

# **What is the hotel industry's view regarding academia's preparation of students as future problem solvers?**

## **Abstract**

Considering the major changes that the hospitality industry faces in terms of disruption, big data and manpower issues, the authors intend to investigate the industry leaders' and academics' views about these challenges, and their expectations about universities' preparation of future manpower to meet the challenges.

This is a preliminary study that was conducted by faculty from Singapore Institute of Singapore (SIT). SIT is an autonomous, public university in Singapore; and the only one that offers full-fledged hospitality degree programme in this country whose tourist numbers exceed its population.

The survey method consisted of a questionnaire that was distributed via email and online modes. The sample unit comprised senior management personnel from the industry as well as senior faculty members of educational institutions, from different parts of the world. The findings add to the existing knowledge base about this research topic. The outcomes also serve as a reference for practitioners and universities as they collaborate further to prepare graduates as future problem solvers.

**Keywords:** industry problems, university education, university-industry collaboration, knowledge management

## **1 Introduction**

As the global travel industry sets out to be one of the largest and fastest growing sectors, it is projected that the hotel sector would sustain a five to six percent growth throughout 2018 (Deloitte 2018). While the growth forecast is on the upscale, the business environment is getting increasingly challenging too. The very dynamic technology, workforce, products and customers combine to be the impetus for companies in the hospitality and tourism industry to change and move forward (Millar, Mao & Moreo, 2010).

In order to create and maintain a sustainable competitive advantage, it has become imperative to infuse innovation in the various management aspects, including of course the human resource management (Bharwani & Butt, 2012; Deloitte, 2018; Enz, 2009). Current students who join and remain in the industry are likely to be the change agents of the future. Hence, it is important to prepare them to deal with the complexities that exist and evolve in the business environment (Boley, 2011).

## **2 Challenges in the industry**

Literature review revealed a few recurring themes on the challenges that the industry faces, namely: human resource, technology and sustainability.

## **2.1 Human Resource**

Human resource is acknowledged as an incessant challenge. Based on the findings of Enz (2009) who surveyed 243 hotel managers from more than 60 countries in every part of the world, a large majority (64 percent) identified human resource as the most continuous problem. This overarching challenge consists of issues related to manpower attraction, retention, training and morale. The results were comparable to an earlier study that was conducted by the same researcher on some 170 managers in 25 countries (Enz, 2001).

Similar findings were generated from other studies that had more geographically targeted sample units. Examples are the research projects by Bharwani and Butt (2012) who involved senior practitioners in India; as well as Murray, Elliot, Simmonds, Madeley, and Taller (2017) whose research was conducted in Canada.

Bharwani and Butt (2012, p. 153) underscored that the poor image of the industry has affected its ability to appeal to job seekers. The industry is often perceived as “a poor pay master and a hard task master”, with limited opportunities for career advancements and non-favourable work-life balance.

Murray, Elliot, Simmonds, Madeley, and Taller (2017) echoed those findings. They added that the shifting of generational attitudes has compounded the problem. The millennial generation is quick to find new workplaces that align with their different values of wanting satisfaction from non-career experiences. Such attitudinal trait of the young generation of employees was reiterated by Goh and Lee (2018) whose study suggested that the Generation Z hospitality workers are not so motivated by salary. Instead, they place higher importance on job satisfaction and career prospects.

The human resource challenge goes beyond the element of quantity. There is the element of quality as well. Bharwani and Butt (2012) outlined three reasons why the calibre of the manpower is so essential. Firstly, by virtue of the business nature, there is a need of the ability to understand changing consumer tastes, and then manage the brand to deliver the desired customer experience.

Secondly, there is a collection of information communication technology such as property management systems (PMS), revenue optimisation systems (ROS), customer relationship management (CRM) and other guest-related interface applications. All these technologies necessitate a requirement of specialised skills in revenue management, yield management, technical and computer services, etc. Thirdly, the trends of globalisation, coupled by merger and

acquisition deals, require managerial capability to carry out organisational re-alignment, cultural integration and diverse workforce management.

With a turnover that was estimated to be as high as 31 percent (Deloitte, 2015), the costs to the industry are significant. There are direct costs of recruitment and training, plus the indirect costs of reduced customer satisfaction (Murray, Elliot, Simmonds, Madeley & Taller, 2017). Conversely, an adequate, skilled and engaged workforce has a positive correlation with key performance indicators that include guest satisfaction, customer loyalty, return on assets and profitability (Bharwani & Butt, 2012). It is therefore within expectations that human resource is often cited to be one major challenge for the industry.

## **2.2 Technology**

With technological advancements and customers' demands of superlative quality at best pricing, online hotel booking has continued to outpace offline bookings (Deloitte, 2018). The study added that online travel agencies are gaining traction in the distribution battle and expanding their range of product offerings by including tours, activities and restaurant reservations.

Rishi and Gaur (2017) recommended that for hotels to compete effectively against online travel companies, hotels could work on augmenting their online presence as well as on-site service experience. For online presence, the current under-utilisation of social media platforms implies that more efforts could be invested to establish authority, connectivity and mind-share to influence online consumers' purchase behaviours. As for on-site service, hotels could capitalise on technology-based service improvements in the operational areas of check-in, check-out, room security, room climate controls, bandwidth and internet speeds.

In their quest to rise above the technology-related challenges, hotels have to be mindful that guests are by nature heterogeneous in their needs and behaviours, especially with the myriad of technological possibilities before, during and after a stay (Rishi & Gaur, 2017). Some guests may still prefer human interactions over technology-based self-services (Kattara & El-Said, 2013). This makes technology a less straightforward and a much tougher challenge that goes beyond hardware and systems.

## **2.3 Sustainability**

A survey undertaken by MIT Sloan Management Review and The Boston Consulting Group (2012) indicated that 70 percent of companies have placed sustainability permanently on their management agendas. Sustainability issues typically include natural resource consumption, pollution, climate change and loss of natural habitats. But sustainability is not just about the ecological environment. There has been a rising acceptance that sustainability has two other key foci: social and economic (Boley, 2011).

Research by Jones, Hillier and Comfort (2016) suggested that while sustainability has gained increasing importance in the business world, the hospitality sector has been somewhat slow to react. There is a relatively low level of awareness, and the industry has just started to make some progress in environmental sustainability. Some common initiatives that hotels have embarked on are: green hotel designs, energy consumption reduction, waste management and recycling, environmentally responsible sourcing, and marketing of sustainability to guests (Jones, Hillier & Comfort, 2016).

Besides cost-saving, sustainability initiatives are used to bring commercial benefits to the hotels. According to Prud'homme and Raymond (2013) who surveyed nearly 480 customers in 11 hotels in Quebec, Canada, they found that customer satisfaction is positively influenced by the hotel's adoption of sustainable development practices. It seems that public commitments to sustainability could be used as a competitive differentiator to boost brand reputation.

Despite the global sustainability trend and the possible commercial advantage, hotels still face trade-offs between sustainable programmes versus their operational and financial goals. For instance, Jones, Hillier and Comfort (2016) pointed out that Marriott's corporate commitment to reduce costs (whenever possible) appears to be contradictory to the hotel's pledge towards guest satisfaction as well as organic food sourcing (which can be more costly than the traditional sources).

### **3. Management competencies**

#### **3.1 Competencies cited by the industry**

Similar to the delineation of industry challenges, the discussion about the competencies of graduates from hospitality-related programmes has been ongoing since 1980s (Millar, Mao, & Moreo, 2010). While research over the past decades has pinpointed a few competencies that are continually important to the industry, it also highlighted some changes that were in tandem with the business environment.

Studies conducted in 1980s to 1990s highlighted interpersonal and leadership competencies as the industry's two highest-rated management skills (Kay & Russette, 2000). These skills comprise the ability to interact smoothly with a variety of people, function effectively under pressure or when faced with crisis, manage problems with sensitivity, maintain professional and ethical standards, demonstrate professional appearance and poise, communicate excellently, etc.

These were concurred by Chung, Enz, and Lankau (2003) who used the term: strategic orientation. It encompasses competencies such as the management of all stakeholders, impacts in communication, and commitment to quality.

In another study by Kay and Russette (2000), the findings indicated a slight shift: while leadership skills were still paramount, interpersonal skills were relegated to a third position. The more people-related soft skills were replaced by technical/administrative competencies that are predominantly financial-based and revenue-related, such as the knowledge of operational budgets and yield forecasts.

In addition to finance skills and revenue management, conceptual competencies were also gaining importance. These conceptual competencies refer to the composite of critical thinking, problem solving, analytical skills and creative adaptability (Bharwani & Butt, 2001; Kay & Russette, 2000; Millar, Mao, & Moreo, 2010).

It is noteworthy that while sustainability (of environment, society and economics) surfaced as a challenge in the earlier section (paragraph 2.3), the concern for community was rated lowly as a competency by the industry (Chung, Enz, & Lankau, 2003). Perhaps, it was like what Jones, Hillier and Comfort (2016) had found: there is actually little deep-seated interest for strong sustainability.

An overview of past research also presented a concerted picture that industry knowledge was ranked lower than soft competencies. This is because soft competencies have been and still are deemed to be harder to learn, and are often inherent in individuals' personality (Chung, Enz, & Lankau, 2003; Jiang & Alexakis (2017).

### **3.2 Hospitality students' competencies**

Having examined the competencies that were cited by industry, the next question is: how proficient are students with regard to the desired competencies, especially the soft skills? Research outcomes indicated that there are gaps between industry's expectations and students' self-assessed / existing standards.

While interpersonal skills are one core competency in the highly people-oriented industry, Goh and Lee (2018) found that Generation Z (those born between 1995 to 2009) are concerned about the perceived difficulty of emotional labour (which is characteristic of service industry).

It seems that Generation Z's own perceptions may have validity. Scott-Halsell, Blum, and Huffman (2011) have established through two separate studies that not only did industry professionals possess above-average emotional intelligence, their emotional intelligence was also much higher as compared to hospitality undergraduates'.

In another research, Jaschik (2015) found out that college students assessed themselves to be well-prepared for their future careers. This assessment seemed to exist only in their own minds. Because the industry held a very dissimilar opinion about the students' readiness.

Looking at such dichotomous results, Scott-Halsell, Blum, and Huffman (2011) offered an optimistic viewpoint that the students' preparedness, including their emotional intelligence, could be enhanced through practice and instruction. This perspective functions as a transition to the next section on university education -- one possible conduit for the needed practice and instruction.

#### **4. Hospitality education**

##### **4.1 Role and value of university education**

The role of university education was examined *inter alia*, with a focus on the business schools (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). The criticism of business school curriculum was targeted at its research that is said to be low in practical application, and its unsatisfactory ability to impart helpful skills to prepare graduates for the industry. One faculty (not an industry professional) even commented that: "We're studying the past, educating students in the present, but we're not looking as much to the future" (Millar, Mao, & Moreo, 2010, p.45). As Blass and Hayward (2015) pointed out, this problem is not unique to business schools - it is an educational issue.

It has been acknowledged that hospitality educators are committed to developing academically rigorous and innovative teaching contents (Ruhanen, Scott, Benckendorff, & Roberts, 2009). Lashley (2013) confirmed that hospitality management programmes were designed to match the occupations, with a suite of subjects that intend to develop managerial competencies in the areas of people management, marketing, finance, business strategy and entrepreneurship. Academics are also introducing more engagement with other subject areas, so as to broaden students' knowledge base and encourage new lines of enquiry beyond the hospitality subject area (Lugosi & Jameson, 2017).

However, such efforts may be inadequate to prepare graduates for good employability. Industry is still complaining about finding university graduates who possess relevant skills and knowledge (Klimoski & Amos, 2012).

The lingering doubts about the effects of university education on graduates' careers and management practices remain and persist. David, David, and David (2011) analysed student resumes and course syllabi, and then compared them to skills areas that were listed in corporate job descriptions (i.e. required by the industry). The researchers found out that large majority of

resumes and course syllabi lacked licenses / certifications in expertise areas such as supply chain, human resource management, research, finance and network security support.

#### **4.2 Gaps between university educational outcomes and industry needs**

Addressing the gaps between university education and industry expectations, literature review has yielded five plausible reasons.

Firstly, there is high dynamism in the business environment, and universities are failing to disseminate the latest knowledge, especially in the area of fast-moving technological advancements (Matic & Agusaj, 2012; Millar & Park, 2013).

Secondly, the competencies that the industry desires in hospitality graduates do not appear to be the main contents of scholastic curriculum. As outlined in the earlier section, many of the competencies cited by the industry are non-academic in nature, such as human relations, ethical standards, leadership abilities, self-motivation, problem-solving ability and cross-cultural skills (Matic & Agusaj, 2012). Even sustainability (that is cited as a challenge for the industry) was scanty when its inclusion in curriculum was examined (Boley, 2011).

There have been efforts to mirror the real demands in the industry. For example, candidates for Cornell University's Master of Management programme were assessed against three core competencies of leadership skills, teamwork and group-process skills (Chung, Enz & Lankau, 2003). However, in most cases, it has been difficult to add soft skills (such as emotional intelligence) as a separate course due to budgetary limitations and credit hour constraints (Scott-Halsell, Blum, & Huffman, 2011).

Thirdly, hospitality education is historically led by academics who often have little business experience or leadership experience, apart from their understanding the academic system and culture (Kalargyrou & Wood, 2012). As the calibre of leadership affects the educational strategy, universities were encouraged to hire more faculty who have real industry experience and credentials (David, David & David 2011).

Fourthly, a recurring concern was the availability of practical facilities to support experiential learning, in preparation for students' entry to the industry. Besides the skepticism about the actual learning value of such facilities, many universities had actually eliminated them totally in a bid to save cost (Lugosi & Jameson, 2017).

Last but not least, with regard to the role and value of education, academics do have a certain philosophy that is different from the industry professionals'. To the academics, there is the long-term value of developing inquiring and critical minds (Gray, Ottesen, Bell, Chapman & Whiten,

2007, as cited in Jiang & Alexakis, 2017). Lugosi and Jameson (2017) urged the industry to recognise the value of high education in its true essence: while industry wanted graduates to step into intensive management roles straight after leaving university, there is still a balance between educating and training people.

Airey and Tribe (2000, as cited in Lugosi & Jameson, 2017) concurred that education is more than just meeting the immediate needs of the workplace or near-future demands of entry-level employment positions. A well-rounded education that develops students' intellectual abilities and critical thinking beyond any specific industry, will serve both the industry and the students better, in not just entry-level positions but subsequent positions in a range of professional and societal capacities (Gross & Manoharan, 2016; Lashley, 2013; Lugosi & Jameson, 2017).

In addition, Jiang and Alexakis (2017, p. 43) explicitly stated that while industry wants students to be “industry ready” with “batteries included”, universities must be clearly mindful that *education* and not *training* will serve students much better into the far future.

#### **4.3 Concluding remarks on university education**

Despite all the criticisms and listed shortcomings, Lashley (2010) alongside Millar and Park (2013) still acknowledged that educators are primarily responsible for teaching and advancing knowledge, and for controlling the educational experience. The higher level of knowledge that the industry demands in the subject areas of marketing, economics, accounting, and information technology can be accomplished in universities; and the strengthening of theoretical fundamentals can be achieved in classrooms (Jiang & Alexakis, 2017).

There is also a general consensus between universities and industry that the curriculum must consist of important leadership and management competencies, in order to nurture graduates who are productive and effective graduates in both theory and practical realms (Klimoski & Amos, 2012).

In order to produce such graduates who are amply equipped with competencies for a successful career, it has become imperative for hospitality educators to have an in-depth understanding of the contemporary issues (Millar & Park, 2013). This brings the discussion to the next section of university-industry collaborations.

#### **5. University-industry collaboration**

In addition to continuous research, consistent collaborations with the industry are the common avenue to attain updated and flexible knowledge (Frasquet, Calderon & Cervera, 2011; Kalargyrou & Wood, 2012; Lashley, 2010; Matic & Agusaj, 2012; Millar & Park, 2013; Pizam, Okumus & Hutchinson, 2013).



### **5.1 Forms and benefits of university-industry collaboration**

Since the 1920s when Cornell University started to offer its college-level programme, educators have already looked to industry leaders for inputs on curricular relevancy and the competencies that graduates need in order to attain professional success (Jiang & Alexakis, 2017; Kay & Russette, 2000).

The area of university-industry collaboration in a variety of forms is quite well researched (i.e. Schofstell, & Arendt, 2014; Prigge, 2005). In 1993, Bower noted the long history of university-industry collaborations, which has seen a quite dramatically increase in recent years as reported by Ankrah (2013). The usual collaboration items comprise internships, course design consultations, case study examples, guest speakers, industry mentors, scholarships and financial donations (Frasquet, Calderon & Cervera, 2011; Lashley 2010; Pizam, Okumus & Hutchinson, 2013). Millar, Mao and Moreo (2010) specified that the communication between the industry and educators can be strengthened by academics attending industry seminars, and vice versa.

One collaboration item that has reported positive outcomes is internship. The value of internship was evident when Lugosi and Jameson (2017) stated that academic inputs could become more practical if they are complemented by experiential learning that occurs outside of university spaces, and led by industry.

Besides enhancing conceptual/theoretical clarity, Chen and Shen (2012) found that good internship (with proper planning and industry involvement) has the most profound influence on students' willingness to remain in the industry after graduation. Such an outcome is ideal for an industry whose perennial challenge is manpower attraction and retention, as discussed earlier.

### **5.2 Challenges of university-industry collaboration**

Though useful, university-industry collaborations are not simple by virtue of the differences between the two parties. At the organisational level, there are different cultures, objectives and processes (Frasquet, Calderon & Cervera, 2011). At the individual level, Leiper et al. (2007) documented several areas of differences that account for misunderstanding between the faculty and industry. Examples are the individuals' first industry positions held, as well as their own collection of perspectives, practices, education and training.

In addition to the above-mentioned differences that can lead to conflicts, there are other challenges when universities try to meet industry needs. For a start, industry practitioners may not know what they want, or will want in the future. Moreover, industry needs could be too heterogeneous to be met satisfactorily across the board (Lashley, 2010). Faculty themselves, especially those without industry experience, may also lack the interest to work with practitioners (Pizam, Okumus & Hutchinson, 2013).

With such possible challenges in university-industry collaborations, it is no surprise that commitment and trust towards achieving common goals are requisites to make the partnerships more frequent, feasible and robust (Lashley, 2010; Morris & Carter, 2005, as cited in Frassetto, Calderon & Cervera, 2011)

## **6. Research objective**

The authors with a background in applied research planned to go beyond the existing studies of university-industry collaborations to explore if there is a match between industry expectations and academic delivery. They also intended to explore in-depth, industry expectations and their views on the extent that universities are preparing the students as problem solvers.

## **7. Methodology**

This preliminary research was carried out mainly using survey by email and online survey hosted on Qualtrics. The authors also accepted Skype interviews, if needed. The surveys were distributed through known contacts by the authors. The participants are selected from the upper management executives in the industry and the senior management faculty members of educational institutions worldwide that offer hospitality education. The authors have selected 19 qualified participants for the study. Two interview rounds were carried out concurrently using the two forms of distribution to both parties of selected participants. The period of survey distribution was conducted between February to March 2018.

The survey was divided into two sections. The first section comprised brief demographic questions. The second section focused on the expected challenges in the industry and if the actual workforce is prepared for the challenges. Participants were requested to write their thoughts and observations. The second section also included questions related to university-industry collaborations that aim to prepare graduates with the right skillset and/or mindset. Suggestions on how the current education system can be improved were sought too. The authors used coding techniques to observe the common theme in each completed survey, before merging the themes and patterns to produce the overall result.

## **8. Results**

The authors received a full response rate. From the preliminary result, half of the respondents from the industry who responded to the survey are at the GM level and similar capacity, with most of them being veterans with at least 10 years of experience. More than half of the respondents represent a chain or independent hotel, and the rest represent a city or resort hotel. For the other group of respondents from the educational institutions, most are faculty members and top-level administrators with more than 30 years of experience in academia. Both parties of respondents are

actively involved in the recruitment of hospitality graduates, student internship programme as well as membership of various hospitality industry associations.

Regarding the kinds of challenges that are expected in the future, most respondents from both parties indicated manpower issues as the top concern. Industry respondents expressed concerns about the challenges in technology, changes in customer behaviour, and changes in demographics, whereas academic respondents cited disruptive entrants into traditional accommodation structure, provision of affordable educational opportunities, raising operational costs in the hospitality industry and the need for ICT skills among the workforce.

On the preparedness of the current workforce to face the current and future challenges, the majority of the industry respondents were quite positive and answered, "Probably yes". However, about a third of the industry respondents were pessimistic about the preparedness of the recent graduates by answering "Probably not". As for the academic respondents, almost all of them were negative in this matter. Many of them quoted that the hospitality industry was "slow" in changing their internal structure to face the challenges of technology and the changing business landscape.

When it comes to their opinion of whether current hospitality graduates on work placement are well-prepared and educated for the hotel industry, there was no consensus among the industry respondents. Half of them answered positively as "Definitely yes" and "Probably yes", and the other half answered neutrally. However, all academic respondents answered positively and referred to the fact that most institutions offering hospitality education do have job placements to prepare their graduates for the hotel industry.

When it comes to the assessment of whether future hospitality students will have the right skill set and mindset to overcome the expected challenges, about a third of the industry respondents, answered positively ("Probably yes"). However, more than half of them had neutral and negative answer. This is a contrast to the responses from the academia. The academia respondents who answered positively approximated half of the responses, emphasising that having the right mindset, attitude and curiosity are the main criterias for hospitality graduates in their institutions and the other half emphasizing on the need of IT skills for the current and future workforce.

The last question in the survey sought ideas from both parties on improvement on the hospitality education, many of the industry respondents suggested that the hospitality students should be trained in areas such as communication, economics and revenue management. Additionally, they would like to see the hospitality students learning how to be more visionary and flexible, possessing business acumen skill, and being able to make decisions independently. One of the respondents emphasised the importance of managing innovation and change. The suggestions

included putting the hospitality students through part-time work or internship to be introduced to the industry so that their expectations can be managed in advance.

As for the respondents from the academia, many suggested new modules to enhance the current academic offering. A small number of the respondents opinioned that the industry should take risks on new graduates and allow them to learn by doing. It was proposed that more contacts with the industry could also be established to bridge the theoretical and practical gaps, alongside more industry placement opportunities for future hospitality undergraduates.

## **9. Discussions**

The results from both industry and academics do not come at a surprise and are mostly aligned with existing research (Gross, et. al, 2017; Lugosi & Jameson, 2017; Kim & Jeong, 2018). Both groups of respondents expressed their concerns about impending challenges that are likely to manifest in the forms of manpower issues, technology and changes in demographics. In fact, these are the similar topics which have been under discussion in this industry for a long time (Jiang & Alexakis, 2017). However, sustainability which is an important topic across many industries, has not been on the radar for industry respondents. Once more, it seems that the hotel industry is lagging behind new developments.

It is noted that the academics have a rather negative view about the current hotel workforce's preparedness to face the industry challenges. A possible explanation could be the academia's view of the industry as a slow adopter. A more bold explanation could be possibly related to academia's elitist approach when it comes to subject matter mastery.

A different picture can be seen when the question turned to the preparedness of the current hospitality students. The academic respondents express a certain amount of optimism. This outcome contrasts with previous findings that were outlined in paragraph 4.1 (e.g. Klimoski & Amos, 2012; David, David & David, 2011) where there is articulated dissatisfaction about the value of university education.

As for the industry respondents, they are understandably less optimistic than the academic respondents. There is a concern as to whether the current students will possess the right skill set and mindset. This finding is again in line with existing research where the industry is not really satisfied with the type of skill set and mindset of the future workforce (Ross, 1997; Tesone & Ricci, 2012).

On the final question on possible improvements in the education of future hospitality students. industry respondents responded that it is all about business skills, leadership and forward-thinking

skills and mindsets, which are once more reflective of existing research (Chung-Herrera, Enz, & Lankau, 2003; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006).

Putting it all together, it is quite striking that even after all the years of collaboration, industry and academia still have their very own and dissimilar views on the educational deliverables, although the preliminary findings do indicate some kind of willingness from both parties to work on common grounds. However, any attempt to generalise the findings must be treated with caution as this study is a preliminary one, and any following study should aim for a much bigger sample size.

## **10. Future research**

There are three possibilities for future research. First of all, the sample size could be increased to capture the views of an even larger pool of senior hotel management personnel.

Next, in order to expand the knowledge base, industry leaders in other hospitality sectors such as events and attractions could be included. In this way, a more expansive and comprehensive study of the entire hospitality industry could be materialised.

Finally, collecting and analysing SIT graduates' perspectives is recommended. As mentioned earlier in the abstract, SIT is the only public university in Singapore that offers a full-fledged hospitality degree programme. Its graduates will play an important role as the next generation of leaders for the local industry.

With a thriving tourism scene and a heavily subsidised public university education, it is strategic for the various stakeholders in Singapore's hospitality industry to use the findings astutely, so as to further benefit both the industry and the academia.

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