

THE STUDY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF HOSPITALITY TEACHERS IN TAIWAN

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to understand the professional development needs of vocational hospitality teachers in Taiwan. The research design was designed with general survey methodology. Participants were 868 professional teachers who taught in 107 Hospitality Vocational Schools. The instrument of this research was a questionnaire which consists of two main parts: personal data and professional development needs. After the statistical analysis with 462 valid samples, six findings were summarized, in addition to five opinions for future researches to the positive effect of teaching professional development.

Keywords: *Hospitality education, Professional development, Taiwan*

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a dramatic proliferation of tourism concerned with the hospitality business. According to the World Tourism Organization (2009), global tourism arrivals were about 800 million in 2008, compared to 900 million in 2009; the tourism statistics reports of Tourism Bureau, Rep. of China (2010) also showed that recreational visitors were 136 million in 2004, 170 million in 2009.

The human resources with respect to accommodation and food services in recent years has increased noticeably, and so does the hospitality education in Taiwan. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of hospitality education students as shown by the testing center for Technological and Vocational Education [TCTE] (2010) that the number of students jointing the hospitality college entrance examination increased from 10,092 in 2002 straight to 25,114 in 2010, equivalent to a compound annual growth rate of 12.13%. The quality of hospitality employees has been particularly influential in hospitality business. It is of paramount importance to promote the aspiration of hospitality employees.

We can have pre-vocational education and on-the-job training to promote the aspiration of hospitality. Their performance depends upon many factors,

such as organizational environments, teachers, students, equipment, curriculum, teaching materials and methods, and evaluation criteria. Among them, teacher traits are the pivotal factor, as indicated by many related researches. Therefore, the important in the quality of hospitality teachers is important in many countries. (Peng Akina, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Woodworth, Bland, Guha, Shields, Wechsler, Tiffany-Morales & Tse, 2009).

As the number of students jointing the hospitality college entrance examination increases, so does that of the hospitality education. Many vocational schools have changed their Home Economics Departments into the food and beverage management or Tourism ones, such as the San-Min Home Economics and Commerce Vocational High schools, and Taichung Agricultural Senior High School. Even a pure hospitality school was built up in Taipei. The phenomenon has highlighted the importance of hospitality education. However, what are the qualifications of hospitality teachers? Whether the qualified teachers were suitable for the hospitality education requirements or not is the first aim of the research.

In order to meet the objectives of hospitality education, qualified teachers enhance their abilities through continuing professional development. The

related research of this theme appeared in Lu Qing (2000), King Yu (2010), Guskey (2000), Fenwick (2004), Sachs (2003). The professional development needs and satisfaction for elementary and junior/high school teachers have been researched in recent studies by Wangyue E (2009), Shi Lina (2011), and Zheng Shuwen (2002) and others. There has thus far been relatively few research into the professional development needs of hospitality teachers. To understand the real needs of hospitality teachers by means of survey is the second aim of the research.

The purposes of this research are: (a) to understand the qualifications of hospitality teachers, and (b) to investigate the professional development needs of hospitality teachers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to keep up with the rapid changing social and information environments, all the variety of employees are obliged to enrich their professional knowledge and skills. As teacher is a professional job, who must constantly enhance his or her professional knowledge and skills. Thus, the missions of education could be achieved.

With respect to the contents of professional development, Tamir (1990) divided them into six items which are elegant education, knowledge, individual performance, subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, subject-specific knowledge, and professional knowledge-based teaching. Similarly, Peter Sun (1997) also pointed out six items: which are teaching techniques, teaching new knowledge, classroom management, subject knowledge, student counseling and professional manner within teacher professional development.

Minix et. al, (1987) studied professional knowledge and skill, coupled with the attitude and the willingness. Victoria Rao(1996), among others, demonstrated that the content of the professional development of teachers is divided into general knowledge and ability, academic knowledge and ability, education, professional knowledge, and educational professionalism.

As this review has shown, the professional development of teachers in this research can be integrated into ten items: relationships, innovation, problem solving, knowledge of the subjects, collecting materials, teaching skills, curriculum

design, classroom management, student counseling, and professionalism.

The related work reported in the qualifications of hospitality teachers can be classified into gender, age, division, class size, current employment, education, qualifications, and professional licenses. They were integrated into variables of this research with reference to Shi Lina (2011), King Yu (2010), Fenwick (2004), Guskey (2000), Sachs (2003) and Teacher Education Annual Report (2009).

The results of Peter Sun (1997) showed that the professional development needs of participants, primary and secondary school teachers, had significant gaps between the professional development needs and practice behavior. Moreover, the studies of Lu Chui-Qing (2000), Zheng Shu-Wen (2002) and Shi Lina (2011) found that the professional development needs of primary and secondary teachers was related to whether they had got involved during the planning phase.

However, the research of Qiong Yu (2010) and Wu Jiemei (2010) pointed out that the professional development needs of primary and secondary teachers were high. As for the professional development patterns, there had been 70% of teachers participating in teaching or learning activities for the past five years. But few of them took education credits and published research works. The learning activities of Center for Teacher Education in University were deemed most useful for teachers. The teaching observing and field trip learning activities which were held during winter or summer vacation were most welcomed for teachers.

As hospitality teaching is a profession, teachers must be suitable for the times, collect teaching material, adopt innovative teaching methods, and solve the problems of students at the same time. The fostering of these is a qualities long term process pre-job education, ongoing training, team learning, accumulating individual expertise, and doing their job well. Therefore, teachers must continue to carry out professional development in order to meet professional requirements. Based on the above review, this research will survey these items: hospitality teacher professional development needs of the future, providing professional development courses by Center for Teacher Education in University, and the courses they need indeed.

3. METHOD

All of the participants in this research were vocational hospitality teachers. The research design was made with general survey methodology. To ensure some homogeneity of hospitality teachers, the samples were selected from 107 Hospitality Vocational Schools with officinal letters and phone calls. Participants were 868 professional hospitality teachers who were teaching in these schools. They consisted of vocational professional teachers, technology teachers, substitute teachers, and part-time teachers, excluding general teachers.

The instrument of this research was "The teacher professional development needs of vocational hospitality teachers in Taiwan." Questionnaire covered two main parts: personal data and professional development needs. The personal data contained gender, age, division, class size, current employment, education, qualifications, and professional licenses. The professional development needs involved hospitality teacher professional development needs of the future, request for professional development courses provided by Center for Teacher Education in University, and the courses they really needed. Consequently, 462 valid samples were got.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the purpose of this research, the analysis of personal data and professional development needs were carried out by means of statistical analysis for the 462 samples. Here were the results and some discussion:

4.1 Personal Data of Hospitality Teachers, the Status Quo

4.1.1 Gender, age, division, class size, current employment, and education

In gender, there were 382 women and 80 men teachers, accounted for 83% vs. 17% as shown in Table 1. Owing to the domination of female teachers, many hospitality teachers worried about the socialization process and personality development of students in the future.

Table 1: The gender of participants

Gender	Number	percentage
Male	80	17%
female	382	83%
Total	462	100%

With respect to age, the group of aged 31-40 ranked the most (38.53%), followed successively by those of aged 26-30 (25.54%), aged 41-50 (22.29%), aged under 25 (7.79), and aged above 51 (5.84%). Table 2 listed the numbers and percentages.

Table 2: The age distribution of participants

Age	Number	percentage
Under 25	36	7.79%
26 – 30	118	25.54%
31 - 40	178	38.53%
41 – 50	103	22.29%
above 50	27	5.84%
Total	462	100%

Hospitality education has emerged as a result of rapid growth of hospitality tourism in recent years. The number of teachers under 40 years old accounted for more than two thirds (71.86%). Generally, these people in comparison with older teachers, are thought to be easier to get along with their students, easier to have a vivid atmosphere on campus, but sort of lack of teaching experience.

About divisions, mostly 304 people (65.80%) studied in hospitality management division, but only 158 people (34.20%) studied in tourism division. The data showed the relationship with the process of hospitality education. The hospitality education came from the traditional food and beverage management subjects in the past time, but hospitality education has prospered with hospitality tourism in recent years. Thus, the later developed relatively less and slowly. The results reflected in Table 3.

Table 3: The divisions of participants

Divisions	Number	percentage
Food & beverage	304	65.80%
Tourism	158	34.20%

Concerning the number of classes, 6-10 classes ranked the most (36.58%), a little more than under 5 classes (35.50%). Stated another way, nearly 3/4 of hospitality classes divisions had set up under 10, which was suitable for the development of hospitality human development. See Table 4.

Table 4: The number of classes of participants' divisions

No. of classes	percentage
Under 5	35.50%
6 – 10	36.58%
11 - 15	5.19%
16 – 20	6.71%
over 21	16.02%
Total	100%

In current employment, the largest was full-time vocational professional teachers, accounted for more than three fourths (76.19%).

The current employment of participants can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5: The current employment of participants

Current employment	percentage
Full-time	76.19%
Technology	10.61%
Substitute	6.71%
Part-time	6.41%

In academic qualifications, most of participants (76.84%) graduated from hospitality-related university, 86 people (18.61%) from relevant university, studied in tourism division. 14 people (3.03%) from hospitality-related junior college, and only 7 people (1.51%) didn't have the academic qualification of hospitality-related junior college.

Table 6 listed the percentage of the academic qualifications of participants.

Table 6: The academic qualifications of participants

Academic qualification	Number	percentage
Hospitality-related university	335	76.84%
Relevant university	86	18.61%
Hospitality-related junior university	14	3.03%
Below of junior university	7	1.51%
Total	462	100%

The above data showed the teachers of hospitality education were suited for professional needs; few teachers still need continuing education in order to get academic qualifications.

4.1.2 Qualifications

Among the 462 participants, 352 people (76.19%) had qualified teacher licenses, only 110 people (23.81%) had no teacher licenses. There were 46 people (10.14%) who continued for education course to get the teacher licenses, but still 64 people (13.85%) didn't. The above data showed that the majority of hospitality teachers had the qualifications, only few of technology teachers, substitute teachers, and part-time teachers did not have.

From the professional development view, these 64 teachers should have continued education for

advanced academic qualifications, in order to meet the hospitality professional needs. Table 7 provided the list of licenses, both education and technology licenses, that were used for classifying the data of qualified licenses.

Table 7: The qualified licenses of participants

Qualified licenses	Number	Percentage	Remarks
had	352	76.19%	Note 1
Had no	110	23.81%	Note 2
Total	462	100%	

Note 1. with technology license: 299 (84.94%); without technology license: 53 (15.06%)

Note 2. attending education courses: 46 (10.14%); didn't attend education courses: 64 (13.85%)

4.1.3 Professional licenses

As can be seen in Table 7, among the 352 participants who had qualified teacher licenses, 299 (84.94%) also owned technology licenses, but still 53 people (15.06%) didn't have one at all. Noted that the teachers who had two or more technology licenses (186) were far more than those who had only one license (113). Some of them, furthermore, even had three to six ones. As for the participants who didn't have teacher licenses (110) had more than 3 technology licenses (70% of them). The other 30% had one or two technology licenses.

As we noted above, in order to teach well, teachers would try to attend the professional courses to get the technology licenses. The more technology licenses they get, the more teaching capability and trust they get from their students. The reason why substitute and part-time teachers who were temporarily employed was they owned technology licenses, even though they didn't have teacher licenses. Therefore, they tried to attend education courses to get teacher licenses to make their jobs assured.

4.2 The Professional Development Needs of Hospitality Teachers

4.2.1 Hospitality teacher professional development needs of the future

As for the hospitality teacher professional development needs of the future, most of the participants, 331 people (71.65%), wanted to attend related learning activities or seminars, followed

those teachers, 276 people (59.34%), who wanted to continue self-study for professional development. Table 8 highlighted the needs.

Table 8: The professional development needs of participants (multiple choices)

Professional development needs	Number	Percentage
Related learning & seminar	331	71.65%
Self-study	276	59.34%
No needs	7	1.02%

Those who wanted to study the education courses or to get the second professional teacher license in university lined the last. Unfortunately, there still were 7 teachers who have no professional development needs. Although relatively small in number, its adverse effect on students might be big. Fortunately, most teachers showed their motivation to attend the learning course or self-study, to meet professional development requirements.

4.2.2 Request for provided Professional Development Courses by Center for Teacher Education in University

The professional development courses, provided by Center for Teacher Education in University, were expected by hospitality teachers: What they wanted most was hospitality subjects, 338 people (73.16%), followed the seminars 284 people (61.4%), and the last was 149 people (32.25%) postgraduate Education Programs. Table 9 summarized the professional development courses.

Table 9: The professional development courses of participants

Professional development courses	Number	Percentage
Food & beverage, tourism	338	73.16%
Seminar	284	61.47%
Postgraduate education	149	32.25%

As for the timing, no matter what kinds of development, the majority of teachers wanted to attend the courses which were held during the winter/summer vacation or weekends. Few of the teachers expected to attend the night/day courses. Furthermore, the courses which teacher wanted were Western cooking, advanced baking classes, and advanced beverage modulation. As mentioned above, the Center for Teacher Education was highly related to teacher professional development. Note that, the majority of teachers looked forward to attending the courses on winter/summer vacation,

or holidays in order not to affect the students learning. This is the best portrayal of teacher professionalism."

4.2.3 The Courses They Really Needed

The courses which hospitality teachers expected most were teaching skills (44.59%), and then subject knowledge (38.41%), curriculum design (38.53%), innovation (33.98%), collecting materials (31.60%), classroom management (28.57%), student counseling (22.73%), problem-solving (21.86%), professionalism (21.00%), and relationships (17.10%). A more detailed understanding of the courses needs can be gained from Table 10.

Table 10. The courses needs of participants

Courses needs	Number	Percentage
Teaching skills	206	44.59%
Subject knowledge	179	38.53%
Curriculum design	178	38.14%
Innovation	157	33.98%
Collecting materials	146	31.60%
Classroom management	132	28.57%
Student counseling	105	22.73%
Problem-solving	101	21.86%
Professionalism	97	21.00%
Relationship	79	17.10%

From the data comparison, the professional development courses which hospitality teachers expected were consistent with the questionnaire and interview, also with the study of Wujie Mei (2010). More specifically, hospitality teachers would prefer professional education and academic knowledge to liberal and professionalism knowledge.

5. CONCLUSION

As discussed above, six findings are worth summarization:

5.1 Most of the Hospitality Teachers within 10 Classes of School Had Professional Hospitality Qualifications, but Most of Them Were Junior Female Teachers

From the result findings, there were more than 80% female teachers in hospitality teaching field. The hospitality teachers worried about the socialization process and personality development of students with the female dominated proportion. In gender, the young hospitality teachers with teaching experience under 10 years, would be easy to get along with students, easier to have a vivid

atmosphere on campus, but also reflected the lack of teaching experience.

Most of the hospitality schools, within 10 classes, set up Food and Beverage twice more than the Tourism Section. It showed that the Food and Beverage section was the current mainstream. The majority of hospitality teachers were graduated from the relevant hospitality departments of university. Their professional knowledge should be competent to teach.

5.2 Most of the Hospitality Teachers Had the Qualified Teacher Licenses, 24% of Them Did Not

According to the questionnaire responses, 76% hospitality teachers had a certificate teacher license, but 24% didn't. The 24% unqualified teachers had professional qualifications, but no education credits, could only be recruited as technology, substitute, or part-time teachers. Of these, 11% of them attended the education course, 13% still didn't. To be a formal professional hospitality teacher, they should had the teacher licenses certified by the Ministry Education.

5.3 The Hospitality Teachers Who Had Multiple Professional Licenses Showed Their Professional Teaching Capability

Among the participants, 85% of them had more than one technology license qualified teacher licenses. Noted that the teachers who had two or more technology licenses were nearly twice more than who had only one license. Some of them, however, still had three, four, five, even six. 70% of the participants had more than 3 technology licenses, even though they didn't have the teacher licenses at all.

As we noted above, in order to teach well, teachers would try to attend the professional courses to get the technology licenses. The more technology licenses they get, the more teaching ability and trust they get from the students. For the reasons why the professional hospitality courses must combine the food and beverage and tourism, therefore, the hospitality teachers would be encouraged to get the relevant hospitality technology licenses to strengthen their teaching abilities in the future.

5.4 Majority of the Hospitality Teachers Had Teacher Professional Development Needs by means of Participating in Conferences, Then by Self-study, Continuing Education in Universities to Get the License, but Few of Them Without Any Needs

AS for the hospitality teacher professional development needs of the future, as mentioned above 72%, attended the related learning or seminar, followed those teachers(59%), who wanted to continue self-study for professional development.

Those who wanted to study the teacher courses or to get the second professional teacher license in university lined the last. Unfortunately, there still were few teachers who had no professional development needs. They might be less, but affected students more. Therefore, the suitable systems should be set up to maintain the quality level of teachers.

5.5 The Hospitality Teachers Looked Forward that There Were Seminars and Education Process for Promotion During Weekends, Holidays, Winter and Summer Vacations in Universities

The hospitality teachers expected to attend the courses to be held by the Center for Teacher Education, in preferment to food and beverage and tourism courses, and the postgraduate education courses were their last choice. As for the timing, no matter what kinds of development, the majority of teachers wanted to attend the courses which were held during the winter/summer vacation or weekends.

Furthermore, the courses which teacher wanted were Western cooking, advanced baking classes, and advanced beverage modulation. As mentioned above, the Center for Teacher Education was highly related to teacher professional development.

5.6 The Professional Needs of Hospitality Teachers Were Preferably the Teaching Skills, Then the Academic Knowledge, Curriculum Design and Innovation

The courses which hospitality teachers expected most in line were teaching skills, subject knowledge, curriculum design, innovation, collecting materials, classroom management, student counseling, problem-solving, professionalism, and relationships. From the data comparison, the professional development courses which hospitality teachers expected were consistent with the questionnaire and interview. More specifically, hospitality teachers would prefer professional education and academic knowledge to liberal and professionalism knowledge.

Despite the encouraging results of this study as to the positive effect of teaching professional development, future research is required in a number of directions.

- (1) The questionnaire is subject to constant revision and changes in order to be improved.
- (2) Future research should investigate the correlation of hospitality professional development to teaching effectiveness.
- (3) An important area for future research in the years to come will be in the refinement of approaches to the analysis of hospitality technology professional development and effectiveness.
- (4) Additional research focusing on these aspects would be of great interest and value in understanding the role of hospitality teachers and their influence on students.
- (5) In order to obtain more reliable and objective data, future research that aims at finding evidence for professional development needs could include qualitative research.

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