

What effects do student jobs have on the study performance, competency and career development of hospitality management students¹

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This research examines the effects student jobs have on the study performance, and the competency and career development of hospitality management students. A 13-item survey was administered to a sample of 82 hospitality management students to see how they think about their student job. Qualitative data was collected by a focus group interview with hospitality entrepreneurs. The sample consisted of 48 MHS students and 34 HHS students. 78,8% of the respondents think a student job is useful for their study. For nine students, the student job affects school results. 63 students think they will find a future job easier because they have had a student job. The average of worked hours per week has a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 40 hours per week. Of all collected data, it can be concluded that having a student job is beneficial for the study performance, competence and career development of hospitality management students. A recommendation for Mise en Place is to put more focus on hiring hospitality management students. They tend to stay longer in the company because they gain knowledge, skills and experiences which are very useful and well-linked to their study and career.

Keywords: student jobs, study performance, competence and career development, hospitality management education

Introduction

The goal of this research is to find out if students who have a student job improve their chances in the labour market. It will be researched whether having a student job has an influence on study results. The research will explore what competencies are needed for a student job and what the added value to the career development of students is. We will discuss whether students who have a student job are more likely to get a (better) job in the future, and what the effects of both a study-related and non-study-related student job are.

Mise en Place is an organisation that focuses on selecting, educating and developing students between 16 and 22 years old. Students have the opportunity to work in the hospitality industry while they are studying. Mise en Place has more than 49 locations, both in and outside the Netherlands. Employees have the option to work in three different categories of work, namely hospitality, events, and kitchen. The hospitality group has the focus on working in restaurants, hotels, congresses, events, food services, catering and the healthcare sector. Relations of Mise en Place (hospitality-related) are Okura Hotel and Krasnapolsky Hotel in Amsterdam, the Fabrique in Utrecht, and Café Thus and the Harmonie in Leeuwarden. Employees working in this group need to follow three courses, namely gastronomy, correct draughting of beer and practice exercises. The focus for the events group is work at festivals, sport events such as FC Twente and concerts such as Zwarte Cross, Lowlands and Climax. Employees working in this group need to follow one course, which is the draughting of beer. The third group focuses on everything that has to do with the kitchen. The kitchen employees have knowledge of the kitchen and specialise in cutting and cooking techniques. Employees

working in this group also need to follow three courses, namely kitchen experience, kitchen factory and kitchen-added value. The course kitchen experience is about general information about the kitchen. During the kitchen factory course, people learn cutting techniques and how to follow recipes. During the kitchen-added value course, people need to show what they have learned and know about the kitchen.

In 2016, 2 995 employees were recruited from all Mise en Place offices in the Netherlands. 271 employees resigned that year. The staff increased by 410 new employees, compared to the previous year (2015). Mise en Place employees have an average of six working hours a week. Salaries vary between €7.07 (18 years old) and €11.92 (22 years old) per hour.

This study aims to explore the effects and benefits for the study performance, competency and career development of hospitality management students when they have a student job in the hospitality industry. The lead author undertook the work placement internship at Mise en Place, Leeuwarden, and this allowed a lot of contact with students, which was seen as a great opportunity to do this research.

Student jobs

For employers who offer temporary and/or part-time work, students are very appealing. Students can be flexible when having a student job, because they often have no other obligations except for their studies, so they can work irregular hours. The work that is done by young people involves stringent restrictions, which derive directly from legislation and rules on child labour. For children aged 15 or under, a work ban applies. They may only work under exceptional conditions and under strict conditions. For example, young people aged 13–14 can only do light activities around the house and nearby,

such as washing a car and babysitting (maximum two hours a day and up to twelve hours a week). From their 15th year, children may do light non-industrial work (such as delivering a morning newspaper). Young people aged 16 and 17 may work, but certain activities are not allowed. It should also be noted that a student job is something different from a holiday job. A student job will always take place (during the school year, after school time or on the weekend), while a holiday job is only done in the (usually summer) vacation. For holiday jobs, other rules apply for young people, regardless of their age.

An important question that arises is what are the pros and cons of a student job for society in general, but of course especially for the young people (Mizen, Bolton & Pole, 1999). Firstly, a student job offers a young person the opportunity to gain some experience in the labour market (Wolbers, 2003). The experience young people gain is beneficial for their future jobs. The work placement enables students to acclimatise to the workplace and to expectations about how they should behave. In addition, young people obtain more general skills such as responsibility, self-confidence, authority and independence (D'Amico, 1984; Lillydahl, 1990; Warren, LePore & Mare, 2000).

Secondly, a student-job offers young people the chance to make social contacts: they learn to know other people. The degree of contact differs, depending on the type of job (for example, the distinction between delivering newspapers and working in the hospitality industry).

Thirdly, young people earn money with a student job. That is nice for young people themselves (for example, to afford their nightlife and mobile phones), but also for parents who have to pay less for their children. In addition, young people also learn how to spend money, which is useful for their future when they live on their own.

There are also disadvantages in student jobs. The labour market participation of students can affect the employment perspectives of low-skilled people (Steijn & Hofman, 1999; Van der Meer & Wielers, 2001). They want the same kind of jobs as low-skilled people. In this "competition", students are in a better position because they are on average better educated, more flexible, less demanding and cheaper for the employer. As a result there are less employment opportunities for low-skilled people, which creates more social costs. A student job can also affect the amount of time spent on homework by students, which results in negative study results.

David Stern (1997) researched students and student jobs. Stern concludes that students who work more than 15 hours a week have poorer academic performance and are more likely to quit their studies. On the other hand, he also found out that there is a positive relationship between a student job (during a study) of a student and the future job of this student. In short, when a student has worked while studying, in the years afterwards, he or she finds a better job compared to students who did not work alongside their studies (Stern, 1997). Stern defines a better job as a job with a higher salary. This study is a good example of the impact of a student job on the labour market position since it is assumed that there are positive effects when you have worked alongside your studies says.

Study performance

According to the traditional organisational behaviour model, performance is a dependent variable subject to the influence

of factors at three levels. Firstly the individual's abilities, motivation, perception and age are influential. Secondly, group influences and culture may or may not place value on educational attainment. Thirdly, at the organisational level, communications, leadership styles and the forms of bureaucratisation all set the context in which the new recruit works. Performance and productivity are the most important signs of organisational health. They have been the focus of attention among both academicians and practitioners in the field of industry and public service.

Study performance is the extent to which a student has reached their short- or long-term educational goals. There are two elements influencing study performance, including cognitive and non-cognitive factors. Cognitive factors (also called learning factors) are the extent to which a person's individual capabilities can influence their learning or academic performance. The factors consist of memory, attention and reasoning. Cognitive factors are measured through tests and examinations (Hannon, 2014).

Non-cognitive factors are a set of attitudes, skills, behaviours and strategies which stimulate professional and academic success, such as academic self-efficacy, motivation, emotional intelligence, expectancy and goal-setting theories, self-control and determination (Gutman & Schoon, 2013). Non-cognitive skills are becoming more popular because they provide a better explanation for professional and academic outcomes.

Competency and career development

Competency is understood to mean that a professional is capable, qualified and able to understand and to do certain things in an effective and appropriate manner. Just having the skills or knowledge is insufficient for someone to be seen as competent. There is an implication that competency needs action and verification (in some public way) of what is reached by that action. Moreover, effective and appropriate action requires critical thinking, judgment and decision-making. Competency also includes that someone's behaviour is consistent with guidelines and standards of peer review, values of the profession, ethical principles, especially those that will protect and otherwise benefit the community.

Reilly, Barclay and Culbertson (1977) and Proctor (1991) summarised the components of competency as how able a person is in a job or role (the performance), what a person can bring to a job or role (the knowledge) and what is reached by a person in a job or role (the outcomes). Epstein and Hundert (2002) defined professional competency as the usual and judicious use of communication, technical skills, knowledge, clinical reasoning, values, emotions and reflection in daily routine for benefits for individuals and society to be served. Competency has been described as effectively integrating the component skills, the knowledge base, the attitude, personal-professional ethics and values and profession-specific factors into professional practices, defined by procedures used, populations served, configuration of problems addressed and service settings.

Gaining more knowledge of employment while studying can help to place the studying in a longer time perspective, which could benefit the motivation (Husman & Lens, 1999) and could develop a realistic view of work (De Vos & Meganck, 2006). Overall, experience from student jobs contributes to the acquisition of useful skills and to the development of more

realistic expectations regarding work. Future leaders must understand the awareness of customers needs, commitment to quality, managing stakeholders and concern for community. Implementation, communication skills and critical thinking were also considered as extremely important.

Career development is seen as the result of the interaction between the performance of the individual, the performance of the organisation and the performance of the society (Spijkerman & Admiraal, 2000). Career development is a continuous process of planning and actions for work and life goals. Career development is characterised by growth and continuous acquisition and use of the skills by the employee (Egan, Upton & Lynham, 2006). Managing career development has several positive effects for both the employer and the employee. Managing careers serves the continuity of the organisation (Paffen & Kluytmans, 2008). Through career management employees become more employable and that is beneficial to the organisation, because the organisation will be able to respond to changes in the environment (Bollen, Christiaens, de Vos, Forrier, Sels, & Soens, 2004).

Hospitality management education

Many researchers like Lundberg (1990), Ferreira (1992) and Samenfink (1992) have tried to characterise hospitality management by analysing its nature. Laesecke (1991) states that the role of educational hospitality organisations is to produce graduates who can lead, think and solve problems. Hospitality students should gain more knowledge about professional concepts, liberal studies and general business principles. Pavesic (1993) states that education must be seen as a journey, not a destination. According to Pizam (1995), the ultimate customers within the hospitality education are not students of catering and hotel courses, but the society in general and the hospitality industry. Hospitality management education is a study about the acquisition of skills and knowledge about management, comparable to that of other management programmes and the acquisitions of skills and knowledge about catering and hotel organisations in a comparable way to craft programmes. It means that hospitality management education can be seen as a combination of academic professional skills and knowledge aimed to satisfy the wants and needs of the hospitality industry. In addition, hospitality education should contribute to the students' development of interpersonal skills and communications and teach them how to lead other people (Goodman & Sprague, 1991).

Research approach

Mise en Place provides student jobs for students, and it is useful to examine the effects of study working on their study. The research aims and questions below were explored in this study.

Aim

The aim is to explore the effects of student jobs on the study performance, competency, and career development of hospitality management students.

Research questions

- What is the effect of a student job on study performance?
- What is the effect of a student job on the study results?

- What is the effect of a career-related or non-career-related student job on study results?
- What is the differential effect on study results of working more or less than 15 hours?
- Do students who have a student job find future work more easily?
- What are the differences between having a career-related student job and a non-career-related student job on ease of finding a job?
- What is the differential effect of working more or less than 15 hours on ease of finding a job?

For this management project, both qualitative and quantitative research is used. To collect qualitative data, a focus group was interviewed. The group consisted of hospitality entrepreneurs. Four entrepreneurs of various hospitality organisations were interviewed. Several questions and topics were raised. The themes explored the type of study the students were enrolled in; whether they had a student job?; why they had a student job?; what the pros and cons of having a student job were?; did they get a better job because they had a student job?; what is the criteria when hiring new employees? To gather quantitative data, surveys were used. With the use of surveys, a large group of students can be reached. By use of these data, it can be concluded how students experience a student job and if there are benefits for study performance and competency and career development when having a student job. What are the effects/advantages when graduates look for a permanent job?

Due to the fact that this research is based on students and the hospitality industry, data is collected about several groups of people. Firstly, students are the target audience. Around 80 surveys were handed out to obtain a clear understanding about students with a student job. Subsequently the data was processed in the program SPSS. Secondly, an interview was organised with entrepreneurs who work within the hospitality industry. It is interesting to see why and how they started in the hospitality industry. Which tools and education are needed to become a successful hospitality-related entrepreneur. What skills are needed and how do they think about a student job? By collecting data focusing on these categories of persons, the study aimed to clarify the research question, answer the problem statement and draw a clear conclusion.

Data collection procedure

Firstly, the four entrepreneurs within the hospitality industry were interviewed. The goal was to interview the owners of Pläske, Fellini's, Ewwerts' Bar and Double B, all restaurants. There was no reason for holding an interview with the entrepreneurs of precisely these restaurants. The restaurants were chosen randomly.

The surveys were handed out to students in hospitality programmes at Stenden University and Friesland College. These schools offer courses in hospitality management. When handing out the surveys, it was expected that students complete them immediately and return them on the spot. This ensures maximum response rates and that none are returned incomplete. After collecting data, the surveys were analysed by looking at the score of each question. The goal was to achieve around 80 surveys filled in.

To approach students of Stenden University, the student timetable was used. When handing out the survey, the

potential respondent confirmed they were studying hospitality management. To approach MHS students of Friesland College, the HOM (Horeca Ondernemer Manager) department was visited. This enabled access to the potential respondents. The data gathered was then analysed using the SPSS program.

Findings

The sample consisted of 48 (58.5%) MHS students and 34 (41.5%) HHS students, which is a total of 82 respondents.

The majority (52) expects that a student job will be useful for their studies. For 57 students, a student job does not affect their study results. For nine students, a student job affects study results in a negative way. They fail to pass their tests or assignments. The majority (63) assumes they will find a future job more easily because of having had a student job. Forty-eight students indicated that there are disadvantages of having a student job. 18 students thought there were no disadvantages of having a student job.

The average of worked hours per week has a minimum of three hours and a maximum of 40 hours per week ($M = 12.95$; $SD = 6.56$). The average of total months students have a student job was a minimum of two months and a maximum of 75 months ($M = 20.11$; $SD = 16.38$). There is a significant difference between number of hours per week and a hospitality-related job ($t = 3.308$; $df = 36.598$; $p = 0.002$). Students who have a hospitality-related student job work on average 13.94 hours a week. Students who do not have a hospitality-related student job work on average 9.29 hours a week. There is no significant difference between working more or less than 15 hours and study results ($t = 3.042$; $df = 64$; $p = 0.003$). There is no significant difference between working more or less than 15 hours and ease of finding a future job ($t = 0.965$; $df = 64$; $p = 0.319$). There is no significant relationship between type of study and a career-related student job ($\chi^2 = 3.655$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.56$). There is no significant relationship between a student job being beneficial for study and finding a job easily in the future ($\chi^2 = 0.276$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.599$). There is no significant relationship between career-related or non-career-related student job and student job affecting study results ($\chi^2 = 0.916$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.338$). There is no significant relationship between having career-related or non-career-related student job and ease of finding a job ($\chi^2 = 0.276$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.599$).

Practitioner views

Four hospitality entrepreneurs from different restaurants took part in a focus group discussion. Topics discussed included the type of education, did they had a student job, needed skills of new employees, and cooperation with schools and trainees. This type of data gives more clarity about working in the hospitality industry from the perspective of managers. A summary of the results will be given.

Arjan ten Dam of Restaurant Pläske took part. His prior education was as a painter which he had done for 20 years. He had not studied hospitality management. During his schooling, he had several student jobs in all kind of hospitality-related organisations. The student jobs were not related to his study. According to Arjan, students can learn a lot from having a student job. When hiring new employees, Arjan focuses on the availability of this person. They need to be flexible and available

over weekends. Restaurant Pläske works both with students (studying hospitality management is not a requirement), and employees with a permanent contract. On weekends, more students are working because than they have more free time. An employee must have a professional appearance and knowledge of the hospitality industry when he/she wants to work at Restaurant Pläske.

An interview was conducted with the entrepreneur (Bas Maathuis) of Café Restaurant Ewwert's Bar. After receiving his HAVO diploma, Bas studied International Hospitality Management at Stenden University. Because his family has always been active in the hospitality industry, Bas grew up in the "hospitality world". Bas likes to work in this sector and he likes to see his guests appreciate his organisation. After graduating, Bas started working as a planner for an employment agency and he also had a job in the technology sector. During his studies, Bas also had one or more student jobs. These student jobs always consisted of work in the hospitality industry, which was valuable for his studies. According to Bas, having a student job is very beneficial for gaining experience. When hiring new employees, he looks at experience, attitude, hospitality skills and alertness. At Ewwert's Bar there are many employees with a permanent contract. On weekends and holidays, students (the students not necessarily studying hospitality management) work regularly, Bas explains. An employee must be flexible and have a hospitable attitude when he/she wants to work at Café Restaurant Ewwert's Bar.

An interview was held with the entrepreneur (Willem Nicolai) of Restaurant Fellini's. Willem studied MBO retail management. When finishing this studies, he worked for seven years as a manager of a clothing store. Because his family was always operating in the hospitality industry, Willem decided to continue in this sector too. During his studies, he had a student job as cook in his father's restaurant. The student job was at that time not relevant to his study in retail. Willem thinks having a student job is good for gaining more experience. Financially speaking, it also gives benefits. When hiring new employees, he looks at the references and a curriculum vitae. Also the first impression is very important. Willem says that there are both students (the students working at Fellini's do all kinds of different studies) and employees with a permanent contract employed. He prefers working with people with a permanent contract. Those people are more involved in the business and are more structured. An employee must be happy, willing to work and communicate well when he/she wants to work at Restaurant Fellini's.

The fourth interviewee was the entrepreneur (Jan Oosterhoff) of Restaurant Double B. Jan studied HHS in Amsterdam. Unfortunately, he did not finish this education. Because his family owned several companies in the hospitality industry, he started working in his parents' organisation. After a while, he switched from organisation to organisation. However, they were all companies in the hospitality industry. Later, he started his own (hospitality-related) business. According to Jan, having a student job has many advantages such as experience, more knowledge, and in social terms. He encourages his son and daughter to work during their studies. When hiring new employees, he looks at attitude and experience. The company employs many students (there are a few hospitality management students working in his organisation, but not all are), but also employees with a permanent contract. An

employee must have sufficient knowledge and a positive attitude and behaviour when he/she wants to work at Restaurant Double B.

Many of the findings of this study confirm earlier research. According to Stern (1997), there is a positive relationship between students with a student job and their future job. When a student has worked during his/her studies, he/she will likely find a better job in the future with a higher salary than students who did not have a student job. 95.5% of the respondents with a student job think they will find a job in the future more easily because of the student job they now have.

David Stern (1997) states that students who work more than 15 hours have a poorer academic performance and are likely to quit their studies. Nine students stated that their student jobs affected the study results. Those people work an average of 18.78 hours per week. For 57 students, the student job had no negative effects on study results. Those people worked an average of 12.04 hours per week. It can be concluded that students who work more than 15 hours per week have poorer school results than students who work less than 15 hours per week.

From the interviews with the four entrepreneurs it becomes clear that they like working with students because they are flexible and are willing to work during evenings and weekends. The results show that there is a significant difference between number of hours per week and a hospitality-related job. Students who have a hospitality-related student job work on average 13.94 hours a week, and students who do not have a hospitality-related student job work on average 9.29 hours. Secondly, there are also findings that do not correspond with the literature review. With reference to the literature review, a student with a student job works on average 15 hours a week. Of all respondents, 66 students have a student job with a minimum of three hours, a maximum of 40 hours and an average of 12.95 hours a week. Thirdly, McKechnie, Hobbs, Simpson, Anderson, Howieson, and Semple (2010) emphasise that students with a student job develop skills and gain experience, which is beneficial for their future careers. Of the 66 participants, 45 students have a student job for the money. Ten participants have a student job for gaining experience, and three participants have a student job because it is a study-related job and they expect the job to be beneficial for their studies. As can be seen, the main reason for having a student job is money. Gaining experience is also important for students, but not the main reason.

Conclusion

Having a student job is beneficial for the study performance and competency and career development of hospitality management students. Students gain lots of experience from a student job. They are more likely to be hired at a subsequent job, because employers appreciate it when a potential candidate already has experience. 78.8% of the respondents think the student job they have is useful for their hospitality management studies. Students who work more than 15 hours a week have poorer academic results. Students should, therefore, work less than 15 hours a week. Students who work in industry-related jobs are more likely to get jobs in the industry, though there is evidence that the experience of working in any sector has benefits.

On reflection, some of the questions asked needed to be adjusted to make it clearer to respondents what is being asked. Clearly the small number of industry interviewees is a limitation on this research. However, interviewee comments were insightful and added to the general value of the research project.

Despite the limitations, the research recommends that Mise en Place put more focus on hiring hospitality management students. It is an organisation that offers training and development programmes for their employees. Hospitality management students can learn a lot that is valuable for their study and competency and career development. Mise en Place should make more advertisements and explain more clearly what kind of training they provide. The students will be more attracted to the organisation once they know what the organisation offers and will be more motivated to apply for a job. They tend to stay longer within the company because they know they gain knowledge, skills and experiences, which is very useful and well linked to their study. If the company demonstrates more clearly what they can offer a hospitality management student, many students will be recruited in a short time. It is a win-win situation. Mise en Place helps students who are developing themselves and offers added value for their study performance, competency and career development, resulting in a better future job. The hospitality management students are more specialised in the hospitality industry than a non-hospitality management student, have more knowledge about the work they provide/do than a non-hospitality management student, and probably perform their work more carefully than a non-hospitality management student.

Note

¹ This paper is based on the management project undertaken by Annemarie Geerlink in support of her studies toward a Bachelor of Business Administration (Hotel Management) at Stenden University of Applied Sciences.

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