

Review Article

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Review of Hospitality Ethics Research in 2009 and 2010

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Introduction

Ethics are the moral rules agreed upon in order to have a society where trust is possible. Unfortunately, too many people have either not been taught the rules or have come to believe the rules are not realistic in today's society. Personal greed took precedence over the wellbeing of the rest of society as witnessed by the behavior of business executives in the financial scandals of the early 2000's. Corporate Social Responsibility is now seen as an obligation of business and requires that business undo social and environmental problems it has created [1].

The hospitality literature on ethics, over the past twenty years, has chronicled the ethical concerns and efforts of organizations to be more ethical. The concerns have moved from problems of individual employees/managers lying, cheating, and stealing, to a more global concern for sustainability in terms of environment, culture, and conservation of natural resources.

Purpose

Isbell Hospitality Ethics (www2.nau.edu/~clj5/Ethics) shares its review and analysis of the ethics articles appearing in the hospitality journals each year to facilitate hospitality ethics researchers' individual effort and to foster communication and coordination among the researchers whose work may ultimately improve the ethical status of the hospitality industry. The purpose of this paper is to review and analyze the ethics articles which appeared in the hospitality journals in 2009 and 2010.

Method

The *Hospitality and Tourism Index* was used as the source of hospitality journals. A search was conducted and 81 articles were obtained and read for 2009 and 2010. Twenty-nine of the articles were deemed not relevant. Of the 52 remaining articles 20 came from academic journals and 32 from trade journals and magazines. Two academic journals and six trade journals or magazines (Table 1) that had either not been part of the *Hospitality and Tourism Index* or had not previously published articles on ethics were added for 2009 and 2010. All of the 2009 and 2010 articles fit into the 12 topic areas that emerged during the past analyses of articles from 1990 to 2008.

Description of the Data

Table 1 identifies the topic areas and the total number of hospitality journal articles on each topic area appearing each year over a 21-year period. While this paper's focus is on the articles appearing in 2009 and 2010, it may be interesting to look at the articles within the context of the previous 19 years.

From 1990 through 2001 there were approximately 10 articles on ethics written in the hospitality journals each year. The publishers for the *Hospitality and Tourism Index* changed around 2002 including far more journals, and the number of articles on ethics increased substantially. The distribution of articles changed dramatically in 2007 with 30% of the articles falling into the categories of Corporate Responsibility and Green/Sustainable. This trend continued in 2008

with a total of 15 articles on the topic of Green/Sustainable, and in 2009 and 2010 there were 16 articles on CSR and eight on Green/Sustainable.

Topics

Unethical actions (Topic 1)

No articles were in this category.

How ethical are we? (Topic 2)

Jeffrey A. Beck and Raymond Schmidgall were the authors of all five articles categorized as "How Ethical Are We?" One of the five articles was published in an academic journal with a third author, William Lazer. Two-hundred-twenty lodging sales and marketing executives were given "unethically-charged hospitality marketing situations" in a survey and asked whether each situation was "ethical," "not ethical," or "not a question of ethics." Almost 40% of all the responses to the situations were "not a question of ethics." The authors concluded that "ethical considerations do not seem to be a barrier to actions for many lodging marketing executives" and suggested the need for ethical guidelines and research in the area of ethical awareness [2].

The remaining articles in this topic ran as a four part series in *Club Management*. The first part reported survey results showing that club managers were ethically influenced most by their parents, and then by spouses, business courses, and colleagues. College professors had very little ethical influence on the club managers [3].

A survey in part two asked club managers to indicate ethicality and to categorize ethical dilemmas as related to (1) coercion and control, (2) conflict of interest, (3) physical environment, (4) paternalism, and (5) personal integrity. The authors found the classification made no difference in how the club managers responded to the various scenarios [4].

Part three compared survey responses from club managers in 2009 with club managers' responses to the same ethical scenarios from 1989, and part four compared responses from U.S. and Chinese Club managers. Today's club managers have more experience and are better educated. The differences between 2009 and 1989 club manager responses were negligible in eight of 13 scenarios but substantial in the other five [5]. U.S. club managers had more experience but slightly less education than the Chinese club managers. Both U.S. and Chinese club managers were strongly ethically influenced by parents, and their responses to ethical scenarios were somewhat similar [6].

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How to do the right thing (Topic 3)

One article from an academic journal was in the Topic 3 category. A study conducted at a large hotel chain showed that integrity tests administered to job applicants effectively screened out potential employees predisposed to dishonesty, drug use, theft and/or disruptive work behaviors and resulted in a 50 percent return on investment. Screening out possible problem applicants can reduce worker's compensation claims by reducing unnecessary accidents and fraudulent claims [7].

Company values (Topic 4)

James Lockhart, a hospitality industry insurer, was named "Supplier of the Year" by *Hotelier Magazine*, and in an interview in the same issue said that it is essential to have good pay and benefits in order to recruit and retain excellent employees [8].

Ethics and leadership (Topic 5)

One article from a trade journal and one from an academic journal appeared in Topic 5. A study of 26 hotels showed a positive relationship between executives' ethical leadership and managers' job satisfaction which decreased management turnover. Affective organizational commitment, which often results in extra effort on the job, is, however, more likely due to managers' job satisfaction rather than the ethical leadership of their superiors. Reduced management turnover results in significant improvement in competitive performance which positively affects financial performance [9].

Two-hundred-fifty frontline casino employees were surveyed in another study, to enable casino management to strengthen employee ethical behavior. It was found that distributive justice (equal pay, promotion, workloads, etc.) strongly determines job satisfaction while high levels of perceived procedural justice (fairness on the job) leads directly to increased ethical employee behavior. Frontline employees, who exhibited ethical behavior by discouraging problem gambling and increasing customer awareness of problem gambling, were also found to have increased levels of job satisfaction. The authors recommend that casino managers treat employees fairly and justly and to clearly communicate why and how decisions are made to avoid perceptions of unfairness [10].

Codes of ethics, the need for, and how to develop them (Topic 6)

Two articles were about ethics codes. The first was the publication of a Code of Conduct for tourists and tourism services providers in the Holy Land developed by several international groups under the name of the Palestinian Initiative for Responsible Tourism [11].

The second article in this topic reported on the results of a study that surveyed 788 Korean food service workers in hotels, restaurants, and contract-managed operations to determine whether person-organization fit would reduce turnover. The authors found that best fit was when employees' values matched company values and when those values were highly ethical. They also found that turnover was reduced when employees' values matched the organizations' highly ethical values. They recommended that potential employees be screened for ethics and that companies operate ethically, establishing codes of ethics and a culture of ethics to enhance performance and employee longevity [12].

Ethics for hospitality educators (Topic 7)

There were no articles in Topic 7.

Teaching ethics (Topic 8)

Six articles from academic journals appeared in Topic 8. Two-hundred-fifty hospitality student interns from 39 countries from one U.S. and two Swiss universities were surveyed to examine their ethical beliefs. Student interns were asked if they found certain questionable behaviors as ethical or unethical. While cultural differences were not profound, European and American interns found violations of organization citizenship to be more unethical than the Asian interns, there were no differences among the three groups on violations of individual rights, and the American interns found violations of organizational justice more unethical than the Europeans and Asians. Female interns tended to more often find questionable behaviors unethical than male interns. Age of the interns did not make a difference in their responses. The authors remind organizations that employees do better when their values match those of the organizations. They recommend that organizations have identified ethical standards that are clearly communicated to new employees particularly when those employees are from differing cultures [13].

Hospitality educators are encouraged to reorient their emphasis on individualistic, profit-oriented business ethics to a more humanistic model to avoid creating the same conditions that were a factor in recent global financial difficulties. "Responsible restrain[t] of self-interest" can be modeled by professors, and ethical awareness can be increased through the introduction of ethical dilemmas in real situations [14].

One-hundred-fifty-one CHRIE hospitality educators were surveyed to find out how much and how they were teaching sustainable practices for the hospitality industry. Seventy-nine percent of the educators believed students needed to be taught about hospitality sustainability issues and practices. However, very few of the educators were actually incorporating sustainability topics in their courses. The hospitality industry is recognizing the necessity of sustainable practices, and hospitality educators must be preparing students for this reality with sustainability as a "prominent focus" of curriculum [15].

The hospitality industry is shifting to a new green paradigm, and hospitality program curricula must also make the shift. Three-hundred-ten introductions to hospitality students were given the New Environmental Paradigm scale which measures environmental attitudes. They were then assigned to a hospitality-ecotourism group project with the intention of increasing their ecological awareness. It was found that the students, prior to the project, were ecologically aware, and that the project did not increase their awareness by much. The authors recommend increasing instruction on environmental issues and sustainable practices across the curricula of all hospitality programs. They also recommend increased research to support this new paradigm [16].

Hospitality educators are increasingly aware of the need to prepare their students for hospitality leadership that includes global sustainability. Combining Web 2.0 technology with community service in the global Green Map System initiative is one very effective way of meeting this need. Green and Green describe students collaborating with local residents in Paraty, Brazil to identify green businesses, sites, and destinations that would be included on the map of the area. The

mapping process increases awareness of sustainable practices, and the finished map can then be used in sustainable tourism development [17].

In the fifth paper of this category, a complete online hospitality ethics program is introduced, described, and offered free (www2.nau.edu/~clj5/Ethics/nau.edu/hrm) for any good use. Online ethics lessons correspond to the usual core courses offered in most university hospitality programs. They are in a format that allows them to be downloaded, copied, and modified for specific use [18].

Tourism ethics (Topic 9)

One of the articles in Topic 9 was a response to an article that appeared in this topic in 2005^{*} which will, again, be reviewed. Also included is an unpublished response by the author of the 2005 article, to the response. It is under the *Journal of Ecotourism* in (Table 1) but in parentheses.

While expecting ecotourism companies to behave ethically, taking an ethical approach in defining ecotourism may not be realistic. Canadian Inuits use power boats and high powered rifles to over hunt the endangered narwhals to be able to illegally sell the tusks to Asian tourists on cruise ships. Ecotourism companies have no control over the Inuits. Similarly, medical doctors are expected to be ethical, but the medical profession is not defined ethically. Some medical doctors are not ethical and can lose their licenses to practice, just as some ecotourists may not be ethical [19,20].

Molloy responded to Buckley's article concluding that ecotourists must be ethical because ecotourism must be defined by ethical principles. Kant writes for an act to be moral it must be done from a sense of duty without any selfish motivations; this is intent.

People value things for different reasons. Reasons from lowest to highest are preference, conformity, outcome (educational), and at the highest level is a quasi-spiritual or principled reason. The basis for ecotourism, according to Molloy, should be educational and/or quasi-spiritual/principled [21].

Buckley, in an unpublished response (2009) to Malloy's response argued that it is impractical to define ecotourism ethically because it would be difficult to know every ecotourist's intent and then equally difficult to determine whether that intent was dutiful. The expectation that ecotourists be ethical is valid but does not define ecotourism [22].

Interest in ecotourism is growing which makes it necessary to determine which activities are ecotourism as opposed to nature based tourism. Fennell and Now aczek developed a framework that can be used to analyze human-animal interactions for the purpose of determining whether an activity can be included in ecotourism or not. Their framework is a tool to analyze where an activity fits on the nature based tourism to ecotourism continuum and is based in two additional continuums: (1) consumptive/non-essential to consumptive/essential to non-consumptive and (2) anthropocentric to ecocentric. They used fishing as an example with fishing for sport, competition, trophy, or pleasure as the furthest from ecotourism, fishing for subsistence deemed more ethical, but viewing fish for learning & appreciation with no direct physical contact was considered ecotourism. The belief that humans are superior to all other species is the prevalent belief and impedes debate [23].

The Global Tourism Interventions Forum took place during the World Social Forum and called for a more sustainable model of tourism [24]. Esencia Estate, a Mexican beach resort, practices cultural greening by hiring a local wise woman and keeper of traditions, to train staff and design spa elements to assure that local culture is preserved [25].

The Australian Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism developed the *ADS Code of Business Standards and Ethics* to reduce unethical business practices of travel intermediaries servicing group travelers from China to Australia. Tour operators, through an application process, are now screened as suitable and have a duty to care for tourists and are monitored and face penalties for non-compliance [26].

Topic	1990-1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009 & 2010	TOTAL
1 Unethical Actions	27	4	4	8	3	13	8	9	7	10		93
2 How Ethical Are We?	16	1		3	5	4	2	5	6	2	5	49
3 How to do the Right Thing	12		4	4	10	15	8	4	10	11	1	79
4 Company Values	6			3			1	1		5	1	17
5 Ethics and Leadership	9	1		1	1	1				2	2	17
6 Codes of Ethics, the Need for and How to Develop Them	18	1	2	4	10	8	10	2	4	11	2	72
7 Ethics for Hospitality Educators	4									1		5
8 Teaching Ethics	16	1		2	1	1	6	2	2	1	6	38
9 Tourism Ethics	6			5	8	9	8	4	4	10	6	60
10 Trends, Issues, Challenges				2		2		1	3	11	5	24
11 Corporate Responsibility (CSR)						1	3	4	10	4	16	38
12 Green/Sustainable Practices									9	15	8	32
TOTALS	114	8	10	32	38	54	46	32	55	83	52	524

Table 1: Number of Articles in the Twelve Topic Areas.

Trends, Issues, Challenges (Topic 10)

Two of five articles were from academic journals. Conventions generate more waste, consume more energy, and are responsible for the highest level of greenhouse gas emissions per trip than the other leisure/tourism sectors, according to the EPA. Three-hundred-fifty-eight meeting planners, convention attendees, and convention suppliers were surveyed to identify perceptions regarding green conventions practices and to determine the factors that would strongly influence green behavior [27].

Convention travel and tourism are quite similar, but while the environmental issues of tourism have gained public awareness, convention travelers are less aware of green convention practices. All three groups had similar environmental and behavioral intentions; however, none supported an environmental tax on convention travel or paying for carbon offsets. Park and Boo found respondents willing to follow environmental codes of conduct so recommended that convention travelers must come to understand the need to alter their energy consumption by being more ecologically responsible. They suggest combining ecolabels, environmental certifications and environmental codes of conduct to increase ecological awareness which will then drive behaviors towards greener conventions [27].

Tourism is expected to grow from 800 million to 1.6 billion international arrivals each year by 2020 which will significantly increase the use of natural resources. Environmental and sustainable policies have had little effect on tourism, however, because it is the values of buyers and their preferences that determine what is sold. Nine-hundred-fifty-four out of 1192 UK households said they believed they would be negatively impacted by global warming, but only 22% were willing to fly less often. Therefore, it is imperative for buyers to move towards an environmental ethic which can then serve to limit their travel behaviors [28].

Representative from the UN World Tourism Organization, academia, and non-governmental organizations met in Copenhagen and discussed ways to keep earnings from three billion international and domestic travelers each year in the destination communities and to lessen the ecological damage they cause. While they came to no conclusions, they did agree to talk more [29].

Medical tourism is big business with patients going abroad for services that are illegal at home, or illegal at home and abroad, or legal in both places but cheaper and more available abroad. Services such as organs for sale and assisted suicides have opened many ethical concerns which are being addressed in a variety of forums including the U.S. Senate hearing on "The Globalization of Health Care: Can Medical Tourism Reduce Health Care Costs?" [30].

Eating food mindlessly does not recognize that others are starving so it lacks appreciation and may be considered unethical [31].

Corporate responsibility (Topic 11)

Sixteen articles appeared in topic 11 of which only two were in academic journals. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is lately seen as an obligation of business to undo social and environmental problems it has created. CSR activities are most effective when they are related to and integral to the long-term success of the company [1].

Four-hundred-fourteen members of the American Hotel and Lodging Association were surveyed and from their responses it was

estimated that the lodging industry contributed a total value of \$815 million to various communities in 2005. Larger urban properties with higher room rates contributed more than smaller, lower priced, non-urban properties. Lodging companies hope to improve their images through CSR [32].

Thirty publicly traded U.S. restaurant companies were studied to see whether their CSR activities affected financial performance. The restaurant companies did show an improved return on equity, however, the market did not result in a higher value. The authors believe the CRS activities should continue, but more emphasis should be placed on promoting the CSR activities to the public. The costs of CSR will most likely pay off over the long term rather than immediately [33].

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development voluntary guidelines for multinational enterprises provide principles and standards for responsible business conduct. CSR is sustainable when it is in line with the goals and objectives of the particular company and integrated throughout the entire operation. The guidelines address issues such as industrial relations, human rights, environmental information disclosure, corruption, competition, and taxation [34].

Corporate Social Responsibility awareness is increasing, however, it must be more than just words on a company web site. CSR must show up in company policies and actions that are not only good for the shareholders, but also good for the environment and people in the company and where the company operates. The Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism notes numerous examples in the Philippines where government policies contribute to tourism practices that exploit cultural and environmental resources and allow multinational companies to profit at the expense of local communities [35].

Casino industry leaders are embracing CSR because they understand that incorporating practices that are good for the community and the environment will make the casinos more appealing to potential employees and customers and will improve their image [36]. It is up to industry leaders to inspire managers to implement sustainability measures. Without inspiration from the top, sustainability policies will not be adopted [37].

Delta Hotels and Resorts values its customers, employees, and the communities where their hotels and resorts are located by building relationships within and between these three groups that are built on caring and service. Corporate Social Responsibility remains a priority for Delta because it is part of their culture [38].

CSR activities have been reported by several other organizations. The Michelangelo Hotel has an ongoing donation program with Metro Evangelical Services [39]. The Hilton Hotel in Durban donated computers, televisions, linen, and tables and chairs to various charities [40]. Park'N Fly matched donations and gave customers free parking in exchange for canned food which they then donated to the Daily Bread Food Bank [41].

Qatar Airways has joined the International Travel Catering Association environment committee and is committed to developing a sustainable global policy to reduce CO₂ aircraft emissions [42]. Marriott committed \$2 million to the rainforest fund of the Juma Sustainable Development Reserve in Brazil. They are also offering greener meetings in their European hotels, and incorporating green practices in the everyday operation of their hotels [43].

The key note speaker at the annual Responsible Travel and Tourism Forum in Toronto, described CSR activities at Transat A.T. Inc. to make mass tourism more sustainable. The Forum focused on the financial benefits of sustainable business strategies [44]. South African Breweries provides opportunities for local suppliers in the communities they operate in [45]. Airline flight catering and food suppliers have widely adopted recycling and waste reduction [46].

Green/Sustainable practices (Topic 12)

Eight articles were categorized as about Green/Sustainable Practices. Only two of the articles were from academic journals. Twenty-eight hotels were studied in Hong Kong to determine environmental costs due to water consumption. While water consumption per room dropped from 1994 to 2002 due to water-saving techniques, the environmental cost was expected to increase from HK\$187 million to over HK\$364 million in 2008. Hotel laundries and kitchens consume the most water, and greenhouse gases are emitted from water heating, sewage treatment processes, and water transport. Hotels should implement water conservation programs, including grey water use, towel reuse, flow regulators and diverters, installation of sub meters, and water use should be audited at least yearly [47].

The number of fish is seriously declining due to unsustainable fishing. Unsustainable aquaculture, processing, and marketing are adding to the problem. The Common Fisheries Policy defines sustainable fishing in Europe and includes recommendations for conservation, fleet management, strategies for by-catches and discards, production methods, control and enforcement, etc. [48]. If there is to be a seafood sector in the future the seafood chain will have to address the many unsustainable current practices and then educate consumers to recognize and utilize ecolables [48].

The "Green Leadership Award" which is sponsored by Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, who distribute their *Green Partnership Guide* worldwide, went to Minto Suite Hotel [49]. All Fairmont's properties offer sustainable, locally or organically grown products, and several properties have onsite herb and vegetable gardens. Environmental responsibility is becoming the norm [50]. CaffèSospeso is an animal and people cruelty-free business. They use only free-range and/or organic eggs, chicken, and pork and encourage customers to buy additional coffees so they can be free to less fortunate people [51].

A study of two-hundred-fifty-eight consumers found positive attitudes towards green restaurants, but less than half of the respondents would be willing to pay more and/or travel further to patronize a green restaurant [52]. The National Recreation & Park Association developed an ethic for environmental stewardship in parks and recreation. While the Stewardship Ethic will save money, it more importantly, will help park & recreation agencies to employ more sustainable practices which will conserve natural resources, reduce carbon emission, and further their educational commitment with children who will be the environmental stewards of tomorrow [53].

Stockholm is the first "European Green Capital" with plans to be fossil fuel-free by 2050. Eighty percent of the population uses public transportation, and CO₂ emissions have been reduced by 25% since 1990. The hospitality industry has embraced all the green initiatives of the city, and sustainability has become the culture of the entire city [54].

Conclusion

There were some general themes running through the 52 articles. People do not seem to be getting more ethical so it has been found useful to carefully screen potential employees to weed out those who may be more inclined to behave unethically or who may be unable to embrace the ethics of the operation. Employees are more satisfied when their values match those of the companies they work for. Line employees and managerial staff prefer working for ethical companies and retention is increased in ethical companies. It is beneficial for companies to have ethical standards and codes that are clearly communicated to all employees. Corporate Social Responsibility is evident in many hospitality companies and is considered to be beneficial in the long term rather than the short term.

Hospitality educators must change their profit orientation to a more humanistic model to better prepare their students for future hospitality management. Hospitality educators agree that sustainable business practices must be taught but aren't currently including them in their curricula. Students may be more environmentally attuned than their instructors.

Interest in ecotourism is growing but if ecotourism is to be sustainable it must have ethical underpinnings. It is imperative for all tourists and travel industry professionals to become more sustainably aware - aware of consequences of current practices and aware of sustainable practices. Eco labeling and environmental certification is two such strategies that are recommended for building awareness and changing behavior. Flying is recognized as particularly damaging to the environment, and perhaps tourists will have to fly less. Most people today agree that sustainable practices are necessary, yet balk at paying more, traveling further, or being inconvenienced for green products. Until an environmental ethic becomes part of the culture, it will be difficult for people to make painful decisions.

Thirty-five out of 52 articles (67%) were categorized in the last four topics: Tourism Ethics, Trends, Issues, & Challenges, Corporate Responsibility, and Green/Sustainable Practices. All four of these topics concern sustainability issues, and, even articles in the other topics, if not outright, had an undercurrent of concern for sustainability. There does appear to be a cultural trend towards more sustainable practices, but there is a long way to go before sustainability becomes the norm.

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