A Comparison of Work Values and Ethics between Hospitality Employees and Students

Abstract

People working in the hospitality industry are challenged by ethical dilemmas on a day-to-day basis; furthermore, the interesting and complex ethical issues impact this industry. Recently, there has been considerable interest in the topic of hospitality ethics, such as hospitality research on codes, ethics in curricula issues, impact of management, comparative ethics, decision making shows the industry’s concern for ethics. The present study examined the responses of workforce professionals, and hospitality majored students to work value and ethical scenarios in Taiwan.

Data were gathered from 399 part time working internship students of hospitality department and 375 full time professional employees of hospitality industry in Taiwan. The multivariate analysis of variance was performed to test the effect of career status on the dimensions of work value, while Wilkes Lambda value was moderate and significant, with career status providing for approximately 39% of variance in the dimensions of work value. Due to the intercorrelations between the work value dimensions were statistically significant, a Roy-Bargmann step-down F analysis was performed. Similar results were produced and the same variables were statistically significant. In practical terms, career status accounts for a great deal of the difference in the work value of college students and workforce professionals. Moreover, logistic regressions were applied to predict the probability of ethical judgments in different position based on different career status. When placing back-of-the-house position ethical scenario as the reference category, the likelihood of ethical scenarios judgment occurrence for workforce professionals was 1.687 times higher, as for administrative position ethical scenario and front-of-the-house position ethical scenario as the reference categories, the likelihood of ethical scenarios judgment occurrence for workforce professionals was 1.654, and 2.448 times higher, respectively. Such findings indicate that workforce professionals can make correct ethical judgments on administrative related scenario than college students did. College students rarely have the opportunities to work as the administrative positions; therefore, it might be difficult for them to make the ethical judgments correctly. Several implications for both hospitality educators and practitioners are also discussed.

Keywords: work value, ethics, hospitality
1. Introduction

“Ethics in business is not an option-it is not only necessary, but an absolute requirement for success” (Payne and Dimanche, 1996, pp. 997-1007). Ethical decision-making and behavior has become a focus of interest in areas such as accounting, finance, and management. It has been asserted to be the critical problem facing companies the world over. In recent years, the reason for running a business is for not only profit, the obligation to society and knowing how to implement ethical policies and judge ethical behavior is also the center of attention of the business.

People working in the hospitality industry are challenged by ethical dilemmas on a day-to-day basis; furthermore, the interesting and complex ethical issues impact this industry (Stevens, 2001). In recent years, there has been considerable interest in the topic of hospitality ethics, such as hospitality research on codes (Coughlan, 2001; Kwansa & Farrar, 1991; Steven, 1997), ethics in curricula issues (Hall & Enghanen, 1991; Kent, Lian, Kahn & Anene, 1993; Vallen & Casado, 2000; Yeung, 2004), impact of management (Kincaid, Baloglu & Corsun, 2008), comparative ethics (Stevens & Fleckenstein, 1999), decision making (Schmidgall, 1992; Upchurch, 1998) shows the industry’s concern for ethics.

The topic of work value is often discussed in connection to business ethics (Cho, 2009). Work values play critical role in influencing an individual’s occupational behavior (Chen, Chu, & Wu, 2000). Work values that one possess further guide the occupational decisions (Ginzberg et al., 1951). Previous studies have studied work value in relation to job satisfaction (Kalleberg, 1977), job choice decision (Judge & Bretz, 1992), job involvement (Kanungo, 1982), and organizational commitment (Kidron, 1978; Meyer, Irving, & Allen, 1998; Siu, 2003). So far, there has been relatively little research on the topic of connection between work values and business, the current study attempt to investigate the topics of work values and ethical behavior in the hospitality setting.

For many reasons the Taiwanese hotel industry represents an appropriate context for such a study. First, tourism is considered a crucial role of Taiwan’s economic policy to expand domestic consumption and international service trade, and the hotel industry has played another contributing service sector for the tourism industry in Taiwan. Second, Taiwanese hospitality related programs has witnessed rapid grow in numbers, thus understanding the hospitality majored students’ work value and hospitality ethics is essential. Thus, fundamental research questions to be answered in this article are as follows:

1. How do work value perceived by hospitality-majored students, and hospitality employees differ?
2. How do hospitality ethical scenarios perceived by hospitality-majored students and hospitality employees differ?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Value System
Values are defined as the principle, standard, or quality that is to be considered as worthwhile or desirable by a group of people (Andrews, 1987). One’s value system also decides what behaviors would be taken as appropriate. Rokeach (1973) defined value as one’s permanent belief that directs one’s behaviors in ways that society favors. Values result from one's culture; later generation will be influenced by previous generation’s values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Joyner & Payne, 2002). The analysis of individual value systems has been of general interest for more than four decades (Elizur, 1984; Mok et al., 1998; Rokeach, 1973; Zytowski, 1994; White, 2005). The most widely used instrument for surveying value system was the Rokeach’s (1973) Values Survey. Generally, the survey contains a set of instrumental values which relate to “modes of conduct” and terminal values which concerned with “end-states of existence” (Rokeach, 1973, p.7). Rokeach categorized the instrumental values as being moral or competence values and the terminal values as being personal or social values.

Work values is defined and measured in different ways based on various research objectives and background (Berings, Fruyt, & Bouwen, 2004). Dose (1997) summarized value as “…standards or criteria for choosing goals or guiding action….”, that are “relatively enduring and stable over time(p. 220)”, Dose further applied to the definition of work value as “relating to work or the work environment (p. 227)”. Pryor (1982) considered work value as the preference of certain job characteristics. Work values are viewed as additional and necessary constructs for vocational theory (Zytowski, 1994). Super (e.g., 1990; 1992; 1995; Super & Sverko, 1995) demonstrate how crucial the work value direct one’s career choice and career development processes, moreover, work values changes and develops over time through the interaction between the individual and their work environment (e.g., Brown & Crave, 1996; Rokeach, 1973). Sagie et al. (1996) have presented the construct of work values and its effects on work behaviors. The analysis of work values as perceived by the hospitality workforce members in particular has also been an area of attention (Mok et al., 1998; Wong & Chung, 2003). The diverse composition of work force in the hospitality industry often reflects the diversity of personal and work values (Iverson, 2000; Na & Duckitt, 2003). Finegan (1994) also examined how personal values influence one’s judgments of the morality of some workplace behaviors, the results indicated that people with different value system
perceived the certain behaviors differently, for instance, participants who think “honesty” as one of the most important value items would have higher ethical standards while rating workplace behaviors. Among these constructs, the individual “value systems” (including work values) is an important aspect that impacts individual work related behaviors (Chen and Choi, 2008). Decisions and behaviors are influenced by values, because people today have differing value systems (Jaszay, 2002). It is known that work values and norms, which shape the behavior of individuals, should be reflected in ethical codes (Stevens, 1999). Therefore, it is necessary for organizations to foster common value systems within their organizations if decisions and behaviors are to be consistent with the individual.

2.2. The factors affect ethical decision

Recently, the issue of ethics in the hospitality industry has become increasingly important (Jung, Namkung, Yoon, 2010). Due to the characteristics of hospitality industry’s inseparability and intangibility, the industry generally presents many opportunities for unethical behavior (Reynolds, 2000); therefore, the management must deal with ethical issues more carefully than other industries (Stevens & Fleckenstein, 1999).

Ethics has been noted to play a main part in decision-making with a work-context (Schultz & Schultz, 2002). Several past researchers had adopted decision models for the influential factor on the ethical dimension of decision making. Ferrell and Gresham (1985) referred values and attitudes as individual decision components which influence individual decision making in the Contingency Model of Ethical Decision Making. Moreover, Fritzsche (1991) specified individual instrumental and terminal values as the initial input for his Model of Decision-Making Incorporating Ethical Values.

Schmidt and Posner (1982) surveyed 6,000 executives and managers adopting Rokeach’s instrumental value instrument. The values of responsible, honest, and capable were the most highly regarded. Rokeach recognizes the first two were the most highly an interpersonal focus and thus as moral values. The instrumental values are related to ethical decision making as was shown in a study that verified the order of these three moral values on the graduates of an Executive MBA program (Frederick and Weber, 1987). Frederick and Weber (1987) also examined the relative importance of terminal values. The results from the sample of executives indicated the top three terminal values were self-respect, family security and freedom. These are all personal end-states rather than social end-states. These three values or end-states which managers consider to be highly important require ethical behavior. Therefore, the terminal values will be associated with ethical decision making.

Viswesvaran, Deshpande and Joseph (1998) indicated that two factors influence
individuals’ ethical behavior: individual and situational determinants. In the past few decades there has been numerous studies focusing on individual determinants such as moral development (Kohlberg, 1984), locus of control (Spector, 1982), ethical values (Fritasche, 1991; Schwartz, 1992); as well as the situational determinants which included organizational ethical climate or organizational justice (Deal & Kennedy, 1983; Schein, 1984; Greenberg & Baron, 2007). Additionally, a number of existing studies sought to examine the effects of individual characteristics on ethical attitude such as gender, age, race, education, and work experience (Betz et al, 1989; Jones & Kavanagh, 1996; Hoffman, 1998; White, 1999; Peterson et al, 2001; Chan, & Armstrong, 1999; Veit & Murphy, 1996; Deshpande, 1997). Based on past research males and females were different significantly in ethical standard (e.g., Franke et al., 1997; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1998; Smith & Oakley, 1997; Veit & Murphy, 1996). Regarding to education, Veit and Murphy (1996) propose educational level as a factor in the development of ethical perspectives. Thus, there are significant differences in ethical standards between graduate and undergraduate students. Deshpande (1997) also suggested that work experience was found to be an important indicator concerning ethical perspectives’ difference. Therefore, students with work experience will have significantly different ethical standards from those without work experience. It is evident that only a few studies so far on discussing the importance of various ethical issues that attempts to solicit views from both hospitality students and industry practitioners (Yeung, 2004).

Individual’s attitude and part of the behaviors changed over time when one gets older (Marnburg, 2006). Different ages and generations perceived value and ethics differently (Elm & Nichols, 1993; McCleary & Vosburgh, 1990; Chen & Choi; Van Ness, Melinsky, Buff, Seifert, 2010) Therefore, it is necessary to explore the work value and ethics differences between Hospitality future managers which were students and current practitioners will yield important information that can enhance understanding of and communication with the newest entrants to the workforce.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample and procedures

Two samples were used for this study. The first sample, 100 hospitality-majored college students, was selected from the two of the northern-, middle-, southern-, of Taiwanese universities. A total number of 600 questionnaires were distributed for the study, 399 were returned. Participation in the paper-and-pencil survey was voluntary and administered in an in-class setting. There were no inducements for participation. Anonymity was guaranteed and no identifying items were included on the questionnaire.
The second sample, hospitality professionals, was drawn from Taiwanese business and tourist hotels, full time employees, as research subjects, to obtain actual industry data. Twenty hotels were selected and delivered 40 questionnaires to these hospitality employees. Originally 800 surveys were distributed; 375 completed surveys were returned giving a response rate of 46.87 percent.

3.2. Instrumentations

A modified version of Rokeach’s instrument (Rokeach, 1973) developed by Wu et al. (1995) was used to collect data on working values. The current study specified individual instrumental and terminal values as the initial input for this model of decision-making hospitality ethics. Moreover, the instrumental values contained orientation of recreational health and traffic (ORHT, 7 items, α = .88), orientation of security and anxiety-free (OSAF, 7 items, α = .90), orientation of organizational security and economy (OOSE, 7 items, α = .94), and orientation of social interaction (OOSIN, 7 items, α = .94); the terminal values contained orientation of self-improvement (OOSIM, 7 items, α = .92), orientation of self-achievement (OSA, 7 items, α = .91), and orientation of dignity (OD, 7 items, α = .93) (Research model see Figure 1). Respondents were asked to rate working value on a five-point scale anchored with the bipolar adjectives 1 (not important) and 5 (extremely important). To gather real-life ethical dilemmas, a series of 10 interviews were conducted with hotel human resource directors at mid to large sized hotels located in 10 different cities throughout Taiwan. These directors had occurred in their organization in the last 6 months. Additionally, in order to test for the differences between career status on ethical judgment, three ethical scenarios were selected as the most representative ones based on the discussion of industry and academia experts (α = .70) which includes different career position such as: administrative position (new salary), front-of-the-house position (spotter’s spies), and back-of-the-house position (new menu). Three ethical scenarios’ survey was created using a 3-point Likert type scale. Respondents were asked to rate the degree in each situation was ethical or unethical (-1 = very unethical; 0 = neutral; 1 = very ethical).
The Seven Dimensions of Work Values

Full time Employee → Overall Work Value → Overall Work Value → College Student

ORHT → OSAF → OOSE → OOSIN → OOSIM → OSA → OD

Note: Orientation of recreational health and traffic (ORHT)
Orientation of security and anxiety-free (OSAF)
Orientation of organizational security and economy (OOSE)
Orientation of social interaction (OOSIN)
Orientation of self-improvement (OOSIM)
Orientation of self-achievement (OSA)
Orientation of dignity (OD)

Three Categories of Ethics

Full time Employee → Ethics → Ethics → College Student

BPS → APS → Ethics → Ethics → FPS

Note: Back-of-the-house position scenario (BPS)
Administrative position scenario (APS)
Front-of-the-house position scenario (FPS)

Fig 1: Research Conceptual Model
4. Results

4.1. Sample profile

This study utilized 399 part time working internship students of hospitality department and 375 full time professional employees of hospitality industry in Taiwan. Demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Students (n=399)</th>
<th>Employee (n=375)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>273(68%)</td>
<td>226(60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>126(32%)</td>
<td>149(40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;20</td>
<td>245(61%)</td>
<td>24(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>154(39%)</td>
<td>156(42%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>165(44%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td></td>
<td>30(8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work experience (number of years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>242(61%)</td>
<td>168(44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>113(28%)</td>
<td>142(38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>44(11%)</td>
<td>48(13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td></td>
<td>17(5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the research objectives was to determine if there were significant work value differences across participants’ career status (Table 2). Both groups perceived that “orientation of organizational security and economy (OOSE)” was the most important work value. The results demonstrate that students think orientation of recreational health and traffic (ORHT) is more important when considering the work value related a future career, while workforce professionals had placed a greater importance on orientation of social interaction (OOSIN). In other words, the results demonstrate that students think a balancing life is more important when looking for a future career, while workforce professionals had placed a greater importance on good interaction with coworkers and supervisors. In addition, as a new employee in their career, students placed self-achievement as the least important factor when they first entered the job market. Overall, the group of students reported less importance on all dimensions of work value than the group of professionals, indicating that workforce professionals considered work value were more important than students.
Table 2. Means, standard deviation, and ranking of the factors of work value as a function of employment status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Names</th>
<th>Students (n=399)</th>
<th>Professional (n=378)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOSIM</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSA</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OD</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOSIN</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOSE</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSAF</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORHT</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Work values range from 1 to 5 and ranked from 1 = most valuable to 7 = less valuable

The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelation matrix between the work value dimensions are shown in Table 3. As would be expected with a sample size of 774, most of the correlations were statistically significant. Most of the correlation coefficients were between .34 and .76, indicating moderately to highly correlate.

Table 3. Correlation matrix of the factors of work value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>OOSIM</th>
<th>OSA</th>
<th>OD</th>
<th>OOSIN</th>
<th>OOSE</th>
<th>OSAF</th>
<th>ORHT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OOSIM</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSA</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OD</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOSIN</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOSE</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>.59**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.71**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSAF</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORHT</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>.76**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Work values range from 1 to 5, N = 774; **p < .01 (two-tailed)

Due to the intercorrelations between the dimensions of work value, a Roy-Bargmann step-down F analysis was performed (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). Similar results were produced and the same variables were statistically significant (see Table 4). Even when taking into consideration the more conservative Roy-Bargmann analysis, the same relationships were statistically significant.

The results found college students and workforce professionals report a similar work value. The Wilkes Lambda Value was moderate and significant, with career
status providing for approximately 39% of variance, clearly a substantial proportion of the overall variance in the dimensions of work value. In practical terms, career status accounts for a great deal of the difference in the work value of college students and workforce professionals. This finding supports this study’s objective to explore more thoroughly the effects of career status on the separate dimensions of work value, with the belief that there is no difference in the overall work value of college students.

Table 4. Test of Main Effects of Employment Status on Each Factor of Work Value using Roy Bargmann’s Step-down Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV Name</th>
<th>DV Name</th>
<th>Wilk’s Lambda</th>
<th>Step-down (F)</th>
<th>Eta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career status</td>
<td>.62(68.61)**</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOSIM</td>
<td>48.44**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSM</td>
<td>85.15**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OD</td>
<td>21.45**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOSIN</td>
<td>210.96**</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOSE</td>
<td>28.89**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSAF</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORHT</td>
<td>8.78**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 774; **p < .01 (two-tailed)

As shown in Table 5~7, all independent variables are significant, indicating the feasibility of making predictions regarding the likelihood of ethical scenario (position-type) based on career status. Consequently, logistic regressions were applied to predict the probability of ethical judgments in different position based on different career status. The dependent variable in the logistic regression was the logarithm ratio (In (p/(1-p))). When placing back-of-the-house position scenario as the reference category, the likelihood of ethical scenarios judgment occurrence for workforce professionals was 1.687 times higher, as for administrative position scenario and front-of-the-house position scenario as the reference categories, the likelihood of ethical scenarios judgment occurrence for workforce professionals was 1.654, 2.448 times higher, respectively. Such findings indicate that workforce professionals can make correct ethical judgments on administrative related scenario because college students rarely have the opportunities to work as the administrative positions. Therefore, it might be difficult for them to make the ethical judgments correctly.
Table 5. Logistic regression: Back-of-the-house position scenario

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indep. Var.</th>
<th>Coefficients(β)</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.156</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>2.444</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.118</td>
<td>.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>.523</td>
<td>.144</td>
<td>13.198</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.687</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dependent variable (Ln(p/(1-p)): (likelihood of employees/students)
-2 Log likelihood = 1059.616; Naglekerke R square = .026

Table 6. Logistic regression: Administrative position scenario

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indep. Var.</th>
<th>Coefficients(β)</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.136</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>1.865</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>.872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>.503</td>
<td>.144</td>
<td>12.271</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.654</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dependent variable (Ln(p/(1-p)): (likelihood of employees/students)
-2 Log likelihood = 1060.202; Naglekerke R square = .025

Table 7. Logistic regression: Front-of-the-house position scenario

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indep. Var.</th>
<th>Coefficients(β)</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.486</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>22.186</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>.895</td>
<td>.147</td>
<td>36.933</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2.448</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dependent variable (Ln(p/(1-p)): (likelihood of employees/students)
-2 Log likelihood = 1036.073; Naglekerke R square = .068

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study indicate the following findings, first, to explore the impact of job positions on the dimensions of work value, no matter for the instrumental value or the terminal value, the results shows a significantly difference among college students, and workforce professionals. Workforce professionals who work in hospitality industry have a significantly higher mean score for the work value in general than did senior students. The results provide additional support for previous studies on work experiences appear to have a greater impact on work value (Johnson, 2001, 2002; Porfeli, 2008). The results also could imply that it ought to emphasis the education of work value in the hospitality programs in the future. As the hospitality programs growing rapidly currently, students may need a curriculum that stressed the importance of ethics, for example, case study may be an ideal teaching method for bringing in more ethical concepts for being future hospitality employees. Focusing on and discuss the students’ conceptualization of the managers’ roles and then have them role-playing with the practical cases, or business need to provide training to incoming employees on ethical businesses practices and moral reasoning. The above strategies
might enhance the students’ senses of being ethical thinking once when they are in management position. Second, students had the highest odd ratio in judging the front-of-the-house position’ ethical scenario than did the back-of-the-house position and the administrative one. Such findings indicate that college students make more corrective ethical decisions with the front-of-the-house position’ scenario than the other two. According to the demographic information obtained from students’ work experience, 40% of students have worked at back-of-the-house departments, 100% of them reported that they have worked at the front-of-the-house units, while only 10% of them have worked at the administrative departments. Because of the characteristics of labor use in the hospitality industry, most of the hospitality units did not offer students’ internship program in the administrative related positions, therefore, students have less opportunities to deal with the ethical issues as the administrative positions. With less experiences dealing with administrative related ethical issues, students might have problems to make ethical judgments.

Third, most of the correlations were statistically significant between the work value dimensions for both professionals and students. As Marnburg (2006) stated “ethical issues and dilemmas often consists of conflicts between different sets of norms and values (p. 563)”. Therefore, the good ethical manager is therefore not only a person with solid value orientation, knowledge and abilities for moral reasoning, but with communication skills who is able to gain insights into the stakeholders’ perspectives, which can discuss difficult issues and provide sensible compromises. This could have implications in organizations, that is enhanced the senses of work value shall also promote their positive thinking toward hospitality ethics.

6. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Although this explorative study has revealed that there exist some differences in how Hospitality students and workplace professionals view the work value and how to judge ethical scenarios. Limitations within the study should be noted. First, it is acknowledged that there are limitations based upon the samples’ generalizability. Both sample in the study obtained from Taiwanese hospitality industry and hospitality programs in the universities and may not be generalizable to other nations or cultures. Also, possible limitation lies in the potential for socially desirable responses, which may be present when respondents are asked for their perceptions of sensitive subjects, such as ethics; however, alternative means of data collection would have limitations of similar or greater magnitude. Future studies may wish to make careful use of reversed items and are recommended to use multi-source data collection skills to deal with such issues.

Since this study only consider the career status, work experience; additional
factors such as educational level, gender may also be included as another ones in the future as the findings of past research had arouse this concern (Borkowski and Ugras, 1998; Dawson, 1997; Keller, Smith & Smith, 2006). As Viswesvaran, Deshpande & Joseph (1998) have proposed that when individuals who perceive the top management in their organizations to be supportive of ethical behaviors will be more satisfied with their jobs. Thus, future research is also needed to examine if job satisfaction (pay, promotions, coworkers, supervision, and work) is related to the ethical behavior among the hospitality workforce professionals. Future studies may also conduct another longitudinal study, and a true follow-up to the current study, would examine and measure the current college students’ work value when they become employee. Additional studies with more geographically diverse participants could also provide insight on the influence of culture on hospitality ethics and work value.

Finally, since only three different major position-related ethical scenarios were selected for this study, likely do not represent the full scale of ethical issues confronted by the hospitality industry. This study was exploratory in nature; nevertheless, the incidents confine some of the ethical dilemmas in the hospitality and the responses also have provided some implications. Interviewing with hospitality workforce regarding the ethical issues in different departments which would be conform to the industry’s current situation. More scenarios should be included in the future study in order to address the ethical issues comprehensively.

**References**


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