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Chapter 3_Theoretical Context

3.1 Introduction

Formal education plays a crucial role in the provision of skilled and competent human resources. South Africa has developed tertiary hospitality education systems which aim at satisfying the needs of the tourism and hospitality industry, however in order for the industry to prosper it is necessary to provide for hospitality education leaders within the sector. Throughout this dissertation, the concept of as well as the need of hospitality management education will be explored, as well as the proposed schools struggle for identity.

The responsibility for developing service-oriented human resources lies not only with the hospitality organisations but also within the system of hospitality management education. In order to satisfy customers through the delivery of quality services by skilled and competent staff, an effective hospitality education system must exist.

Such a programme will provide organisations with employees who have the potential to become quality leaders. In order to examine the nature of hospitality management education, a distinction between education and training must be made. According to John Dewey (1916) an American philosopher, education is defined as *“that reconstruction or reorganisation of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience.”*

A common distinction between education and training is that education is mainly provided by institutions such as universities while training is usually provided by employers. This distinction which is the basis of the traditional view towards education and training, suggests that education is for professional and training is for the artisan or the unskilled. However, with today’s global tourist and the forthcoming demand it is widely recognised that education cannot be considered as a finite and terminal activity, while training cannot be considered as the strictly hands on approach. In today’s environment, a combination of new information technology and economic globalisation has resulted in changing the traditional view towards education and training.

The tourism market is demanding continually higher levels of performance in the face of growing economic trends and globalisation. It is therefore essential that the hospitality education programme aims at blending theory with practical experience through experiential learning and training, since they are not two independent processes, but build upon one another.



Fig. 3.1: Culinary art and customer service products

3.2 The need for hospitality management education

Hospitality management education is the teaching of hotel management and catering operations and organisations. Hospitality management education can be seen as a mixture of academic, professional and craft knowledge. Education is about change and choice, by increasing one's knowledge, understanding and skills, the ability to influence the surrounding environment is obtained, therefore allowing the individual to become a controller of change, rather than a victim of it.

Empowerment through education results in a committed student who brings with him decision-making skills which inevitably contributes toward the economy. Similarly, the greater and varied the skill of the individual, the better the person is in terms of personal skills, individuality and use for the organisation. These factors allow greater flexibility for the individual to choose his own destiny, thereby influencing the impact on his surrounding environment and advance the interests of the concerned parties.

The South African Government as well as the Tourism Industry have invested significant resources into the sector, as a result the maintenance and advancement of the hospitality industry's competitiveness in both the national and international arenas has become priority. The increasing affluence of international tourists has placed a greater demand on the African tourism industry, both in volume and standards. The impact of which has led to a need for greater professionalism within the South African hospitality sector.

This industry accommodates approximately 380 000 employees and 42 000 employers. It is organised into five sectors namely travel and tourism; conservation and tourist guiding; gaming and lotteries; sport, recreation and fitness, and hospitality.

Hospitality, the largest sub-sector in the tourism industry with 77% of employees, includes the management of events and accommodation, for example hotels and guest houses, the management of food and beverage outlets which varies from restaurants to mass catering companies, and professional cookery which focuses on specialisation in culinary art.

3.3 Education in South Africa

South Africa's investment in education has tripled since the end of apartheid. In 1994, the government spent R31.8-billion on education; in 2006, the budget allocation was R92.1-billion. At 6.6% of the country's GDP and 17.7% of total government spending, the country's education spending rate is among the highest in the world. South Africa plans to increase the number of tertiary institutions in the country in a bid to ensure that 20% of people aged between 18 and 25 are enrolled in the higher education system by 2015. (White paper on Education)

Speaking at a higher education working group meeting in Pretoria, Education Minister Naledi Pandor said the system would have to take on more than 100 000 extra students between 2010 and 2015 if the government was to reach its target. She also highlighted the need to address the capacity constraints in the higher education system, as the current establishment cannot handle a planned increase in the number of students. "It is clear that the current number of institutions would not be able to absorb 100 000 pupils into the system to counter skills shortages, which means we would have to address the re-sourcing of the system we have and the number of institutions," Pandor said. She pointed out that there are presently 740 000 students enrolled at tertiary institutions in the country, with 820 000 expected by 2010. (appendix 4, fig 5)

3.4 The role of the Teaching Hotel

The focus shifts from an academic school to that of a teaching hotel and the administration thereof, provided that proper management of the process of education, accommodation and the social interaction connected to the intervention exist. It is the opinion of the author that the presence of the School in the Hatfield area has the potential of providing the community new opportunities and choices relating to the programme of learning accommodation and the inherent infrastructure thereof.

This argument is further reinforced by Government, their approach being "Tourism development is an intersectorial function which requires integrating various issues, activities and actors. The goals and objectives of putting the tourism policy in place must complement other policies and laws across a host of sectors, including environmental management, education, labour, safety and security, economic development, agriculture, transport and arts and culture." (White Paper on Sustainable Tourism Development and Promotion in South Africa, 2001).

The relevance of education and the promotion of tourism within the country have been identified, the problem now arises as to how these conditions may be applied and translated into the built form. An opportunity arises with the proposed programme which allows for the successful administration and facilitation of the Hotel School and its related events. The provision of such infrastructure enables the University to focus on generating opportunity and thus increasing participation through involvement.

By supporting vision it provides a long term aim for project participants which embody a strategy for the future. By creating events which encourage community exposure and inform the programme identity the School surpasses the role of education only, it establishes local character which in turn promotes individual and communal upliftment.

Although the programme informs the design response, the architectural point of departure will not only focus on the concept of the "teaching hotel." Rather emphasis will be placed on creating spaces that are mutually inclusive, which encourage opportunities for social exchange and interaction by allowing chance encounters through event driven spatial planning. It is the author's intention to highlight the University's commitment to product excellence as well as strengthening the identity of the Hatfield area.

3.5 Architecture of the event

Pretoria, like any other city in our country is dynamic and contradictory. The cultural, social and political landscape makes for a capital that is constantly changing. In many cases, these changes are initiated politically, expressed physically and experienced socially. Urban transformation is a critical part of any well-functioning city. The ability to modify and improve existing infrastructure, opportunities and facilities is essential to stay competitive in a global world, and locally it is of the utmost importance that the urban environment is able to adapt to the changing needs of the residents of the city.

Norberg-Schultz explores the relationship between space and place, the principle elements to giving people meaning to city making. Norberg-Schultz states that "place is the concrete manifestation of man's dwelling and his identity depends on his belonging to places" (1980). He suggests that the concept of place is a result of the relationship between life and place, that the concept of place cannot be viewed in isolation from the idea of meaning and of city-making which is meaningful to the dweller.

Discussing the process of place making within the city Norberg-Schultz (1980) talks of the importance for space to be bound and directed in harmony with the surrounding structure, whether man made or natural would result in a spatial organisation or structure that is generative and thus ideal for living a meaningful life. It therefore suggests that form is expressed through order which in turn is demonstrated through and gives quality to the built environment.

Space, order and form are the elementary constituents of the physical environment, the concrete of our cities. This raises the question as to how the physical space and the social spaces within the city relate toward each other, and furthermore how it is perceived by the user? According to Dewaar and Uytenbogaardt (1991) there are four sets of needs that inform the spatial transformation of place making, namely urban generation, access, social contact and interaction, and individual needs. When these social needs are represented through the spatial form the outcome is a balanced urban settlement, that welcomes the unexpected and accepts conflict by allowing a greater range of variation.