ENHANCING HOTEL LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF MANAGERS' ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES ON THEIR SELF-REPORTED WORK-RELATED LEARNING LEVELS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

Figure Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Drivers of Organizational Learning over the Last Decade

The global environment has been in a crisis mode over the last decade due to devastating situations: the September 11 terrorist attacks in the US in 2001(Barron, 2001); the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in 2002-3 (Krauss, 2003); the Indian Ocean earthquake in 2004 (which resulted in 230,000 persons missing or dead across thirteen countries) (Reuters AlertNet, 2008; Revkin, 2004; Waldman, 2004); global warming and its resulting effects in extreme weather events (Morello, 2009); unstable food and fuels costs in 2007-8 (Bailey, 2007; New York Times, 2009; Simpson, 2007); the financial meltdown and global recession in 2007-9 (Lander, 2008; Rampell, 2009) and in 2009 the swine flu epidemic (Grady, 2009). The hotel industry was also impacted directly by terrorism, the most recent of which was the November 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks where approximately 20 gunmen targeted nine sites in the area, two of which were the world famous and historic landmark, the Taj Mahal Hotel, and the other, the Hotel Oberoi. The 60-hour rampage ended with 183 persons dead and thousands of lives shattered (CNN, 2008; Gandossy, 2008). Therefore, the view of futurists was not whether there would be similar or other devastating situations in the future, but when (Cornish, 2004). Companies must learn from the past in order to mitigate negative impacts of such events in the future. A changing macro environment, especially a sporadic one, demanded organizational commitment to learning in

order for businesses to survive and be a success (Edmondson, 2002; Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003).

The information age also meant a new dawning for businesses. It provided a stronger case for learning and connected learning with business success. Ellerman (1999) observed, in the 1990s, a shift in the global marketplace from capital goods accumulation to knowledge-based economies which drove companies to transform themselves to learning organizations. He stated further, making the connection between learning and success that the rapid growth observed prior to 1999 in countries like Japan and Germany were due to two main factors: sound institutional habits and knowledge development. Tony Buzan, the developer of the mind-mapping concept, also noted this shift in his 1991 Management Review article titled *"Train Your Brain"*. In the article he stated that a company's wealth depended strongly on their ability to accumulate and dispense knowledge. Mind-mapping is a technique where by understanding the geography of the mind individuals are able to use information more efficiently and profitably (Buzan, 1991). It was a similar realization which led to the development of the *balance scorecard technique* in the early 1990s. Its developers, Harvard Business School professor, Robert Kaplan, and President of the Massachusetts- based Renaissance Solutions Consulting Firm, David Norton, discovered that a company's ability to exploit its intangible assets was more important than their ability to manage its physical assets. Hence, they developed the balance scorecard technique to

measure a company's performance by looking at its customers, internal business processes, its growth possibilities but most importantly, its ability to learn (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Countries like the US, also acknowledged the importance of a strong intellectual capital amongst its citizenry in order to create the efficient innovations needed to drive their economic recovery. Therefore, the knowledge age, which is between the latter half of the twentieth century and now, 2009, is characterized by a global focus on knowledge creation and use as a means of attaining competitive advantage.

Other factors, features of the information age, have also placed a premium on workplace learning. First, frequent technological innovations internationally have created a need for users of technology within businesses to engage in learning and to do this on an ongoing basis (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003; Inman & Vernon, 1997). Pundits in the U.S. have also predicted that the retiring of some 76 million, more experienced baby boomers to be replaced by 41 million, less-experienced Generation Xers (Aiman-Smith, Bergey, Cantwell, & Doran, 2006) and the disparity in educational levels between the existing workforce and that of new entrants (Inman & Vernon, 1997) will create learning deficiencies in organizations that must be addressed. Similar trends were also observed in other parts of the world.

Learning Crucial for Hospitality Businesses

Issues and characteristics unique to hospitality businesses have made learning critical for this sector such as the intangible, heterogeneous, perishable and simultaneous production/consumption nature of service businesses. These characteristics, which distinguish them from manufacturing-type operations, and which sometimes resulted in vagaries experienced throughout the industry, made continuous learning a necessary requirement for these businesses to exceed customer expectations, maintain product consistency and accomplish profitability. Learning in these entities have also been limited partly due to the 24/7 nature of hospitality business. In this industry, it would be customary for line staff and managers to work long hours, during holidays and on weekends, which made them unable to engage in important knowledge garnering- type activities. Low quality workforce and high turnover rates placed a further premium on industry learning. According to Hinkin and Tracey (2000), the high employee turnover rate experienced across the industry was due to persons using the sector as a stepping stone to other careers. Hospitality jobs were also seen as mundane and repetitive and this perception further increased employee turnover rates, creating a continuous gap in organizational knowledge. The entrance of more fierce competition with new products and branding strategies and improvements in sector-appropriate technologies also created a need for industry players to learn (Hinkin & Tracey, 2000). However, to stay ahead of the competition individual hospitality

businesses not only need to learn, but they must be able to do so at a faster rate than the competition (Bell, 1996).

Another characteristic of the hospitality industry was the tendency for persons to rise to top positions in hotels purely on the basis of experience and previous performance, with level of academic qualifications playing a limited role. Some industry analysts considered this a positive and a strong motivator within the industry, while others thought such promotion strategies placed a limit on learning amongst industry leaders. Organizational learning is therefore a top concern for businesses, in general, and the hospitality sector, in particular.

Change in the Jamaican Hotel Industry's Landscape: A Catalyst for Learning

The Jamaican hotel industry, in particular, had become even more competitive between 2005 and 2009. In 2002, the island had a hotel room inventory of 15,358 (Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2002). However, by 2006 Spanish hotel companies added another 1,682 rooms to the island's stock, with the intention of increasing this number by another 9,000 by 2010 (The Ministry of Tourism, Jamaica, personal communication, June 28, 2006). This rapidly changed the local hotel landscape including another level of hotels to the industry, the mega hotel, that is, those hotels with one thousand guestrooms or more. The result was small, medium and large hotels on the island scrambling for innovative ways to survive. The new developments also created a

heightened need for skill development especially in the areas of foreign languages, in particular Spanish (Evans, 2006), and with the impending legalization of casino gambling on the island (Brown, I., 2008b), gaming operations as well. Therefore, for local hotels to survive in such settings learning and changing would be two necessary imperatives.

Learning Organization Explained

It has been established by scholars that one long-term strategy to successfully deal with change, such as those described above, was for businesses to transform themselves to learning entities. A learning organization was one that encouraged the erudition of its members and constantly reinvented itself and thus had a heightened capacity to learn, adapt, change (Burgoyne, J., 1995; Gephart, Marsick, Van Buren, & Spiro, 1996) and produce results (Harrison, 2004; Nyhan, 1998) and therefore was skilled at acquiring, creating and transferring knowledge, modifying their behavior to reflect the new thinking. A learning entity would be an ideal state of being. It would be an orientation and not an activity, a process and not an outcome, a journey and not a destination (Gephart, et al., 1996; Leitch, Harrison, Burgoyne, & Blantern, 1996). All entities could be characterized as learning entities with some being better learners than others. However, within the context of this document, a learning organization would be company that demonstrated above average learning capability because they took a deliberate and strategic approach to their company's learning efforts.

The Features of a Learning Entity

Outside the characteristics of learning organizations previously outlined, Peter Senge (1990), the author of the book *The Fifth Discipline*, believed there were some distinct features of these special organizations and they included: systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision and a team approach to learning. According to Senge (1990), system thinking involved an entity seeing events as a combination of complex interrelationships. Personal mastery, on the other hand, involved clarifying the entity's vision and knowing how it differed from reality. Therefore, it was being aware of where the entity was and where it should be and allowing this tension to drive the desired change. A shared vision was having a clear mental picture for the entity. Mental models were deeply engrained assumptions that the entity was willing to challenge and modify. Finally, team learning involved members thinking together and where the collective good was considered more important than individual interests (Zemke, 1999).

In 1999 a network of human resource development academics set out to determine whether or not Unipart, a logistics, automotive and accessories company (Unipart Logistics, 2007), was a learning organization. The academicians identified characteristics that made them believe this company was on its way to becoming one. The first characteristic was the company's philosophy. Unipart believed that as a company, they should be learning faster

than the competition; that effort was not enough; that their knowledge should be updated on an ongoing basis and in addition, every employee's intellect, energy and creativity should be engaged. They also believed that there were new ways of thinking and that explicit and implicit knowledge, or stated and implied knowledge, had to be combined. Their commitment to learning was evident in company signage and their investment in an in-house university underscored this commitment (Giannopoulou, 1999). However, Reineck (2002) also believed a key feature of a learning organization was the ability to link constituents' growth to the company's economic performance. Examples of companies often cited as learning organizations included: Motorola, Ford Motor, 3M, FedEX, Walmart, British Petroleum, Xerox, Shell, Analog Devices, GE, Honda, Sony, Nortell, Harley-Davidson, Corning, Kodak and Chaparrel Steel (Gephart, et al., 1996; Goh, 1998). A number of hotel companies, such as Sandals and Marriott, have fused into their policies and operations elements of learning organizations, for example their establishment of corporate universities, learning networks and through their continuous investment in training and internal/external collaborations (Teare & O'Hern, 2000), however, few have publicly characterized themselves as such. Therefore, learning organizations have distinguishable features that separate them from other entities.

Possible Benefits of Hotels Becoming Learning Organizations

According to authors such as Levitt and March (1988), numerous studies have confirmed that learning can improve performance. Companies which have become learning organizations have also testified to varied positive outcomes: improvements in individual employee performance and productivity; decline in absenteeism rates; reduction in waste; strengthened innovative capacity; increase in overall market share and competitiveness (Gephart, et al., 1996). Brett and Alworth (1998), whose article was based on the petroleum industry, also reported that oil companies which became learning organizations experienced specific gains: reduction in repeated mistakes; less inexperienced and more informed workers; shortened process times for pilots; and quicker and less costly planning time. In primary health care, potential benefits identified included smoother inter-professional working relationships and improvements in the speed of informal communication resulting in service that was realistic, acceptable, sustainable and owned by the practitioner (Rushmer, Kelly, Lough, Wilkinson, & Davies, 2004). The U.S. Armed Forces felt the approach helped their acquisition and logistics community to make intelligent decisions and deliver timely capabilities to their men and women in the field (Salopek, 2004). Hays and Hill (2001) also discovered that higher levels of employee motivation/vision and organizational learning had a positive effect on external customers' perception of service quality. Chen (2005) concluded that the greater an organization's learning capability, the better it would be able to sustain its development and existence. According to Baldwin, Danielson

and Wiggenhorn (1997), and which could be a factor behind the successes identified, was that learning often enhanced an organization's response to change. However, such successes required a focus on human capital and companies that paid attention to the people aspect of their business operations often outperformed those that did not (Welbourne & De Cieri, 2001).

The Connection between Hotel and Individual Constituents' Learning

A connection between individual constituents' and organizational learning has been established by learning organization theorists. Researchers posited that organizational learning was a product of individual constituent's learning but the sum of individual constituent's learning did not necessarily equate to total organizational learning (Antonacopoulou, 2006; Fiol & Lyles, 1985; Gephart, et al., 1996; Geppert, 2001; Teare, R., 1997). Learning organization theory, from which the concept of the learning organization evolved, came out of Bertalanffy's Systems Theory which simply defined a system as an entity with interrelated parts; thus every entity had a super-system and a sub-system (Hatch, 1997). Therefore, within the context of the learning hotel, the individual hotel manager and employee learning would be at the core of work group, hotel-wide, industry-wide and societal learning, each drove the other (Gephart, et al., 1996) (Figure 1). Individual learning could reflect the level of hotel learning (Antonacopoulou, 2006) as individuals would acquire and digest the information and use it to effect the change seen in hotels (Carroll, J., 1998; Driver, 2002; Marsick & Watkins, 2001). According to

Goh (1998), it was employees' acquisition of knowledge and competencies that drove companies' experimenting culture and knowledge transfer. Bower (1990), who tried to make the distinction between individual and organizational learning, saw individual learning as the worker changing approaches to solve problems, and organizational (or hotel) learning as changing routines and procedures based on information acquired, the latter being dependent on the former. Hence, learning organization implied dual responsibility at the organizational level, the individual constituents to the organization and the organization to the individual constituents.

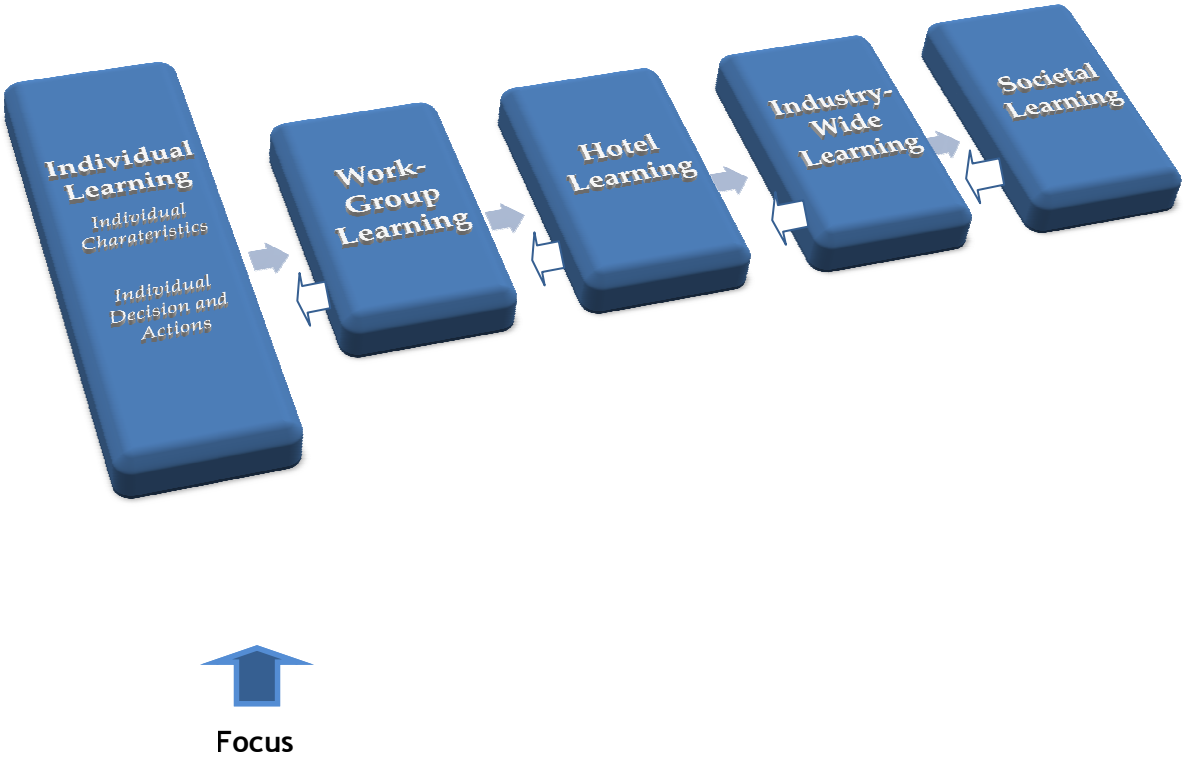


Figure 1. The interconnectivity between a learning hotel, its sub and super-systems

Therefore, individual constituents' learning would be crucial to organizational learning and success. However despite this realization, previous scholarship focused more on organizations' responsibility to overall learning and less on improving individual constituents' contribution to the process. Hence, learning organization theory was commonly examined through organizational lens and rarely through individual perspectives, actions and

decisions, before and during employment. There might be a logical explanation for this, such as the fear of a focus on individual learning to the detriment of organizational learning (Zemke, 1999). Therefore, the next logical step is organizational learning research would be to examine how individual constituents learning could be strengthened and optimized and the role of the organization and the individual learner in the process so that the desired levels of organizational learning would be realized.

The Importance of Individual Learning to Organizations

In a knowledge economy, survival depended on the continuous learning at both organizational and individual levels (Adams & Waddle, 2002). Some authors also felt that organizational success was a by-product of a brain-rich workforce (Ahmed, Loh, & Zairi, 1999; Bassi & McMurrer, 2007) and failure to pursue its development could result in negative repercussions for companies (Chambers, 1997). According Antal and Sobczak (2004), who cited Argyris and Schön duetro-learning concept, this meant that individuals not only had to learn, but they had to learn how to learn in order to stay ahead of emerging issues. Individual learning not only allowed for professional growth but it also equiped one with the information to challenge traditional practice (Andrews & Lewis, 2002).

The Importance of Hotel Managers' Work-Related Learning

A tremendous burden would normally be placed on managers and leaders, in particular, to be great learners for a number of reasons. First, it was the leader's vision, style of leadership and motivation that influenced and guided constituents' action (Teare, R., 1997). Second, leaders were often the designers, coaches and stewards of their organizations' learning (Giesecke & McNeil, 2004). Third, their learning usually impacted their businesses and how strategic decisions would be made (Anderson & Skinner, 1999). Hence, leadership was more than charisma and energy; but also required the capacity for one to learn and learn again (Bower, 1990). According to leadership guru, John Maxwell, successful leaders were often learners and the learning process often continuous (Maxwell, 2002). Management learning was also important as it impacted one's personal marketability as well (van der Sluis-den Dikken & Hoeksema, 2001). However, if one reflected on the qualities of successful leaders and the hotel managers they encountered or worked with, they would have concluded that not all hotel managers were successful leaders. Despite this realization, management positions within hotels demanded key leadership competencies. The position of this dissertation was that one such leadership competence required of successful hotel managers would be ongoing individual learning.

Problem Summary

The rapid pace of global, national and industry-wide change and decades-old features of the hotel industry have created a heightened need for the hospitality sector and its constituents to learn. According to the literature, companies that heed the call to learn could realize tremendous benefits. Those that do not could experience dire consequences (Buzan, 1991).

The nucleus of hotel learning was individual constituents' learning, both managers and line staff. Managers were unique, as they were generally the architects of organizational learning and therefore needed to be great learners themselves in order to successfully drive the learning of others and ultimately the performance of their units.

The Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The overarching goal of this dissertation was to examine organizational learning from individual hotel managers' level, more specifically, how management work-related learning could be improved prior to and during employment. To do this the study pinpointed and measured potential drivers of such learning, namely the managers' personal and business context and the type and depth of their involvement in learning activities. Two broad objectives were established for the study. The first was to determine and understand the relationship between hotel managers' engagement in learning activities and their self-reported work-related learning. In the case of the

former, the type and depth of their post- secondary education, training, work experience and networking, meanwhile in the case of the latter, the level and nature of their work-related learning. While second, to look at the work-related behaviors and hotel characteristics that influenced their depth of engagement in education, training and networking.

Both the managers' work-related behaviors and hotel characteristics were studied. The work-related behaviors examined included the managers' motivation towards learning, perceived risk-taking abilities, and their attitude towards both learning and the hospitality industry. In examining the characteristics of the managers' place of work, the research focused on their hotel's size and learning culture.

Consequently, the study involved two levels of analysis: the impact of hotel managers' personal and business context on their engagement in learning activities and the impact of their engagement in learning activities on their self-reported work-related learning (Figure 2). At the end of the study, factors that significantly influenced hotel managers' engagement in learning activities and how they impacted their learning were identified.

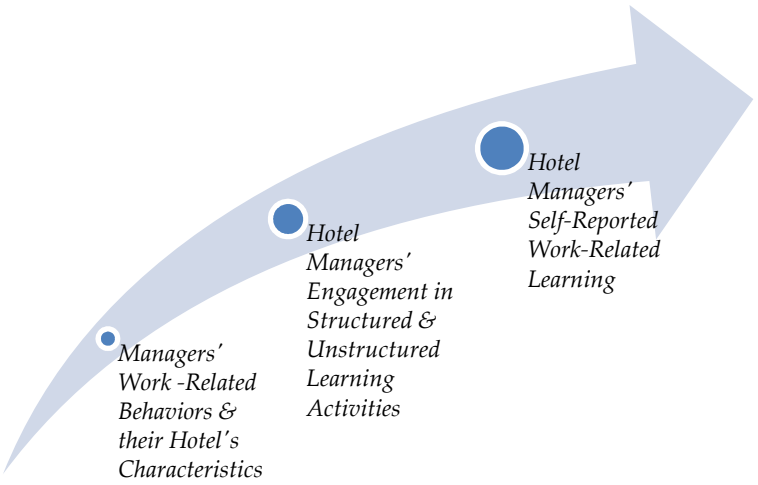


Figure 2. The levels of analysis

Why This Study?

Although learning organization theory was one of the most researched areas in human resource management, with over 4,000 publications in 2007, there still existed a significant gap in the literature. The following was evident from existing literature which this investigation attempted to address:

1. A limited number of peer-reviewed journal articles on the hotel industry in Jamaica and hotel learning, in general;
2. A significant amount of qualitative work on learning organization theory, but a limited number of quantitative studies in the area (Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981);
3. Significant prescriptive (that focused on actions and decisions managers can take to drive learning in their organizations) and

descriptive (that is, explaining how organizations learn) studies; but limited predictive work in the area (Tsang, 1997); and

4. Most importantly, a dominance of work on team and organizational learning but a paucity of studies on individual learning.

Tsang (1997) also argued that recent studies on learning organization theory were rarely built on previous works, a view also expressed earlier by Huber (1991).

Significance of the Study

Using a mixed method approach to enquiry, the study proposed a model through which management learning could be predicted and enhanced, ultimately resulting in the data driving the theory and not the reverse. The study's findings therefore, could assist industry and feeder learning institutions. For the industry, it could guide selection and hiring processes, identifying those managers with a greater potential for work-related learning. It could also be used to direct the development of existing managers so that higher levels of management work-related learning could be achieved. However, the findings could challenge the relevance of universities and colleges that prepare managers for the sector, unearthing areas for renewed focus.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The investigation looked at the relationship between hotel managers' engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities with their self-reported work-related learning. Formulas were proposed for engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities using the managers' work-related behaviors and characteristics of their respective hotels. Whilst type and depth of the hotel managers' engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities were used to determine the managers' perceived work-related learning.

The dissertation did not explore the extent of hotel managers' acquisition of knowledge based on their engagement in learning activities. Instead, once the managers reported learning, knowledge acquisition was assumed. The study also did not include in its analysis the perceptions of the managers' customers, superiors, colleagues, employees or other independent observers. Only the perceptions of the managers themselves, specific workplace learning experts and those of the researcher were included in the study. Also, no distinctions were made as to the type or quality of the hotel managers' self-reported learning, that is, whether it was good or bad learning or high or low order learning, only the extent of their learning was reported.

Definition of Key Terms

A number of key terms were used throughout the document. Listed below are the main ones and the context with which they were used throughout the document. For the constructs examined in this study, examples were provided and how they were determined explained.

Business hotels, rural and urban resorts: A *business hotel*s are public lodging facilities, located in city centers or commercial districts, which cater primarily to a business or corporate client base. Meanwhile, *rural resorts* are public lodging facilities located in moderately developed or virtually underdeveloped hotel communities and cater more to the leisure market. These hotels usually comprise of less than 100 guestrooms. *Urban resorts* are public lodging facilities that also cater predominantly to the leisure market and often located in fairly dense, well-developed hotel communities. Urban resorts usually comprise of 100 guestrooms or more, but could also have less than 100 guestrooms.

Creating Knowledge: It is the application of generic information to a current work situation.

Employee: A manager or line staff that works with an organization.

Learning Organization and Organizational Learning: Learning organizations are companies, which through their policies, systems, culture and decisions encouraged the creation, transfer and application of knowledge by its constituents on a continuous basis in order to achieve and sustain competitive advantage. These organizations tend to: have a boundary-less organizational structure; encourage information sharing amongst its constituents through open communication practices; draw inspiration from a shared vision; work collaboratively with employees; and forge an organizational culture based on trust (Robbins & Decenzo, 2004). It is usually a desired state of being for organizations.

Management Learning Situations: These are situations, described by the hotel managers, where they applied knowledge acquired from their education, training, previous work experience and/or networking to work-related problems and innovations. They include:

1. Performing *computer-related task*, which involves applying previous knowledge to computer-related activities in the workplace;
2. Addressing *crisis situations,* which involves applying knowledge previously acquired to unexpected situations;
3. Addressing *employees' knowledge gap*, which involves using previous knowledge to train others;

4. Handling *equipment and physical plant deficiencies,* which involve using previous knowledge to effect software, equipment, grounds or building repairs and resolve infrastructural problems or issues;
5. Solving *human relations problems and deficiencies,* which involve using previous knowledge to address employee and guest relations issues.
6. Dealing with *process and system deficiencies,* which is using previous knowledge to implement systems, processes or steps; and
7. Finally, p*roduct and service creation,* which is using previous knowledge to create a new product or service for hotel guests.

Management Self-Reported Work-Related Learning*: 'Management self-reported work-related learning'* describe persons who oversee the work of others in a hotel, acquire knowledge from school, training, previous experience and networking and use this knowledge to solve problems and/or develop innovative products, systems, services and procedures in the workplace. It involves two sub-constructs: problem-solving and innovation. '*Problem-solving'* is addressing work-related challenges. '*Innovation',* on the other hand, is the initiation, adoption and implementation of new ideas or activity within an organizational setting (Pierce & Delbecq, 1977). Although there is some overlap in the two concepts, there are instances when they are mutually exclusive. An existing work-related problem can be solved through innovation. However, not all problem solving techniques involve the use of innovation, neither are all innovations used to solve existing problems. The extent of

problem solving and innovation from knowledge garnered from hotel managers' engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities were each measured using a five-point Likert scale of ordered responses and the mean of the two sub-constructs ascertained (Appendix A).

Mega, Large, Medium and Small Hotel: A mega hotel is one with 1000 guestrooms or more. A large hotel is one with between 350 and 999 guestrooms. A medium size hotel is one with between 100 and 349 guestrooms, while a small hotel is one with fewer than 100 rooms.

Organizational Characteristics: These are factors that describe the hotel managers' work environments and include their respective hotels' learning culture and size.

A '*hotel's learning culture*' is a way of being for a hotel that places learning at the center. Hotels with a strong learning culture tend to display great external adaptability and internal consistency. For this study, '*external adaptability*' included the sub-constructs '*trust*', '*openness*', '*innovativeness*', the extent to which '*errors are seen as learning opportunities*' and '*external exchanges*'. Whilst '*internal consistency*' included constructs such as the extent: of '*clear vision*', '*internal exchanges*', '*availability of learning opportunities*' and to which '*learning was rewarded*'. All sub-constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The mean of the sub-constructs for

'*external adaptability*' was averaged with the mean of the sub-constructs for '*internal consistency*' (Appendix A). On the other hand a *'hotel's size'* is the number of guestrooms at a property.

Personal and business context: *Personal context* is the hotel managers' work-related behaviors, namely their motivation to learn, risk-taking abilities and attitudes to learning and the industry. *Business context* refers to the size and learning culture at the managers' place of work.

Single, Double and Triple Loop Learning*: Single-loop learning* is correcting mismatches between the actual and the ideal in an environment where values and assumptions are unable to change. On the other hand, *double-loop learning* is changes in assumptions and values that resulted in change in actions. *Triple-loop learning* occurs when errors embedded in traditions which constrain values and assumptions are addressed (Seo, 2003).

Structured Learning Activities: These are tasks, actions or programs that result in the planned and controlled transmittance of information. These types of learning activities are typically provided at schools, colleges and universities and evidenced through the awarding of some certification. Businesses also provide structured learning opportunities in the form of training sessions and workshops. Two types of structured learning activities include engagement in formal education and participation in training programs. Within the context of

this document, training is a short structured course, seminar or workshop that is offered online or face-to-face. Training often results in the awarding of a certificate of participation but there could be instances where no certification is awarded.

Depth of Engagement in Formal Post-Secondary Education and Training

'Depth of engagement in formal post-secondary education' is the number of years of schooling beyond fifth form or eleventh grade in high or secondary school. It includes time spent pursuing a certificate, degree and/or graduate program after completing one's high or secondary school education. '*Depth of engagement in training'* is the number of training sessions the hotel manager completed between 2003 and summer 2009. Hotel managers' depth of engagement in each of the two structured learning activities was ascertained using two open-ended survey items, one for each type of structured learning activity (Appendix A).

Type of Formal Education & Training

The '*type of formal education and training'* is the extent to which the hotel managers' post-secondary education and training related to their respective jobs. For example, in the case of the '*type of formal education'* for a hotel marketing manager, it is the extent to which the manager's post-secondary education was in the field of marketing. An example of the '*type of training'* would be the extent to which training completed by an executive

housekeeper, over the last five years, related to housekeeping. The '*type of formal post-secondary education*' and '*training completed*', were each measured separately using a single closed-ended item with a five point ordered Likert responses ranging from *'strongly agree'* to *'strongly disagree'* (Appendix A).

Unstructured Learning Activities: Unstructured learning activities include events such as employment experience and networking. These are events where knowledge is transmitted in an uncontrolled and unplanned fashion. Therefore, for the purposes of this document learning activities that were mandatory requirements for a job or program of formal study were excluded.

'Depth of experience' was determined using two constructs: the hotel managers overall experience, expressed in years, and the number of entities with which the manager worked throughout his/her professional life (Appendix A).

The *'type of experience'* construct examined the extent to which the hotel manager's total work experience was in the hospitality industry. It was determined by dividing the hotel manager's hospitality experience by their total work experience (Appendix A).

The '*depth of networking*' is the number of times per year a hotel manager gets together with other professionals, whether at a cocktail party, professional association meeting or other professional gatherings. This was determined by the managers indicating, in an open-ended survey item, the number of times per year they networked (Appendix A).

The '*type of network*' is the extent to which hotel managers were active members of professional associations related to their current job. Service, community or religious clubs or associations were not considered professional associations. Type of network was determined using a closed-ended item with a three-point ordered Likert responses ranging from '*not related*' to '*directly related*' (Appendix A).

Work-Related Behaviors*:* The hotel managers' work-related behaviors reflected in this study included their motivation towards learning; perceived risk taking abilities; attitudes towards learning and attitudes towards the hospitality industry.

'*Motivation*' is the willingness to exert effort to achieve both personal and organizational goals (Robbins & Decenzo, 2004). Meanwhile '*motivation towards learning*' is the extent to which managers are driven to learn intrinsically. The sub-constructs used to determine level of intrinsic motivation included '*the need for recognition*' and '*opportunities for advancement*'. Both

sub-constructs were each measured using a five-point Likert scale and the mean ascertained to arrive at a single figure for the variable (Appendix A).

'Perceived risk taking abilities' is the extent to which hotel managers saw themselves as persons willing to take work-related chances. This was measured by using two closed-ended items with a five-point ordered Likert responses ranging from *'strongly agree'* to *'strongly disagree'*. The mean of both items was determined to arrive at a single figure which denoted managers' *'perceived ability to take risks'* (Appendix A).

'*Attitude towards industry*' is a way of thinking and a pattern of behavior that demonstrates one's love, interest in and commitment to the hospitality profession. This was determined by finding the mean of two sub-constructs: '*commitment to the hospitality industry*' and '*love of the industry*'. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure each sub-construct (Appendix A). *A 'positive attitude towards the industry'* is a thinking and behavior pattern that demonstrates love, interest in and commitment to the profession. Conversely, a '*negative attitude towards the industry*' connotes a way of thinking and a behavior pattern that demonstrates a dislike, lack of interest in and commitment to the profession.

'*Attitude towards learning'* is having a thought process and the supporting behavior that demonstrates love, a keen interest in and a

commitment to learning. In this study it was measured using two sub-constructs: '*commitment to learning'* and '*love of learning'*. It was ascertained through finding the means of both sub-constructs after measuring each using a five-point Likert scale (Appendix A). *A 'positive attitude towards learning'* is having a thought process and the supporting behavior that demonstrates love, a keen interest in and a commitment to learning. Conversely a '*negative attitude towards learning'* is having a thought process and supporting behavior that demonstrates a dislike, lack of interest in and a limited commitment to learning.

Workplace Learning Expert: Someone who has either conducted research taught and/or was very familiar with learning in organizations, in particular hotels.

Work-Related Learning: It is transferring and creating knowledge in the workplace.

With explanations of the key terms used throughout the remaining document established, previous studies on factors influencing learning were reviewed next; the methodology used to achieve the study's objectives were then outlined; followed by the study's findings; and the document concluded with a discussion of the new knowledge unearthed, implications of the findings for the hotel industry as well as hotel management education and training, the

study's conclusions, the limitations of the investigation and possible areas for further exploration.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter is a review of opinions, findings and conclusions of largely peer-reviewed scholarly work on learning organization theory. The objective of the section was twofold: to discuss studies that examined the relationship between employees' work-related behaviors, features of their organizations and their engagement in learning activities. However, the primary objective was to explore previous work on the relationship between employees' engagement in learning activities and their work-related learning. The word 'employees', as used in this chapter, refers to both managers and line staff personnel of an entity.

Section A of the chapter, which looked at the impact of employees' work-related behaviors and organizational characteristics on their engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities was divided into the following sub-headings:

1. The relationship between employees' work-related behaviors and their engagement in learning activities, such as the relationship between employees':

a) Motivation towards learning and their engagement in learning activities;
b) Risk-taking characteristics and their engagement in learning activities;
c) Attitude towards learning and their engagement in learning activities; and
d) Attitude towards industry and their engagement in learning activities.

2. The relationship between characteristics of the employees' organizations and their engagement in learning activities, such as the relationship between the organizations'
    a) Size and their employees' engagement in learning activities, and
    b) Learning culture and their employees' engagement in learning activities

Section B of the chapter examined the impact of employees' engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities on their learning. The section was organized around the following sub-headings:

3. The relationship between employees' engagement in structured learning activities and their learning, such as the relationship between employees':

a) Type (Job-Relatedness) of structured learning activities and learning
b) Years or frequency (Depth) of engagement in structured learning activities and learning

4. The relationship between employees' engagement in unstructured learning activities and their learning such as the relationship between employees':
    a) Work experience and learning
        - The relationship between employees' type (job-relatedness) of experience and learning
        - The relationship between employees' length and number of work experiences and learning
    b) Networking and Learning
        - The relationship between employees' type (job-relatedness) of networking and learning
        - The relationship between employees' frequency of networking and learning

Each of the two sections, A and B, began with a review of the definitions of the key constructs discussed throughout the chapter. The chapter ended with the management learning models proposed prior to data collection.

SECTION A: LITERATURE DISCUSSION

The Impact of Employees' Work-Related Behaviors and Organizational Characteristics on their Engagement in Structured and Unstructured Learning Activities

A1) Structured and Unstructured Learning Defined

There are two main types of learning activities which employees often use to garner new information and insights: structured and unstructured. A structured learning activity is the planned and controlled transmittance of information through programs such as courses, workshops and seminars and engagement in this type activity often results in the award of some certification (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). These programs can be offered by institutions of learning or businesses and also through professional associations (Antonacopoulou, 2006; Bierly III, Kessler, & Christensen, 2000; Dominiak, 2006; Huber, 1991).

An unstructured learning activity, on the other hand, is an unplanned, uncontrolled, sometimes unconscious, information gathering activity. Some common unstructured learning activities include work-related experience and networking with other professionals (Huber, 1991). Unstructured learning often results in informal and incidental learning (Marsick & Watkins, 2001).

Although both structured and unstructured learning can result in the transfer and application of explicit and tacit knowledge, structured learning activities, such as training, are often used to share structured, more explicit knowledge. While, unstructured learning activities, such as experience and networking, often result in the transmission of more personal tacit knowledge (Aiman-Smith, et al., 2006) (Table 1).

A number of factors impact employee engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities identified and ultimately their work-related learning. This chapter explores some of them.

Table 1.

Literature Summary – Structured Versus Unstructured Learning Activities

SECTION A1 LITERATURE SUMMARY: Structured Versus Unstructured Learning Activities		
VARIABLES	**CONCLUSIONS**	**CITATIONS**
STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES	A structured learning activity is the planned and controlled transmittance of information through programs such as courses, workshops and seminars.	(Marsick & Watkins, 2001)
UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES	An unstructured learning activity is the unplanned, uncontrolled, sometimes unconscious, information gathering activity such as work-related experience and networking with other professionals.	(Huber, 1991)

A2) The Relationship between Employees' Work-related Behaviors and their Engagement in Learning Activities

According to the literature, there could be a relationship between employee work-related behaviors (such as their intrinsic motivation towards learning, risk- taking ability, and their positive attitude towards learning and the industry) and the frequency of their engagement in learning activities.

i) The Relationship between Employees' Motivation Towards Learning and their Engagement in Learning Activities

Employees' motivation to learn could influence their individual learning (Slotte, Tynjälä, & Hytönen, 2004), ultimately impacting organizational wisdom (Bierly III, et al., 2000) and innovation (Mohr, 1969). As a matter of fact, employees' de-motivation could result in the failure of some organizations to learn (Carroll, J. S. & Edmondson, 2002). Researchers have also contended that employees' motivation to learn could have a significant positive effect on customer's perception of service quality (Hays & Hill, 2001). It could improve employees' ability to work smartly; adjusting work-related behaviors as situations demands it (Sujan, Weitz, & Kumar, 1994). It could play a significant role in employees knowing why and not just how and whom (Arthur, M. B., DeFillippi, & Jones, 2001). Brinkerhoff (2006) asserted that learners' motivational values could also affect training impact. Therefore, employees' motivation to learn could impact their individual and their organizations' learning.

Researchers proposed two epistemologies on learning motivation, the behaviorist and the Gesaltist thinking. Behaviorists believe learning is driven by physiological needs such as hunger, thirst and pain avoidance and hence shaped by the consequences of learning efforts. Meanwhile, Gesaltists believe learning is driven by a desire to understand and master the world even at the expense

of physiological needs. Therefore, behaviorists see learning as being driven somewhat by extrinsic factors while the Gesaltists see learning as being influenced by more intrinsic factors (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003), thus making the motive to learn biological or intentional.

Ellerman (1999) made the distinction between drivers of motivation and their likely effects on organizational learning. Ellerman (1999) felt that one way learning organizations differed from church-like organizations was the way they were motivated. Surmising from the work of Taylor and Dehming, Ellerman (1999) stated that church-like organizations often used more external or extrinsic motivation for short-term behavioral change, while open learning organizations often used more internal or intrinsic motivation to achieve long-term sustainable change. Glyn (1996) also postulated that strong intrinsic incentives and high individual motivation were at the heart of individual intelligence, idea generation and ultimately organizational innovation. However, the researcher recognized the importance of extrinsic motivation and incentives to innovation stimulation. Therefore, *'true'* long-term, sustainable learning was more likely with more intrinsic rather than extrinsic type motivation.

Ahmed, Loh and Zairi (1999), who seemed to support the Gesaltist view, opined that persons learnt most when they were motivated by their interests, enjoyment, satisfaction and the challenge of the work and not by external

pressures. Persons who were extrinsically motivated were not inclined to experiment but tended to focus more on following the rules (Ahmed, et al., 1999). Pierce and Delbecq (1977) theorized that it was the intrinsically motivated that were more likely to innovate. Antonacopoulou (2006) found in the banking sector that managers' learning was dependent on whether or not learning was encouraged in the organization. The researcher concluded from the longitudinal study that managers who learnt to satisfy organizational requirements do not learn. Some researchers were therefore of the view that individual learning in the workplace was more the result of intrinsic rather than extrinsic factors.

However, a trend observed in the literature was that in many instances managers' individual learning was very often intrinsically driven by self-imposed fears of failure. Agryris (1991), Vince (2002) and Beamish (2005) all noted similar observations. Agryris (1991) found that consultants were driven to learn simply because they wanted to be considered amongst the best by their peers. Vince (2002), who interviewed seven senior managers at a single company identified fear and competition as drivers of their individual learning. Beamish (2005), whose work focused on chief executives, also found that personal results and recognition motivated executives to learn. The researcher also revealed that recognition for these chief executives meant symbols and activities that flattered their images and was often reflected in their working conditions and codified in ways such as in their office space, furnishings,

travel, accommodations arrangements, and the profile of the learning events they attended. Leonard (2005) stated that authentic, specific and frequent recognition could actually foster greater achievement. Ford and Olgilvie (1996) and López, Peón and Ordás (2005) went further and stated that organizations that rewarded actions were more likely to develop learning organizations that were resilient, capable of optimizing on change, ultimately gaining and maintaining a competitive edge. Therefore, being the best and being recognized and acknowledged as such were strong drivers of management learning.

Therefore, the general consensus in the literature thus far was that persons motivated by intrinsic factors, were more likely to learn in a more long-term, sustained, innovative way than those motivated by more extrinsic factors. However, is there relationship between how constituents were motivated to learn and their engagement in learning activities?

Wiethoff (2004) postulated for diversity training, in particular, trainees' attitudes were influenced by four factors: their belief in the utility of the diversity training; the perceived need for the training; their belief that the training would lead to some job rewards; and the importance of such rewards. This implied a difference in how employees were motivated to engage structured learning activities, like training, partly by extrinsic factors.

Motivation to learn could be at the heart of informal and incidental learning (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Artis and Harris (2007) found motivation to be an important element for salespersons' engagement in unstructured, self-directed learning and more powerful than their self-directed learning skills. The researchers noted that salespersons were typically motivated by extrinsic factors like financial rewards and intrinsic factors such as feedback. Researchers found that feedback, such as recognition, could foster learning and achievement (Artis & Harris, 2007; Leonard, 2005; Tannenbaum, 1997). However, the literature left one unsure as to the type of motivation - intrinsic or extrinsic, that would have the greatest influence on the depth of engagement in unstructured learning activities.

Researchers found that depth of engagement in learning activities depended on employees' internal loci of control. London and Smither (1999) found that employees' internal loci of control played an important role in their empowered self-development and continuous learning.

The literature also revealed employees' motivation to learn and engagement in learning events was influenced by three factors: the love of learning, interest in the profession (Lohman, 2005) and the organization's culture (Egan, Yang, & Bartlett, 2004). This dissertation looked at the impact of these variables on learning activity engagement. The study did not examine the impact of the love of learning, interest in the profession and organizational

culture on motivation to learn. If hotel leaders were aware of the factors that drove managers to learn and the impact of those factors on their engagement in learning activities and learning then hotels could better select initiatives that would have the greatest positive effect on their managers' learning activities engagement and ultimately their learning (Remedios & Boreham, 2004).

ii) The Relationship between Employees' Risk Taking Characteristics and their Engagement in Learning Activities

London and Smithier (1999) stated that an uncertainty orientation was key to employee self-development and continuous learning and hence could be a reason learning organizations typically reward risk-taking (Kline, P. & Saunders, 1993). According to researchers, constituents' ability to take risks could impact their ability to create, innovate, change and learn (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Edmondson, 2002; Glynn, 1996). Hence leaders in learning organizations, in particular, not only need to take risks in order to fulfill their organization's learning mandate but must be able to manage risk as well (Stinson, Pearson, & Lucas, 2006). Ortenbald (2005) also felt that of the varying personality types required in learning organizations, constituents' flexibility would be one personality type needed. The researcher further stated that different personality types would focus on different aspects of a business such as its efficiency, flexibility or democracy. Researchers therefore suggested a

connection between an uncertainty orientation and individual and organizational learning.

Although the literature stated that risk-taking would impact learning and more specifically, continuous learning. The literature failed to indicate whether one's risk-taking orientation would influence the type and depth of their engagement in learning activities.

iii) The Relationship between Employees' Attitude Towards Learning and their Engagement in Learning Activities

'Attitude', as defined in the *Little Oxford Dictionary*, 'is a way of thinking or behaving' (Hawker & Cowley, 1998, p. 29). Argyris (1991) felt learning required more than just motivation but the right attitude and commitment and companies create motivated and committed workers through compensation programs, performance reviews and corporate cultures. Dirkx (1999), who held a view similar to Argyris' (1991), postulated that a manager's belief system could influence his/her role as a facilitator of learning. Pierce and Delbecq (1977) added further refinement to this line of thinking. The researchers stated that organizations with strategic decision makers with a more favorable attitude towards change would see improvements in their organizations' innovation. Gardiner and Whiting (1997) found that respondents at a defense-oriented engineering company and learning organization had a positive attitude towards learning and were willing to take responsibility for

their own education and training within the group. Therefore, a relationship between the constructs *attitude to learning* and *responsibility for education and training* could be implied; however, the study failed to clearly establish whether or not such a relationship existed between the two constructs. Gordon (2001), on citing an article written in the *Chicago Tribune* entitled 'Learning Never Stops for Successful People', stated that one of the lessons learnt from the article review was that the persons who succeeded were the ones committed to lifelong learning. The literature therefore suggested a relationship between a positive attitude to learning, which is also change, and engagement in learning activities and ultimately learning.

There are attitudinal impediments to learning. Harrison (2004) identified two such impediments: first, when persons see research as an 'ivy tower' and not as a practical endeavor and second, when persons believe that thinking inhibits doing. Seo (2003) identified a third impediment, namely, individual emotion.

Regarding the motivation to engage in informal learning, Lohman (2005) found that the love of learning evident in public school teachers and human resource development (HRD) professionals was one of the seven characteristics that enhanced their desire for learning activity engagement. In the case of a structured learning exercise, Wiethoff (2004) hypothesized that if employees perceived diversity training as developmental, then they would exhibit a

greater motivation to learn than if they perceived it to be punitive. A positive attitude towards learning was defined as having thought processes and the supporting behaviors that demonstrated a love, interest in and commitment to learning. Therefore, Lohman (2005) and Wiethoff (2004) suggested that there could be a possible positive link between positive attitude towards learning and one's engagement in learning activities.

iv) The Relationship between Employees' Attitude Towards Industry and their Engagement in Learning Activities

Employees' positive attitude towards their career and industry could also have a positive effect on their learning. Pierce and Delbecq (1977) proposed from their review of the literature that job satisfaction and involvement would positively relate to innovation. Buzan (1991), identified 20 essential characteristics of successful personalities and organizations, two of which were a positive attitude and love of the task (Buzan, 1991) while Lohman (2005) found that interest in the profession was one of the characteristics that motivated professional groups to engage in informal learning. Dirkx (1999) felt that a manager's view of his/her role in the organization could influence his/her approach to facilitating learning. Therefore, there could be a positive relationship between favorable attitude towards the job or profession and one's engagement in informal learning activities and learning. In this study a positive attitude to the industry suggested that one's thoughts and behavior demonstrated love, interest in and commitment to the profession (Table 2).

Table 2.

Literature Summary – Employees' Work-related Characteristics and Learning

SECTION A2 LITERATURE SUMMARY: Employees' Work-related Characteristics and Learning		
VARIABLES	**CONCLUSIONS**	**CITATIONS**
MOTIVATION TOWARDS LEARNING	Employees that were more intrinsically motivated were more likely to learn and change.	(Ahmed, et al., 1999; Antonacopoulou, 2006; Argyris, 1991; Artis & Harris, 2007; Beamish, 2005; Glynn, 1996; 2001; Leonard, 2005; Lohman, 2005; London & Smither, 1999; López, et al., 2005; Marsick & Watkins, 2001; Pierce & Delbecq, 1977; Tannenbaum, 1997; Vince, 2002)
ABILITY TO TAKE RISKS	There was a connection between a risk-taking orientation and learning, organizational and individual.	(Ahmed, et al., 1999; Edmondson, 2002; Glynn, 1996; Kline, P. & Saunders, 1993; London & Smither, 1999; Ortenblad, 2005; Stinson, et al., 2006)
ATTITUDE TOWARDS LEARNING	There would be a positive relationship between one's attitude towards learning and their learning.	(Argyris, 1991; Dirkx, 1999; Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Lohman, 2005; Pierce & Delbecq, 1977; Seo, 2003; Wiethoff, 2004)
ATTITUDE TOWARDS INDUSTRY	A positive attitude towards the industry and profession could have a positive impact on one's learning.	(Buzan, 1991; Dirkx, 1999; Lohman, 2005; Pierce & Delbecq, 1977)

It was therefore hypothesized that:

H1a-b: Hotel managers who were less intrinsically motivated to learn would more likely pursue structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time or more frequently (DEPTH) than those more intrinsically motivated to learn.

H1c-d: Hotel managers with high perceived risk-taking abilities would more likely pursue structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time or more frequently (DEPTH) than those with lower perceived risk-taking abilities.

H1e-f: Hotel managers with more positive attitudes towards learning would more likely pursue structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time or more frequently (DEPTH) than those with less positive attitudes towards learning.

H1g-h: Hotel managers with more positive attitudes towards the hospitality industry would more likely pursue structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time or more frequently (DEPTH) than those with less positive attitudes towards the same industry (Figure 2a).

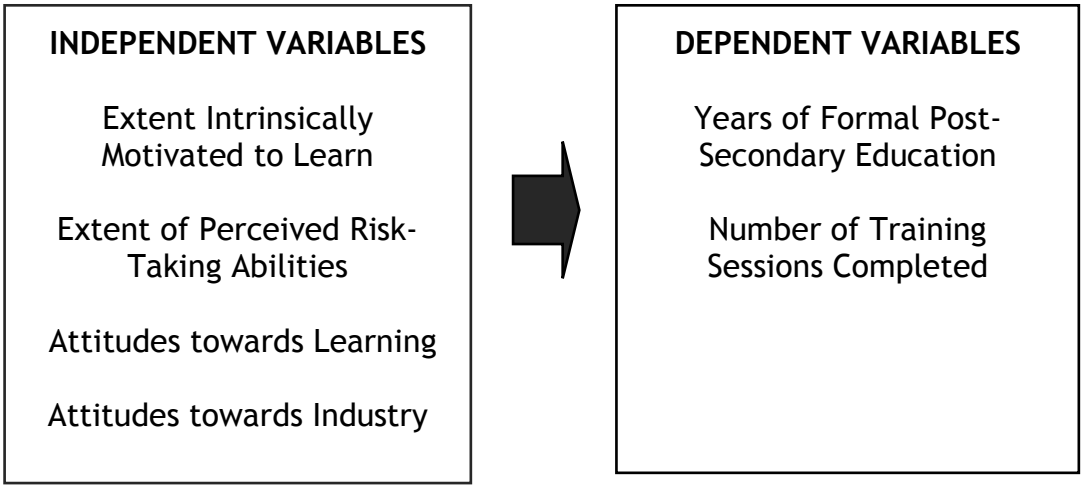


Figure 3a. Relationships explored: Hotel managers' work-related behaviors on the depth of their engagement in each structured learning activity

H2a: Hotel managers who were more intrinsically motivated to learn were likely to network (unstructured learning activity) significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those less intrinsically motivated to learn.

H2b: Hotel managers with high perceived risk-taking abilities would network (unstructured learning activity) significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those with lower perceived risk-taking abilities.

H2c: Hotel managers with more positive attitudes towards learning would network (unstructured learning activity) significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those with less positive attitudes towards learning.

H2d: Hotel managers with more positive attitudes towards the hospitality industry would network (unstructured learning activity) significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those with less positive attitudes towards the same industry (Figure 2b).

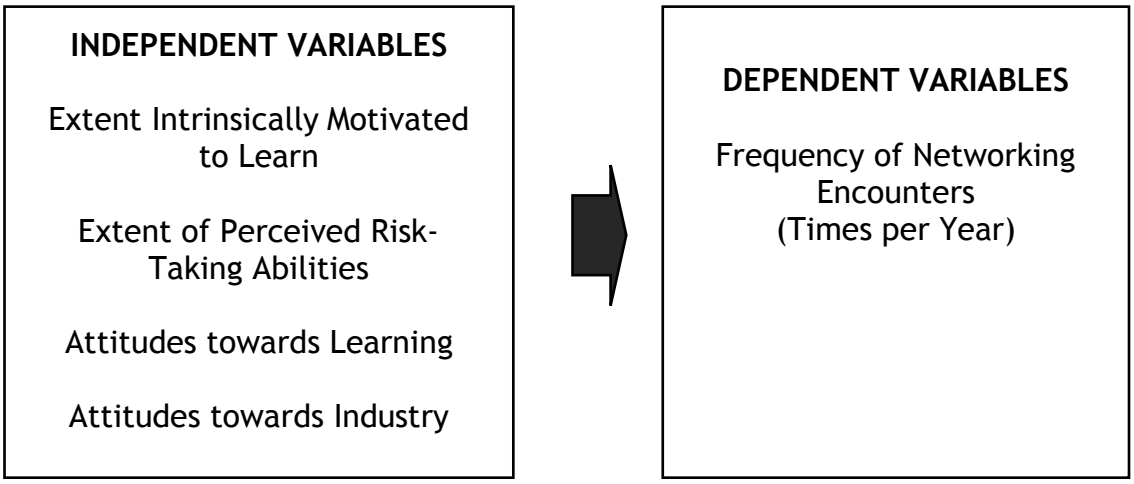


Figure 3b. Relationships explored: Hotel managers' work-related behaviors on the depth of their engagement in networking

A3) The Relationship between Organizational Characteristics and Employees' Engagement in Learning Activities

i) The Relationship between Organizations' Size and their Employees' Engagement in Learning Activities

According to the literature, size was a good predictor of organizational learning (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981) as it often had implications for available resources and differentiation. Smaller businesses tended to have limited time and money, fewer resource persons from whom to learn, and limited access to available knowledge which could facilitate

innovation (Hurley & Hult, 1998; Marsick & Watkins, 2001; Mohr, 1969). Larger firms could also better exploit the labor market and its relational capital (Capello & Faggian, 2005). However Mohr (1969), whose study looked at the determinants of innovation in public health organizations, discovered that a health department's size had no impact on its proportional innovation but Mohr (1969) failed to infer that resources attributed to size were not related to proportional innovation. The researcher noted that larger departments often adopted more non-traditional programs than smaller ones because smaller departments' had difficulty attracting more specialized staff; had a limited number of persons to assign to diverse tasks; and little slack funding. Therefore, larger departments were more equipped with the resources to support variety than smaller ones. Mohr (1969) further speculated that this observation may also be true for other service organizations, a point this study attempted to prove. Therefore, there could be a positive relationship between organizational size and organizational learning.

Differentiation could also account for a firm's size and have an impact on learning, especially in the hotel industry, because as the number of departments and specialized units increased, so do the number of persons employed. Pierce and Delbecq (1977) posited that differentiation stimulates innovation as it allowed for the cross-fertilization of ideas; facilitated constructive conflict; and eliminated the presence of a single professional ideology. Therefore, one sure way that an organization could achieve

differentiation was through heterogeneous occupational types. The researchers cautioned their readers and proposed that differentiation was more conducive to innovation initiation than it was to innovation adoption and implementation. They further explained that size provided the differentiation for initiation, the required critical mass for adoption and unit autonomy for implementation. Therefore, they postulated a positive relationship between organizational size and innovation. Brown and Duguid (1991) also felt that autonomy in large organizations' internal communities could actually accelerate innovation. However, there was a way for smaller organizations to enjoy learning levels similar to those of their larger counterparts. Argote, Ingram, Levine and Moreland (2000) felt interconnectedness amongst smaller organizations could provide them with a larger experience base from which they could learn. Therefore, there could be a positive relationship between differentiation and individual learning, as well as differentiation and organizational learning.

Referring specifically to unstructured learning, Anderson and Skinner (1999) believed that small businesses were usually heavily reliant on informal off-the-job learning. Lohman (2005) also found that the inaccessibility of subject matter experts (which could be attributed to size) inhibited HRD professionals from engaging in informal learning. Therefore, based on the literature a similar trend was postulated for the hotel industry, that is, the larger the hotel, the more management engagement in learning activities, and the more individual learning likely.

ii) The Relationship between Organizations' Learning Culture and their Employees' Engagement in Learning Activities

Learning cultures often existed in environments where:

a) their collective vision, goals and objectives were clear (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Alexiou, 2005; Ellinger, Ellinger, Yang, & Howton, 2002; Goh, 1998; Keong Tan & Heracleous, 2001; Kline, P. & Saunders, 1993; McCaskey & Raggett, 2005; Reineck, 2002; Tannenbaum, 1997);
b) quality standards were high (Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Tannenbaum, 1997);
c) a future orientation was evident (Ahmed, et al., 1999);
d) managers were supportive and not controllers (Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Gephart, et al., 1996; Gjelsvik, 2002; Goh, 1998; Keong Tan & Heracleous, 2001);
e) there was internal transparency and trust (Burgoyne, J., 1995; Chambers, 1997; Ellerman, 1999; Garvin, 1993; Gephart, et al., 1996; Kline, P. & Saunders, 1993);
f) control was decentralized and organizational structure non-hierarchical (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Alexiou, 2005; Chambers, 1997; Gephart, et al., 1996; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Gjelsvik, 2002; Goh, 1998; Rushmer, et al., 2004);
g) innovative and improvement ideas were solicited at all levels (Alexiou, 2005; Barnett, E. & Storey, 2001; Bayraktaroglu & Kutanis,

2003; Burgoyne, J., 1995; Darling, Parry, & Moore, 2005; Egan, et al., 2004; Ellerman, 1999; Ellinger, et al., 2002; Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Gephart, et al., 1996; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Gjelsvik, 2002; Goh, 1998; Keong Tan & Heracleous, 2001; Rushmer, et al., 2004; Tannenbaum, 1997);

h) ideas were challenged (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Bayraktaroglu & Kutanis, 2003; Darling, et al., 2005; Egan, et al., 2004; Ellerman, 1999; Ellinger, et al., 2002; Goh, 1998; Reineck, 2002);

i) diverse lifestyles and values were seen as a means by which to encourage variety of perspectives and ideas (Gephart, et al., 1996);

j) non-threatening language, such as 'error', 'investigations', accidents' and 'analysis', were used (Carroll, J. S. & Edmondson, 2002; Darling, et al., 2005);

k) mistakes and risks were seen as learning opportunities (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Gephart, et al., 1996; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Gjelsvik, 2002; Goh, 1998; Kline, P. & Saunders, 1993; Reineck, 2002; Schragenheim & Passal, 2005; Tannenbaum, 1997);

l) autonomy and individual approaches were encouraged (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Rushmer, et al., 2004);

m) there were systems to capture and share learning and learning opportunities were created (Ellinger, et al., 2002; Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Gephart, et al., 1996; Reineck, 2002);

n) internal exchanges such as meetings, collaborations, training and team learning were encouraged (Alexiou, 2005; Burgoyne, J. G., 1995; Egan, et al., 2004; Ellinger, et al., 2002; Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Garvin, 1993; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Gjelsvik, 2002; Goh, 1998; Keeble, Lawson, Moore, & Wilkinson, 1999; Kline, P. & Saunders, 1993; McCaskey & Raggett, 2005; Reineck, 2002; Tannenbaum, 1997);

o) external exchanges were encouraged (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Barnett, E. & Storey, 2001; Burgoyne, J., 1995; Ellinger, et al., 2002; Gephart, et al., 1996; Goh, 1998);

p) sharing and learning were rewarded (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Burgoyne, J., 1995; Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Gephart, et al., 1996; Gjelsvik, 2002; Keong Tan & Heracleous, 2001);

q) employees' self development were supported (Burgoyne, J., 1995; Gjelsvik, 2002);

r) internal training was offered on a continuous basis (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Gjelsvik, 2002; McCaskey & Raggett, 2005; Tannenbaum, 1997);

s) external training was encouraged (Barnett, E. & Storey, 2001);

t) employees' got the opportunity to learn novel tasks (Gjelsvik, 2002);

u) departments viewed each other as customers and suppliers (Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004);
v) individuals were assigned tasks where they can apply the knowledge and challenge their abilities (Tannenbaum, 1997);
w) time was allotted for reflection and analysis (Garvin, 1993); and
x) individuals contributed effectively to the performance of the organization (Bayraktaroglu & Kutanis, 2003; McCaskey & Raggett, 2005).

Therefore, based on the above, learning cultures had two main features: external adaptability and internal consistency. Generally, entities achieved external adaptability through an openness and willingness to experiment with new ideas and because they took risks and participated in external exchanges. While, companies with internal consistency had a shared vision; participated in internal exchanges and continuous training; and rewarded learning (Ahmed, et al., 1999). In the case of Tensator, a medium-sized spring manufacturing firm, their shared philosophy was simply 'innovate or die' (Barnett, E. & Storey, 2001).

Organizational layout and design could reflect and drive a desired learning culture. Edenius and Yaklef (2007) found that open spaces characterized by involvement, noise, movement and chaos could encourage employees to participate in ongoing activities and allow them to perform in

spontaneous ways. However, there could be a downside as it could compromise reflection and the quality of decisions made.

A learning culture, therefore, was one where all employees of the entity believed they were doing something meaningful; felt they were growing; and felt they made more intelligent decisions because they were operating as a team (Reineck, 2002). Hence a learning culture would put learning center stage of the organization (Mavrinac, 2005).

Arie de Geus, author of the book *The Living Company: Habits for Survival in a Turbulent Business Environment* implied that there was a relationship between a learning culture and organizational learning. He stated in an interview that living companies, which were brain-rich companies with a long-term outlook, were often preoccupied with developing employee potential (Chambers, 1997) and this viewpoint was also suggested in other studies. Researchers found that organizational learning was tied to institutional conditions (Geppert, 1996; Rashman & Hartley, 2002; Sta. Maria & Watkins, 2003; Vickers, 2000) and often the stronger the learning environment, the stronger the organization's performance (Ben-Horin Naot, Lipshitz, & Popper, 2004; Tannenbaum, 1997). Therefore, there could be a positive relationship between an organization's learning culture and their overall learning.

London and Smither (1999) and Antonacopoulou (2006) also thought that individual learning was shaped by the organizational context in which it took place. Sujan, et al. (1994) felt that a performance orientation drove employees to work hard, meanwhile a learning orientation drove employees to work both smart and hard. The reason for this was that when persons learn at the workplace or in similar social settings, their actions would be influenced by the group's established cultural and social norms (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Bates & Khasawneh (2005) also concluded that innovation demanded a psychological climate that would foster individuals' ability to share and apply what was learnt.

When it came to the learning culture and innovation, Pierce and Delbecq (1977) speculated that there was a positive relationship between the learning culture characteristic, autonomy, and innovation. Damanpour (1991) later confirmed this, having discovered a negative relationship between centralization and innovation and also between formalization and innovation, characteristics that were contrary to a learning culture. Creativity would therefore result in innovation if the appropriate enabling environment existed, namely the opportunity for creative expression, the absence of constraints, and the available resources to develop ideas (Glynn, 1996). This finding explained why high levels of innovativeness in a firm's culture could result in a greater number of innovations being implemented (Hurley & Hult, 1998). Hence, a learning culture could be a significant predictor of organizational innovation

and learning transfer climates and both could greatly influence the perceived innovative capacity of a firm (Bates & Khasawneh, 2005).

Learning culture could also influence organizational learning. Closed organizations, such as those with limited information access, could inhibit individual and group contribution to organizational performance (Inman & Vernon, 1997; Jonsson & Elg, 2006) as high level organizational learning and employee exchanges often required trust and psychological safety (Ben-Horin Naot, et al., 2004; Driver, 2002; López, et al., 2005; Vince, Sutcliffe, & Olivera, 2002). Awoniyi, Griego, and Morgan (2002), whose study looked at the effects of the interaction of person-environment variables on training transfer, found a modest positive relationship between the transfer of training on the job with sufficient resources, workers' perceived freedom, workload pressures and perceived worker creativity. The researchers suggested that practitioners could improve training transfer by making some necessary environmental changes. Hays and Hills (2001) believed that superior service was predicated on employees having a clear vision of the importance of such service quality. Bassi and McMurrer (2007) theorized that an organization's learning capacity could be driven by diverse elements of its learning culture: innovation; training; employee development; leaders supporting and valuing learning; and by using learning management systems that automated aspects of training. Therefore, organizational learning could be predicated on a learning culture.

Bijlsma-Frankema, Rosendaal, & Taminiau (2006) however, felt that in order for learning culture to enable learning there must be consistency in the organization's vision, its hierarchy and in its rules and procedures. Employee autonomy, in particular, would have to be guided by clear organizational intent in order to trigger learning. According to Carroll (1998), if organizations had no systemic understanding of how work was accomplished, then such entities would fail to learn from the past.

According to researchers, a learning culture could have an impact on employees' engagement in learning activities (Carroll, J., 1998). Furthermore, organizations with learning cultures often support and encourage their constituents' engagement in learning activities. Artis and Haris (2007) found that when salespersons were highly autonomous, a characteristic of a learning culture, they were more willing to use self-directed learning in situations. Van der Sluis-den Dikken and Hoeksema (2001) also found that limited management support and encouragement, characteristics that goes contrary to a learning culture, was statistically related to instruction-oriented learning. Researchers found that managers supported by their seniors would get more information and be invited to important meetings (van der Sluis-den Dikken & Hoeksema, 2001); meanwhile an unsupportive organizational culture prevent managers from engaging in informal learning activities (Lohman, 2005). Project-based learning also demanded an informal network environment where persons can learn without fear of failure and willing to talk about difficult issues (Ayas &

Zeniuk, 2001). Hence, according to the literature, there could be a significant relationship between an organization's learning culture and their constituents' engagement in learning activities, in particular their engagement in unstructured learning activities.

Although will not be examined in this dissertation, researchers also found a relationship between an organization's learning culture and its employees' desire to learn (Egan, et al., 2004). According to Remedios and Boreham (2004), learning organization theorists speculated that when employees are empowered with knowledge and responsibility, they become motivated and contented (Table 3).

Table 3.

Literature Summary – Organizational Characteristics and Learning

SECTION A3 LITERATURE SUMMARY: Organizational Characteristics and Learning		
VARIABLES	**CONCLUSIONS**	**CITATIONS**
HOTEL SIZE	A positive relationship was likely between organizational size and learning, organizational and individual; as well as between differentiation and learning.	(Ahmed, et al., 1999; Capello & Faggian, 2005; Hurley & Hult, 1998; Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981; Lohman, 2005; Marsick & Watkins, 2001; Mohr, 1969; Pierce & Delbecq, 1977)
HOTEL LEARNING CULTURE	A positive relationship was likely between an organization's learning culture and learning, both organizational and individual.	(Ahmed, et al., 1999; Antonacopoulou, 2006; Awoniyi, et al., 2002; Bassi & McMurrer, 2007; Bates & Khasawneh, 2005; Ben-Horin Naot, et al., 2004; Bijlsma-Frankema, et al., 2006; Carroll, J., 1998; Chambers, 1997; Damanpour, 1991; Driver, 2002; Geppert, 1996; Glynn, 1996; Hays & Hill, 2001; Hurley & Hult, 1998; Inman & Vernon, 1997; Jonsson & Elg, 2006; London & Smither, 1999; López, et al., 2005; Marsick & Watkins, 2001; Mavrinac, 2005; Pierce & Delbecq, 1977; Rashman & Hartley, 2002; Rushmer, et al., 2004; Seo, 2003; Sta. Maria & Watkins, 2003; Sujan, et al., 1994; Tannenbaum, 1997; Vickers, 2000; Vince, et al., 2002)
	Learning cultures often encouraged employee engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities.	(Artis & Harris, 2007; Ayas & Zeniuk, 2001; Carroll, J., 1998; Lohman, 2005; van der Sluis-den Dikken & Hoeksema, 2001)

It was therefore hypothesized that:

H3a-b: Managers who worked in larger hotels would engage in structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time and more frequently (DEPTH) than those who worked in smaller hotels.

H3c-d: Managers who worked in hotels with a stronger learning culture would engage in structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time and more frequently (DEPTH) than those who worked in hotels with a weaker learning culture.

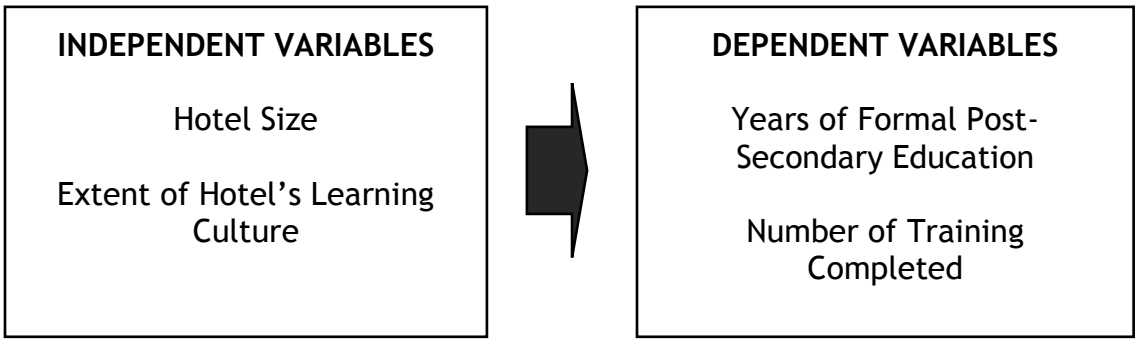


Figure 4a. Relationships explored: Hotel characteristics on the depth of hotel managers' engagement in each structured learning activity

H4a: Managers who worked in larger hotels would network significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those who worked in smaller hotels.

H4b: Managers who worked in hotels with a stronger learning culture would network significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those who worked in hotels with a weaker learning culture.

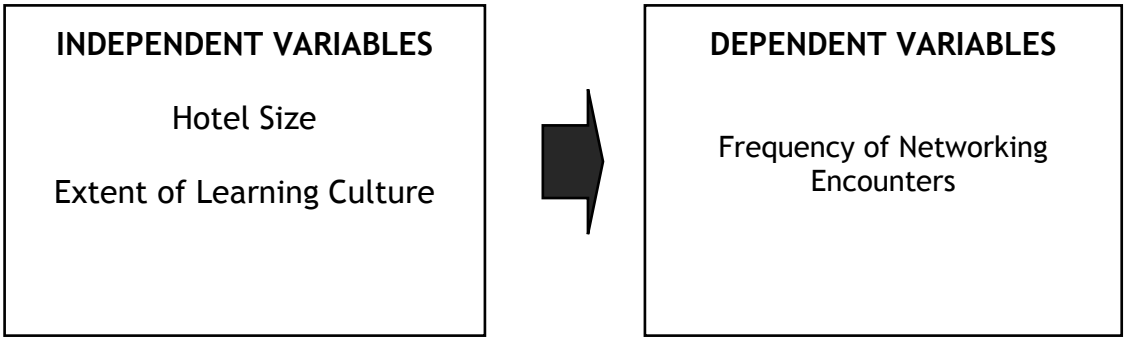


Figure 4b. Relationships explored: Hotel characteristics on the depth of hotel managers' engagement in networking

SECTION B: LITERATURE DISCUSSION

The Impact of Employees' Engagement in Structured and Unstructured Learning Activities on their Learning

B1) Learning Defined: Organizational, Individual and Management

i) Organizational Learning

Organizational learning could simply be defined as changes in a company's or an entity's perception, thinking and ultimately behavior (Chen, 2005). While it might not equate to the sum of individual learning, through individuals organizations learn (Leitch, et al., 1996; Tannenbaum, 1997; Teare, R., 1997) and hence organizational learning would be influenced by employees' mindsets (Slotte, et al., 2004). An example of when individual learning would

not result in organizational learning (Stinson, et al., 2006) would be in situations when organizations were unable to use its members' knowledge (Edmondson, 2002). There might also be occasions when learning failed to produce intelligent behavior or changes but instead resulted in superstitious learning, competency traps and incorrect inferences (Huber, 1991; Levitt & March, 1988). Individual learning is a function of organizational learning (Gephart, et al., 1996; Schilling, Vidal, Ployhart, & Marangoni, 2003). Organizational and individual learning would often occur concurrently as individual learning would typically occur in social settings such as within organizations (Bogenrieder, 2002).

The literature identified different types and levels of learning: single-, double- and triple-loop and low- and high-level learning. Single-loop learning was described as an organization's constituents trying to modify differences between the desired and the actual, while being guided by established values and assumptions. Double-loop learning, on the other hand, was using knowledge to change governing assumptions and values and by extension actions. Meanwhile triple-loop learning was using knowledge to tackle embedded traditions that influenced organizational values and assumptions (Seo, 2003). Most organizations were restricted to single-loop learning; however, experts suggested that entities should strive to develop their double-loop learning potential (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003).

Single-, double- and triple-loop learning could be categorized as either lower- or higher- level learning. Single-loop learning is a lower-level type of organizational learning and the other two, higher-level types learning. Descriptions of lower- and higher-level learning, which Abma (2000) referred to as 'first' and 'second' order learning, were similar to those for single-, double- and triple-loop learning. Therefore lower-level learning, which was the norm in habit-driven organizations, tended to be rule-based. These entities often used scripts to deal with common situations. Higher-level learning, which was common to adaptive organizations, involved preparing learners to deal with unusual situations through discovery, adjusting the rules along the way (Burgoyne, J., 1995; Cope, 2003). Abma (2000) characterized 'first order' learning as gaming and 'second order' learning as playing.

Organizational learning could also be of a low or high quality. High quality organizational learning was one that produced a desired outcome or prevented an undesirable one. Features of such learning within organizations included when: lessons learnt were a part of their method of operation; their constituents were engaged; internal and external sources of knowledge were used and its leadership was supportive (Ben-Horin Naot, et al., 2004). This dissertation did not attempt to ascertain the hotel managers' type, level or quality of learning but its existence in the literature could not be ignored.

ii) Individual Learning

Business competitiveness and success depends on a workforce generating new insights through learning (Baldwin, et al., 1997; Bijlsma-Frankema, et al., 2006). When organizations allowed earning to inhibit learning, then misfortunes resulted (Bower, 1990).

According to active learning philosophy, individual learning was more than the transfer of knowledge but the transformation of knowledge and therefore the learner would create new knowledge from previous knowledge, experiences and problems (Clark & Geppert, 2002). A more behaviorist definition of individual learning would be the ability to gather and use information to effect change (Bierly III, et al., 2000; Casey, 2005; Dominiak, 2006; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Marsick & Watkins, 2001; Mavrinac, 2005; Tannenbaum, 1997) with knowledge being the end result (Alred & Garvey, 2000). This explained why Antonacopoulou (2006) characterized learning as *'the the liberation of knowledge through self-questioning'* p.460. Individual learning was therefore consistent with the notion of working smart, which Sujan, et al. (1994) defined as developing knowledge and using it in work behavior. Therefore, learning was more than problem solving as it involved identifying and correcting errors in the external environment (Argyris, 1991) and when necessary changing one's basic assumptions (Bower, 1990). Individual learning could be maintenance or anticipatory. Maintenance learning was often short-term focused and involved finding better ways of doing current tasks and

procedures. Anticipatory learning, which would be common to learning organizations, was often participatory and involved acquiring and incorporating new information into the work environment (Giesecke & McNeil, 2004). However, for this dissertation the distinction was not made between the two but once managers reported learning either or both were assumed to have occurred.

Individual learning is very private and hence poses a challenge for researchers to measure. For one to have learnt one had to have retained, internalized and owned information before one could act on it (Bakken, Gould, & Kim, 1992; Barkley & Bianco, 2000). Individual learning is also complex and non-linear (Cunliffe, 2002). Peter Senge, the author of the book *The Fifth Discipline* and Director of Organizational Learning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School of Management stated in an interview with the senior editor of the magazine *Training*, Ron Zemke(1999), stated that knowledge could not be reduced to simple answers and steps and gave the example of the difficulties involved in recording all the steps involved in the everyday task, walking. Therefore, individual learning was very difficult to record and measure.

Learning often involved three steps: acquiring, interpreting, and applying information (Carroll, J., 1998; Morris, Bessant, & Barnes, 2006). For

this dissertation, only the acquisition and the application of knowledge were examined. Interpretation, the second step in the learning process, was implied. Hence, by looking at management's engagement in learning activities, the extent of their exposure to useful industry information was assumed (Carroll, J., 1998).

Like individual learning, management learning implied cognitive and behavioral adjustments (Tsang, 1997). Clark and Geppert (2002) defined management learning as "*those internal organizational processes of knowledge acquisition whereby managers in organizations concerned assimilate new values, ideas, systems and techniques and thereby, in their changed practices, produce new organizational patterns and processes.*" p. 264. However, managers were expected to be more than learners but teachers, learning initiators and moderators in their organizations. Kerfoot (2005) went further and contended that if a leader was unable to teach, then he or she would have difficulty motivating and inspiring others to crave knowledge. The researchers further recognized the role of power, politics and contestation in their learning process. Therefore, management learning involved the assimilation, application and transformation of knowledge.

iii) Measuring management learning

Based on the behaviorist epistemology, the philosophy which guided this paper, management learning required action and the outward manifestation

and the measure often used by researchers was organizational performance. One simulated example of this was the People Express Flight Simulator where cumulative net income indicated learning success (Bakken, et al., 1992). Gavin's (1993) learning curve operated on a similar premise. It looked at a company's experience curves, which was defined as the relationship between decline in cost and increase in production where the percentage learning reported was the percentage decline in cost. However, one weakness with this approach was that it only looked at one aspect of learning, output, and the cost and price associated with it. 'Half Time' Curve also used organizational performance as the measure of learning. This system developed by the semi-conductor firm, Analog Devices, measured the time it took to achieve a 50% improvement in specified performance measures. An advantage of this method was that it looked at other aspects of organizational performance such as defect rates, delivery time and time to market (Garvin, 1993). Even though the bottom-line data, such as cost and profits, were good indicators of business success, they tended to be more reflective of collective rather than individual management learning, hence the need for further expansion of the definition of the term 'management learning'.

iv) Management Learning Redefined

Learning organizations were typically skilled at systematic problem solving, experimentation (Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Stinson, et al., 2006) and knowledge transfer, such as learning from their past experiences and from the

experiences of others (Barnett, E. & Storey, 2001; Ellerman, 1999; Garvin, 1993). If organizational learning was the result of individual learning it could be implied that individuals, in particular the teachers, initiators and moderators of organizational learning, managers, should be skilled in the art of acquiring new information and using it to challenge pre-existing values, ideas, systems and techniques through their approach to problem solving, experimentation and knowledge transfer. Therefore, management learning, as used in the context of this dissertation, was the digestion of new knowledge, which was transferred to the workplace and transformed through problem solving and innovation. In other words, management learning signified the ability to apply acquired knowledge to current or anticipated challenges and changes.

Systematic problem solving, in particular, was a scientific method designed to address work-related challenges using empirical evidence and not guesswork (Garvin, 1993). For example, in the petrochemical industry in the United Kingdom (UK), problems would be resolved systematically. The parties involved would be called to a meeting, the source of the problem identified and revised procedures developed (Remedios & Boreham, 2004). A part from solving problems systematically, managers should be able to demonstrate their learning through experimentation and creation of new products, services, processes, plans, programs, structures or systems (Damanpour, 1991)and this should go beyond idea generation, but should involve the commercialization of the innovation as well; ultimately resulting in the generation of usable

products, services and systems (Ahuja & Lampert, 2001; Mohr, 1969). Therefore innovation often involved the following: initiation, adoption but importantly, implementation as well (Pierce & Delbecq, 1977). Driver (2002) noted that managers' experimenting learning roles involved performing more than the contractual agreement and had more to do with engagement in resource exchanges in order to get the desired behavior. Also such roles were embraced by managers resulted in more innovative individual learning and this is more in line with double-loop than single-loop learning (Table 4).

Table 4.

Literature Summary – Management Learning

SECTION B1 LITERATURE SUMMARY: Management Learning		
VARIABLES	**CONCLUSIONS**	**CITATIONS**
INDIVIDUAL (MANAGEMENT) LEARNING	Individual learning is the acquisition, interpretation and use of information to effect change.	(Antonacopoulou, 2006; Argyris, 1991; Bakken, et al., 1992; Barkley & Bianco, 2000; Bierly III, et al., 2000; Bower, 1990; Carroll, J., 1998; Casey, 2005; Clark & Geppert, 2002; Dominiak, 2006; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Marsick & Watkins, 2001; Mavrinac, 2005; Morris, et al., 2006; Sujan, et al., 1994; Tannenbaum, 1997; Tsang, 1997)
MANAGEMENT LEARNING	Managers would demonstrate their learning through problem solving and experimentation.	(Damanpour, 1991)

B2) The Relationship between Employees' Engagement in Structured Learning Activities and their Learning

According to Peter Senge (1990), there were five pillars on which a learning organization would be built, two of which were personal mastery and mental models. He defined personal mastery as clarifying and deepening one's vision, continuously sharpening one's expertise, enabling the employee to perceive with greater accuracy the connection between his/her learning and that of the organization. Meanwhile, mental models were the assumptions and generalizations one created which shaped their view of the world (Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Reineck, 2002). One way personal mastery and mental models could be shaped was through engagement in structured learning activities.

Structured learning activities, such as training, have been used by companies to address learning and talent deficiencies (Barnett, E. & Storey, 2001), ensuring better employee-job fit (Awoniyi, et al., 2002). It had been used to transfer explicit knowledge (Aiman-Smith, et al., 2006; Brett & Alworth, 1998; Jonsson & Elg, 2006) so that constituents could access experiential lessons without reliving history (Levitt & March, 1988). Researchers also used it to ascertain human resource value (Welbourne & De Cieri, 2001).

i) The Relationship between Employees' Type (Job-Relatedness) of Structured Learning Activities and Learning

Which education and training skills areas were more important to work-related learning in the hotel industry? Glynn (1996) concluded after reviewing key literature that individual intelligence would result in creativity if the individual's dominant intelligence related to their particular task domain and if there was flexibility in accessing and storing information. Citing Gardner (1993), the researcher stated further that domain specific technical knowledge was often reflected in an individual's education and training. Anderson and Skinner (1999), whose work was in company internationalization, found that there were different individual learning requirements at varying stages of a company's internationalization process, but that technical knowledge, often acquired through engagement in off-the-job courses, was required during the implementation stage of internationalization. Gjelsvik's (2002) scholarship, which was conducted in the hotel industry, also arrived at a similar conclusion. The researcher posited that persons with hotel specific knowledge would experience a more positive learning climate on the job than those with less specific competencies. Therefore the literature alluded to a relationship between job/task- specific training and education and one's work-related learning.

ii) The Relationship between Employees' Years or Frequency of Engagement in Structured Learning Activities and Learning

Training, whether done internally by inviting experts in or externally by sending employees out, was one way companies facilitated discovery and innovation (Chen, 2005). However, one issue that had been brewing for decades was the relevance of higher level academic credentials as a requirement for successful careers in the hospitality industry. Some researchers felt there was a relationship between depth of engagement in structured learning activities and learning. Mohr (1969) discovered a weak relationship between employees' educational levels and innovation. Meanwhile, Pierce and Delbecq (1977) predicted a positive relationship between employees' professionalism, which they defined as the degree of professional training and outside professional activities, and organizational innovation. Kimberly and Evanisko (1981), whose study was conducted in the health care sector, discovered that the educational level of the hospital administrator, along with other variables, were strong predictors of both administrative and technological innovation. Bassi and McMurrer (2007) identified training as one of the factors that drove organizational learning capacity. The researchers found in their work with the American Standard Company that safer plants, one of the manifestations of organizational learning, excelled in skill development. However, Tannenbaum (1997) found no consistent relationship between the amount of training and effectiveness in fostering continuous learning. Therefore the general consensus across researchers, with a few exceptions,

was that there would be a positive relationship between depth of engagement in structured learning activities and organizational learning.

However, researchers have found a number of factors that could weaken the relationship between depth of engagement in structured learning activities and learning. Argyris (1991) made an interesting discovery and that was that highly skilled professionals, who spent much of their lives acquiring academic credentials in one or two fields, were skilled at single-loop but weak at double-loop learning. Brinkerhoff (2006) provided three possible explanations for the reduced impact of training on learning and by extension performance. The first was poor quality training that did not allow learners to see practitioners at work. The second factor was that training was sometimes overwhelmed as some organizations' performance management systems were not aligned and integrated. Thirdly, workload demands sometimes limited the transfer of knowledge acquired from training. Albrecht (2004) therefore suggested that one way to improve the transfer of knowledge from training to the work environment was through the use of mnemonic anchors such as wallet cards, posters in the conference rooms, acronyms, slogans, physical devices and props.

Researchers discovered a number of factors that limited management engagement in structured learning activities, like training, from the onset. One such factor was managers seeing training as insignificant. Beamish (2005) found

that executives spent approximately four days a year in training yet only 40% thought training programs were significant. The researcher also discovered reluctance on the part of executives to attend training sessions that did not flatter their image, like skill-based training programs. The executives opted instead for more legislative-type training or events that dealt with strategic questions. Beattie (2006) saw this as a negative and argued that managers with limited education and training were more likely not to support their subordinates' engagement in training and development activities as they often failed to appreciate the need for it (Table 5).

Table 5.

Literature Summary – Structured Learning Activities and Learning

SECTION B2 LITERATURE SUMMARY: Structured Learning Activities and Learning		
VARIABLES	**CONCLUSIONS**	**CITATIONS**
STRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES (TYPE)	The type of education and training that could have a significant effect on management's work-related learning and success were those that were domain or job -task specific.	(Anderson & Skinner, 1999; Gardner, 1993; Gjelsvik, 2002; Glynn, 1996)
STRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES (DEPTH)	A positive relationship would be likely between employees' engagement in structured learning activities and organizational learning, more specifically innovation.	(Bassi & McMurrer, 2007; Chen, 2005; Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981; Mohr, 1969; Pierce & Delbecq, 1977)

It was therefore hypothesized that:

H5a-b: Hotel managers with more job-related academic preparation (that is, their formal post-secondary education and training were related to their job area) (TYPE) would report significantly higher levels of perceived work-related learning than those with less academic preparation related to their job areas.

H5c-d: Hotel managers with more years of post-secondary education and participated in professional training programs more frequently (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of perceived work-related learning than those with fewer years of post-secondary education, and who participated less frequently in training programs.

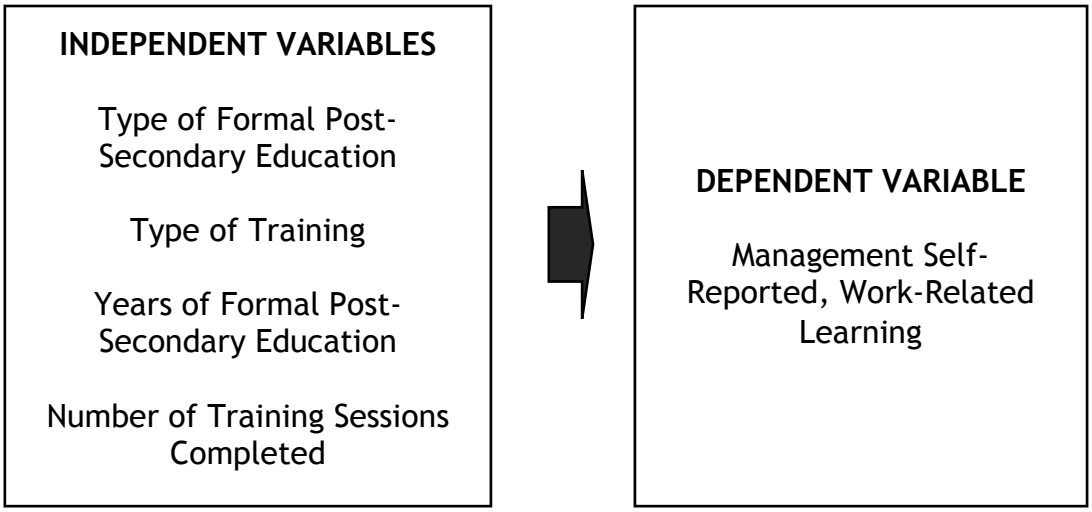


Figure 5a. Relationships explored: Type and depth of hotel managers' engagement in structured learning activities on their self-reported, work-related learning

B3) The Relationship between Employees' Engagement in Unstructured Learning Activities and their Learning

During the earlier years organizations have traditionally associated learning with structured training (Baldwin, et al., 1997). Antonacopoulou (2006) actually discovered insecurity within the banking sector with learning outside of training. Despite this and with the rapid pace of change, more

organizations have taken a holistic look at unstructured, more informal approaches to learning. The importance of unstructured learning could not be overstated as it was through the engagement in those activities that key entrepreneurial learning (Cope, 2003; Inman & Vernon, 1997) and implicit knowledge was often acquired (Brown, J. & Duguid, 1991); personal mastery achieved; mental models shaped (Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Reineck, 2002); and higher-level learning gained (Ben-Horin Naot, et al., 2004; Cope, 2003).

There was a myriad of unstructured activities from which persons could learn. However, this study and review focused primarily on learning from experience and networking.

i) Unstructured Learning: The Relationship between Employees' Work Experience and Learning

One source of learning was experience (Antonacopoulou, 2006; Bhatt & Grover, 2005; Bierly III, et al., 2000; Brown, R. & McCartney, 1998; Dominiak, 2006; Herriott, Levinthal, & March, 1985; Huber, 1991). Brown and Duguid (1991) explained learning through working as gaining knowledge through practice and could become the bridge to innovation. Burgoyne (1995) also expressed similar thoughts and described learning from experience as the creation of knowledge through the active interpretation of the experience. Such interpretation was often achieved through reflective observation and active experimentation (Baker, Jensen, & Kolb, 2005). Learning from

experience was therefore referred to in some circles as on-the-job or workplace learning (Berings, Doornbos, & Simons, 2006).

Experiential learning was considered by the business community as one of the most significant forms of unstructured learning. Beamish (2005) found, in a study identifying the characteristics of chief executives that distinguished them from managers, that 60% of the executives thought that their life experiences were very important. Employees were also of the view that most of their productive competencies were acquired on the job and not through structured educational programs (Berings, et al., 2006). According to researchers, they were benefits to experiential learning. It fostered greater understanding of broader context issues. It facilitated the integration of old with new knowledge. Experiential learning helped in assigning value to different types of knowledge (Bierly III, et al., 2000). Entities that learnt from experience were least likely to make mistakes and better able to adapt (Darling, et al., 2005). Because of this importance, many believed experience needed to be captured by organizations in documentation and routines (Levitt & March, 1988) and developed and invested by individuals with each project (Arthur, M. B., et al., 2001). Capello and Faggian (2005) found that inter-firm mobility by human resources with valuable career capital, experience, could significantly impact companies' innovation performance. Prior knowledge, experiences and competencies of employees also influenced the nature of

workplace learning (Dirkx, 1999). Therefore, experience was important to work-related learning.

- *The Relationship between Employees' Type (Job-Relatedness) of Experience and Learning*

Which mattered most to learning, more or less industry-specific, in this case hospitality, experience? According to the literature, there was a positive relationship between specialization and organizational and individual learning. Barkema, Shenkar, Vermeulen and Bell (1997), whose work was in organizational experience and learning, found that experience in domestic joint ventures and internationally wholly owned subsidiaries had a role to play in the longevity of international joint ventures but prior experience in international joint ventures did not. The researchers further stated that firms learned from experience with domestic joint ventures and internationally wholly owned subsidiaries if the experience was related to the firm's knowledge base, or in other words, in the same line of business.

In the case of individual learning, Henri Fayol (1949), well known French industrialist, theorist, one of the founding fathers of management theory and developer of *the principles of management*, supported specialization and saw it as a way for employees to focus, develop practice and familiarity. Herriott et al. (1985) found the slower the pace a learner became a specialist, the higher his/her performance. Levitt and March (1988) explained that

specialization encouraged more frequent use of procedures, ultimately improving competence and leading to more successful outcomes. Glynn (1996) also supported specialization and postulated that technical knowledge in the task domain was essential for innovation initiation. Watson (2001) stated that learning associated with work must be related to the individual's biography. Driver's (2002) model of how learning in organizations could be conceptualized as a role negotiated between superiors and their subordinates, suggested that individuals in organizations learned by specializing in certain learning tasks. The researcher went further to state that specialization led first to individual learning and then to organizational learning. Gjelsvik (2002) also found that employees with the relevant work experience were exposed to other learning opportunities within a hotel. Therefore based on the above, what was important to individual experiential learning was more specialized unit and industry knowledge.

- *The Relationship between Employees' Length and Number of Work Experiences and Learning*

According to the literature, learning from mistakes could have a positive effect on individual and organizational performance and success (Barkema, et al., 1997; Buzan, 1991; Hays & Hill, 2001). Researchers have concluded a positive relationship between length and frequency of experience with learning levels both at the organizational and individual levels. Kimberly and Evanisko (1981) discovered, in the health care sector, that a hospital's age could be a

significant predictor of technological innovation. Barnett and Hansen (1996) made a similar discovery and concluded that the more competitive experiences banks encountered, the less likely they would fail. Boone and Ganeshan (2001), after examining ten years of data of an engineering firm, found a positive relationship between organizational experience and productivity. Schijven (2006), after studying 25 Dutch firms, concluded that although related diversified acquisition experience resulted in subsequent negative transfer to other related diversified acquisitions, this negative transfer decreased with each acquisition. Therefore, one could anticipate a positive relationship between extent of organizational experience and organizational learning.

When individual learning was examined, similar observations were made. Chonko, et al. (2003) found that highly effective sales people had highly developed cognitive abilities which they attributed to knowledge garnered from experience and therefore postulated that more experienced salespeople would use higher levels of learning. Hart, Hogg and Banerjee (2004) discovered from a sample of 719 respondents from an online CRM-Forum website, that users and suppliers with more CRM experience found measures that denoted the success of a CRM program as more important than those with less experience. Tempest and Starkey (2004), who examined the impact of transient organizational context due to temporary teams and individualized careers on organizational learning, saw a diverse portfolio of work experiences arising from working in network settings as a positive for individual learning.

Van der Sluis-den Dikken & Hoeksema (2001) felt the more varied a manager's experience the more they can mix and use ideas. Companies like the furniture maker, IKEA, encouraged and used experience variation as a strategy to enable knowledge transfer throughout their organization. At IKEA employees were encouraged to make non-linear moves up their organizational chart (Jonsson & Elg, 2006).Companies therefore tried to seek the more experienced as they could depend on them for more informal, real time learning events (Tannenbaum, 1997). Therefore, both extent and number of experiences could be determinants of individual learning levels.

Researchers Baum and Ingram (1998) and Damanpour (1991) noted observations to the contrary. Baum and Ingram (1998) found that organizations with higher levels of experience had higher failure rates. Meanwhile, Damanpour (1991) found that the longer managers were employed, the less likely they were to innovate. The researcher further stated that new executives tended to have new perspectives and ideas and fewer obligations to internal constituents, which left one to speculate that what was more important to management learning in a current job was experience prior to the job appointment and not experience garnered during the appointment (Table 6).

A number of factors could prevent employees from learning from experience and if the opposite was done could result in greater learning from

experience. One such factor could be an attitude unreceptive to criticisms and according to Argyris (1991) this seemed common amongst persons unaccustomed to failure. However, on the other hand there were ways one could optimize on experiential learning. According to Arthur and Huntley (2005), one way companies could achieve this with their constituents was by getting members to articulate and codify their tacit knowledge. Schragenheim and Passal (2005) identified a five step process to learning from experience. The first was the employee should identify the case that would trigger the need to learn from experience. Second was to identify the gap between the actual and the desired. Third, based on the lessons learnt, the employee should modify their pre-existing model or the assumption. Fourth, they should distribute the new knowledge. Lastly, implement the changes. Levintal and March (1993) felt that being able to exploit the experiential knowledge of others was a significant way to improve organizational intelligence.

Table 6.

Literature Summary – Unstructured Learning Activities (Experience) and Learning

SECTION B2i: LITERATURE SUMMARY: Unstructured Learning Activities (Experience) and Learning		
VARIABLES	**CONCLUSIONS**	**CITATIONS**
EXPERIENCE (TYPE)	Specialized unit and industry knowledge was important to experiential learning.	(Barkema, et al., 1997; Driver, 2002; Fayol, 1949; Gjelsvik, 2002; Glynn, 1996; Herriott, et al., 1985; Levitt & March, 1988; Watson, 2001)
EXPERIENCE (DEPTH)	A positive relationship would be likely between experience and learning, namely individual and organizational experience.	(Barnett, W. & Hansen, 1996; Boone & Ganeshan, 2001; Chonko, et al., 2003; Hart, et al., 2004; Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981; Schijven, 2006; Tannenbaum, 1997)

It was therefore hypothesized that:

H6a: Hotels managers with a greater percentage of total work experience in the hospitality industry (TYPE) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those with a smaller percentage of total work experience in the same industry.

H6b: Hotels managers with more years of total work experience (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those with fewer years of total work experience.

H6c: Hotels managers with experience with more entities or companies (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those with experience with fewer entities.

ii) Unstructured Learning: The Relationship between Employees' Networking and Learning

For organizations to learn, survive and be successful they must be open entities, continuously exchanging information with the external world (Bassi & McMurrer, 2007). Such exchanges would improve their reputation, but also give them valuable feedback on which to craft change. A number of companies have bought into this philosophy: NASA, Disneyland, and GE (Chen, 2005). Huber (1991) referred to this earlier as '*information distribution*', getting and sharing information from different sources and using it to create new information and understanding. Glynn (1996) later posited that interchange among intelligent members could actually affect the intelligence of the collective.

One way organizations could encourage information distribution was through organizational constituents' involvement in learning networks. Learning networks were horizontal knowledge relationships where the focus

was on technical renewal, innovation and business relations, and differed from vertical, more buyer-seller relationships where the focus was more on business relations and achieved member learning through inter-organizational dialogue and exchange (Tell, 2000). Therefore, learning networks was learning through relational dialogue in a space which allowed for critical analysis and reflexivity (Andrews & Lewis, 2002; Ferreday, Hodgson, & Jones, 2006).

Conversational learning was an element of network learning, constructing new knowledge through conversations, garnering new perspectives beyond one's frame of reference (Baker, et al., 2005). It involved knowledge sharing through storytelling, collaborations and social construction of shared understandings (Brown, J. & Duguid, 1991). Through conversing vicarious learning could be achieved, less the experiential costs (Nathan & Kovoor-Misra, 2002). However, conversing requires the use of a common language, a pre-condition for learning, as well as trust, capacity and similar geographic and political organizational characteristics (Keeble, et al., 1999; Rashman & Hartley, 2002). Conversing, therefore, can be an important knowledge garnering source for managers.

Self-organized, informal, cross-firm, occupationally-based learning networks or 'communities of practice' (Cohen, 2006) could be valuable learning mechanisms. They not only provide a context by which professionals could acquire and maintain required competencies, but also to disseminate

innovation and maintain innovators (Benner, 2003; Zemke, 1999). In these networks core actors would take responsibility for what was learnt and how learning was organized (Poell, Chivers, Van Der Krogt, & Wildemeersch, 2000). Anderson and Skinner (1999) found networking particularly helpful during the implementation and consolidation phases of a company's internationalization process, as it gave them a better idea of the host countries' business requirements and culture in order to avoid costly mistakes. Hsu and Pereira (2006) found performance advantages of internationalization being partly dependent on social learning. The researchers speculated that this could be due to social ties being a lot sensitive to geographic and cultural diversity than technology. Network learning provided opportunities for two-way (Aiman-Smith, et al., 2006) and double-loop learning, creating an environment where its members' value systems and pre-determined assumptions could be challenged (Roan & Rooney, 2006) and re-shaped. However, on a lighter note, *taking time to smell the roses*, as Stinson et al. (2006) put it, talking and socializing allowed for participants' self refreshment and reflection. Therefore, conversing within professional networks and 'communities of practice' could positively influence managers' work-related learning.

- *The Relationship between Employees' Type (Job-Relatedness) of Networking and Learning*

Networking could influence informal individual learning levels. However, what type of networks would have the greatest effect on work-related

learning? There are various types of networks with varying social architectural requirements, namely levels of structural embeddedness and relational strength, which often dictated the type and level of learning possible amongst its members. According to Granovetter (1992), when sharing redundant information, networks with stronger relational ties were often required. For the sharing of more novel information, weaker relational ties were recommended (Bogenrieder, 2002). Network form could also be based on actor dynamics and work characteristics (Poell, et al., 2000). There could be networks established to address routine problems and deal with situations where there was high goal certainty but high technical uncertainty. An example of this would be professional networks, group of persons from different organizations who would come together with the primary goal of improving their profession. Explicit knowledge was usually required for membership to this group. However, there were other networks that were often created to handle specific problems. These networks operated in an environment of high goal and technical certainty. Unlike professional networks, tacit knowledge was often required for membership here (Bogenrieder, 2002). Therefore, network structure and purpose would determine the type and level of learning among the group.

Roan and Rooney (2006) also classified networks in three distinct types: support, political and 'old boys'. Support networks were groups that provided emotional and social support to its members and facilitated private information

flows. Political networks usually played a more advocacy role on behalf of its members and were often supported by organizational information flows. Political networks could be a great source of career information. 'Old Boys' networks were often political in nature, but very selective and exclusive. Roan and Rooney (2006) found that support networks provided its members with the environment to explore: their own values, how it conflicted with that of the public and the organization, and how to confidently reconcile those tensions. These networks often revealed values and norms asymmetries and enabled divergent evaluations. Political networks on the other hand provided knowledge that minimized political uncertainties. However, the researchers felt that 'old boys' networks often produced little new knowledge or expanded information flows.

John (2004), identified support networks such as professional associations as one place leaders could learn how to be effective. The researcher claimed that there could be some ripple effect to the organization, when their managers become involved in professional associations, as these knowledgeable and effective leaders would often perform better and last longer in their jobs.

This study did not examine all types of learning networks discussed. Instead the more political, professional associations and social networks were examined. Social networks could be defined as the informal gathering of

professionals. Social networks were often characterized by weaker relational ties than professional networks and might not necessarily involve professionals within the same profession. What this dissertation tried to ascertain was the relationship between the hotel managers' type of professional association membership and their work-related learning. The theoretical basis used here was the importance of task-specificity experience to learning levels. This was discussed earlier in the review (Barkema, et al., 1997; Driver, 2002; Fayol, 1949; Gjelsvik, 2002; Glynn, 1996; Herriott, et al., 1985; Levitt & March, 1988; Schijven, 2006; Watson, 2001). Therefore, if task specificity was a requirement for work-related learning from experience, would it be a requirement for work-related learning from managers' involvement in professional associations? Type of network, within the context of this dissertation, was seen as the extent to which the professional associations to which the managers were active members were related to their job areas. The literature seemed to suggest that management learning would be more likely with members involved in groups with a social architecture characterized by low relational strength and more supportive in nature and that was linked to the manager's job area.

- *The Relationship between Employees' Frequency of Networking and Learning*

According to the literature, there could be a relationship between extent of organizational exchanges and learning. Pierce and Delbecq (1977)

contended a positive relationship between inter-organization interdependence and organizational innovation. Damanpour (1991) later confirmed this with a meta-analysis and found a positive relationship between external communication and innovation. The researcher concluded that the more organizational contact and exchange of information with the external environment, the more innovation likely. Benner (2003) also suggested that by organizations strengthening and expanding their access to cross-firm occupational learning communities, they could productively focus their economic development strategies.

A number of factors could inhibit learning from networking. First, a history of un-integrated industry-wide relationships could compromise learning (Peterson, 2002). Cultural arrogance, that is when one party considers their culture superior to others, could also impede relational learning (Abell & Simons, 2000). According to Baker et al. (2005), factors such as too little or too much solidarity amongst members and succumbing to status could also affect learning. The researchers further stated that the absence of solidarity within a network could result in a break in the conversation and the group losing its relevance. On the other hand too much solidarity could result in aimless and repetitive talk. Baker et al. (2005) felt that what was required for ongoing conversation was an openness that allowed participants' pre-judgments to be challenged and when that happened understanding would be gained.

Learning through networks could be improved through a number of approaches. One way was by creating virtual spaces, such as through the internet, by which information could be shared across organizations and nationally (Cohen, 2006). However, virtual learning spaces must be supplemented with physical learning spaces like formal and informal gatherings (Antal & Sobczak, 2004). A second way learning could be improved through networks is through the use of vicarious learning approaches and this would typically involve four steps: attention processes, retention processes, motor reproduction and motivation. In attention process the desired model and behavior would be singled out for observation. Then a representation of the model would be encoded to memory, the retention process. Then when possible the observed behavior would be repeated, motor reproduction. Then positive reinforcement would be used to increase the likelihood of the modeled behavior being replicated, motivation (Nathan & Kovoor-Misra, 2002). Therefore, the use of vicarious learning approaches and doing so through the use of virtual spaces would be two ways to improve learning through networking.

At the American Chemical Council, the professional association that represented the chemical industry, a variety of approaches was used to improve vicarious learning. First, they identified the behavior to be replicated by clarifying the lessons to be learnt from the crisis of others. It was then communicated to its membership by using highly respected leaders in the

industry and through learning support programs like press releases, websites and workshops with the hope that the behavior would be committed to memory. They then created opportunities for their stakeholders to practice the lessons taught through drills and workshops. This was referred to as motor reproduction. They also reinforced their stakeholders' memory, through events and programs such as Safety Week, self and third party audits and communicated successes in their newsletters and on their websites (Nathan & Kovoor-Misra, 2002).

A third way of improving learning through networking would be through strengthening the networks themselves. According to Tell (2000), networks could be strengthened by: creating an environment of trust within the group; encouraging the voluntary and active participation of members; creating a space for dialogue and knowledge creation; and keeping the network small, 10-15 persons recommended. However, Morris et al. (2006) disagreed with the later and believed that a small membership could compromise the long-term sustainability of a network. A network should not be seen as somewhere to solve severe problems but to ask questions and seek clarifications. Therefore, the stronger a network, the more likely learning will improve amongst its membership.

Morris et al. (2006) also found the following to be helpful during the operational phase of the network. They suggested that network membership be

defined and maintained. One way network membership could be maintained was by avoiding low barriers to entry and exit. The researchers also proposed that members should have ownership in the governance of the network. Information should be shared and built upon new knowledge. Knowledge should be captured and shared with the entire network. There should also be a clear procedure on how conflicts should be resolved. Finally, integration should be encouraged within the network through meetings, joint projects, newsletters etc.

Individuals could create their own networks through their involvement in projects. Projects, because of the temporary associations, give individuals the liberty to be involved in many communities and could provide a ready cadre of informal links for managers to tap when new knowledge is needed (Arthur, M. B., et al., 2001; Ayas & Zeniuk, 2001) (Table 7).

Table 7.

Literature Summary – Unstructured Learning Activities (Networking) and Learning

SECTION B2ii: LITERATURE SUMMARY: Unstructured Learning Activities (Networking) and Learning		
VARIABLES	**CONCLUSIONS**	**CITATIONS**
NETWORKING (GENERAL)	Networks could be vehicles for learning.	(Aiman-Smith, et al., 2006; Anderson & Skinner, 1999; Andrews & Lewis, 2002; Baker, et al., 2005; Benner, 2003; Brown, J. & Duguid, 1991; Cohen, 2006; Ferreday, et al., 2006; Glynn, 1996; Hsu & Pereira, 2006; Keeble, et al., 1999; Nathan & Kovoor-Misra, 2002; Rashman & Hartley, 2002; Stinson, et al., 2006; Tell, 2000; Zemke, 1999)
NETWORKING (TYPE)	Higher levels of learning were more likely with networks characterized by low relational strength and supportive in nature.	(Bogenrieder, 2002; Roan & Rooney, 2006)
NETWORKING (FREQUENCY)	A positive relationship was likely between the extent of inter-organizational relationships and learning.	(Benner, 2003; Damanpour, 1991)

It was therefore hypothesized that:

H6d: Hotels managers who were active members of professional associations related to their job-area (TYPE) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those who were active members of professional associations not related to their job area.

H6e: Hotels managers who networked more frequently (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those who networked less frequently.

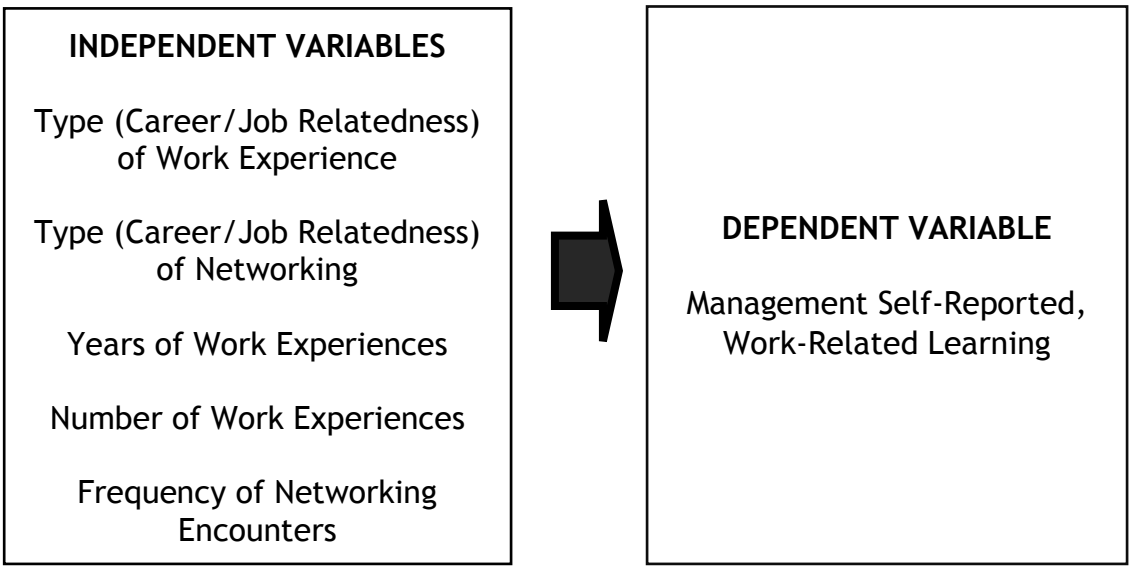


Figure 5b. Relationships explored: Type and depth of hotel managers' engagement in unstructured learning activities on their self-reported, work-related learning

What was evident from the review of scholarly work, were possible relationships between employees' work-related characteristics and their learning. The literature also suggested a relationship between organizational characteristics, such as size and learning culture, and employee engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities. What this dissertation tried to ascertain was whether observations noted in other industries were also true for the hospitality industry, in particular, the hotel industry. Where there were differences in the findings, what were the mediating factors that could have influenced this? Also where relationships between work-related behavior characteristics and learning activities engagement were not established in the literature, but instead learning, if relationships did exist between learning activity engagement and individual management learning.

The Study's Model

The management learning model (Figure 7), on which this dissertation was based, was an expansion of Marsick and Watkins (2001) informal and incidental learning model (Figure 6). Like the Marsick and Waktins (2001) model, the management learning model proposed in this study recognized one's personal, social, business and cultural context to be the foundation of individual learning. However, Marsick and Watkins (2001) went beyond the management learning model proposed and outlined steps in the learning process between one's engagement in informal learning activities and their learning. According to the researchers' model, after the business context had

been framed, the informal learning process begins with a trigger, the experience would be interpreted, alternative solutions examined, learning strategies employed, solutions produced, consequences assessed and finally lessons learnt. Although their model was circular, the researchers felt that the steps did not always occur in the sequence outlined. The Marsick and Waktins (2001) model was not empirically tested.

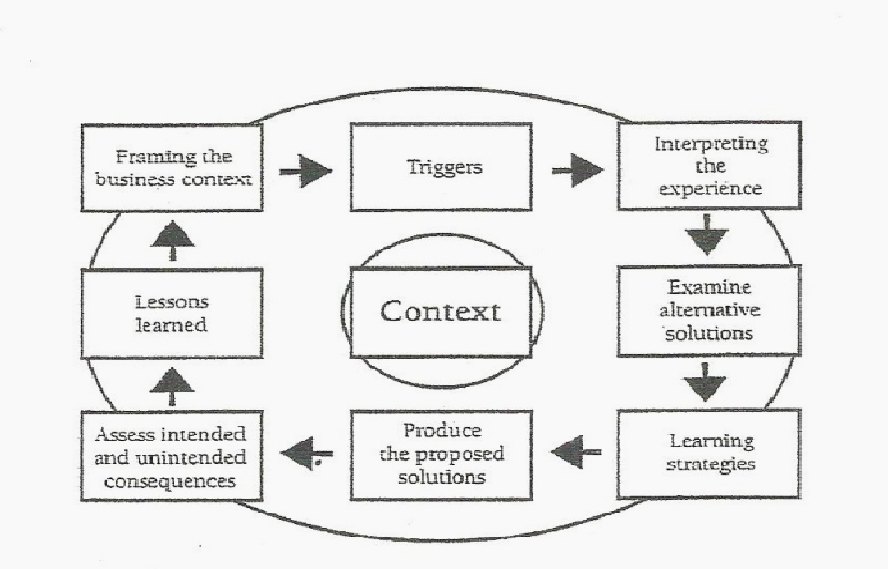


Figure 6: Marsick and Watkins informal and incidental learning model as adapted with Cseh (Marsick & Watkins, 2001)

In this investigation the process between hotel managers' engagement in learning activities and ultimately their learning was not examined but instead assumed once learning took place. Also the management learning model ended at the solutions produced point of the Marsick and Watkins (2001) model.

Like Marsick and Watkins (2001), the guiding thinking was that management learning involved three phases: the pre-cognitive, cognitive and behavioral phases. For this study it was proposed that these phases would be influenced by the hotel managers' personal and business context. During the pre-cognitive phase, the manager would acquire knowledge through engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities. In the cognitive phase, the said manager would interpret, internalize and mentally store knowledge. Meanwhile, during the behavioral phase, the manager would be triggered to address the company's existing and anticipated challenges by using the acquired knowledge to fix differences between the desired and the actual sometimes challenging existing assumptions, values and traditions in the process.

Stage 1 of the model examined the management characteristics and the business context within which knowledge acquisition would have taken place, developed and/or natured. The management work-related behaviors which could influence the type and depth of their engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities were identified and included: their motivation towards learning, perceived risk-taking affinity and attitude towards learning and the industry. However, the literature also revealed that organizational characteristics such as hotel size and its learning culture could influence management engagement in these learning activities and hence also included in stage 1 of the model.

Stage 2, the pre-cognitive phase of the model, identified the knowledge acquisition learning activities that could influence the level of hotel managers' learning. The structured learning activities indicated included post-secondary formal education and training completed. Meanwhile, the unstructured learning activities identified included work experience and networking. Management learning, the behavioral and *stage 3* of the model, involved two manifestations and those were using knowledge acquired from learning activities to solve problems and to innovate (Figure 8).

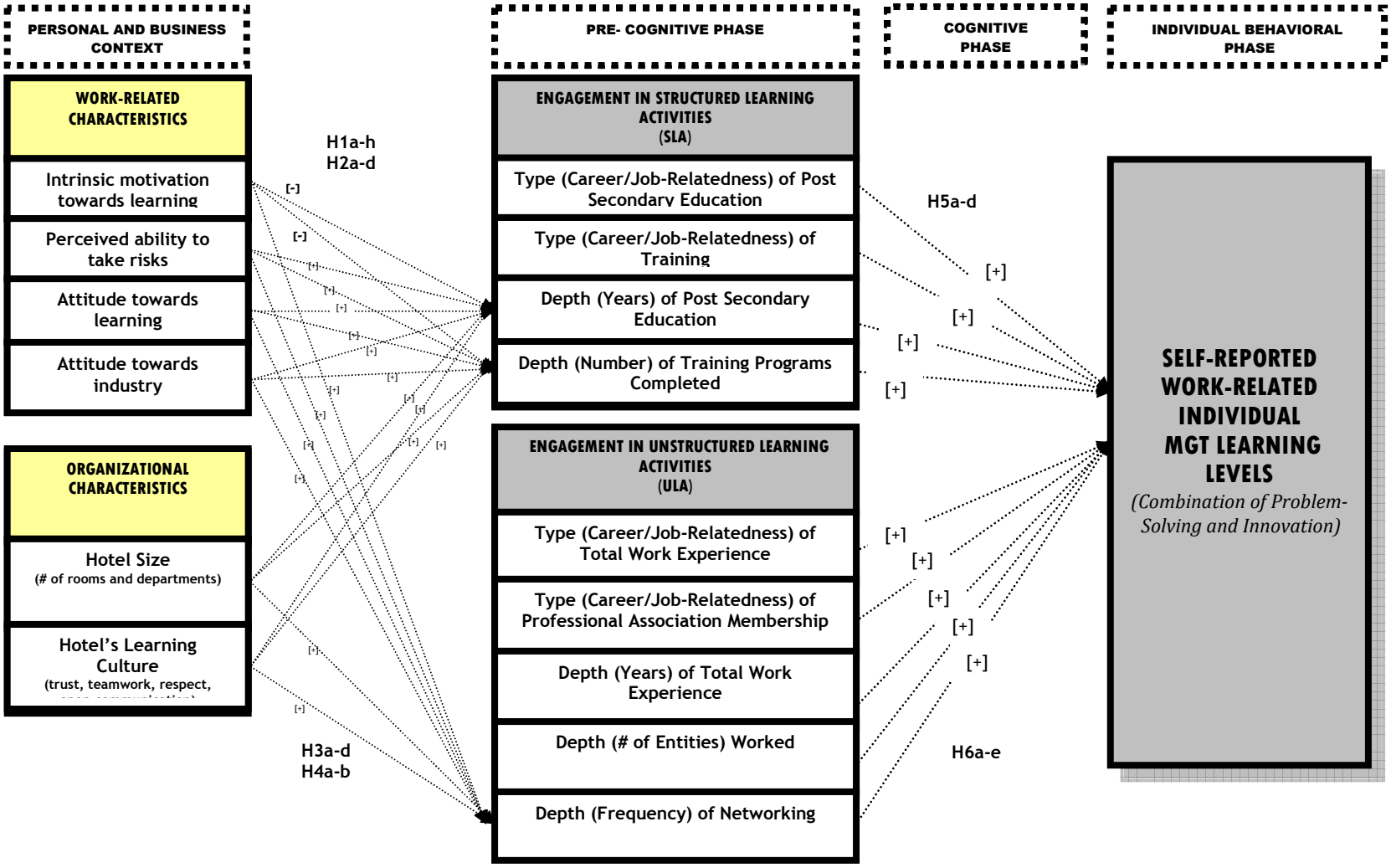


Figure 7. The study's management learning model
It illustrates the expected relationships between a hotel manager's work related behaviors, their work environment on the type and depth of their engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities and how this impact their self-reported work-related learning levels.

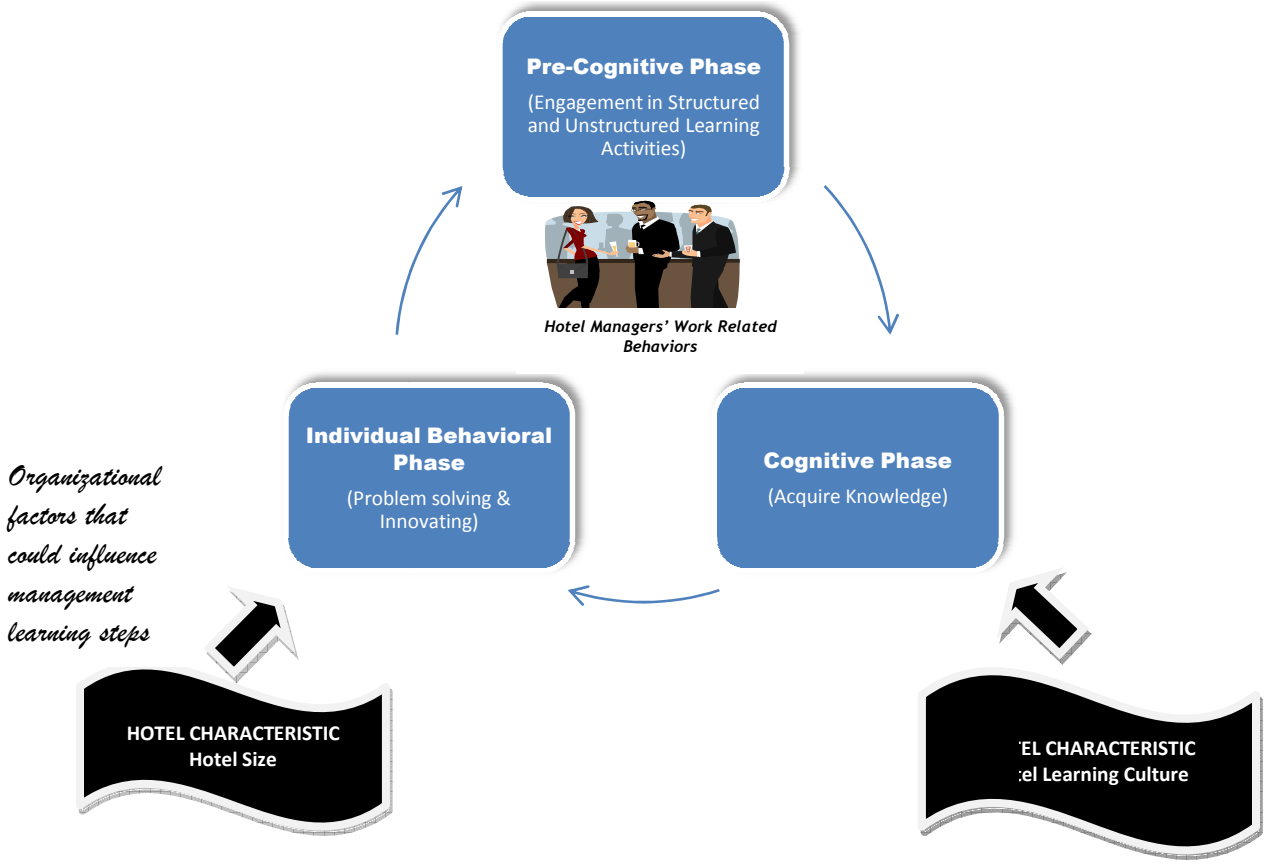


Figure 8. The management learning process within a hotel

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study sought to examine two sets of relationships: first, the relationship between hotel managers' personal and business context and their engagement in specified structured and unstructured learning activities; and finally and most importantly, the relationship between the managers' engagement in the same learning activities and their self-reported work-related learning. To achieve this, the following questions were examined under three subheadings.

1. The relationship between the hotel manager's personal and business context and his/her engagement in structured learning activities, that is,
    a. What was the relationship between a hotel manager's work-related behaviors (namely his/ her motivation towards learning, perceived risk-taking ability, attitude towards learning and the industry) and the depth of his/her engagement in structured learning activities, namely, formal post-secondary education and training?

    b. What was the relationship between characteristics of the hotel manager's place of work (namely his/her hotel's size and learning culture) and the depth of his/her engagement in structured learning activities, namely, formal post-secondary education and training?

2. The relationship between the hotel manager's personal and business context and his/her engagement in unstructured learning activities, that is,
    a. What was the relationship between a hotel manager's work-related behaviors (namely his/her motivation towards learning, perceived risk-taking ability, attitude towards learning and the industry) and his/her depth of engagement in the unstructured learning activity, networking?

    b. What was the relationship between characteristics of the hotel manager's place of work (namely his/her hotel's size and learning culture) and his/her depth of engagement in the unstructured learning activity, networking?

3. The relationship between a hotel manager's engagement in learning activities and his/her self-reported work-related learning, that is,
    a. What was the relationship between the type and depth of a hotel manager's engagement in structured learning activities (namely post-secondary education and training) and his/her self-reported work-related learning (that is, his/her perceived ability to innovate and solve problems)?

b. What was the relationship between the type and depth of a hotel manager's engagement in unstructured learning activities (namely his/her work experience and networking) and his/her self-reported work-related learning (that is, his/her perceived ability to innovate and solve problems)?

This chapter, therefore, detailed how the data was collected and analyzed so as to answer the above research questions and achieve the study's primary objective, which was to understand the possible direct and indirect drivers of hotel managers' work-related learning.

Research Design and Approach

Quantitative versus Qualitative and Positivism versus Constructivism

An explanatory mixed methods approach to research design was used for this exploratory correlational study, optimizing on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Researchers, such as Tsang (1997), believed that the academic rigor of a study would improve if qualitative and quantitative research methods were combined. Berings et al. (2006) also contended that when studying the highly unconscious, unintentional, not well planned, on-the-job learning, in particular, which was a major construct in this research, marrying both approaches could improve investigation quality in this academic genre.

There are strengths and weaknesses with both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, each compensates somewhat for the weakness of the other. Qualitative research, generally, is often concerned with painting a complete picture of research participants and the context within which data is collected and therefore provides a rich understanding of them and their setting (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006; Leedy, 1997; Szmigin & Foxall, 2000). The technique is based on a more constructivist epistemology where the constructivists see themselves as part of an observed reality. Researchers that use this technique often seeks a more subjective interpretation of the phenomenon being studied (Driver, 2002). It is consistent with the systems-structural view of research (Ford & Ogilvie, 1996). Although generalizing the findings to a population is not be prudent with this approach, the thick descriptions of the study's constructs that this technique provides makes the transferability of the findings by the reader to his or her setting possible (Hellström, 2008). Hence, qualitative field research is often strong in validity (that is, the measure reflects the real meaning of the concept), however because of its subjectivity, low on reliability, (that is, the ability of the study to yield the same results if the data collection process is repeated) (Babbie, 2007).

Quantitative research, on the other hand, is based on the premise that the world is stable and coherent and hence can be measured and generalized. It involves establishing a set of hypotheses, collecting data based on the

variables identified, analyzing the numbers and making some predictive generalizations which either supports or refutes the theory initially proposed (Gay, et al., 2006). It is based on a more positivistic epistemology, which posits that knowledge can be codified, stored and transmitted and hence seen as a commodity located in the minds of people (Chiva & Alegre, 2005). Therefore, a notable strength of quantitative research is the generalizability of its findings, making it more applicable to the population under examination. Quantitative research is therefore big on reliability, but lower on validity.

For this investigation, qualitative methods, such as focus groups and non-participant observations, were used to induce the study's hypotheses and/or explain the study's findings (Babbie, 2007; Ritchie & Goeldner, 1994), while quantitative methods, such as surveys, were used to make objective deductions from the data collected (Gay, et al., 2006). Although the explanatory mixed methods approach was employed, the dominant epistemology was positivism.

Data Collection Techniques Used: Focus Groups with Hotel Managers and Local Workplace Learning Experts

Two 2 ½-hour focus groups were convened for this study: one with local hotel managers and the other with workplace learning experts. Focus groups discussions, which are unstructured group interviews, facilitate a snowballing of ideas amongst discussants and often result in more information being

generated than the individual collection of responses from participants (Zikmund, 2000). However, a shortcoming with this technique is the possibility of one or few persons dominating the discussions and hence bias the information produced (Ritchie & Goeldner, 1994). For this exercise each focus group approached the discussions differently. The hotel managers provided a more introspective, experiential perspective; while the workplace learning experts took a more predictive theoretical perspective and response. This resulted in response comparisons across groups and a multi-layered examination of the discussion items, the details of which were included in chapter four, the findings section, of the document.

Data Collection Techniques Used: Non-Participant Observations

According to Berings et al. (2006), there were other qualitative techniques not currently being used in on-the-job learning research which could be useful. They were observation, diagrams, personal narratives and documents. This dissertation used one of the techniques identified, non-participant observation. Non-participant observation is a less intrusive means of data collection where the researcher observes and records behavior while not engaged in the participant's setting (Gay, et al., 2006). Although this technique is less robust, than the participant observation method, in terms of understanding the study's participants and their setting, it provides the researcher with useful insights into the context within which management learning takes place. Therefore, field notes were taken when the researcher

interacted with the managers and their hotels via email, fax and/or telephone or onsite.

The final qualitative technique used was open-ended and partially-closed questions. These items were incorporated in the structured survey and allowed the respondents to express and give unexpected responses to the items. They also provided specific examples to some of their closed-end, objective responses. Hence, they gave the researcher a better understanding of the individual manager, his/her work setting and how both interplayed and linked to his/her learning (Zikmund, 2000).

Data Collection Techniques Used: Surveys

Surveys were used as the quantitative data collection technique for this study. Although actual physical contact with participants was limited with this methodology (Gay, et al., 2006), having participants respond to questions without the researcher's physical intervention, allowed them to express their views on their personal and business context, their own engagement in learning activities and their actual work-related learning in a more objective, non-coercive way. Learning, in particular, although behavioral, was also cognitive and deeply personal. Bryant (2005) also found this method to be appropriate due to the interpersonal and relational nature of learning. Therefore, the three data collection approaches used for this study were focus groups, non-

participant observations and surveys with open, closed-ended and partially closed-ended items.

Participants and Subjects

The study was conducted in the Caribbean island of Jamaica. The island was chosen for the study because of the size, importance and strength of the island's hotel and tourism industry. Tourism is important to the Jamaican economy. In 2008, with 26,000 rooms in its inventory (Jamaica Tourist Board, 2008), the industry generated US$2 billion in revenues, making it Jamaica's largest foreign exchange earner at 47%, employed 9-10% of their national workforce and contributed 47% to their GDP (Bartlett, 2008; Brown, I., 2008a; Edwards, 2008; The Jamaica Observer, 2008). The island also had three major universities; and a number of skill training centers, community colleges, university colleges and off-shore universities; that provide education and conduct research in hospitality and business management at the tertiary level. Therefore, by selecting Jamaica to conduct the study the researchers was able to get the desired samples for both the focus groups and surveys to conduct the required qualitative and quantitative analysis and produce findings that could be transferred, generalized and used by the population. Also, by limiting data collection to a single island, moderating variables which could influence management learning; namely the market along with the cultural, industrial and the regulatory context of the area; were as a result controlled (Gjelsvik, 2002).

Focus Group Participants

Thirteen persons participated in the focus groups discussions, seven in the hotel managers' discussion group and six in the workplace learning experts group. To ensure key characteristics in the population were also reflected in the first focus group, six managers were purposively selected from six departments and three management levels within the same entity. The seventh manager was a generalist and worked alongside the hotel's general manager. The workplace learning experts were also purposively selected, however, from both the academic and business communities. The experts group comprised of five academics, from two leading local universities, and one practitioner, vice-president of human resources of one of the largest local hotel chains on the island. Of the five academics, one had significant hotel industry experience at top management level. A workplace learning expert, within the context of this study, was someone who had either conducted research, taught and/or was very familiar with learning in organizations, in particular hotels.

Survey Participants

One of the island's leading lodging associations was identified as the population for the survey. In 2008, the professional group had a membership of 127 properties, organized in seven sub-groupings across Jamaica: Kingston, Mandeville and South Coast, Montego Bay, Negril, Ocho Rios, Runaway Bay and Port Antonio. Although the association represented less than 5% of hotels on the island, its members were selected for the study for four main reasons.

Firstly, they were one of the larger bodies representing players in the local hotel industry. Secondly, most major players in the sector were members of the association. Thirdly, only hotels (and affiliate companies) could be members of the association and not individuals. Fourthly, their vetting process for membership ensured the legitimacy of the properties on their listing. The association not requiring individual membership was important to this study since the hotel managers' individual involvement in professional associations was one of the constructs under investigation.

The study's target population was therefore the general managers, department heads and unit managers of the association's hotels. Supervisors were not included in the analysis. Therefore, the size of this population was estimated at 783 managers. This was determined by first making a random selection of 13 member hotels from the population. The average ratio of managers to hotel guestrooms was later ascertained (1 manager per 19.33 guestrooms). This figure was then used to estimate the number of managers for each of the 127 member hotels and these numbers were then totaled.

In order to determine the desired sample size per sub-group, a proportional stratified sampling technique was used (Gay, et al., 2006). This sampling technique often results in a more homogenous sample and a smaller sampling error (Babbie, 2007).

Each sub-group had unique characteristics which were reflected in the sample. The sub-groups differed by the size of their member community, hotel product type and dominant hotel size. For example, the Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Negril properties, located north/northwest of the island in the more established resort communities, had the largest concentration of member properties with 100 rooms or more. Therefore, the hotels in this area were mainly urban resorts. On the other hand, the Mandeville/South Coast and Port Antonio properties situated on the southern and eastern coast respectively of rural Jamaica, were located in smaller hotel communities with most hotels having 100 or fewer rooms. These hotels were mainly rural resorts. Kingston, on the other hand, was the only chapter with a predominance of business hotels (Table 10) located mainly in and around the commercial district of New Kingston.

A 35% hotel manager response was desired from the study's survey sample. Baruch (1999), who examined 175 studies in business journals published in the years 1975, 1985 and 1995, found that the average response rate for business research was 55.6% with a standard deviation of 19.7. However, for studies which involved top management or organizational representatives, such as this one, the average response rate Baruch (1999) observed was 36.1% with a standard deviation of 13.3. Also noteworthy was that most of the studies Baruch (1999) examined were conducted in the research-friendly continent of North America. Therefore, a hotel manager

response rate of less than 35%, or less than 274 managers, was considered low for this exercise.

The Instruments

In order to achieve its objectives the study used three instruments: focus groups, field notes and surveys.

Focus Groups and Field Notes

The two focus group sessions were convened in summer 2008, first with workplace learning experts and then with hotel managers. Both group discussions centered on the following topics:

1. The types and extent to which hotel managers engage in learning activities;
2. Hotel managers' demographic and organizational characteristics and its possible relationship with learning;
3. Hotel managers' work-related behaviors and its effects on learning; and
4. Lastly, the manifestation of management learning in the workplace.

Both sessions were audio recorded, then transcripts prepared and analyzed and the variables identified were used to develop the field notes sections and the survey instrument and also to corroborate some of the study's findings.

The field notes collected from the non-participant observations was also organized under similar headings, they included:

1. The hotel manager's work related characteristics (namely, their motivation towards learning, risk-taking ability and attitude towards learning and the industry);
2. Features of manager's hotel culture;
3. Inhibitors and enablers of learning activities engagement; and
4. Management learning manifestations.

The field notes were also analyzed and aided in the interpretation of the results of the quantitative analysis.

The Management Learning Survey

The 75-tem survey used for the study was organized into six sections:

1. *"work-related characteristics",*
2. *"organizational characteristics",*
3. *"structured learning activities",*
4. *"unstructured learning activities",*
5. *"management learning",* and
6. *"demographics".*

The *work-related* and *organizational characteristics* sections of the survey examined the personal and organizational contexts that could impact the hotel manager's engagement in learning activities. Meanwhile, the *structured learning activities* and *unstructured learning activities* sections examined the type, depth, variety and recency of the hotel manager's engagement in four popular structured and unstructured learning activities: post secondary

education, training, experience and networking. The *management learning* section of the survey measured the extent of the manager's self-reported work-related learning. The intention of the researcher was to use responses in *structured learning activities*, the *unstructured learning activities* and the *management learning* sections to ascertain the relationship between the hotel managers' engagement in learning activities and their work-related learning (Appendix A). However, for this dissertation only the type and depth of the hotel managers' engagement in the learning activities, post-secondary education, training, work experience and networking were analyzed.

Three types of survey items were included in the instrument: closed, open and partially closed-ended. The closed-ended survey items were used to describe objectively each respondent according to the study's variables. The open-ended items, on the other hand, were used to give the manager the opportunity to justify or clarify some of his/her closed-ended selections. While, the partially closed-ended items allowed the manager to include responses not previously conceived by the researcher. Most of the closed-ended survey items had five-point Likert scales, ranging from *"strongly agree"* to "*strongly disagree"* (Appendix A). Likert scale helped the researcher to measure the intensity of respondents' agreement or disagreement with each item (Babbie, 2007). The survey was administered using two modalities: email and paper.

Reliability and Validity

Measures were taken to ensure the data collection methods and instruments used achieved the study's objectives. To minimize data bias in the focus group discussions steps were taken prior to and during the meetings. First, two relatively homogenous groups of discussants with similar lifestyles, job classifications, experiences and communication skills were selected and used for the exercise, one with hotel managers and the other with academics and a vice president of human resources. This allowed for more focus discussions, less class of viewpoints (Zikmund, 2000) and more honest exchanges. Second, the discussion settings were made as relaxed and informal as possible. The discussants were given name cards so that they could refer to each other by name and refreshments were provided throughout the meetings. The managers' focus group discussions was held in one of the senior managers' office/meeting room at the property where the managers worked and the workplace learning experts focus group held in a meeting room at a local hotel unaffiliated to any of the discussants of that group. Third, both sessions were moderated by the principal investigator; however, the sessions were audio-recorded and a note- taker was present in both rooms. Fourth, all discussants had two sheets: one indicated the research objectives and key terms along with their definitions, and other an agenda indicating the sub-topics to be discussed. The definition sheet ensured discussants understood the context with which the study's key constructs were used in the discussions. Finally, the moderator encouraged feedback from all participants present at the meetings.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the information produced from the field and focus group transcripts:

1. All field notes were documented by the principal investigator;
2. The field notes re-coder was briefly trained immediately prior to coding and the training covered the objectives of the study, the codes used and their meanings;
3. The field notes were first coded by the principal investigator and then recoded by a graduate student in the hospitality field. The desired inter-rater reliability was 75% (Fredrickson, 1996);
4. The focus groups transcripts were prepared and the section relevant to this study coded by the principal investigator. Two weeks later the same transcripts were reviewed by the principal investigator and the coding of a few areas readjusted;
5. The field notes and focus group findings were then triangulated with the literature and survey data for accuracy.

Meanwhile, to ensure the reliability and validity of the data produced by the survey instrument the following steps were taken:

1. A draft of the instrument was first reviewed for clarity by a Jamaican graduate student acquainted with local hotel managers.

2. The document was then reviewed for coverage and item relevance by two university professors, one with expertise in organizational learning and the other in hospitality management.

3. The instrument was then examined by a statistics professor and the determination made that the instrument could achieve the study's objectives statistically.

4. The instrument was then pilot tested at two hotels in a process which involved four hotel managers: two general managers, and two unit managers. One manager was from a large hotel and the other three from a small property. One manager was from Jamaica while the other three were from Oklahoma.

5. The internal consistency of the survey was measured using Cronbach alpha. Cronbach alpha determined how well a set of items measured a single unidimensional latent construct (UCLA Academic Technology Services, 2003). It was computed for constructs which were measured using multiple survey items, which included: "*motivation to learn*", "*perceived risk-taking ability*", "*attitude towards learning*", "*attitude towards industry*", "*hotel learning culture*", "*depth of experience*" and "*management learning*". The minimum desired level required for internal consistency was 0.7 (Hair, Black,

Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006; UCLA Academic Technology Services, 2003)

6. The accuracy of constructs, "*type of post-secondary education*", *"type of training"*, *"type of networking"* were then confirmed using the subjects' response to other categorical closed-end, open-ended and qualitative items in the survey. For example, for survey item B2UNT1b, managers were asked to indicate the extent to which the professional associations of which they were active members were directly related to their job. Their response to this item was cross checked with survey item B2UNT1c and demographic item A1DD1 (Appendix A). The former requested that the respondent list the professional associations of which they were active members and the latter, that they indicate the hotel division in which they were currently employed. If there was a conflict in response across the items, then a decision was made as to data entry for that participant.

7. The accuracy of the construct, "*hotel size*", was also confirmed by cross-checking the response of the item across respondents from the same property. Where there was conflict, the front office of the hotel was contacted and the number of guestrooms for that hotel, as stated by the hotel's front desk representative, was used.

Adjustments were therefore made to the survey instrument at each step of the process prior to its administration to the sample. Weber (1990), although he made the comment in reference to content analysis, stated that "*accuracy was the strongest form of reliability*".p.17 (Weber, 1990).

Three persons participated in the administration and collection of the surveys and they were also trained immediately prior to the data collection process. Their training covered areas critical to the survey administration and data collection process, such as, the objectives of the study; the informed consent; the survey items; key terms used throughout the survey and their meaning; the procedure while on property; and confidentiality.

After the survey was administered, open-ended qualitative items requesting examples of management learning situations from education, training, work experience and networking were hand-coded by the principal investigator, that is, survey items B3M3a and b (Appendix A). By having one person coding the responses, the content reliability and validity of these responses were improved (Koth, 1999). The study's reliability and validity were further enhanced as all the responses were re-coded by a graduate student in the hospitality field who was trained in the process. For all items coded and recoded by separate persons (that is, the field notes and the open-ended survey items) differences were discussed and consensuses achieved. Hence,

steps were taken to ensure that all instruments consistently measured what they intended to measure (Zikmund, 2000).

Procedure

After the instruments were finalized, the following steps were taken to collect the data.

1. Documents submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB)

The instruments, along with the cover letters and related documents, were sent to Oklahoma State University's (OSU's) IRB, the body charged with the responsibility to protect human subjects engaged in research conducted by constituents of the university. Amendments were made to the documents based on suggestions made by the group.

2. Compilation of hotel listing

A contact listing of members of the local hotel association, organized according to hotel communities, was compiled indicating the size of the hotels in the area and the desired sample size per community.

3. Managers of large and medium- sized hotels contacted

In June 2009 general managers, human resource managers and/or hotel managers of medium and large hotels of the local hotel association were contacted via telephone and letters of introduction emailed to them with the following enclosures: a copy of the survey, a cover letter relating to the survey, and a hotel consent sheet.

4. Surveys emailed to managers of small hotels

Managers who worked at small properties and those located in remote areas were also contacted via telephone in June 2009. Personalized but standardized emails were then sent to the managers, along with the survey, its cover letter and definition sheet for their completion and submission via email or fax.

5. Site Visits

General, human resource and/or hotel managers for the large, medium and small hotels were notified via email of proposed site visits to their respective areas. This presented the managers of small hotels with a third option: printing the completed surveys and making them available for collection by the team when in their area. The surveys were then distributed and/or collected over the two- to three-day period that the research team was in each area. Those unable to complete the surveys during the visits were given the option of sending them by courier directly to the researcher, cash-on-delivery. Site visits were conducted within the last two weeks of June 2009 and the first two weeks of July 2009.

6. Strategies to Improve Survey Response Rate

To improve the survey response rate, four digital camcorders were available for drawings, one each for participants in the following hotel

communities: Montego Bay; Negril; Ocho Rios and Runaway Bay; and Kingston, Port Antonio and the South Coast. OSU souvenirs, such as pens, key rings, key purses, were also distributed onsite. Hotel managers' participation in the drawings was voluntary.

Contacts were also identified within the large and medium-sized properties to facilitate the process of sending surveys by courier when this was applicable. Some of these contacts were secretaries, or human resource, training and/or hotel managers who demonstrated interest in the project or simply wanted to help with the successful completion of the exercise. Follow-up calls was made to these contacts. For the smaller hotels, reminder/ thank you emails were sent to the hotel managers and the drawing deadline extended.

7. Field Notes

Observations were noted throughout the data collection process which was between the last week of May 2009 and the end of July 2009.

Data Analysis

The focus group transcripts, the field notes and qualitative open-ended items on the survey were analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis converted the data to a standardized form, helping the researcher to identify

its manifest and latent contents and determine recurring themes. For example, the content analysis performed on the managers' examples of learning situations from education, training, previous work experience and networking revealed seven distinct types of management knowledge application situations in hotels and the dominance of two. This information was reflected in the findings section of the document. Therefore, content analysis helped the researcher to understand management learning in hotels and the constructs that influenced such workplace learning.

The closed-ended, partially closed-ended and some of the open-ended items were analyzed using conventional path analysis. Although path analysis could not conclude cause and effect, it showed the patterns of causation among the variables. A recursive model was used (Figure 7) because causation flowed in a single direction. By using this technique, the researcher was able to examine the following paths and test the study's hypotheses:

PATHS 1 AND 2: Individual work-related and organizational characteristics on depth of a hotel manager's engagement in structured learning activities

DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT IN STRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES – *FORMAL EDUCATION* (DV) = IVs (Work-related Characteristics) + IVs (Organizational Characteristics)

Dependent Variable (DV): Depth of Engagement in Structured Learning Activities – Formal Education (SLA-DFE) = Years of post-secondary formal education

Independent Variables (IVs): Work-related Characteristics = motivation towards learning (MTL); perceived risk-taking ability (RTA); attitude to learning (ATL); attitude to industry (ATI)

Independent Variables (IVs): Organizational Characteristics = hotel size (HS); hotel learning culture (HLC) (Figure 9)

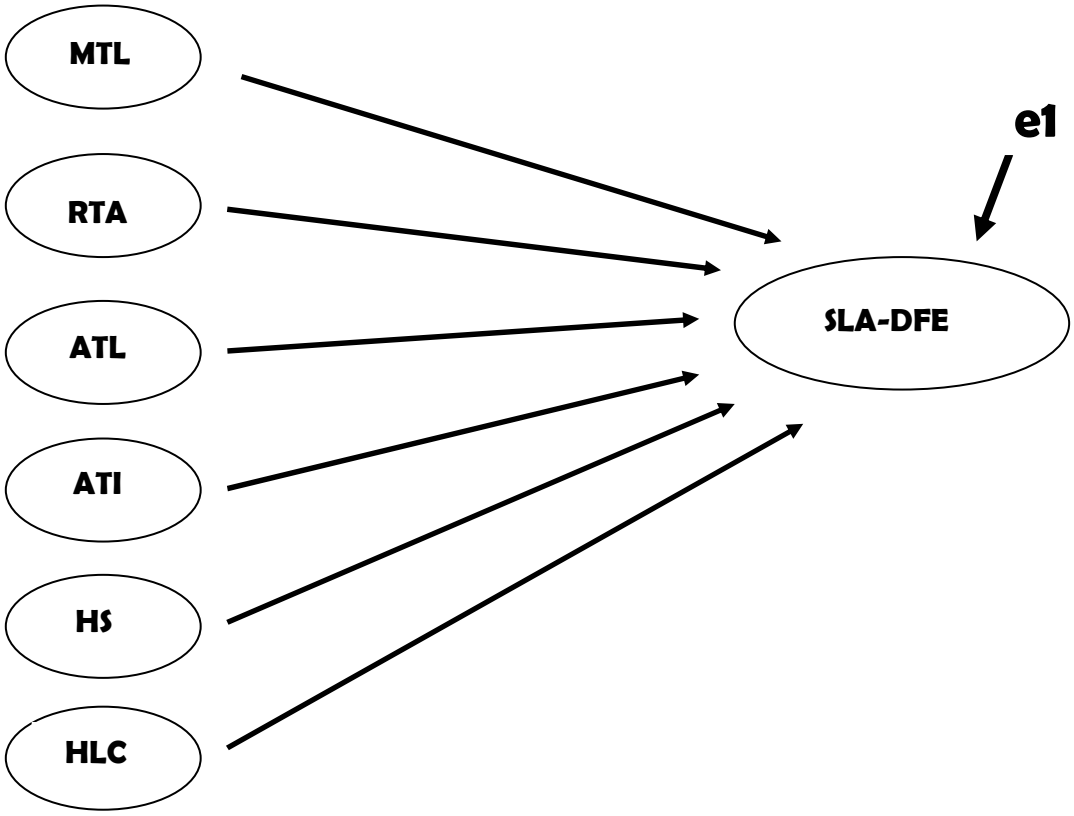


Figure 9. Model A1 – Showing expected relationships between a hotel manager's context, namely personal and business, and his/her depth of engagement in formal post-secondary education

DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT IN STRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES – *TRAINING* (DV) = IVs (Work-related Characteristics) + IVs (Organizational Characteristics)

Dependent Variable (DV): Depth of Engagement in Structured Learning Activities – Training (SLA-DT) = Number of professional training programs and courses completed between 2003 and summer 2009

Independent Variables (IVs): Work-related Characteristics = motivation towards learning (MTL); perceived risk-taking ability (RTA); attitude to learning (ATL); attitude to industry (ATI)

Independent Variables (IVs): Organizational Characteristics = hotel size (HS); hotel learning culture (HLC) (Figure 10)

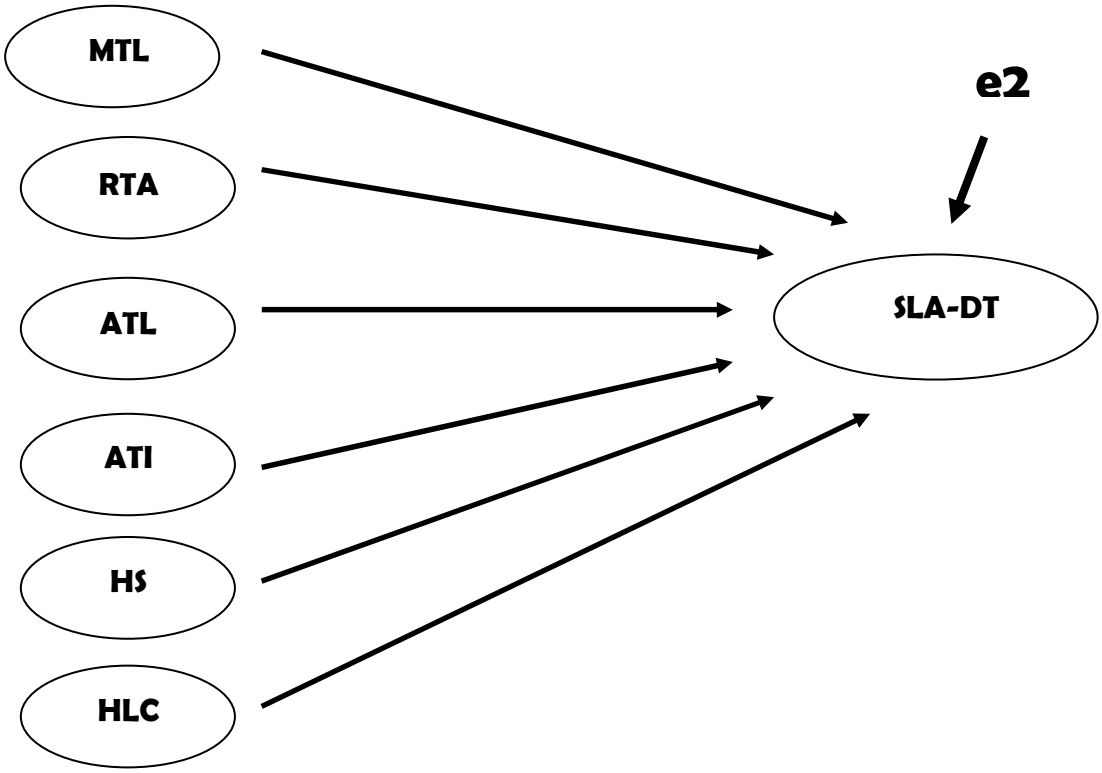


Figure 10. Model A2 – Showing expected relationships between the hotel manager's context, namely personal and business, and his/her depth of engagement in training courses between 2003 and summer 2009

PATH 3: Individual work-related and organizational characteristics on depth of a hotel manager's engagement in the unstructured learning activity, networking

DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT IN UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES ***NETWORKING***

(DV) = IVs (Work-related Characteristics) + IVs (Organizational Characteristics)

Dependent Variable (DV): Depth of Engagement in Unstructured Learning Activities Networking (ULA-DN) = Frequency of networking

Independent Variables (IVs): Work-related Characteristics = motivation towards learning (MTL); perceived risk-taking ability (RTA); attitude to learning (ATL); attitude to industry (ATI)

Independent Variables (IVs): Organizational Characteristics = hotel size (HS); hotel learning culture (HLC) (Figure 11)

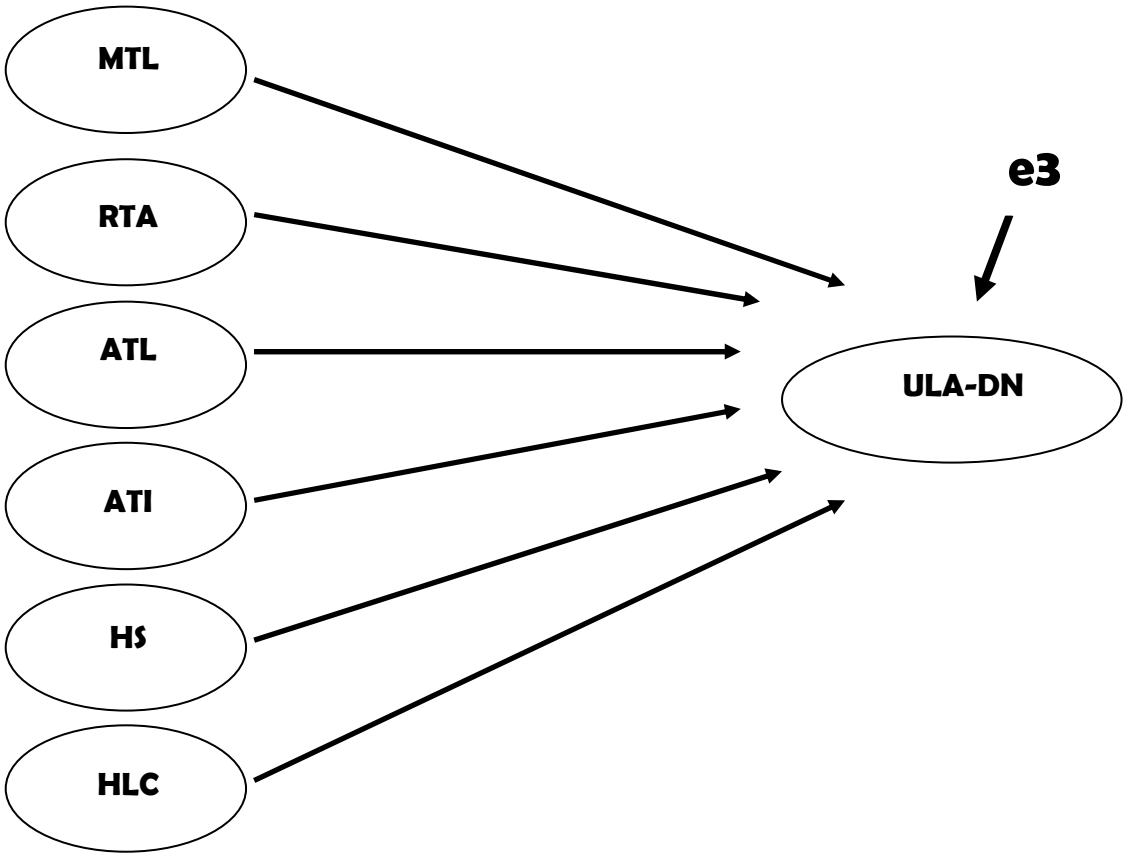


Figure 11. Model A3 – Showing expected relationships between the hotel manager's context, namely personal and business, and his/her depth of engagement in networking

PATH 4: Type and depth of engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities on management learning

SELF REPORTED WORK-RELATED MANAGEMENT LEARNING (DV) = IV (type of structured learning activities) + IVs (depth of engagement in structured learning activities) + IVs (Type of unstructured learning activities) + IVs (Depth of engagement in unstructured learning activities)

Dependent Variable (DV): Self-reported work-related management learning (SRWRML) = Problem solving and innovation ability

Independent Variables (IVs): Type of structured learning activity = Job-relatedness of formal education (TYPE OF FORMAL EDUCATION: SLA-TFE); job-relatedness of training (TYPE OF TRAINING: SLA-TT)

Independent Variables (IVs): Depth of engagement in structured learning activities = Years of formal post-secondary education (DEPTH OF FORMAL EDUCATION: SLA-DFA); number of professional training programs or courses completed between 2003 and summer 2009 (DEPTH OF TRAINING: SLA-DT)

Independent Variables (IVs): Type of unstructured learning activity = ratio of hospitality experience to total work experience (TYPE OF EXPERIENCE: ULA-TE); job-relatedness of professional association membership (TYPE OF NETWORK: ULA-TN)

Independent Variables (IVs): Depth of engagement in unstructured learning activities = Years of work experiences (DEPTH OF EXPERIENCE: ULA-DE1); number of entities managers worked with (ULA-DE2); frequency of networking encounters (DEPTH OF NETWORKING: ULA-DN) (Figure 12)

Based on the results of the analysis the model was revised to reflect the statistically significant relationships.

Tables 8a-f was a summary of the statistical relationships examined. They indicated the study's research questions, the related hypotheses,

relationships examined and the source of the data used in the analysis. For this dissertation all quantitative data analysis was performed using the statistical software, SPSS 17.0. Therefore, to achieve the study's objectives the researcher used two data analysis techniques: content and path analyses.

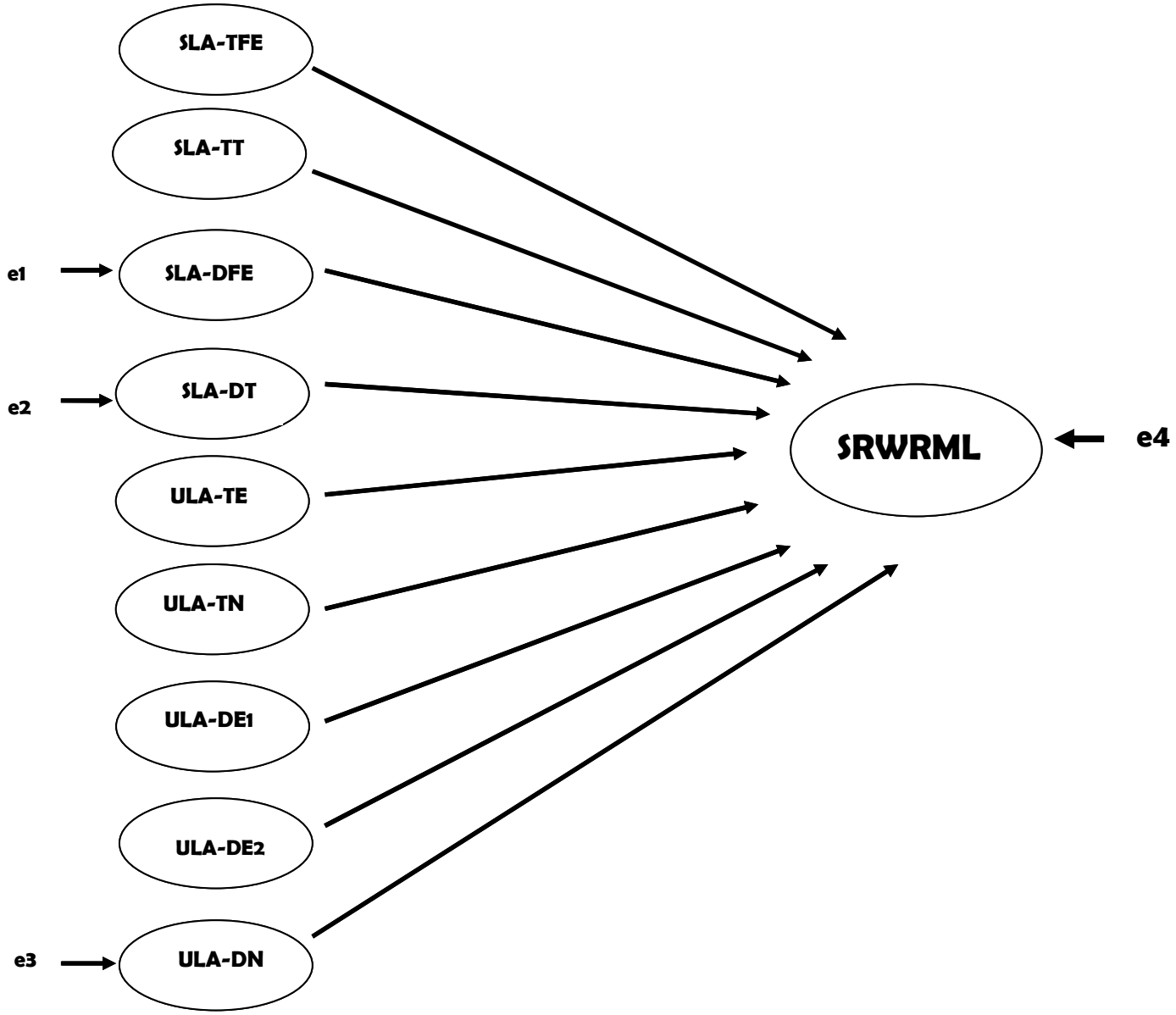


Figure 12. Model A4 – Showing expected relationships between the hotel manager's engagement in learning activities and his/her self-reported work-related working

Table 8a.

Data (Quantitative) Analysis Summary – Work-Related Behaviors and Structured Learning Activities

Research Question	Hypotheses and Relationships Investigated	How Variables Were Determined *(Variable = Treatment of Survey Item/s)*
What was the relationship between hotel managers' work-related behaviors (namely their perceived risk-taking abilities, motivation towards learning, attitudes towards learning and the industry) and the depth of their engagement in the structured learning activities, namely formal post-secondary education and training?	**WORK-RELATED BEHAVIORS VERSUS DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT IN STRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES** **H1a-b:** Hotel managers who were less intrinsically motivated to learn would more likely pursue structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time or more frequently (DEPTH) than those more intrinsically motivated to learn. **H1c-d:** Hotel managers with high perceived risk-taking abilities would more likely pursue structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time or more frequently (DEPTH) than those with lower perceived risk-taking abilities. **H1e-f:** Hotel managers with more positive attitudes towards learning would more likely pursue structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time or more frequently (DEPTH) than those with a less positive attitudes towards learning. **H1g-h:** Hotel managers with more positives attitude towards the hospitality industry would more likely pursue structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time or more frequently (DEPTH) than those with less positive attitudes towards industry. **The Relationships** - Extent Intrinsically Motivated(IV); Years of Post-Secondary Education(DV) - Perceived Risk-Taking Ability(IV); Years of Post-Secondary Education(DV) - Attitude to Learning(IV); Years of Post-Secondary Education(DV) - Attitude to Industry(IV); Years of Post-Secondary Education(DV) - Extent Intrinsically Motivated(IV); Frequency of Training(DV) - Perceived Risk-Taking Ability(IV); Frequency of Training(DV) - Attitude to Learning(IV)/ Frequency of Training(DV) - Attitude to Industry(IV)/ Frequency of Training(DV)	Extent Intrinsically Motivated = (A2WM1 + A2WM2)/2 Perceived Risk-Taking Ability = (A2WR1 + A2WR2)/2 Attitude to Learning = (A2WAL1 + A2WAL2)/2 Attitude to Industry = (A2WAI1 + A2WAI2)/2 Years of Post-Secondary Education = B1SDE1 Frequency of Training = B1SDT1

Table 8b.

Data (Quantitative) Analysis Summary – Hotel Characteristics and Structured Learning Activities

Research Question	Hypotheses and Relationships Investigated	How Variables Were Determined *(Variable = Treatment of Survey Item/s)*
What was the relationship between characteristics of the hotel managers' place of work (namely their hotels' size and learning culture) and their depth of engagement in structured learning activities, namely formal post-secondary education and training?	**ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS VERSUS DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT IN STRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES** **H3a-b**: Managers who worked in larger hotels would engage in structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time and more frequently (DEPTH) than those who worked in smaller hotels. **H3c-d**: Managers who worked in hotels with a stronger learning culture would engage in structured learning activities (such as formal post-secondary education and training) for significantly longer periods of time and more frequently (DEPTH) than those who worked in hotels with a weaker learning culture. **The Relationships** - Hotel Size(IV); Years of Post-Secondary Education(DV) - Extent of Learning Culture(IV); Years of Post-Secondary Education(DV) - Hotel Size(IV); Frequency of Training(DV) - Extent of Learning Culture(IV); Frequency of Training(DV)	Hotel Size = A3OS1 Extent of Learning Culture = (A3OCE1..5/5) + (A3OCI1..4/4)/2 Years of Post-Secondary Education = B1SDE1 Frequency of Training = B1SDT1

Table 8c.

Data (Quantitative) Analysis Summary – Work-Related Behaviors and Unstructured Learning Activities

Research Question	Hypotheses and Relationships Investigated	How Variables Were Determined *(Variable = Treatment of Survey Item/s)*
What was the relationship between hotel managers' work-related behaviors (namely their motivation towards learning, perceived risk-taking abilities, attitudes towards learning and the industry) and their depth of engagement in the unstructured learning activity, networking?	**WORK-RELATED BEHAVIORS AND DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT IN UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES** **H2a**: Hotel managers who were more intrinsically motivated to learn were likely to network (unstructured learning activity) significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those less intrinsically motivated to learn. **H2b**: Hotel managers with high perceived risk-taking abilities would network (unstructured learning activity) significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those with lower perceived risk-taking abilities. **H2c**: Hotel managers with more positive attitudes towards learning would network (unstructured learning activity) significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those with less positive attitudes towards learning. **H2d**: Hotel managers with more positive attitudes towards the hospitality industry would network (unstructured learning activity) significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those with less positive attitudes towards the industry. **The Relationships** - Extent Intrinsically Motivated(IV); Frequency of Networking(DV) - Extent of Perceived Risk Taking Ability(IV); Frequency of Networking(DV) - Attitude Towards Learning(IV); Frequency of Networking(DV) - Attitude Towards Industry(IV); Frequency of Networking(DV)	Extent Intrinsically Motivated = (A2WM1 + A2WM2)/2 Extent of Perceived Risk-Taking Ability = (A2WR1 + A2WR2)/2 Attitude Towards Learning = (A2WAL1 + A2WAL2)/2 Attitude Towards Industry = (A2WAI1 + A2WAI2)/2 Frequency of Networking = B2UND1

Table 8d.

Data (Quantitative) Analysis Summary – Hotel Characteristics and Unstructured Learning Activities

Research Question	Hypotheses and Relationships Investigated	How Variables Were Determined *(Variable = Treatment of Survey Item/s)*
What was the relationship between characteristics of the hotel managers' place of work (namely their hotels' size and learning culture) and their depth of engagement in the unstructured learning activity, networking?	**HOTEL CHARACTERISTICS VERSUS DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT IN UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES** **H4a**: Managers who worked in larger hotels would network significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those who worked in smaller hotels. **H4b**: Managers who worked in hotels with a strong learning culture would network significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those who worked in hotels with a weaker learning culture. ***The Relationships*** - Hotel Size(IV); Frequency of Networking (DV) - Extent of Learning Culture(IV); Frequency of Networking (DV)	Hotel Size = A3OS1 Extent of Learning Culture = (A3OCE1..5/5) + (A3OCI1..4/4)/2 Frequency of Networking = B2UND1

Table 8e.

Data (Quantitative) Analysis Summary – Type and Depth of Structured Learning Activities and Learning

Research Question	Hypotheses and Relationships Investigated	How Variables Were Determined *(Variable = Treatment of Survey Item/s)*
What was the relationship between the type and depth of hotel managers' engagement in structured learning activities (namely formal post-secondary education and training) and their self-reported work-related learning levels (that is, their perceived abilities to innovate and solve problems)?	**ENGAGEMENT IN STRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES VERSUS LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT SELF-REPORTED WORK-RELATED LEARNING** **H5a-b:** Hotel managers with more job-related academic preparation (that is, their formal post-secondary education and training were related to their job area) (TYPE) would report significantly higher levels of perceived work-related learning than those with less academic preparation related to their job-areas. **H5c-d**: Hotel managers with more years of post-secondary education and participated in professional training programs more frequently (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of perceived work-related learning than those with fewer years of post-secondary education, and who participated less frequently in training programs. **The Relationships** - Type of Post-Secondary Education(IV); Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning(DV) - Type of Training(IV); Management Self-Reported Work-Related Learning(DV) - Years of Post-Secondary Education(IV); Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning(DV) - Frequency of Training(IV); Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning(DV)	Type of Post-Secondary Education = B1STE6 Type of Training= B1STT6 Years of Post-Secondary Formal Education = B1SDE1 Frequency of Training= B1SDT1 Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning= (B3M1a,b,c,d + B3M2a,b,c,d)/8

Table 8f.

Data (Quantitative) Analysis Summary – Type and Depth of Unstructured Learning Activities and Learning

Research Question	Hypotheses and Relationships Investigated	How Variables Were Determined *(Variable = Treatment of Survey Item/s)*
What was the relationship between the type and depth of hotel managers' engagement in unstructured learning activities (namely their work experience and networking) and their self-reported work-related learning levels (that is, their perceived abilities to innovate and solve problems)?	**ENGAGEMENT IN UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES (EXPERIENCE) VERSUS LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT SELF-REPORTED WORK-RELATED LEARNING** **H6a**: Hotels managers with a greater percentage of total work experience in the hospitality industry (TYPE) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those with a smaller percentage of years work experience in the same industry. **H6b**: Hotels managers with more years of total work experience (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those with fewer years of total work experience. **H6c**: Hotels managers with experience with more entities or companies (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those with experience with fewer entities. **The Relationships** - Type (Career/Job Relatedness) of Experience(IV); Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning(DV) - Years of Work Experiences(IV); Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning(DV) - Number of Entities Worked (IV); Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning(DV) **ENGAGEMENT IN UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES (NETWORKING) VERSUS LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT SELF-REPORTED LEARNING** **H6d**: Hotels managers who were active members of professional associations related to their job-area (TYPE) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those who were active members of professional associations not related to their job area. **H6e**: Hotels managers who networked more frequently (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those who networked less frequently. **The Relationships** - Type (Career/Job Relatedness) of Professional Association Membership(IV); Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning(DV) - Frequency of Networking(IV); Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning(DV)	Type (Career/Job Relatedness) of Experience = B2UET1h/B2UED1 Type (Career/Job Relatedness) of Networking = B2UNT1a Years of Work Experiences = B2UED1 Number of Entities Worked = B2UED2 Frequency of Networking = B2UND1 Management Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning = (B3M1a,b,c,d+B3M2a,b,c,d)/8

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

As already stated, the primary goal of this dissertation was to understand hotel managers' work-related learning by attempting to identify characteristics and learning activities indicative of managers who reported high levels of work-related learning. More specifically, the objective was to identify those statistically significant and generally noteworthy relationships between hotel managers' work-related behaviors, characteristics of their organizations, and the type and depth of their engagement in education, training and networking. This study also sought to determine how their participation in those activities, along with their work experience, was associated with their work-related learning.

Therefore, the chapter summarized the results of path and content analyses conducted on data garnered from hotel managers and workplace learning experts. The study's model was tested using a series of multiple regressions. The section began with the reliability of the study, and this was followed with a description of the sample, and then by the descriptive statistics of the constructs investigated, after which the data addressing each of the study's six research questions was presented.

The Reliability of the Study

When the field notes and the open-ended survey items requiring managers to cite actual learning situations were coded and recoded, a convergence of 89% and 88% respectively, was achieved. The minimum level of convergence required for inter-rater reliability was 75%. Therefore, the coding was reliable.

Cronbach alpha was computed for the continuous variables. The constructs *attitude towards learning*, *attitude towards industry*, *hotel learning culture*, *depth of experience* and *management learning*, all reflected Cronbach alpha above the acceptable level for social science research of 0.7 (Gay, et al., 2006; Hair, et al., 2006; UCLA Academic Technology Services, 2003) and they were 0.72, 0.82, 0.79 and 0.86, respectively. The Cronbach alpha for the constructs *motivation to learn* and *perceived risk-taking ability* were 0.17 and 0.35 respectively, below the acceptable levels for internal consistency (Table 9).

Table 9.

Cronbach Alpha for the Constructs

Constructs	Item Codes	Cronbach Alpha	High/ Acceptable/ Low
Motivation to Learn	A2WM1 A2WM2	0.171	Low
Perceived Risk-taking Ability	A2WR1 A2WR2	0.348	Low
Attitude Towards Learning	A2WAL1 A2WAL2	0.718	Acceptable
Attitude Towards Industry	A2WAI1 A2WA12	0.818	High
Hotel Learning Culture	A3OCE1 A3OCE2 A3OCE3 A3OCE4 A3OC11 A3OC12 A3OC13 A3OC14 A3OC15	0.79	Acceptable
Management Learning	B3M1a B3M1b B3M1c B3M1d B3M2a B3M2b B3M2c B3M2d	0.855	High

Description of the Survey Sample

Forty-six percent (46%) of the local hotel association member hotels participated in the study. The ratio of hotels by hotel community that participated in the exercise differed between ± 4% to the ratio of hotels in each community of the population. Montego Bay alone had 4% fewer hotels in the sample when compared to its ratio percentage in the population, while Kingston had 4% more when compared to the ratio found in the population (Table 10). None of the hotels in the small, predominantly rural resort area, of Port Antonio participated in the exercise.

Of the 260 managers expected to complete the survey, only 154 actually did, 41% fewer than expected. The managers' response rate was 20% of the population. The population was computed at 783 hotel managers. The number of managers in each hotel community was reflective of the approximate size of the hotels in that area. The ratio of managers in the sample to the managers in the population differed by 3%, 8%, 9%, -6% and -18% for the Kingston, Negril, Mandeville & the South Coast, Runaway Bay and Montego chapters respectively. Therefore, Montego Bay was significantly underrepresented at-18%, while Negril along with Mandeville and the South Coast (9%) were significantly over-represented at 8% and 9% respectively.

The reduced sample size therefore meant a reduction in the number of variables included in the analysis than previously planned. Chapters one to three were adjusted accordingly. This was done so as not to compromise the usefulness of the quantitative results. A final sample size of 154, which fell between researchers suggested range of 150 and 400, was ideal for the quantitative analysis (Hair, et al., 2006). The general rule-of-thumb was 10 times as many cases as parameters but the ideal was 20 times (Chin, 1998; Kline, R., 1998). Six parameters were included in regression models A1, A2 and A3 (Figures 9-11) and nine in model A4 (Figure 12). The parameters retained were those considered by the researcher to be stronger predictors of management learning.

Although the hotel response rate of 46% was considered acceptable, the managers' survey response rate of 20% was considered low for business research. The minimum manager response rate desired was 35% (Baruch, 1999).

Of the 154 managers who participated in the survey, at least 61% were female and 34% male. Five percent (5%) did not indicate their gender. Approximately 45% were between the ages of 20-40 years, 26% between 41-50 years and 9% between 51-60 years. Twenty percent (20%) did not indicate age. Of the three levels of management included in the survey sample, at least 55% were department heads or executive committee members, 24% were unit managers and approximately 14% were general managers/owners. Seven

percent (7%) did not indicate their management level. The sample represented over seven departments commonly found in hotels and 23% of the managers that participated had either overall responsibility for their property or oversaw the running of two or more departments. The other dominant departments represented in the sample included the rooms division (19%), food and beverage (15%) and the human resource departments (9%) (Table 11).

Table 10.

Distribution of Survey Population and Sample

HOTEL COMMUNITIES	Predominant Hotel Type	# of Member Hotels *(By Size)*	# of Member Hotels *(By Community)*	% of Member Hotels *(By Community)*	# of Member Hotels in Sample *(By Community)*	% of Member Hotels in Sample *(By Community)*	Diff. between % of Hotels in Sample & % of Hotels in Population	HOTEL RESPONSE RATE % *(By Community)*	Manager Population Approx. *(By Community)*	% of Manager Population - Approx. *(By Community*	Revised Manager Sample Size Desired *(By Community)*	Final Manager Sample *(By Community)*	% of Managers Sample *(By Community)*	Diff. between % of Managers in Sample & % of Managers in Population	HOTEL MANAGERS' RESPONSE RATE % *(By Community)*
Kingston	Business	13 (< 100 rooms) 4 (100-349 rooms) 0(350 or > rooms)	17	13%	10	17%	**4%**	**59%**	71	9%	21	18	12%	**3%**	**25%**
Mandeville & the South Coast	Rural Resort	8 (<100 rooms) 0 (100-349 rooms) 1(350 or > rooms)	9	7%	5	8%	**1%**	**56%**	34	4%	11	21	14%	**9%**	**62%**
Montego Bay	Urban Resort	23 (<100 rooms) 7 (100-349 rooms) 5 (350 or > rooms)	35	28%	14	24%	**-4%**	**40%**	247	3%	42	21	14%	**-18%**	**9%**
Negril	Urban Resort	24 (<100 rooms) 8 (100-349 rooms) 1 (350 or > rooms)	32	25%	16	27%	**2%**	**50%**	156	2%	39	43	28%	**8%**	**28%**
Ocho Rios	Urban Resort	11 (<100 rooms) 7 (100-349 rooms) 2 (350 or > rooms)	20	16%	10	17%	**1%**	**50%**	182	2%	24	35	23%	**-1%**	**19%**
Runaway Bay	Rural Resort	4 (<100 rooms) 4 (100-349 rooms) 1 (350 or > rooms)	9	7%	4	7%	**0%**	**44%**	88	11%	11	8	5%	**-6%**	**9%**
Port Antonio	Rural Resort	5 (<100 rooms) 0 (100-349 rooms) 0 (350 or > rooms)	5	4%	0	0%	**-4%**	**0%**	5	1%	6	0	0%	**-1%**	**0%**
TOTAL (OVERALL %)	-	**88 (<100 rooms)** **30 (100-349rooms)** **10 (350 or > rooms)**	127	100%	59	100%	**0%**	**46%**	**783**	100%	154	154	100%	**0.00**	**20%**

Table 11.

Survey Sample Details

Demographics of Respondents	Description	% of Respondents
Age*	20-30 years	22%
	31-40 years	23%
	41-50 years	26%
	51-60 years	9%
	Did Not Indicate Age	20%
	TOTAL %	100%
Gender*	Male	34%
	Female	61%
	Did Not Indicate Gender	5%
	TOTAL %	100%
Mgt Level*	General Managers/Owners	14%
	Dept. Heads/Exec. Committee Members	55%
	Unit Managers	24%
	Did Not Indicate Management Level	7%
	TOTAL %	100%
Hotel Areas*	Overall Management	23%
	Rooms	19%
	Food & Beverage	11%
	Human Resources	9%
	Marketing, Sales & Public Relations	5%
	Engineering	2%
	Accounts & Finance	7%
	Entertainment	2%
	Other	10%
	Did Not Indicate Hotel Area	12%
	TOTAL %	100%

* Of the 154 respondents 124 indicated their age, 147 indicated their gender, 143 indicated management level and 136 indicated their division.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of the constructs measured indicated below (Table 12).

Table 12.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.	Variance
Motivation Towards Learning (1-very low intrinsic motivation towards learning; 5-very high intrinsic motivation towards learning)	153	3.50	1.50	5.00	3.90	.81	.66
Perceived Ability to Take Risk (1-low perceived risk-taking ability; 5-high perceived risk-taking ability)	152	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.41	.88	.77
Attitude Towards Learning (1-very negative attitude towards learning; 5-very positive attitude towards learning)	153	2.50	2.50	5.00	4.75	.43	.18
Attitude Towards Industry (1-very negative attitude towards the hospitality industry; 5-very positive attitude towards the hospitality industry)	153	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.38	.82	.67
Hotel Size (# of guestrooms)	154	844.00	12.00	856.00	240.66	204.11	41661.77
Extent of Hotel Learning Culture (1-very weak learning culture; 5-very strong learning culture)	150	3.33	1.68	5.00	3.85	.61	.37
Type (Career/Job-Relatedness) of Post-Secondary Education (1-education not related to job; 5-education very strongly to job)	153	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.73	1.23	1.50
Type (Career/Job-Relatedness) of Training (1-training not related to job; 5-training very related to job)	152	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.93	1.07	1.14
Depth (Years) of Post-Secondary Education (*N.B. Existence of outlier*)	138	35.00	.00	35.00	5.46	4.72	22.32
Depth (Number) of Training Courses Completed Between 2005 and Present	130	60.00	.00	60.00	6.39	8.65	74.78
Extent of Work Experience in the Hospitality Industry (Type of Experience) (0 - no experience in the hospitality industry; 1-all experience in the hospitality industry)	140	.96	.04	1.00	.69	.30	.09
Career/Job-Relatedness of Professional Associations of Which the Hotel Managers were Members (Type of Networking) (0-not member of professional association; 3-member of professional association related to job)	143	3.00	.00	3.00	.83	1.26	1.58
Depth (Years) of Hotel Managers General Work Experience	141	56.92	1.08	58.00	19.8	11.56	133.64
The Number of Companies/Entities Managers Worked	141	21.00	1.00	22.00	5.84	3.61	13.01
The Number of Times a Year the Managers Networked (Depth of Networking)	120	365.00	.00	365.00	23.28	64.09	4107.58
The Extent of Self-Reported Work-Related Learning Over Last 6 Months (1-very low work-related learning levels; 5-very high work-related learning levels)	146	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.76	.71	.51
Valid N (listwise)	91						

Hotel Managers' Work-related Behaviors and Hotel Characteristics on their Engagement in Structured Learning Activities

To examine the relationship between hotel managers' work-related behaviors and hotel characteristics and their engagement in structured learning activities two research questions were posed. They were:

1a) What was the relationship between hotel managers' work-related behaviors (namely, their motivation towards learning, perceived risk-taking abilities, and attitudes towards learning and the hospitality industry) and the depth of their engagement in the structured learning activities, namely post-secondary formal education and training?

1b) What was the relationship between characteristics of hotel managers' place of work (namely, their hotels' size and learning culture) and the depth of their engagement in the structured learning activities, namely post-secondary formal education and training?

For research question 1a, eight hypotheses were tested; each reflected the expected relationship between one of the independent variables (IV) and the dependent variable (DV), formal post-secondary education, and then the independent variable (IV), training. (See hypotheses listed in the literature). It was earlier theorized that hotel managers who were less intrinsically motivated, with higher perceived risk-taking abilities, and more positive attitudes to learning and the hospitality industry would pursue formal post-

secondary education for significantly longer periods of time than those with opposite work-related behaviors and the same would also hold true for the number of training sessions they completed between the period 2003 and summer 2009. In other words, those who were less intrinsically motivated, with a higher perceived risk-taking abilities, and more positive attitudes to learning and the hospitality industry would have completed more training sessions during the period than those who displayed opposite work-related behaviors.

For research question 1b, it was also previously theorized in four separate hypotheses that managers who worked in larger hotels would have significantly greater number of years of post-secondary education and would have completed significantly more training programs between 2003 and summer 2009, than those who worked in smaller properties. This was also expected to be the case for managers who worked with properties with a stronger learning culture. Therefore, those who worked in hotels with a stronger learning culture would have significantly more years of post-secondary education and completed more training sessions between 2003 and summer 2009.

Results of the Statistical Analysis

Two multiple regression analyses were conducted to understand the nature and strength of the relationship between the work-related behavior

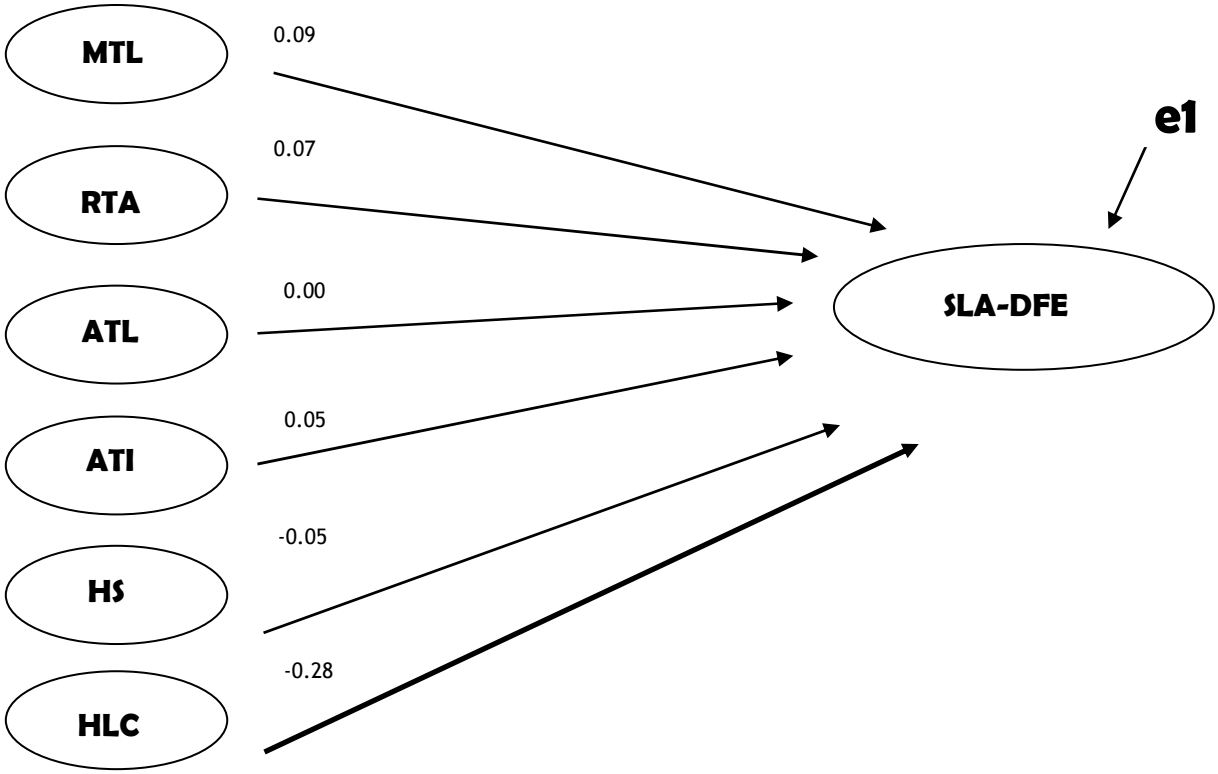
and hotel characteristic IVs on the DVs, structured learning activities. Therefore, one multiple regression analysis examined the effect of the hotel managers' *motivation to learn (MTL)*, *perceived risk-taking ability (RTA)*, *attitude towards learning (ATL)*, *attitude towards the industry (ATI)*, *hotel size (HS)* and *hotel learning culture (HLC)* on their "*years of formal post-secondary education" (SLA-DFE) (DV)* (Figure 13). The second analysis examined at the effect of the same IVs on the "*number of training sessions the managers completed between 2003 and summer 2009"* (Figure 14).

In the first scenario, only one statistically significant relationship was found between the IVs and the DV, *years of formal post-secondary education*, and that was *hotel learning culture* (*B = -0.28)* (Figure 13). Outliers were removed and a simple regression analysis performed entering *hotel learning culture* as the only IV. The overall R^2 for this bivariate statistically significant regression model ($p = 0.03$) was a low 0.04, which meant that only 4% of the variability in hotel managers' *years of formal post-secondary education* (DV) could be accounted for by their *hotel learning culture* scores. The Beta score, which was the same as the Pearson correlation coefficient, was -0.2 (Table 13 and Figure 18). Therefore, lower hotel learning culture scores was associated with higher number of years of hotel managers' post-secondary formal education. More specifically, the number of years of post-secondary education was expected to decline by 0.97 years when hotel learning culture increased

by one point on a five-point Likert scale (Table 17). This finding contradicted the hypothesis earlier posed.

Final Regression Equation: SLA-DFE = 8.6 – 0.97HLC + e1

In the second scenario, no statistically significant relationship was found between the work-related behaviors and organizational characteristics constructs, and the *number of training sessions completed between 2003 and summer 2009*. What was also evident from the data, but not statistically significant, was that *hotel size* had the strongest direct relationship (r = 0.13; p = 0.07) of all the DVs entered with *depth of training*. Therefore, the larger the hotel, the more training sessions the hotel managers completed between 2003 and summer 2009.



(*Significant paths indicated in bold)

Equation 1: SLA-DFE = a + b_{11}MTL - b_{12}RTA + b_{13}ATL + b_{14}ATI + b_{15}HS + b_{16}HLC + e1

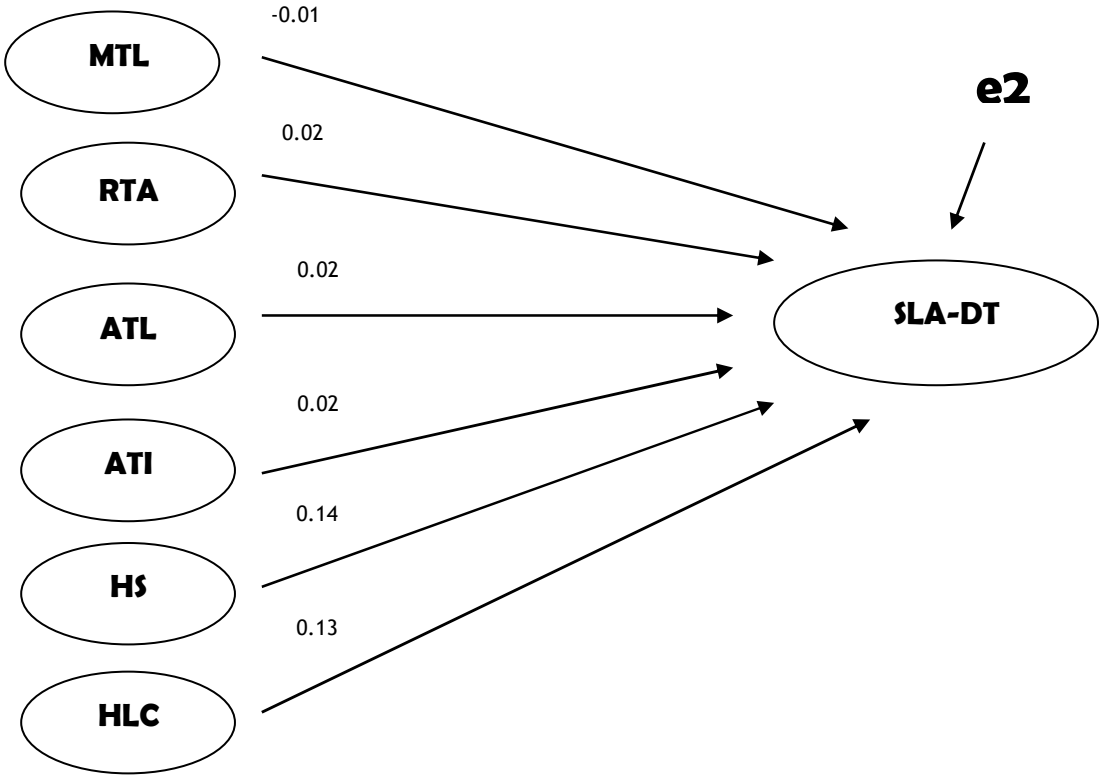
Figure 13. Model A1 indicating standardized Beta scores for the relationships between hotel managers' personal and business context and their depth of engagement in formal post-secondary education

Table 13

Revised A1 Model: Correlation Matrix of Observed Variables and Standard Deviation (n=129)

	SLA-DFE	HLC
SLA-DFE	1	-0.2*
HLC	-0.2*	1
SD	2.93	0.6

*p<0.05



(*There were no statistically significant relationships in this model.)

Equation 2: SLA-DT = a + b_{21}MTL + b_{22}RTA + b_{23}ATL + b_{24}ATL + b_{25}HS + b_{26}HLC +e2

Figure 14. Model A2 indicating standardized Beta scores for the relationships between hotel managers' personal and business context and their depth of engagement in training courses between 2003 and summer 2009

Results of the Content Analysis

When one examined hotel managers' work-related behaviors and its likely effects on their engagement in structured learning activities, the workplace learning experts also predicted no significant relationship between

the extent to which managers were *intrinsically motivated to learn* and their *engagement in structured learning activities*. The experts contended that although intrinsic factors such as achievement orientation; being seen by peers as equal, if not an exception; and the fear of failure were powerful drivers of structured learning activity engagement, hotel managers motivated to learn by extrinsic factors would also display similar results. However, the workplace experts deviated from the results of the quantitative analysis on the relationship between *attitude towards learning* and *engagement in structured learning activities*. The experts felt that hotel managers who were more traditionalist or displayed attitudes defensive to change would avoid situations that challenged their knowledge and hence, were less prone to learning.

When it came to the organizational factor, *hotel size,* and managers' *engagement in structured learning activities*, the hotel managers that participated in the focus group anticipated a direct relationship between the two constructs. They felt with hotel size comes more resources and time flexibility to allow their managers to engage in structured learning activities on and off property. One assistant manager summed up the situation in industry like this:

> *"I would think opportunities would be greater for larger properties because you have a back-up. That is generally speaking. In smaller properties, the maintenance manager can only take his day off (for engagement in structured learning activities). There is no adequate*

back-up. They are turning towards creating administrative backup for technical people like Donald (a fictitious name for the maintenance manager). If he worked in a Marriott or Hilton there would be four Donalds."

A management trainee further expounded:

"In larger hotels, like the Marriotts and so, you have a lot more coverage; they have a bigger budget so they can make things happen. As far as training, they have constant training. They have a lot more to offer. The truth is big or small once you are dealing with service and 5-star you still have to make it happen. With a smaller hotel you have to give up a lot more. You have to micromanage a lot more."

On the issue of the relationship between *hotel learning culture* and hotel managers' *engagement in structured learning activities*, the workplace experts anticipated a strong, direct relationship between the constructs. The experts felt this would be so for two main reasons. The first was that hotels with a strong learning culture often fund staff development programs, eliminating one inhibiting factor to their managers' engagement in structured learning activities. Second, the very notion of being in an environment that values learning, places psychological pressures to conform on those managers who would not usually be of that dispensation. One former hotel general manager, hospitality lecturer and college administrator explained it like this:

"Persons who don't want to take on additional responsibilities... They are contented in the little box they have built for themselves. But if these persons were placed in another environment, in another organization that makes certain demands…. If they wanted to remain, they have to sign up for some course, because it is a part of that organization's culture. They have a choice; if they don't conform they have to leave."

Another member of the expert panel concurred and stated that *"90% of the time the environment forces you to react".*

Section Summary: Hotel Managers' Work-related Behaviors and Hotel Characteristics on their Engagement in Structured Learning Activities

From the path analysis there was no statistically significant relationship between hotel managers' work-related behaviors, namely, their m*otivation to learn*, *perceived risk-taking ability*, *attitude towards learning* and *attitude towards the hospitality industry* and their depth of engagement in the structured learning activities *formal post-secondary education* and *training*. However, there was a weak inverse statistically significant relationship between *hotel learning culture* and their managers' *depth of engagement in formal post-secondary education*. Content analysis corroborated some of the statistical results, in particular, the statistical analysis that indicated no significant relationship between hotel managers' *motivation to learn* and their *depth of engagement in structured learning activities*. However, where the

content analysis deviated was on the issue of *attitude towards learning*, *hotel size* and *hotel learning culture* and the extent of managers' *engagement in structured learning activities*. The purposive sample of hotel managers and workplace learning experts predicted a significant direct relationship between the contexts constructs; *attitude towards learning*, *hotel size* and *hotel learning culture;* and the managers' *depth of engagement in structured learning activities*.

Hotel Managers' Work-Related Behaviors and Hotel Characteristics and their Engagement in <u>Unstructured Learning Activities</u>

To examine the relationship between the same personal and business context constructs and the extent of the hotel managers' engagement in networking two research questions were posited. They were:

2a) What was the relationship between hotel managers' work-related behaviors (namely, their motivation towards learning, perceived risk-taking abilities, attitudes towards learning and the hospitality industry) and their depth of engagement in the unstructured learning activity, networking?

2b) What was the relationship between characteristics of hotel managers' place of work (namely, their hotel's size and learning culture) and their depth of engagement in the unstructured learning activity, networking?

For research question 2a, four hypotheses were tested, and each examined the relationship between one IV and the DV. It was earlier theorized that hotel managers who were more intrinsically motivated to learn, with a high perceived risk-taking abilities, with more positive attitudes to learning and the industry would network significantly more frequently than those less intrinsically motivated to learn, and who had lower perceived risk-taking abilities and negative attitudes toward learning and the hospitality industry.

For research question 2b, two hypotheses were tested. The first posited that managers who worked in larger hotels would network more frequently than those who worked at smaller hotels; while the second, managers who worked at properties with a stronger learning culture, would network more frequently than those who worked at hotels with a weaker learning culture.

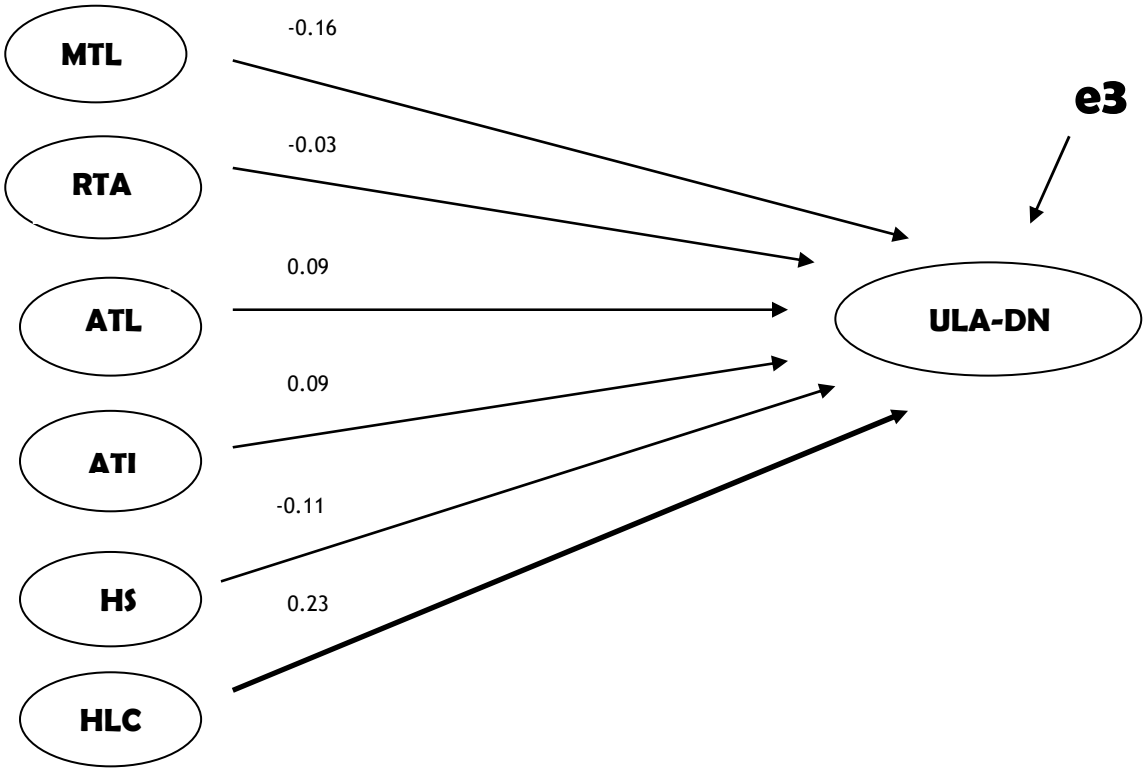
Results of the Statistical Analysis

Initially one multiple regression analysis was performed to ascertain the Beta coefficients for work-related behaviors and organizational context constructs: *motivation to learning (MTL), perceived risk-taking ability (RTA), attitude towards learning (ATL), attitude towards the industry(ATI), hotel size (HS)* and *hotel learning culture (HLC)* when regressed on "*depth of networking" (ULA-DN). Hotel learning culture* was the only IV that had a moderate positive (*B*=0.23), but also statistically significant effect (p= 0.02), with *depth of hotel managers' engagement in networking* (Figure 15). The

outliers identified were removed and *hotel learning culture* the only IV entered in a new model. The model generated a statistically significant (p=0.01), but low overall R^2 of 0.07, which meant that 7% of the variance in *frequency of networking* could be accounted for by managers' *hotel learning culture*. The construct generated a statistically significant Beta coefficient or Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.27 (p<0.01) (Table 14 and Figure 18). Therefore, as a hotel's learning culture strengthened, the frequency of their hotel managers networking modestly improved. More specifically, as a hotel's learning culture improved by one point, on a five-point Likert scale, the frequency of their hotel managers' networking increased by 6.67 more times per year (Table 17).

Final Regression Equation: ULA-DN = -15.95 + 6.67HLC + e3

There was no statistically significant relationship between *depth of hotel managers engagement in networking* and the constructs *motivation to learn (MTL), perceived risk-taking ability (RTA), attitude towards learning (ATL), attitude towards the industry (ATI), hotel size (HS*) and the relationships between these IVs and the DV networking were weak.



(*Significant path indicated in bold)

Equation 3: ULA-DN = a + b_{31}MTL + b_{32}RTA + b_{33}ATL + b_{34}ATI + b_{35}HS +b_{36}HLC + e3

Figure 15. Model A3 indicating standardized Beta scores for the relationships between hotel managers' personal and business context and their depth of engagement in networking

Table 14

Revised A3 Model: Correlation Matrix of Observed Variables and Standard Deviation (n=112)

	ULA-DN	HLC
ULA-DN	1	0.27**
HLC	0.27**	1
SD	14.52	0.58

**p<0.01

Results of the Content Analysis

Again the workplace learning experts corroborated some of the findings of the statistical analysis. As mentioned earlier, the workplace learning experts believed that engagement in learning activities such as networking would be no different between managers who were intrinsically motivated or extrinsically motivated to learn. What it simply communicated was the intent behind the engagement.

The experts held a similar view when it came to the managers' perceived risk-taking abilities. They felt that it wasn't that perceived risk-takers would chose more unstructured learning activities over the structured but rather they would chose the unorthodox over the orthodox, whether or not it was structured or unstructured. Former hotel general manager, hospitality lecturer and college administrator summed it up thus:

"Managers who are risk-takers will perhaps not desire to indulge in as much training. Risk-takers may say to themselves I will go out on a limb…. Non-risk-takers will not go out on such a limb. There is no clear and definitive 'yes'. It depends on the environment….. In industry, when 2nd degrees became the norm it was the risk-takers who were the 1st to do them."

The experts felt that although risk-takers, by their very nature, were usually entrepreneurial and impatient, and as such shied away from the more structured to the more unstructured learning activities, the key to their decision to engage in learning activities was personal assessment. That is, what were the benefits to such engagement and did it made sense. Therefore, the relationship between hotel managers' *perceived risk-taking ability* and their *depth of their engagement in networking* might not be linear but influenced more by the specifics of that networking event or encounter and whether the risk-taker saw it as an opportunity to learn something that would put him or her ahead of the pack and made sense for their business and his/her own professional development.

Section Summary: Hotel Managers' Work-Related Behaviors and Hotel Characteristics and their Engagement in Unstructured Learning Activities

To summarize, there was no statistically significant relationship between the work-related constructs *motivation to learn*, *perceived risk-taking ability*, *attitude towards learning* and *attitude towards the hospitality industry* and

the *frequency of hotel managers' engagement in networking*. However, there was a direct, moderate, statistically significant relationship between *hotel learning culture* and the *frequency of the hotel manager's engagement in the unstructured learning activity, networking*. *Hotel size* was not a significant predictor of the frequency of hotel managers' networking. The workplace learning experts were also of the view that *motivation to learn* and *perceived risk-taking ability* would not be good predictors of *frequency of networking*.

Type and Depth of Hotel Managers' Engagement in Structured and Unstructured Learning Activities and their Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning

To examine the relationship between hotel managers' engagement in specific learning activities and their work-related learning two research questions were posited. They were:

3a) What was the relationship between the type and depth of hotel managers' engagement in structured learning activities (namely, post-secondary education and training) and their self-reported work-related learning (that is, their perceived abilities to innovate and solve problems)?

3b) What was the relationship between the type and depth of hotel managers' engagement in unstructured learning activities (namely, their work experience and networking) and their self-reported work-related learning (that is, their perceived abilities to innovate and solve problems)?

In response to question 3a it was theorized that hotel managers with more job-related type of post-secondary education and training would report higher levels of self-reported learning than those with less job-related education and training. For question 3b it was also theorized that hotel managers with a greater percentage of their work experience in hospitality, more years of general experience and experiences with more entities would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning.

Results of the Statistical Analysis

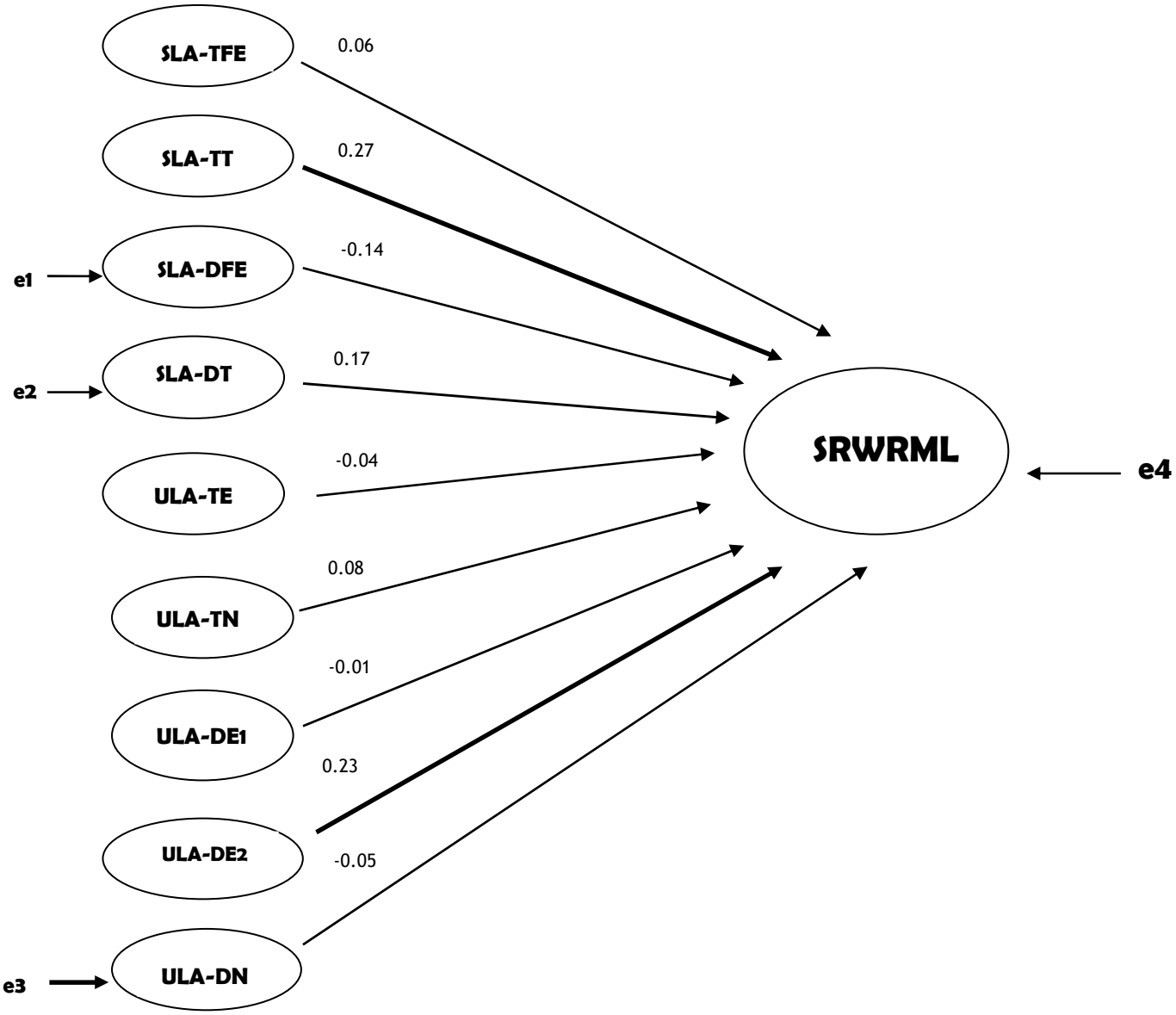
Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the IVs, "*type of formal post-secondary education" (SLA-TFE), "type of training" (SLA-TT), "depth of formal post-secondary education" (SLA-DFE), "depth of training" (SLA-DT), "type of experience (ULA-TE), "type of networking" (ULA-TN), "years of experience" (ULA-DE1), "number of entities worked with" (ULA-DE2)* and the single DV, "*extent of self-reported work-related management learning"(SRWRML)*. Of all the IVs, two reached statistical significance, *type of training* (ß=0.27; p=0.01) and *number of entities worked* (ß=0.23; p=0.04) (Figure 16).

The model was revised, outliers removed and a single multiple regression analysis performed using the IVs, *depth of training*, *type of training* and *number of entities worked* on the single DV, *self-reported work-related management learning*. The model achieved a statistically significant (p<.001)

moderate overall R^2 of 0.3 which meant that 30% of the variance was accounted for by the model. All variables in the model reached statistical significance. *Type of training (SLA-TT)* (ß =0.41; p<= .001) had the greatest direct effect on the DV, *management learning (SRWRML)*, followed by the *number of entities worked (ULA-DE2)* (ß=0.28; p=0.00), and finally *depth of training (SLA-DT)* (ß=0.16; p=.05) (Figure 18) (Table 17). The correlation of each of the three variables with the DV, *management learning* was: *type of training* ***r***=0.45 (p=0.00); *number of entities worked* ***r***=0.315 (p=0.00) and '*depth of training*' ***r***=0.22 (p=0.01) (Table 15). Therefore, the greater the percentage of hospitality training, number of training programs a hotel manager completed and the more entities or organizations in which the manager had worked, the greater his/her level of management work-related learning. More specifically, when *type of training*, *number of entities worked* and *depth of training* moved up by a unit, management learning increased by 0.23, 0.05 and 0.01, respectively, on a five-point Likert point scale (Table 17).

Final Regression Equation:

$$SRWRML = 2.59 + 0.23SLA\text{-}TT + 0.05ULA\text{-}DE2 + 0.01SLA\text{-}DT + e4$$



*Statistically significant relationships in bold)

Equation 4: SRWRML = a + b_{41}SLA-TFE + b_{42}SLA-TT + b_{43}SLA-DFE + $b4_{4}$SLA-DT + $b4_{5}$ULA-TE + b_{46}ULA-TN + b_{47}ULA-DE1 + b_{48}ULA-DE2 + b_{49}ULA-DN + e4

Figure 16. Model A4 indicating standardized Beta scores for the relationships between hotel managers' engagement in learning activities and their self-reported work-related learning

Table 15

Revised A4 Model: Correlation Matrix of Observed Variables and Standard Deviation (n=112)

	SRWRML	SLA-TT	SLA-DT	ULA-DE2
SRWRML	1			
SLA-TT	0.45***	1		
SLA-DT	0.22*	0.12	1	
ULA-DE2	0.32***	0.07	0.04	1
SD	0.61	1.07	9.03	3.78

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Results of the Content Analysis

When the experts explored the relationship between years of post-secondary education and extent of management learning, the views were mixed. One expert felt assuredly that higher levels of education allowed managers to think and operate at the highest level. However, the vice-president of human resources and only current industry practitioner on the experts' panel felt that this expectation was not consistent with reality. He stated *"I expect that someone with a master's degree would have greater levels of learning, I have not necessarily found it, but I expect it"*. However, he went on to state the importance of training versus education in hospitality business, a line of thinking supported by the statistical data.

> *"Many schools are just factories, masters and PhD factories. We, in the private sector, are having a problem. I will take Jane any day over a*

Bill because Jane has had no exposure, but she is trainable. Whereas Bill comes in with the Phd and thinks he gotten claim to fame. You ask Bill what can he do and he cannot tell you. He has a Phd. I ask Jane 'I can help you get 20% more competitive advantage'. The person with the Phd. says they are the competitive advantage."

The survey respondents were asked to provide personal testimonials of work-related learning from the structured and unstructured learning activities examined. Of the 72 managers that provided real-life examples most were work-related learning situations where the source of the knowledge was training (50 or 69%) and experience (50 or 69%). Only 39 (54%) and 28 (39%) provided examples of work-related learning from formal education and networking, respectively. What was also evident from the managers' responses was that of the 167 learning situations cited, the dominant work-related learning situations were addressing process and systems, and human relations deficiencies, 68 (41%) and 45 (27%) respectively. Of the 68 process and system deficiency problems cited 24 (35%) and 16 (24%) of the hotel managers identified experience and training as the source of the knowledge, respectively. A similar observation was also made for human relations problems. The top two source of knowledge cited for addressing human relations problems were training (16 or 36%) and experience (14 or 31%) (Table 16 and Figure 17). This supported previous statistical results and that is,

training and experience were important knowledge sources for hotel managers' workplace learning.

Table16.

Hotel Managers' Knowledge Application Situations

Hotel Managers Knowledge Application Situations (from Education, Training, Networking & Previous Experience)						
Types of Learning Situations	**Descriptions of Learning Situations**	**Education**	**Training**	**Experience**	**Networking**	**TOTAL** *learning situations by type)*
Computer-Related Tasks	Applying previous computer knowledge to work-related computer-related activities	1	0	1	0	**2**
Crisis Situations	Using the knowledge acquired to deal with unexpected situations	1	0	4	1	**6**
Employee Knowledge Gap	Using knowledge acquired to train others	3	9	2	2	**16**
Equipment and Physical Plant Deficiencies	Using knowledge acquired to conduct or address software, equipment, grounds or building repairs, problems or deficiencies	4	4	3	5	**16**
Human Relations Problems or Deficiencies	Using knowledge acquired to address employee and guest relations issues.	10	16	14	5	**45**
Process and System Deficiencies	Using knowledge acquired to implement a system, process or steps	15	16	24	13	**68**
Product and Service Creation	Using knowledge acquired to create a new product or service for hotel guests	5	5	2	2	**14**
TOTAL (Learning Situations by Knowledge Source)		**39**	**50**	**50**	**28**	**167**

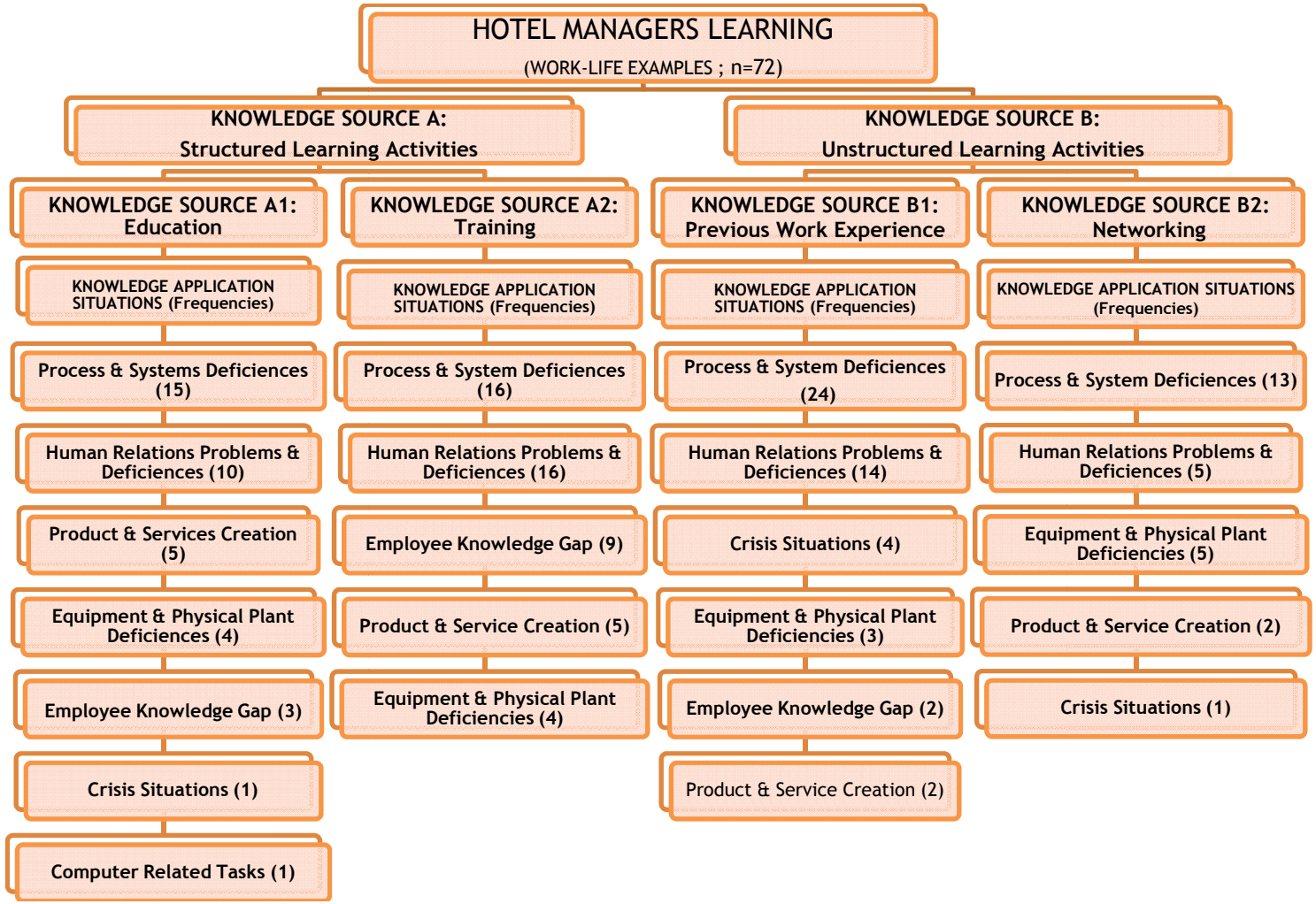


Figure 17. A concept map indicating, in frequency order, the classifications of innovation and problem-solving situations cited by the hotel managers by knowledge source type

Section Summary: Type and Depth of Hotel Managers' Engagement in Structured and Unstructured Learning Activities and their Self-Reported, Work-Related Learning

Of the structured and unstructured learning activities education, training, experience and networking the most significant predictors of management learning were training and experience and they have a direct relationship with management learning.

Chapter Summary

The results of the path analysis revealed that there was a relationship between *hotel learning culture (HLC)* and *depth of engagement in formal education (SLA-DFE)* and *depth of networking (ULA-DN),* in the former the relationship was inverse (β=-0.2) and in the latter, direct (β=0.27). There was no statistically significant relationship between the hotel managers' work-related behaviors and their engagement in the structured and unstructured learning activities studied, while the major predictors of hotel managers' workplace learning were *depth of training (SLA-DT)*, the *extent of hospitality training (SLA-TT)* and *the number of entities or companies with which the manager worked (ULA-DE2)* (Figure 18) (Table 17).

The focus group discussants believed that there was a significant direct positive relationship between *attitude towards learning*, *hotel size* and *hotel learning culture* with *depth of engagement in structured learning activities*.

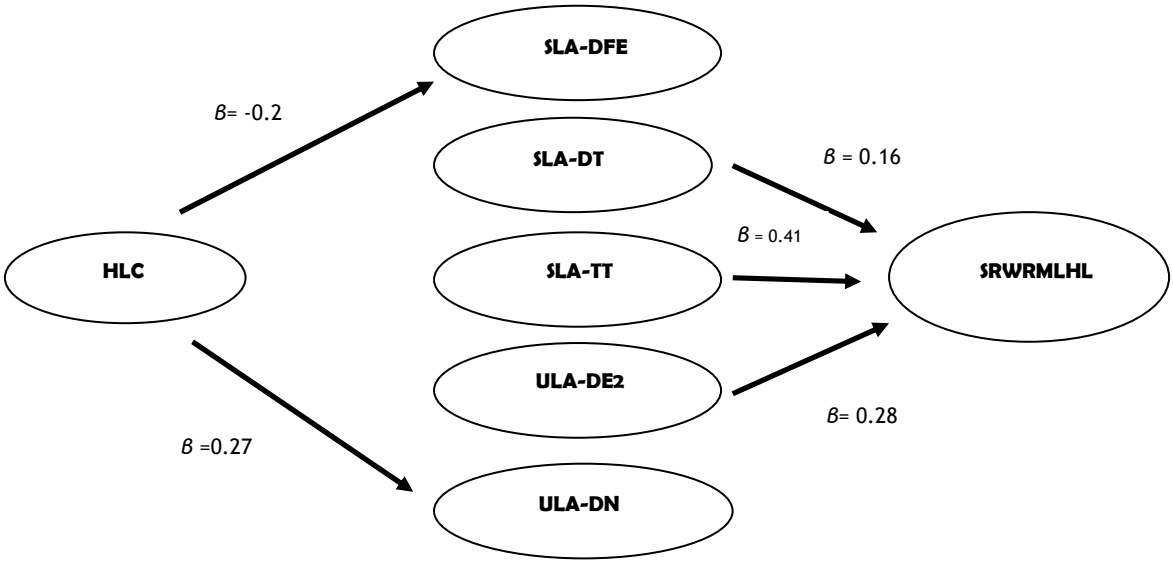


Figure 17. Revised management work-related learning model

Table 17

Estimates for Revised Models Using Multiple Regressions (N=154)

	The DVs	The IVs	b	SEB	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Revised Model A1	SLA-DFE	HLC	-0.97	0.43	-0.2	0.04	0.03	5.12* (df=128)
Revised Model A3	ULA-DN	HLC	6.67	2.31	0.27	0.07	0.06	8.35** (df=111)
Revised Model A4	SRWRML	SLA-TT	0.23	0.05	0.41	0.3	0.29	17.76*** (df=111)
		SLA-DT	0.01	0.005	0.16			
		ULA-DE2	0.05	0.01	0.28			

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS &CONCLUSION

The overall objective of the paper, using learning organization theory as the guiding epistemology, was to look at learning activities engagement required for hotel managers to realize the highest levels of individual work-related learning and the role their work-related behaviors and organizational context played in influencing such engagement. It was established in the literature that at the heart of hotel learning and success was individual management learning, where managers constantly apply, create and challenge knowledge to and through work-related situations. It was through hotel managers continuously striving for mastery and sharpening their mental models that organizational excellence and success was plausible.

In this final chapter the study's findings was discussed. Therefore, it began with a general summary of the findings; then moved into an elaboration of those findings, putting it into context with the literature; recommendations and implications for both the hotel industry and academe were then discussed; then the study's limitations identified and conclusions drawn.

Findings Summary

Two waves of analysis were performed. The first examined the relationship between the hotel managers' personal and business context and their engagement in learning activities. Meanwhile, the second examined the relationship between the hotel managers' engagement in learning activities and their self-reported, work-related learning. The findings revealed a relationship between the managers' hotel learning culture and their depth of engagement in post-secondary formal education, and their hotel learning culture and networking. However, neither their depth of engagement in formal post-secondary education nor networking were significant predictors of their work-related learning. Instead, the significant predictors were their depth of training, type of training and the number of entities or organizations with which the managers worked. Therefore hypotheses H4b, H5d, H5b and H6c were not rejected. They were:

> H4b: Managers that worked in hotels with a stronger learning culture would network significantly more frequently (DEPTH) than those that worked in hotels with a weaker learning culture.

> H5d: Hotel managers who participated in structured professional training programs more frequently (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of perceived work-related learning than those who participated in structured professional training programs less frequently.

H5b: Hotel managers with more hospitality-related training (TYPE) would report significantly higher levels of perceived work-related learning than those with a lesser ratio of hospitality training.

H6c: Hotels managers with work experience with more entities or companies (DEPTH) would report significantly higher levels of work-related learning than those with work experience with fewer entities.

In the case of the relationship between hotel learning culture and depth of engagement in formal post-secondary education, the alternative hypothesis was not rejected and that was:

H3d (A): Managers that worked in hotels with a stronger learning culture would engage in post-secondary formal education for a significantly shorter length of time than those who worked in hotels with a weaker learning culture.

Discussion: Connecting Previous Literature with New Findings

A Negative Relationship between Learning Culture and Years of Education

It was established in the literature, and confirmed by the workplace learning experts that participated in the study, that organizational context could influence individual constituents' action as persons often learn in social settings (Antonacopoulou, 2006; London & Smither, 1999; Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Some of the experts also felt that a hotel learning culture would have a

much greater influence on managers' engagement in structured learning activities, than their individual work-related behaviors such as their motivation to learn and their perceived risk-taking abilities. A hotel with a learning culture was one where learning was at the epicenter of daily activities. Two important characteristics of such a culture were continuous internal training (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Gjelsvik, 2002; McCaskey & Raggett, 2005; Tannenbaum, 1997) and support for external training (Barnett, E. & Storey, 2001).

What caused the hotel managers' years of post-secondary education, and not their frequency of training, to be impacted by their hotels' learning culture? The path analysis revealed an inverse relationship between the managers' hotel learning culture and their depth of engagement in post-secondary formal education (r= -0.2; p=0.01), but no significant relationship between their hotel learning culture and their frequency of training (r=0.12; p=0.09). This finding could be due to a number of factors. Given the service nature of hotel business, there tended to be a preoccupation with property or chain specific education which hotels often provide through short internal episodes of training. It was discovered that training was such a major part of hotel operations that for some of hotels studied the minimum number of training hours per year established for each employee was 120 hours, a large percentage of which was one-on-one and unstructured. The survey, however, requested respondents to comment on their structured training programs; hence, the extent of training could have been understated.

There may be a practical explanation for the noted decline in hotel managers' length of post-secondary education which seemed to have some correlation with the improvement in their hotel's learning culture. A review of the approach to hiring in the hospitality industry may explain the gradual emergence of this trend, as hotel human resource executives have to some extent been guided by the popular mantra *"we hire for attitude and train in the skills"*. This shared philosophy could have resulted in the industry hiring persons with no post-secondary qualifications or with lower level post-secondary qualifications, ultimately resulting in these persons moving into management positions after extensive training, because of the learning-centric culture existing in these hotels. However, little or nothing was done to upgrade the formal academic qualifications of these employees.

Another factor that could have resulted in the decline in hotel managers' post-secondary education levels as their hotels' learning culture improved, was managers' lack of time to pursue the necessary academic upgrading partly due to the 24/7 nature of hotel business. A manager in the food and beverage department described the situation in his company and stated:

> *"The company and the management team actually, on a personal note, they encourage self-development highly. Time is very difficult. For a person like me who works in food & beverage, it is very, very, very*

tough to carry out a long- term training development. Personally I started two courses sometime ago and I had to quit both of them because I could not keep up……."

Training and education were just two aspects of a hotel learning culture. A learning culture has many other features such as: decentralized control (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Alexiou, 2005; Chambers, 1997; Gephart, et al., 1996; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Gjelsvik, 2002; Goh, 1998; Rushmer, et al., 2004); the existence of systems that captured and shared learning (Ellinger, et al., 2002; Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Gephart, et al., 1996; Reineck, 2002) and environments where mistakes and risks were seen as learning opportunities (Ahmed, et al., 1999; Gardiner & Whiting, 1997; Gephart, et al., 1996; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Gjelsvik, 2002; Goh, 1998; Kline, P. & Saunders, 1993; Reineck, 2002; Schragenheim & Passal, 2005; Tannenbaum, 1997). This study listed over 24 such characteristics in its literature review. However, the two main features of a learning culture were internal consistency and external adaptability and hotels could use a variety of approaches to achieve both. This study used nine essential features to determine the hotels studied internal consistency and external adaptability. Therefore, the inverse relationship between *hotel learning culture* and hotel managers' *depth of engagement in formal post-secondary education* could be attributed to three characteristics unique to the hotel industry such as: the frequent use of unstructured training for human resource development; hiring leaders and potential leaders with no

or lower level post-secondary education; and lack of time for engagement in post-secondary education.

Positive Relationship between Learning Culture and Networking

The path analysis also revealed a positive relationship (r=0.27; p=0.002) between hotel learning culture and networking. This was expected as entities that commonly embraced learning often encouraged internal exchanges with fellow team members and external exchanges with other professionals within and outside the industry, thus building hotels' internal consistency and external adaptability (Ahmed, et al., 1999). According to Gjelsvik (2002), a hotel that fosters learning will encourage conversation and experience transfer.

Hospitality Training: A Significant Predictor of Hotel Managers' Work-related Learning

The hotel managers cited a number of examples of learning from hospitality training. For example, a manager in the food and beverage department of an all-inclusive resort on the island stated that to address the breakfast rush that had become typical at one of his restaurants, he got the idea to establish a Mimosa station at the entrance of the restaurant from a training session conducted by a representative of the Guild of Butlers allowing guests to sip on the elegant breakfast cocktail while waiting. The end result achieved? Shorter perceived waiting time and the WOW effect the industry so craved.

Training has always been a strategy used by companies' to address some employee\job fit issues (Awoniyi, et al., 2002). The results of the study revealed that the greater the ratio of hospitality training to other training completed by the hotel manager, the greater the level of work-related learning (r=0.45; p<0.001). Glynn (1996) took this further, and the findings of this study supported this view, and that was, individual intelligence would contribute to creativity if the dominant intelligence was related to the individuals' task domain. The researcher further stated that technical knowledge in the work area, which was often reflected in one's education and training, was essential for innovation initiation, one of the sub-measures of management learning. Therefore, customization was one explanation for hospitality training being a significant predictor of workplace learning. Hospitality training was often developed with a specific job, property, chain, hotel type and industry in mind. This level of teaching/learning customization might be difficult to achieve with hospitality education programs.

Training Frequency: A Significant Predictor of Hotel Managers' Work-related Learning

A significant predictor of management work-related learning was training frequency. In fact the data revealed a direct relationship between the two variables (r=0.22; p=0.01). This finding confirmed a conclusion Pierce and Delbecq (1977) made earlier. The researchers forecasted, from a careful

review of literature, a positive relationship between professional training and innovation. Bassi and McMurrer (2007) also identified training as one of the drivers of organizational learning capacity and as stated earlier organizational learning was very much predicated on individual learning.

However, what role did recency played in the findings? It was commonplace for training to be designed to meet the specific needs of the organization in question at a specific point in time. Therefore, one could speculate that the more continuous the training, the more current the information last shared and the higher the likelihood that recently acquired knowledge would be applied to the workplace. Training for an individual rarely occurred concurrently but usually one after the other. This study only examined hotel manager learning over the last six months. The direct relationship between training frequency and hotel managers' work-related learning could be due to recency, however, this was not explored in this investigation.

The level of currency attained with training would be difficult to achieve with post-secondary education programs since they were often one time extended learning events at each of the five post-secondary educational levels and for each manager this would occur at different times either prior to or during their employment life. Some hotel managers completed their highest level of education a month ago, while others at the same educational level

would have done so decades ago. However, education programs can still strive for relevance by ensuring recent graduates are equipped to succeed in the current work environment. Therefore, the issue of currency of training and education on managers' work-related learning needs to be explored.

Two factors often inhibited hotel managers' frequent engagement in training, according to the results of the content analysis, time and training profile. The workplace experts, some of whom were current or former hotel executives felt there was unwillingness on the part of some senior managers to attend training workshops with their junior counterparts. Beamish (2005) also found that chief executives were less inclined to attend skills training but more inclined to attend learning events that flattered their images. A similar discovery was made in this study. Some of the workplace learning experts believed managers used learning events like, training, as a vehicle to acceptance by their peers or even to outshine their colleagues. Therefore, an important factor which determined hotel managers' engagement in training was its profile such as: where the training was being held, who the speaker or speakers would be, who the organizers would be, who were the other likely participants, was it for a selected few, was the content perceived to be cutting edge in the industry, would valued certificates be awarded and similar relevant queries.

Breadth of Work Experience: A Significant Predictor Hotel Managers' Work-related Learning

An interesting finding from the data analysis was that a hotel manager's breadth of experience was a more significant predictor of management learning than his/her extent of hospitality experience. This meant that the more work experience a manager had with multiple entities (whether within their company chain or not, or in the hospitality field or not), the greater his/her level of work-related learning. This was contrary to previous papers by researchers such as Fayol (1949), Driver (2002) and Gjelsvik (2002), proponents of work specialization as key to learning and performance success. However, it was important to note that Fayol's work on specialization focused on line employees and not managers.

Tempest and Starkey (2004) thought differently. They thought a diverse portfolio of work experiences was good for individual learning. Van der Sluis-den Dikken and Hoeksema (2001) also felt the more varied a manager's experience, the more they can mix and use ideas. Companies like the furniture maker, IKEA, encouraged and used experience variation as a strategy to enable knowledge transfer throughout its organization (Jonsson & Elg, 2006).

Some researchers were even of the view that some value could be found in managers having a series of short work tenures. Although this study did not explore this viewpoint, Damampour (1991) found that the longer a manager

was employed at one entity the less likely he/she would innovate and newer executives tend to have fresher ideas while being devoid of obligations to inside constituents. Therefore, based on the results of the study, the observations and views of Tempest and Starkey (2004), van der Sluis-den Dikken & Hoeksema (2001) and Jonsson & Elg (2006) might also be true for hotel business since with a greater breadth of experience comes a wider knowledge and network base.

Expectations Collide: No Relationship between Education and Management Learning

There was a general thinking that with increased knowledge should come increased learning. There was a widely held view, which also became evident in the focus group discussions, that the more persons attained further levels of post-secondary education; the more they craved new knowledge. Another view was that persons who were exposed to different levels of learning should be able to think and operate at higher levels. There was literature to support this thinking. Kimberly and Evanisko (1981), whose work was in the heath care sector, found that the educational level of the hospital administrator, along with other factors, was strong predictors of both administrative and technological innovation. Therefore, knowledge acquired from formal structured education should be transferable to work life.

However, the number of examples of work-related learning from education provided by the hotel managers' sampled provided was significantly fewer than the ones cited from training and experience. Of the four learning activities examined in the study examples of learning situations from education ranked third (Table 16). Berings et al. (2006) also found in their work that employees were of the view that most of their productive competencies, that is, workplace learning, were acquired from experience and not through structured educational programs. Therefore the question remains, would persons with higher levels of post-secondary education report higher levels of workplace learning? The only current practitioner on the workplace learning experts' panel and vice-president of human resources of a local hotel chain had this to say.

> *"I expect that someone with a master's degree would have greater levels of learning, I have not necessarily found it, but I expect it…. To answer your question, the master's degree should have greater depth of learning, greater applicability. But I have not always found it."*

Mohr (1969) made a similar observation much earlier. The researcher discovered a weak relationship between educational level and innovation. This study found no statistical significant relationship between the two constructs (r=-0.08; p=0.22), a manager's years of formal post-secondary education and his or her work-related learning.

A reason for the difference in expectation about the nature of the relationship between depth of post-secondary education and management work-related learning could lie in the panelists' personal conviction as to the true meaning of the word 'learning', even though definitions were established prior to the focus group discussions. The panelists who expected a positive relationship between the constructs *depth of post-secondary education* and *management work-related learning* were academics and embraced the more Gesaltist view of learning the premise of which was that learning was influenced by one's desire to understand and master the world. Therefore, although action was possible, it was not a requirement of learning. Meanwhile, the sole current practicing industry manager had a more behaviorist view of learning which was predicated on one's ability to use knowledge to do, that is, there should be an outward manifestation of learning. He stated:

> *"Somebody may come to me with a master's degree in marketing and so an interview question would be, you need to sell this glass. If you can't sell this glass, if you can't let me leave this room and get it, you don't get the job. I expect a master's person to be able to do that."*

He stated further:

> *"Mary (a fictitious name of one of the academics on the panel) spoke to it very well in terms of this individual simply has a passion for growth and knowledge because I happen to love this area. If you take this and put this in the real world the question is. So you love this. So what? What are you going to do after you master this thing? At the end of the*

day as your employer I want to see 20% drop in guest dissatisfaction. What are you going to do to do that? I want to have my cost and purchasing inventory more efficient. I want to have a bigger market share. I want to have fewer complaints in the transfer business."

This difference could be at the heart of the impasse between the academic and business communities where universities, in particular, tend to be focused on creating great thinkers and the industry, because of its requirements on the ground, were expecting great doers from college programs. Therefore, academe was interested in preparing great learners, while industry expected great workplace learners. Workplace learning is a more behaviorist definition of learning where one acquires new knowledge and applies it to a problem and/or transfers or transforms and uses it to develop innovative products, systems, services and procedures in the workplace.

The Most Significant Path: The Impact of Training and Experience on Management Learning

Based on the path analysis the stronger predictors of management work-related learning were the frequency of hospitality training, the ratio of hospitality training to total training completed and the number of entities or organizations with which the hotel manager previously worked. When the three variables were entered into the model with the goal of determining how well they would predict hotel managers' self-reported work-related learning, the

model achieved a statistically significant R^2 of 0.3, meaning that 30% of the model was attributed to the variables entered. This also meant that 70% of the model was unaccounted for and the researcher believes that the missing variables could be individual hotel manager factors such as their:

1. Physical, emotional and spiritual health;
2. Love of the job;
3. Love of discovering new information;
4. Feeling of personal responsibility for individual learning; and
5. Direct and indirect exposure to other hospitality business settings.

However, elements not included in the model could also be due to organizational factors such as:

1. Availability of information sources, such as print and electronic media;
2. Availability of relatable team members within the organization;
3. The extent of differentiation within the hotel's organizational structure;
4. The availability of tangible and intangible rewards for learning that the managers would find appealing; and
5. The establishment and effective communication of achievable individual manager targets.

Factors such as love of the job and the love of discovering new information were included in the constructs *attitude to the industry* and *attitude to*

learning and therefore included in the original analysis. However, the investigation examined the effect of the attitude constructs on the hotel managers' engagement in learning activities and not on their learning. The relationship between the factors listed above and hotel managers' self-reported, work-related learning was not empirically examined in this investigation.

Popular Types of Management Learning Situations in Jamaican Hotels

Another significant finding of the study was the types of learning situations common in hotels. In the order of frequency, they included the use of previous knowledge to address: process and system deficiencies; human relations problems and deficiencies; employee knowledge gap issues; equipment and physical plant deficiencies; creating products and services; handling crisis situations; and performing computer related tasks. Annaraud's (2004) dissertation also found human relations skills, which like this study included customer and employee relation skills, to be very important for success in the hospitality industry. The researcher identified these skills as the most important when compared to conceptual and technical skills.

Conclusions

The study found that years of post-secondary education were not required for managers to report significantly higher levels of work-related learning. Years of post-secondary education may address managers' other

learning needs, but that was beyond the scope of this investigation. Based on the results of this dissertation, in order to report significant levels of work-related learning managers required more frequent hospitality training and a breadth of work experience with a number of entities. Managers' work-related behaviors, such as their motivation to learn, perceived risk-taking abilities, attitudes towards learning and attitudes towards the hospitality industry could influence their learning, as the literature suggested, but this study found that such work-related behaviors had no significant effect on the type and depth of their engagement in post-secondary education, training or networking.

Interestingly, the study also found a significant inverse relationship between a hotel's learning culture and their managers' years of post secondary education, that is, the stronger the hotel's learning culture, the fewer their managers' years of post-secondary education. This may be attributed to a trend across the hotel industry of building its learning culture on training and not on the depth of post-secondary formal education of its managers. As expected, the analysis revealed that the stronger a hotel's learning culture, the more frequently its managers' networked within and outside the organization. However, it was important to note that frequency of networking was not a significant predictor of hotel managers' work-related learning. The strongest predictor of hotel managers' work-related learning was their engagement in more hospitality-type training.

Recommendations and Implications

The results of the study, if applied, could have significant implications for the development of potential and existing hotel managers so that maximum workplace learning could be realized. Hotels may witness improvements in their managers' work-related learning if they hired persons with a breadth of experience as the greater the amount of experience garnered from different entities, the greater the knowledge base on which they could draw and apply to the workplace. Management work-related learning may also improve if hotels created and sustained a culture that supported managers' regular engagement in internal or external hospitality training and other job experience. Hotel managers' breadth of engagement in other work-related experiences could be facilitated through their: teaching in local learning institutions; involvement in short-term projects or events; temporary transfer to other properties within the same company or through furloughs with entities outside the hotel business.

When it comes to training programs for hotel managers, it is also recommended that where possible hotels:

1. Design training programs that targets different levels of management;
2. Develop or identify training programs that would be highly desired by managers, so careful consideration should be given to its location, speakers, marketing, certification etc.;

3. Set the stage for star performers, fellow managers, to deliver training content. This would encourage effective managers to reflect on the secrets behind their own success, document, and replicate and share them with other colleagues. This would boost the manager/presenter's own learning and that of team members;
4. Create training programs taking into consideration hotel managers' personality types and unique elements of the industry such as scarcity of time.

Colleges and universities that prepare managers for the hotel industry could also ensure that their curricula adequately prepare graduates for the knowledge need situations they would likely encounter in the workplace, such as how to effectively deal with: process and systems deficiencies, human relations challenges, equipment and physical plant problems and employee knowledge gaps situations in the workplace. Students in hospitality programs should also be encouraged to work and study as a means of adequately preparing themselves for dealing with knowledge application and creation situations throughout their career.

In view of the significant impact of hospitality training frequency has on management work-related learning, hospitality schools should now grasp the opportunity to become involved in more industry-based training. This could be done through alliances with industry partners, encouraging academics to leave

the comforts of their college and university campuses and become more engaged with teaching and learning in the field. By doing this academe could gain real-life experiences that they could incorporate in the classroom and also use to drive their own research.

However, in order for the above to be implemented successfully, there must be some consensus between academe and industry as to the role of hotel schools, if any, in driving work-related learning so that the expectations of industry would be in sync with what colleges and universities were able or prepared to deliver. Failure to do this could result in further inefficient use of learning dollars by both producers of hotel managers and the recipients of such managers.

Limitations

There were numerous limitations to this investigation, some of which were mentioned in chapter one. First, the sample selection and the location where the hotel manager focus group was held could have compromised somewhat the validity of the data produced. Instead, three focus groups should have been convened, each group comprising of managers at a specified level of management across properties of various sizes. Such meetings should have been held away from the managers' place of employment.

Second, the fact that permission was sought from the leadership of member hotels for their managers to participate could have compromised the validity of the data as survey responses from managers working at hotels that failed to participate in the exercise could have resulted in slightly different findings. Also, having garnered support from representatives at some properties to ensure the successful collection of completion surveys from respondents could have also biased managers' responses to the survey items as well.

However, there were other limitations to the study. First, path analysis as a statistically technique had its own limitations. With this technique association but not causation could be implied. Second, although culture and economic environment were controlled by studying hotels on one island, other intervening variables might not have been identified in the study. Third, only 20% of the population of hotel managers at the local hotel association member hotels participated in the survey. The low individual manager response rate could be attributed to three main factors: the managers' lack of time, the length of the survey and general lack of trust in research. Fourth, the sample suffered from an over-representation of managers from Kingston and under-representation and no representation of managers from Montego Bay and Port Antonio hotel communities, respectively. Fifth, the survey items that measured the constructs *motivation to learn* and *perceived risk-taking ability* although yielded useful insights for this study, might not produce similar results in other studies. Sixth, from the low R^2 received for DVs, *depth of engagement in post-*

secondary education and *depth of networking*, from the IV, *hotel learning culture*, 4% and 7% respectively, one could conclude that other variables were excluded from the revised model.

Future Research

Despite the limitations, the exploratory study revealed some significant findings; however, there are areas for further research. Firstly, more qualitative work is needed not only to refine existing constructs, but also identify and define other constructs that could influence hotel managers' work-related learning. Given the deeply personal, and sometimes sporadic nature of learning, this might require examination of the relevant constructs over a longer period of time and greater use of data collection techniques such as learning journals, focus groups and interviews. Participant observations, employee, superior and customer interviews could also help researchers to understand with greater clarity the context within which management learning takes place.

Secondly, differences in effective approaches to learning as managers move up organizational charts and how to increase hotel supervisors' and employees' workplace learning are also areas for further exploration. Finally, the issue of lower versus higher order learning and its impact on hotel business needs to be examined and understood.

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Appendix A: Management Learning in Hotels Survey

Code: _____

Management Learning in Hotels (Survey #1)

This questionnaire is divided into seven sections. Answer ALL items in each section as accurately as possible.

WORK-RELATED LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS

SECTION OBJECTIVE: To understand your work-related characteristics.

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each by CIRCLING the appropriate response, (1) meaning *'strongly disagree'* and (5) *'strongly agree'*. Learning here means *acquiring and creating new knowledge in a way that would result in a change in your behaviour.'*

Key:
SD (1) – Strongly Disagree A (4) – Agree N/O (3) – No Opinion
D (2) – Disagree SA (5) – Strongly Agree

STATEMENTS	SD (1)	D (2)	N/O (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
My learning is influenced by the recognition I get from family, friends and colleagues. A2WM1	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
My learning is influenced by the desire to advance professionally. A2WM2	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
I take work-related risks. A2WR1	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
I make decisions I believe is right even if it goes contrary to my boss' wishes. A2WR2	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
I enjoy learning new things. A2WAL1	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
I constantly seek new knowledge. A2WAL2	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
I love the hospitality industry. A2WAI1	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
I am committed to a career in the hospitality industry. A2WAI2	SD	D	N/O	A	SA

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

SECTION OBJECTIVE: To understand your work environment.

~SIZE OF HOTEL COMMUNITY~

A3OSC1. Approximately how many hotels (small and large) are within a 15 MINUTES DRIVING RANGE of your property? Be as accurate as possible _____ HOTELS

~HOTEL SIZE~

A3OS1. Indicate the number of rooms at your hotel. _____ ROOMS

A3OS2. Indicate the number of departments or units at your hotel. *(Departments are the number of sub-units in your hotel such as the room service department, bar department, restaurants etc.)* _____
DEPARTMENTS

Code: _____

~CULTURE~

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below by CIRCLING one of the five options for each. Look at each in relationship to YOUR HOTEL.

Key:
SD (1) – Strongly Disagree A (4) – Agree N/O (3) – No Opinion
D (2) – Disagree SA (5) – Strongly Agree

STATEMENTS	SD (1)	D (2)	N/O (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
There is trust amongst colleagues. A3OCE1	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
Persons are free to express their views without fear of negative repercussions or consequences. A3PCE2	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
Innovative ideas are encouraged. A3OCE3	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
Errors are treated as learning opportunities. A3OCE4	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
One can participate in exchanges with persons and bodies outside the property without negative consequences. A3OCE5	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
There is a clear vision that we all share. A3OCI1	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
Collaboration across departments is encouraged. A3OCI2	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
Learning opportunities are readily available. A3OCI3	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
Learning is often rewarded. A3OCI4	SD	D	N/O	A	SA

STRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

SECTION OBJECTIVE: To examine your involvement in structured learning activities.

~TYPE AND DEPTH OF EDUCATION & TRAINING~

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements in the table by CIRCLING one of the five options for each item.

Key:
SD (1) – Strongly Disagree A (4) – Agree N/O (3) – No Opinion
D (2) – Disagree SA (5) – Strongly Agree

STATEMENTS	SD (1)	D (2)	N/O (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
During my FORMAL EDUCATION I was taught how to learn *(such as. how to speed read, concentrate, memorize material and/or think creatively etc.)* BISTE1	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
During my FORMAL EDUCATION I was taught self regulation and self management skills *(such as time management, goal setting, self-evaluation skills etc.)* BISTE2	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
During my FORMAL EDUCATION I was taught interpersonal skills *(such as. how to build and maintain successful relationships with diverse persons in the workplace)* BISTE3	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
During my FORMAL EDUCATION I was taught leadership skills *(such as. how to build and maintain a team; sell a vision or an agenda; guide a team towards a vision or agenda)* BISTE4	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
During my FORMAL EDUCATION I was taught business skills *(such as. how to plan, organize, control human and material resources etc.)* BISTE5	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
My POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION is directly related to my current job *(such as. I am a marketing manager and have a marketing degree)[Note: If you have never studied beyond secondary/high school, select 'N/O for no opinion']* BISTE6	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
In the TRAINING SESSIONS I have completed I was taught how to learn *(such as. how to speed read, concentrate, memorize material, think creatively etc.)* BISTT1	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
In the TRAINING SESSIONS I have completed I was taught self regulation and self management skills *(such as time management skills such as time management, goal setting, self-evaluation skills etc.)* BISTT2	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
In the TRAINING SESSIONS I have completed I was taught interpersonal skills *(such as. how to build and maintain successful relationships with diverse persons in the workplace)* BISTT3	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
In the TRAINING SESSIONS I have completed I was taught leadership skills *(such as. how to build and maintain a team; sell a vision or an agenda; guide a team towards a vision or agenda)* BISTT4	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
In the TRAINING SESSIONS I have completed I was taught business skills *(such as. how to plan, organize, control human and material resources etc.)* BISTT5	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
The TRAINING PROGRAMMES I have completed OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS were directly related to my current job *(such as. I am a marketing manager and I did a short course in writing marketing plans)* BISTT6	SD	D	N/O	A	SA

Code: _____

BISDE1. Indicate your number of years of POST- SECONDARY EDUCATION (AFTER 5TH FORM). _____ YEARS

BISDT1. Indicate the number of STRUCTURED PROFESSIONAL OR CAREER-RELATED TRAINING PROGRAMMES OR COURSES *(whether conducted by your hotel or not, or whether online or not)* you completed between 2003 and present? _____ COURSES

BISDI-2. Indicate *'yes'* or *'no'* to the following questions by placing A TICK IN THE RELEVANT BOX.

QUESTIONS	Yes	No
1) Do you feel DETERRED OR RESTRICTED in any way from completing post-secondary formal education programmes (like a certificate, diploma, degree programme etc.)?		
2) Do you feel DETERRED OR RESTRICTED in any way from participating in structured professional or career-related training programmes?		

BISD3-4. If you indicated *'yes'* to any of the above questions *BISDI-2*, identify factor or factors which DETERRED OR PREVENTED you from completing POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES and TRAINING SESSIONS by placing a tick in the relevant columns in the table below? *(Note: Multiple selections in each column are acceptable here.)* If you indicated *'no'* to the questions above, then move on to the next question.

REASONS DETERRED OR PREVENTED	Education	Training
1) A general dislike for the traditional ……. *(school; training)* environment)		
2) I was unaware of the ……. *(education programmes; training programmes)* in my field		
3) The low profile of ……. *(education programmes; training programmes)* in my field		
4) No time		
5) I wanted to but it was difficult to access *(education programmes; training programmes)*		
6) Cost expensive		
7) Lack of company support for my participation		
8) Other, please specify here and indicate under the relevant column:		

~RECENCY OF EDUCATION & TRAINING~

BISR1. How many years ago did you complete your HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION DIRECTLY RELATED to your current hotel position? *(For example, your culinary arts education if you are an executive chef)* _____ YEARS AGO

BISR2. How many years ago did you complete your LAST TRAINING SESSION DIRECTLY RELATED to your current job? *(For example, customer training workshop if you are a front desk manager)* _____ YEARS AGO

~VARIETY OF EDUCATION & TRAINING

Indicate with a tick the AREA OR AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION that relates to your POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION and the TRAINING COURSES you completed between the period 2003 and present. *(Note: Please ensure that you indicate the areas of specialization for each level of education attained.)*

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION	Post-Secondary Education	Training Courses
Building, Architecture & Engineering *(construction, cabinet making land surveying, electrical, mechanical and chemical engineering, automotive technology, real estate, facilities mgt.)*		
Business (not including hospitality) *(accounting, finance, marketing, administrative management, organizational behavior, general management, economics, government, HRM etc.)*		
Cosmetology *(nails, hair dressing etc.)*		
Education *(library studies, early childhood, primary, secondary and adult education)*		
Health & Applied Sciences *(chemistry, biology, physics, mathematics, geography & geology, marine sciences, dietetics & nutrition, medical technology, pharmacy, nursing, child & elderly care, medicine etc.)*		
Hospitality & Tourism *(culinary arts, tourism, hotel, foods, beverages, event planning)*		
Information Technology & Computers		
Law		
Liberal Arts & Humanities *(communication, psychology, sociology, social work, languages, history, literature, theology, philosophy)*		
Sports		
Visual & Performing Arts *(visual arts such as ceramics, jewelry, sculpture, print making, painting, textiles; the performing arts such as music, dance, drama)*		
Other, please specify specialization area here _____ (Indicate type of structured learning activity in the appropriate column)		
Other, please specify specialization area here _____ (Indicate type of structured learning activity in the appropriate column)		
OFFICE UE ONLY (BISV1-2) Total Row:		

Code: _____ 4

UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING

SECTION OBJECTIVE: To examine your engagement in unstructured learning activities.

~TYPE, DEPTH, VARIETY, RECENCY OF EXPERIENCE~

This item has two steps. First, INDICATE THE FIELDS (OR INDUSTRIES) YOU HAVE WORKED throughout your professional life in the COLUMN TO YOUR LEFT. Second, indicate THE TOTAL LENGTH OF TIME WORKED IN EACH INDUSTRY, in years, in the COLUMN TO YOUR RIGHT. *(Note: Take into consideration your current experience.)*

Indicate Industry Here	SECTORS OF EMPLOYMENT		Total Time Worked in Each Field (in Years)
o	Agriculture & Fisheries *(eg. on a farm)*	B2UET1a.	
o	Architecture, Construction, Engineering, Interior Design, Real Estate *(eg. with a contractor)*	B2UET1b.	
o	Communications, Media & Entertainment *(eg. with a media house or communications agency)*	B2UET1c.	
o	Education & Training *(eg. in a classroom or as a consultant/freelancer)*	B2UET1d.	
o	Fashion *(eg. if you did clothing design, tailoring, dressmaking)*	B2UET1e.	
o	Financial Services *(eg. if you worked with a bank, investment broker or insurance company)*	B2UET1f.	
o	Health Care & Wellness *(eg. if you worked in a hospital, with a pharmacy, medical centre, group home, spa etc.)*	B2UET1g.	
o	Hospitality *(eg. if you worked in a hotel or restaurant, with or as a caterer etc.)*	B2UET1h.	
o	Information Technology *(eg. if you worked with a computer sales or software developing firm)*	B2UET1j.	
o	Manufacturing *(eg. if you worked with a clothing, furniture, chemical or agro-processing firm)*	B2UET1k.	
o	Mining *(eg. if you worked with an oil, bauxite, sand mining company or the water commission)*	B2UET1l.	
o	Public Service *(eg. other government agencies not covered in the other areas)*	B2UET1m.	
o	Retailing *(eg. if you worked with a store of some kind)*	B2UET1n.	
o	Safety & Security *(eg. if you worked for the police, army, fire or private security company)*	B2UET1o.	
o	Tourism *(eg. if you worked for an attraction, tour co., travel agency, govt. tourism office, airline etc.)*	B2UET1p.	
o	Other, please specify:	B2UET1q.	
o	Other, please specify:	B2UET1r.	
o	Other, please specify :	B2UET1r	
o	Other, please specify:	B2UET1s.	
OFFICE USE ONLY (B2UEV1). Total Number of Fields (industries) Worked:			
OFFICE USE ONLY (B2UED1). Total Work Experience:			

B2UED2. Indicate the NUMBER OF ENTITIES OR COMPANIES YOU WORKED throughout your professional life, whether as an intern, part-time, on contract, project or special event. *(Note: Include in your count: your current place of employment, multiple hotels or businesses worked within the same company; and your own private business (if you had or have one). We want to determine your total experience and therefore your count should not be limited to hospitality entities.)* _____ COMPANIES OR ENTITIES

B2UED3. Do you feel DETERRED OR RESTRICTED from getting additional experience in the hospitality industry, whether with another entity within your company or outside your company?

- o 1) YES
- o 2) NO

B2UED4. Indicate the factor or factors that DETERRED OR PREVENTED you from getting additional experience in the hospitality industry.

- o 1) A general dislike for the hospitality field
- o 2) I am unaware of other work possibilities in the industry (whether part-time or full-time)
- o 3) The general low profile of hospitality work
- o 4) No time to pursue other work or career possibilities in the industry
- o 5) A difficulty in finding and accessing other work possibilities in the industry
- o 6) Lack of company support for my working outside the company or pursuing my own hospitality business
- o 7) Other, please specify :_____

B2UER1. Think about your PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE in the hospitality industry. Which of those experiences RELATE DIRECTLY to your current job? *(For example, before your current job as food and beverage manager you were once the supervisor of a small independent restaurant).* What is the period, in years, between when the most current related experience ended and when you started your current job? *(For example, I left Jerkie's Restaurant in December 1999 and started this job in April of 2003. So 2 years, 3 months, therefore 2 ¼ years)* _____ YEARS

B2UER2. Indicate the number of years you have been IN YOUR CURRENT POST. _____ YEARS

Code: _____

5

~TYPE, DEPTH, VARIETY OF NETWORKING~

B2UNT1a. Are you a member of a professional association?

- o 1) YES
- o 2) NO

B2UNT1b. If you selected *'yes'* to the above question, indicate the extent to which the professional association or associations of which you are an active member RELATE TO YOUR HOTEL JOB. *(Please Note: For the purposes of this survey service, community or religious clubs or associations are not considered professional associations. Also to be considered an active member of a professional association, you must either possess individual membership or represent your hotel and also participate in association activities).*

- o It does not relate to my job
- o It relate/s somewhat to my job
- o It relate/s directly to my job

B2UNT1c. List the professional associations of which you are an active member.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

B2UNV1a. Do you network with others on a regular basis (at least once a year) ?

- o 1) YES
- o 2) NO

B2UNV1b. If you indicated *'yes'* to the above, describe the persons you network with on a regular basis (at least once a year). *(You may make multiple selections here.)*

- o Other colleagues from your company
- o Other colleagues in the hospitality industry but not employed to your company
- o Other persons outside the hospitality industry

OFFICE USE ONLY (B2UNV1) Total Variety:

B2UND1. If you network with others on a regular basis, how many times per year you do so *(whether at association meetings, cocktail parties etc.)* _____ TIMES PER YEAR

B1UND2-3. Indicate *'yes'* or *'no'* to the following questions by placing A TICK IN THE RELEVANT BOX.

QUESTIONS	Yes	No
1) Do you feel DETERRED OR RESTRICTED in any way to become a member of a professional association?		
2) Do you feel DETERRED OR RESTRICTED in any way from networking with others?		

B1UND4-5. If you indicated *'yes'* to any of the above questions *B1UND2-3*, identify factor or factors which DETERRED OR PREVENTED you from becoming A MEMBER OF A PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION and NETWORKING WITH OTHERS in the table below? *(Note: Multiple selections in each column are acceptable here.)* If you indicated 'no' to questions *B1UND2-3* above, then move on to the next question.

REASONS DETERRED OR PREVENTED INVOLVEMENT IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS & NETWORKING	Professional Associations	Networking
1) A general dislike for ..... *(professional associations ; getting together with others)*		
2) I was unaware of the ..... *(professional associations in my field; opportunities for networking)*		
3) The low profile of ..... *(professional associations in my field; my colleagues)*		
4) No time		
5) Difficult to get to or access .... *(professional association activities; networking events)*		
6) Costly *(professional association fees; participate in socializing events)*		
7) Lack of company support for my *(participation in professional associations; networking with colleagues)*		
8) Other, please specify here and indicate under the relevant columns:		

Code: _____

MANAGEMENT LEARNING

SECTION OBJECTIVE: To look at learning in the workplace.

Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 whether or not you agree or disagree with the following statements where '1' means '*strongly disagree*' and '5' '*strongly agree*'.

Key:
SD (1) – Strongly Disagree A (4) – Agree N/O (3) – No Opinion
D (2) – Disagree SA (5) – Strongly Agree

		SD (1)	D (2)	N/O (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
	OVER THE LAST 6 MONTHS I APPLIED KNOWLEDGE……					
B3M1a	Acquired from school to a problem.	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
B3M1b	Acquired from a training session to a problem.	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
B3M1c	Acquired from previous experience to a problem.	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
B3M1d	Acquired from a networking encounter to a problem.	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
	OVER THE LAST 6 MONTHS I BOTH DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED A NEW PRODUCT, SERVICE, SYSTEM, PROCEDURE FOR MY HOTEL					
B3M2a	Based on knowledge acquired from school.	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
B3M2b	Based on knowledge acquired from a training session.	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
B3M2c	Based on knowledge acquired from a previous work experience.	SD	D	N/O	A	SA
B3M2d	Based on knowledge acquired from a network encounter	SD	D	N/O	A	SA

B3M3a. If you *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with any of the statements above, please provide an actual example below. In the case of USING THE ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE TO SOLVE A PROBLEM, state the problem, the source of the solution *(which would be the type of structured or unstructured learning activity from which the knowledge was acquired)*, and the solution applied. If the space in insufficient continue in the '*Comments*' section of the last page.

Learning Activities	The Problem	Source of the Knowledge Applied	The Solution Applied
Structured Learning Activity *(that is your post-secondary education and training)*			
Unstructured Learning Activity *(that is your previous experience and networking encounter)*			

B3M3ab. Continuing, in the case of PRODUCT, SERVICE, SYSTEM, PROCEDURE DEVELOPED, state the innovation, the source of the knowledge used *(which would be the type of structured or unstructured learning activity from which the knowledge was acquired)* and the impact of the innovation on the company.

Learning Activities	The Innovation	Source of the Knowledge Applied	The Effect of the Innovation on the Business
Structured Learning Activity *(that is your post-secondary education and training)*			
Unstructured Learning Activity *(that is , your previous experience and networking encounter)*			

Code: _____

DEMOGRAPHICS

SECTION OBJECTIVE: To understand background.

AIDG1. Indicate gender
- o 1) Male
- o 2) Female

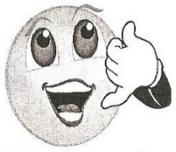
AIDA1. Indicate the year you were born. THE YEAR _____

AIDM1. Indicate your management level
- o 1) General manager/ managing director/owner
- o 2) Department head/executive committee member *(e.g. F & B director, HR director etc.)*
- o 3) Unit/middle manager *(e.g. Restaurant manager, Reservations manager etc.)*

AIDD1. FOR ALL OTHER MANAGERS EXCEPT GENERAL MANAGERS:
Indicate your division
- o 1) Overall Management
- o 2) Rooms
- o 3) Food & Beverage
- o 4) Human Resources
- o 5) Marketing, Sales & Public Relations
- o 6) Engineering
- o 7) Accounts & Finance
- o 8) Entertainment
- o 9) Other, please specify: _____

AIDC1. What percentage of your monthly take-home salary is based specifically on the performance of the area, areas or hotel you oversee? *(Note: If such payments are made annually, please divide by 12 and calculate the monthly percentage)*_____%

CLOSING COMMENTS



A breeze, wasn't it!

Thanks for completing this important survey!

Appendix B: IRB for Dissertation (Focus Group)

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	Wednesday, June 11, 2008
IRB Application No	HE0838
Proposal Title:	Creating 'smart' hotels: the impact of engagement in structured and unstructured learning activities on overall management learning (Part 1)
Reviewed and Processed as:	Expedited

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 6/10/2009

Principal Investigator(s):

Annmarie Nicely
210 HES
Stillwater, OK 74078

Radesh Palakurthi
210 HES
Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

[X] The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Shelia Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

Appendix C: IRB for Dissertation

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	Tuesday, June 02, 2009
IRB Application No	HE0938
Proposal Title:	Creating 'Smart' Hotels: The Impact of Hotel Managers' Engagement in Structured and Unstructured Learning Activities on Their Self-Reported Learning
Reviewed and Processed as:	Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 6/1/2010

Principal Investigator(s):

Annmarie Nicely
210 HES
Stillwater, OK 74078

David Njite
210 HES
Stillwater, OK 74078

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210 HES
Stillwater, OK 74078

Katye Perry
433 Willard
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Shelia Scott-Halsell
210 HES
Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

☑ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
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Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Sheila Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

ANNMARIE NICELY

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: ENHANCING HOTEL LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF MANAGERS' ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES ON THEIR SELF-REPORTED WORK-RELATED LEARNING LEVELS

Major Field: Hospitality Administration

Biographical:

Education: A diploma in Institutional Management and Catering from the College of Arts, Science & Technology (CAST), Jamaica; a Bachelor's degree in Hotel Management from the University of the West Indies (UWI), Jamaica; a Masters degree in Hotel & Foodservice Management from Florida International University (FIU), USA; a Graduate Diploma in Education from the University of Technology,(UTECH) Jamaica; and a Doctor of Philosophy degree with a specialization in Hospitality Administration from Oklahoma State University (OSU), USA in December 2009.

Experience: Manager of Peppers Restaurant, Kingston Jamaica; rooms division supervisor at Wyndham New Kingston Hotel, Jamaica; lecturer at UTECH, Jamaica; Quality Assurance Specialist with the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education & Training (NCTVET); and teaching and research assistant at OSU.

Professional Memberships: Member of NCTVET/HEART Assessment & Certification Committee; founding member of UTECH's mentoring committee; member of OSU- Stillwater IRB; member of the College of Human Environmental Sciences' OSU Dean Search Committee; member of I-CHRIE.

Name: Annmarie Nicely Date of Degree: December, 2009

Institution: Oklahoma State University Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: ENHANCING HOTEL LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF MANAGERS' ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES ON THEIR SELF-REPORTED WORK-RELATED LEARNING LEVELS

Pages in Study: 233 Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Major Field: Hospitality Administration

Scope and Method of Study:

The goal of study was to explore management learning in hotels by examining the relationship between hotel managers' work-related behaviors and characteristics of their hotels on the type and depth of their engagement in post-secondary education, training and networking and how engagement in these learning activities and their work experience influenced their self-reported work-related learning.

Qualitative and quantitative data were collected using surveys, focus groups and non-participant observations. The surveys were completed by 154 hotel managers and each of the two focus groups comprised of hotel managers and workplace learning experts, respectively. Data was analyzed using path and content analyses.

Findings and Conclusions:

The study found that the stronger a hotel's learning culture, the fewer years of post-secondary education their managers had. Also the stronger the hotel's learning culture, the more frequently their managers networked. However, neither hotel managers' years of post-secondary education, nor the frequency with which they networked were significant predictors of their work-related learning. The significant predictors of their work-related learning were the extent and frequency of their hospitality training and the number of companies or entities with which they worked. All three had a direct relationship with the managers' work-related learning but the strongest predictor was the extent of their hospitality training.

Training and experience were therefore more important to hotel managers' work-related learning than post-secondary education and networking.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Radesh Palakurthi