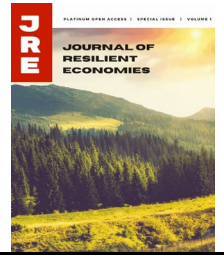




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## Editorial: Enhancing Regional Resilience: The Role of Hospitality Services in Sustaining Communities

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### Abstract

Welcome to this special issue where we explore the role of hospitality services in sustaining communities especially in terms of enhancing regional resilience. In this issue, a range of topic areas are covered including service learning, operational risk management, hotel subscription models, staycations, virtual reality, cultural resilience, luxury transportation and Vanaprastha Tourism. With each of the research papers in this issue, the focus is on the provision of hospitality services and in particular the unique relationship between hosts and guests. The studies show that various factors need to come together for quality hospitality services to be delivered and that it is the interplay between hosts and guests that has important implications for organisations and associated communities. The studies highlight that hospitality is about creating spaces where a range of services are experienced, e.g., food, drink, accommodation, transportation, and entertainment. In turn, hospitality spaces are at the intersections of a range of issues, such as social interactions, physical spaces, symbolic places, loyalty, transformation, embodiment, inclusivity, and resilience. These papers present insights into the importance of hospitality services to not only travellers and their experiences and memories but also to the sustained social and economic activities of communities and their respective regions. They contribute significantly to understanding and knowledge of regional resilience and augment past, present and emerging discourses on the nature and role of hospitality and the provision of hospitality services for enhancing regional and community resilience and sustainability. They generate ideas for policies, practices and future research. Individually and collectively, the insights provided by these papers lend opportunities for establishing resilient and sustainable hospitality operations into the future.

**Keywords:** Hospitality Services, Community Resilience, Service Learning, Operational Risk Management, Hotel Subscriptions, Staycation, Virtual Reality, Cultural Resilience

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## Hospitality Services and The Hospitality Way

Hospitality services have long been recognised for their cultural, social and economic relevance and importance. As early as the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, hospitality services have had a tradition of providing “visitors with care and protection during their stay” (Pryce, 2004, p. 28). The etymology of hospitality is grounded in the notion of making people feel welcomed. It is defined as “The act or practice of being hospitable; the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and goodwill” (Oxford English Dictionary 2024). Hence, hospitality is about caring for guests’ needs while they are away from their home. These days, the term hospitality is largely used in the context of business activities, and it relates to the provision of food and beverage services, accommodation options, recreational facilities (such as theme parks and entertainment venues), and travel options (e.g., transport).

As noted in the Meriam-Webster Dictionary, hospitality is the context for business activities that provide services to guests in such facilities as “hotels, restaurants, and bars”. Regardless, at the heart of the provision of hospitality services is the understanding of guests’ expectations and the provision of memorable experiences. Hospitality services allow for the connecting of people through the provision of goods that are deeply rooted in a service culture that is characterised by its genuineness, friendliness, care, and generosity (Pryce, 2024). The offering of hospitality services “is important for a range of reasons, including consumer satisfaction, ensuring ongoing patronage . . . and strong organisational performance” (Pryce, 2020, p. 46). The diversity of services means that it includes businesses and experts that work independently and integrative to provide a complexity of experiences.

The hospitality industry is a multi-faced and integral sector of economies worldwide. Statistics from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2024) show that for 2022, the travel and tourism sector (for which hospitality services are a driver) contributed 7.6% of the global GDP, with 22 million new jobs. Data from the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 2023) show that for the first quarter of 2023, there was an estimated 235 million travellers internationally. Hence, the commercial nature and value of hospitality emphasise the potential of the industry to contribute to individuals’ livelihoods and quality of life, and to the development and sustainability of communities. Indeed, the impacts are wide-ranging across social, environmental and economic areas (Bilgihan et al., 2024).

With such significance and a vast array of facets, the hospitality industry encounters several challenges, including economic volatility and market fluctuations, labour shortages and staffing issues, competition and saturation, changing consumer trends, technological transformations, environmental sustainability, regulatory compliance, accessibility, cultural sensitivities, supply chain issues, health and hygiene standards and security and safety concerns (Bronotte, 2023). As ways to address these challenges and for the sector to remain viable, there is a need to look beyond traditional approaches and consider ways in which resilience can be enhanced to ensure the sustainability of communities. The importance of resilience in the hospitality industry has already garnered some discussion (Hall et al., 2023).

This special issue goes a step further and presents studies that recognise the role of hospitality services in enhancing regional resilience through its importance in sustaining communities. They

have allowed a focus of inquiry into the hospitality phenomenon and its potential to be an entity for social and economic analysis. The papers presented here allow for a reimagining of the role of hospitality services in society.

**PAPER: “Creating Community-Based Tourism Resilience: The Transformative Impact of Service-Learning in Jodipan” by Voak et al. (2024)**

Hospitality services are often understood in terms of their application, relevance, partnerships and prosperity in terms of the Hospitality and Tourism Industry. Increasingly, research is emerging that shows that hospitality services can act as a force for transformation, where hospitality services play critical roles in society. This paper by Voak et al. (2024) shows how hospitality commercial ventures have played an important role in revitalising a community by positioning service learning at the heart of this initiative. Elements of service learning parallel the ethos of the provision of hospitality. Hospitality embodies the virtues of “generosity, kindness, trust, protection of the weak and vulnerable and relationship-building” (Bilgihan et al., 2024, p. 2263).

Equally, service learning enables individuals to develop and consolidate these virtues and others (e.g., ‘reciprocity and mutual support’) as participants work on projects that affect their understanding of the communities they live in and of their own individual capacities for serving others. Hand-in-hand, this paper illustrates that hospitality services and service learning are transformative; both can enrich societies and work toward the sustainability and resilience of communities.

**PAPER: “Strengthening Indonesian Tourism Resilience Based on Tourism Operational Risk Management” by Sugiarto et al. (2024)**

Some authors have recognised that the delivery of hospitality services has some fundamental and universal characteristics/dimensions (Pizam, 2020; Pryce, 2009). At times this collective phenomenon has been identified as ‘hospitality organisational culture’ (Pizam, 2020) or ‘an hospitality occupational culture’ (Pryce, 2009). In either case, the dimensions associated with this phenomenon, capture a holistic approach to understanding hospitality services and encompasses all the stakeholders (e.g., customers, workers, and organisations). The dimensions relate to “a system of shared norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and expectations whose ultimate goal is to provide exceptional service and memorable satisfactory experiences to all the organisations’ stakeholders” (Pizam, 2020, p. 432).

They include customer/server interactions, workplace climate, and relations with external stakeholders. The interplay of the dimensions impacts the resilience and sustainability of respective organisations and communities. The paper by Sugiarto et al. (2024) also presents a holistic approach to operational risk management and shows the relationship between effective management of operational risk and the satisfaction and loyalty of consumers. The authors emphasise the subsequent impact on tourism resilience and sustainability of communities.

The study utilises various dimensions as indicators for the detection of risk events and shows these can provide evidence for adapting process to improve performance. As with the earlier work mentioned, these approaches allow for the development of tools that will allow for the identification and evaluation of the

elements/dimensions of the hospitality services as a means for continuous improvement and, ultimately, satisfaction of all stakeholders and building of resilient and sustainable enterprises and communities.

**PAPER: “From Loyalty to Profitability: Assessing the Viability of Hotel Subscription Models in Staycation Services” by Kiky (2024)**

With a focus on Indonesia, this paper by Kiky (2024) adopts a novel approach to exploring the potential of subscription-based membership to promote staycations with local people in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. A quadrant analysis was used to compare guests’ willingness to pay against evaluated importance of specific features in the subscription programs. The findings of this research were interesting in extending the understanding of consumers’ perceived financial value of the benefits of membership, especially in the context of staycations where travellers holiday near their homes (Muritala et al., 2022). They highlight that the provision of hospitality services is a balancing of profitable commercial outcomes against the needs and expectations of guests.

Ultimately, to achieve loyalty, guests’ perceived value of paid membership is driven by a ‘bundling’ of benefits that can extend to include a collective of tourism and hospitality services. This finding suggests that such services in a community can work together to promote paid membership and so, garner subscriptions that will enhance community resilience and sustainability across social and economic areas.

**PAPER: “Transforming Hospitality with Virtual Reality: Technological Applications for Sustainable Community Resilience” by Octafian et al. (2024)**

As technology marches forward at great speed, it is incumbent on hospitality services to embrace technological advances. The expectations and engagement of hospitality consumers are becoming increasingly dependent on the utilisation of technologies that evoke simulated and real-world experiences (Omran et al., 2024). One such technology, virtual reality (VR), affords opportunities for organisations to reimagine hospitality services and present interactive and immersive imagery and experiences that showcase what communities offer to visitors. This paper by Octafian et al. (2024) shows that virtual reality can foster resilience for hospitality organisations by extending use of VR technology beyond consumers to operational activities and employee training and facilitate accessibility for people with disabilities.

Such use of VR technology allows for hospitality services to be inclusive and speaks to the nature of hospitality as “a broad-spectrum experiential phenomenon that affects society” (Bilgihan et al., 2024, p. 2260). It confirms hospitality services as critical to all human interactions and so, catalysts for people and organisations to thrive and so, contribute to sustaining the communities within which they operate.

**PAPER: “Vanaprastha Tourism: A New Foundation for Enhancing Bali's Cultural Tourism Resiliency” by Suyasa et al. (2024)**

Hospitality services are recognised as being fundamental to the enactment of tourism (Novotná and Kunc, 2022). Indeed, the term ‘hospitality’ is often used in conjunction with the broader context of ‘tourism’ (Bilgihan et al., 2024). Cultural tourism is a field of study that showcases the importance of hospitality services to the sustainability of tourism activities. It highlights that the interactions

between host and visitors are critical to the ongoing valuing of unique cultural heritage and so, the long-term viability of associated enterprises and the sustainability of respective communities. Hospitality is built on the interactions of host and visitors (Lashley, 2015; Pryce, 2004). It is recognised as “a fundamental social process that is embedded throughout both history and modern society with the capacity to affect change at multiple societal levels” (Bilgihan et al., 2024, p. 2257). The paper by Suyasa et al. (2024) highlights the importance of hospitality as a driver of tourism and so, its potential to activate resilience and sustain communities. The paper explores the notion of Vanaprastha Tourism, allowing for Balinese hosts to extend their care for and respect of nature to visitors who may equally experience the beauty and calm of nature amidst the cultural heritage and richness that Bali has to offer. The interplay of nature, hospitality and tourism in this paper affords options for communities to enhance regional resilience and sustainability.

**PAPER: “Market-Driven Resilience in Luxury Transportation: A Competitive Advantage Approach” by Rahmawati et al. (2024)**

One of the often overlooked areas in hospitality services is transportation. It is critical to the movement of people while they are travelling away from home and is growing sector with a range of options for travellers. The inherent association with provision of hospitality engenders transportation to opportunities for fostering the host and guest relationship and so, makes it an important part of the hospitality and travel industry (Pryce, 2020). Luxury consumption extends hospitality transportation services into a niche sector of the economy that is growing (Boukis et al., 2024). The paper in this issue by Rahmawati et al. (2024) explores luxury transportation. Focusing on the services provided by the luxury tourism bus known as Omah Sultan by Juragan 99 Trans in Malang (East Java, Indonesia), the paper lends insights into the expectations of its consumers. It highlights seven key areas that span across tangible and intangible factors and are important to the success of luxury bus services: service, facilities, safety and convenience, innovation and technology, price, brand image, and uniqueness and rarity.

The market-based approach to exploring hospitality services in the context of luxury transportation is important and invites discussions of the resilience of this sector of the hospitality and travel industry, especially in the face of sustainability. Some would argue that luxury and sustainability are “polar opposites” since luxury is considered to be “superfluous, conspicuous, and excessive” and “devoid of any utilitarian use” (Cattaneo, 2023, p. 103). The paper by Rahmawati et al. (2024) shows that luxury hospitality services can play a key role in building a circular economy and enhances the resilience of hospitality as a vibrant and sustainable industry.

## Conclusion

The resilience of communities and their regions encompasses the ability of hospitality services to engage with and drive economic, social and environmental sustainability. The potential of hospitality services to do so is yet to be fully explored. This special issue provides insights into how the challenges faced by communities and regions can be addressed. It presents contributions that explore how hospitality services can enhance regional resilience and sustain communities. It highlights activities and initiatives whereby resilience and sustainability in the hospitality industry can be optimised to the benefit of communities. Collectively, the papers presented here echo the importance of hospitality services in engendering resilience in communities.

They also emphasise that hospitality services ultimately rely on the interactions of hosts and guests and an understanding that hospitality services create physical spaces and symbolic places that are of importance and significance. They allow for human exchange that enables flourishing of such aspects as social interactions, transformation, embodiment and inclusivity. The future of communities and regions is dependent on recognising the value of its hospitality services and enabling of policies and practices that can sustain them.

The papers in this issue present insights into the importance of hospitality services to not only travellers and their experiences and memories but also to sustained social and economic activities of communities and their respective regions. They contribute significantly to understanding and knowledge of regional resilience and augment past, present and emerging discussions on the nature and role of hospitality and the provision of hospitality services for enhancing regional and community resilience and sustainability. They generate ideas for policies, practices and future research. Individually and collectively, the insights provided by these papers lend opportunities for establishing resilient and sustainable hospitality operations into the future.

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