
EDITORIAL

This issue of Research in Hospitality Management (RHM) will be disseminated to our industry colleagues at the Annual General Meeting of the European Hotel Managers Association (EHMA) in Marbella (16–18 March 2018). Stenden Hotel Management School is proud to have been one of only three academic partners of EHMA for more than ten years. During this time, the school has provided EHMA with data on talent in, and entering, the industry through the publication of “Profiles”. However, we feel we can better serve our industry partners going forward by connecting them directly with research undertaken in the school. To this end, this special edition of our research journal is designed to introduce our colleagues at EHMA to the journal’s editorial ambitions by including papers on hospitableness, hospitality management, hospitality management education and sustainability, and an increased number of papers informed by research undertaken by our own undergraduate students. It is also satisfying to note that many papers submitted reflect and highlight the school’s commitment to applied research and international partnerships.

Andy Heyes, a former student and now part-time member of staff at the Hotel School here at Stenden University, has partnered with **Ajay Aluri** from West Virginia University in the USA. Their paper explores the perceptions of luxury hotel brands by the “millennial generation”, which exemplifies the potential link between research and EHMA in that it is directly related to the theme of the EHMA AGM: providing “Smart Data for Luxury Destinations”. **Staffieri, Cavagnaro and Rowson** are also based at Stenden and their research explored the impact of travel on young people’s development and motivation. Their findings support the benefits of international travel experience.

Mohamed Nasser from Alexandria University in Egypt contributes a paper which explores the impact of psychological empowerment on the acceptance of change among hotel employees. **Irina Tamminga and Elsbeth de Boer** are based at Stenden University and their paper explores front office personnel’s desire for personal development in a major hotel brand property in Miami.

Student Research Projects

Four of the papers included in this issue are edited versions of student management projects. The research is similar to a final-year dissertation and is submitted for assessment for the Bachelor of Business Administration (Hotel Management) in Stenden Hotel Management School at NHL Stenden University. Unusually, the final year of the programme takes the form of a work placement with a commercial organisation for a minimum of ten months. This format provides significant benefits to students and industry partners, not least in providing (for the vast majority of our graduates) a seamless transition from internship to full-time employment. Locations reflect the international location of the student placements. The management project involves students conducting both secondary and primary research on topics informed by the hosting work placement organisation. Typically, this has some benefit to the host organisation, resulting in recommendations for improvements in management practice. The four projects published in this issue were all selected from a list of management projects judged to be distinctive by two members of the university’s assessment team.

The management project demonstrates much about the student’s abilities. Academically, it involves research undertaken by the student with minimal supervision and input from academic staff. The student is required to select and explore a topic relevant to both the university programme and the host employer organisation. The student needs to investigate and review relevant published academic research on the topic, and from this, decide on the issues to be explored as well as identify the research method to be used. Findings have then to be written up in the final report in a manner that reflects back on the prior literature and demonstrates an understanding of scientific objectivity. On a personal level, the work involved requires a high degree of self-discipline and self-control, as well as the ability to critically evaluate the context they are investigating.

Laura Velten’s management project also connected with the international theme, but it explores some of the experiences of working in a multinational workforce and suggests that this can be highly beneficial, particularly in hotels dealing with a multinational customer base, though work relations need to be sensitively handled by organisation management. **Ambra Hekman**’s research is conducted in order to find out whether demographics such as age, gender and working in different departments have an influence on the motivational factors of

workers in the luxury hospitality industry. This study found that appreciation for a job well done was the most important motivational factor, whereas the opportunity for advancement was ranked as least important.

Annemarie Geerlink explored the influence of student jobs on study performance and subsequent careers. She concludes that the work undertaken prior to, or during, the degree can be highly beneficial. However, part-time work during the course needs to be kept within limits. She confirms the findings from other studies that too much work during the school term can have a negative impact on study performance, and in some cases can lead to failure.

Helga Tweebeck researched a highly relevant topic, that of women in leadership positions. Specifically, this was conducted in a Frankfurt branch of a major hotel brand. The company had ambitions to increase the number of women in senior management roles, but did not have a subtle enough understanding of both the workplace and domestic experience of would-be senior women managers.

We are confident that all our readers, and specifically our colleagues at EHMA, will find the papers interesting and informative. And, if you are interested in discussing how Stenden HMS might integrate with and contribute to your organisation (perhaps through placement, research, or training), we would be delighted to hear from you.

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