a serial mediation model", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 30 No. 1, pp. 217-241.
- Hughes, R.L., Ginnett, R.C. and Curphy, G.J. (1993), *Leadership: Enhancing the Lessons of Experience*, Irwin, Boston.
- James, R.F. and James, M.L. (2004), "Teaching career and technical skills in a 'mini' business world", *Business Education Forum*, Vol. 59 No. 2, pp. 39-41.
- Janghorban, R., Roudsari, R.L. and Taghipour, A. (2014), "Skype interviewing: the new generation of online synchronous interview in qualitative research", *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, Vol. 9 No. 1, p. 24152.
- Jenkins, R. (2019), How Generation Z will transform the future workplace, available at: <https://www.inc.com/ryan-jenkins/the-2019-workplace-7-ways-generation-z-will-shape-it.html>.
- Jiang, L. and Alexakis, G. (2017), "Comparing students' and managers' perceptions of essential entry-level management competencies in the hospitality industry: an empirical study", *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports and Tourism Education*, Vol. 20, pp. 32-46.
- Johanson, M., Ghiselli, R., Shea, L.J. and Roberts, C. (2011), "Changing competencies of leaders, hospitality leaders: a 25-year review", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 43-47.
- Kara, D., Uysal, M., Sirgy, M.J. and Lee, G. (2013), "The effects of leadership style on employee wellbeing in hospitality", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 34, pp. 9-18.
- Kay, C. and Moncarz, E. (2004), "Knowledge, skills, and abilities for lodging management", *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 45 No. 3, pp. 285-298.
- Kay, C. and Russette, J. (2000), "Hospitality-management competencies: identifying managers' essential skills", *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 41 No. 2, pp. 52-63.
- Kim, H., Knight, D.K. and Crutsinger, C. (2009), "Generation Y employees' retail work experience: the mediating effect of job characteristics", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 62 No. 5, pp. 548-556.
- Lancaster, L.C. and Stillman, D. (2010), *The M-Factor: Why the Millennial Generation Is Rocking the Workplace and How You Can Turn Their Great Expectations into Even Greater Results*, Tantor Media, Old Saybrook, Connecticut.
- Liang, T.L., Chang, H.F., Ko, M.H. and Lin, C.W. (2017), "Transformational leadership and employee voices in the hospitality industry", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 374-392.
- Lipman, V. (2015), *The Type B Manager: Leading Successfully in a Type A World*, Prentice Hall Press, New York, NY.
- Litzky, B.E., Eddleston, K.A. and Kidder, D.L. (2006), "The good, the bad, and the misguided: how managers inadvertently encourage deviant behaviors", *Academy of Management Perspectives*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 91-103.
- Lou, N.M., So, A.S.I. and Hsieh, Y.J. (2019), "Integrated resort employee competencies: a Macau perspective", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp. 247-267.
- Lu, J., Zhang, Z. and Jia, M. (2019), "Does servant leadership affect employees' emotional labor? A social information-processing perspective", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 159 No. 2, pp. 507-518.
- Lucas, R. and Jeffries, L. (1991), "The 'demographic timebomb' and how some hospitality employers are responding to the challenge", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 10 No. 4, pp. 323-337.

- 
- Marzullo, D. (2019), "4 Generations, 1 workforce. Understand who's who in the workplace", available at: <https://www.zenefits.com/workest/gen-z-Millennials-gen-x-baby-boomer-the-4-leading-generations-in-the-workplace/>.
- Millar, M., Mao, Z. and Moreo, P. (2010), "Hospitality and tourism educators vs. the industry: a competency assessment", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, Vol. 22 No. 2, pp. 38-50.
- Millar, C.C., Culpin, V., Kultalahti, S. and Viitala, R.L. (2014), "Sufficient challenges and a weekend ahead—Generation Y describing motivation at work", *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol. 27 No. 4, pp. 569-582.
- Moustakas, C. (1994), *Phenomenological Research Methods*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California.
- National Restaurant Association (2017), "Hospitality employee turnover rate edged higher in 2016", available at: <http://www.restaurant.org/News-Research/News/Hospitality-employee-turnover-rate-edged-higher-in>.
- Özduran, A. and Tanova, C. (2017), "Manager mindsets and employee organizational citizenship behaviours", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 589-606.
- Peterson, H., "Millennials are old news – here's everything you should know about Generation Z", available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com.au/Millennials-are-old-news-heres-everything-you-should-know-about-generation-z-2014-6>.
- Petkovski, K. (2012), "Required skills and leadership characteristics of a modern manager in tourism and hospitality", *UTMS Journal of Economics*, Vol. 3 No. 1, pp. 91-96.
- Qian, X., Zhang, M. and Jiang, Q. (2020), "Leader humility, and subordinates' organizational citizenship behavior and withdrawal behavior: exploring the mediating mechanisms of subordinates' psychological capital", *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, Vol. 17 No. 7, p. 2544.
- Raybould, M. and Wilkins, H. (2006), "Generic skills for hospitality management: a comparative study of management expectations and student perceptions", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 177-188.
- Riggs, M.W. and Hughey, A.W. (2011), "Competing values in the culinary arts and hospitality industry: leadership roles and managerial competencies", *Industry and Higher Education*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 109-118.
- Sakdiyakorn, M. and Wattanacharoensil, W. (2018), "Generational diversity in the workplace: a systematic review in the hospitality context", *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, Vol. 59 No. 2, pp. 135-159.
- Salancik, G.R. and Pfeffer, J. (1978), "A social information processing approach to job attitudes and task design", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 23 No. 2, pp. 224-253.
- Sandwith, P. (1993), "A hierarchy of management training requirements: the competency domain model", *Public Personnel Management*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 43-62.
- Shum, C., Gatling, A. and Shoemaker, S. (2018), "A model of hospitality leadership competency for frontline and director-level managers: which competencies matter more?", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 74, pp. 57-66.
- Sisson, L.G. and Adams, A.R. (2013), "Essential hospitality management competencies: the importance of soft skills", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, Vol. 25 No. 3, pp. 131-145.
- Siu, V. (1998), "Managing by competencies – a study on the managerial competencies of hotel middle managers in Hong Kong", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 17 No. 3, pp. 253-273.
- Slatten, T. and Mehmetoglu, M. (2015), "The effects of transformational leadership and perceived creativity on innovation behavior in the hospitality industry", *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism*, Vol. 14 No. 2, pp. 195-219.

- Solnet, D., Kralj, A. and Kandampully, J. (2012), "Generation Y employees: an examination of work attitude differences", *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 17 No. 3, pp. 36-54.
- Suh, E., West, J.J. and Shin, J. (2012), "Important competency requirements for managers in the hospitality industry", *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports and Tourism Education*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 101-112.
- Tesone, D.V. and Ricci, P. (2006), "Toward a definition of entry-level job competencies: hospitality manager perspectives", *International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration*, Vol. 7 No. 4, pp. 65-80.
- Testa, M.R. and Sipe, L. (2012), "Service-leadership competencies for hospitality and tourism management", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 648-658.
- Tracey, J.B. and Hinkin, T.R. (1998), "Transformational leadership or effective managerial practices?", *Group and Organization Management*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 220-236.
- Walsh, K. and Taylor, M.S. (2007), "Developing in-house careers and retaining management talent: what hospitality professionals want from their jobs", *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 48 No. 2, pp. 163-182.
- Wang, C.J., Tsai, H.T. and Tsai, M.T. (2014), "Linking transformational leadership and employee creativity in the hospitality industry: the influences of creative role identity, creative self-efficacy, and job complexity", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 40, pp. 79-89.
- Wang, Y., Liu, J. and Zhu, Y. (2018), "Humble leadership, psychological safety, knowledge sharing, and follower creativity: a cross-level investigation", *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 9, p. 1727.
- Weber, M.R., Crawford, A., Lee, J. and Dennison, D. (2013), "An exploratory analysis of soft skill competencies needed for the hospitality industry", *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism*, Vol. 12 No. 4, pp. 313-332.
- Wimbush, J.C. (1999), "The effect of cognitive moral development and supervisory influence on subordinate's ethical behavior", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 383-395.
- Yang, J.T., Wan, C.S. and Fu, Y.J. (2012), "Qualitative examination of employee turnover and retention strategies in international tourist hotels in Taiwan", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 837-848.
- Yukl, G. (1990), *COMPASS: The Managerial Practices Survey*, Author/Manus Associates, New York.
- Yukl, G., Gordon, A. and Taber, T. (2002), "A hierarchical taxonomy of leadership behavior: integrating a half century of behavior research", *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 15-32.
- Zikmund, W.G., Babin, B.J., Carr, J.C. and Griffin, M. (2013), *Business Research Methods*, 9th ed., Cengage Learning, Mason, Ohio.

**Corresponding author**

Trishna G. Mistry can be contacted at: [trishna@usf.edu](mailto:trishna@usf.edu)