

**University of Stirling
School of Education**

**The contextual characteristics of successful small
upper segment culinary restaurant owners and their
potential influence on hospitality management
education**

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University of Stirling for the degree of Doctor of Education**

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Nunc est bibendum
'Now it is time to drink'
(Horace, Odes I, 37, 23 BC)

Qualitative Research Humanizes Science
(Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011)

Understanding The SSUSCRO In Order To Learn
(Gehrels, 2012)

Abstract

The aim of this research is to explore the contextual characteristics of a particular group of Dutch restaurant owner's (SSUSCROs) and practitioners, to examine how these contextual characteristics might be used in a professional hospitality education programme. This very small segment of the Dutch restaurant business (0,2-0,5% of the total restaurants) is known for its strong commitment to competitiveness, in delivering quality service and products. No previous research in The Netherlands had embarked on a search for connecting this specific category of practitioners to education. As owners of their restaurants, the SSUSCROs were aware of the potential contribution that participating in this research would make. The research was designed from a constructionist epistemological point of view. This means that the data supplied by the respondents, and the background and vision of the researcher provided an interplay.

By using grounded theory methodology, theory is constructed from the empirical data. The main instrument for the primary research was in-depth, interviewing. Six retired and four practising restaurant owners, and a connoisseur of the business were interviewed in one to three hour depth interviews that were digitally recorded. The transcripts of the recorded interviews were analysed, applying the specific constructivist version of grounded theory methodology as described by Charmaz's (2006). The research generated a grounded theory in the form of a narrative about the SSUSCRO social construct and its central theme 'Living the business'. The narrative informs future practitioners i.e. students, about how they can prepare for possible future business ventures in the culinary restaurant business.

Furthermore, it confronts future practitioners with the notion of particular contextual characteristics and value systems that need to be incorporated in order to successfully engage in and sustain a career in the culinary restaurant sector. Elements of the narrative, connected to Covey's 7-Habits of Highly Effective People framework for personal leadership. The findings from this research confirmed the importance of providing students in hospitality management education with a approach towards professional development that is grounded in the social construct of a remarkable group of entrepreneurs such as the SSUSCROs. The conclusions suggested that faculty and academic management of hospitality management programmes need to become more knowledgeable about the particular nature of the discipline, and the specific category of practitioners researched here.

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Sjoerd Gehrels

Leeuwarden, September 2012

Author's Declaration

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the School of Education at the University of Stirling, Stirling, Scotland, United Kingdom.

I declare that this thesis is based on my own original work except for quotations and citations which I have duly acknowledged.

I also declare that this thesis has not been previously or concurrently submitted, either in whole or in part, for any other qualification at the University of Stirling or other institutions.

I am responsible for any errors and omissions present in the thesis.



Signed _____

Sjoerd Gehrels

September 2012

Chapter 1. Introduction

Introduction

This research seeks to identify what made a certain category of entrepreneurs successful in their business by looking at their lives and the perceptions they hold about important happenings, decisions, choices and values in life. From the analysis of the entrepreneurs' factual information and discourses a contribution is generated to the learning process for future hospitality management practitioners, students of hospitality management programmes, faculty teaching in these programmes and management.

In this chapter the background and my own reflection as a researcher related to four narratives of successful entrepreneurs experienced, while being in the first working phase of my life, are explained. This is followed by the context of the research, my assumptions, the parameters of the research, the rationale and significance. Included in this chapter are the problem statement, the purpose, aims and objectives as well as the research questions. Concluding this chapter, a definition of the key terms is offered.

Background and Reflection

The starting point of this doctorate research is grounded in my own reflexive considerations. Working as a young practitioner in some of the leading Dutch culinary restaurants generated special learning experiences. The enormous energy, creativity and drive but sometimes also unpredictable actions of the employers/entrepreneurs left me with many questions. I did not manage to answer these questions as a starting professional in a new field. This experience made me feel like the 'foreigner', as Derrida (2000, p.5) refers to,

who would want 'to question the master of the home', in my case the entrepreneur. I felt like being the sophist, someone who does not speak like the rest.

Working for four restaurant owners with strong characters over a period of ten years shaped my professional hospitality management life and influenced my perception of how to lead my personal life. I started to really contemplate the experiences working for the restaurant entrepreneurs after changing workplace to education 23 years ago. There I found out that truth in life is a lot more difficult to define than initially expected. It was in that phase of my life that I learned to appreciate the 'truth' as Foucault (in: O'Farrell, 2005) refers to in the sense of 'spiritual self-transformation and a search for limit-experiences that make a person deeper understand a subject by breaking it from itself' (p. 54). I became aware that discovering this process of spiritual self-transformation needed an in-depth effort. A good opportunity presented itself when I could undertake a substantial research for this doctorate thesis. It would involve me in looking at past experiences and then to relate these to the contemporary culinary restaurant sector. An important goal is to share the research outcomes with the educational sector, in which I work as a lecturer.

In my years in hospitality management education that followed the practitioner years in the restaurants, I learned about many theoretical and practical approaches to management and leadership. An approach that influenced my life, was the 7-Habits Value Driven Leadership approach (Covey, 2004). After having been educated in the 7-Habits, I realised more profoundly that there is significant potential value in frameworks based on real world groundings. I acknowledge the contribution of exploring successful

entrepreneurs' life stories and their perceptions of what brings them success, where they make important decisions, how they learn, how balance can be found between professional and personal life. An exercise like this exploration of entrepreneurs' lives, adds to the leadership models that can be found in the literature. It is an interesting and stimulating endeavour to use the findings for influencing students, staff and management in hospitality management education.

To illustrate my starting point of reflection, I present four narratives of the entrepreneurs that I refer to as Successful Small Upper Segment Culinary Owners. (SSUSCROs). These restaurant entrepreneurs "avant la lettre", shaped the initial development of my working life and triggered the ideas from which this research was initiated. I will demonstrate how reflecting on the entrepreneurs' narratives, influenced the research. As Bloomberg & Volpe (2008) state, it is 'me as the researcher in this qualitative inquiry process that is the main instrument of data collection and data analysis' (p. 4). Therefore, it is also my task to provide personal insight into my own role related to the experiences under study.

Reflection, or better reflexivity, is needed because in this research I am involved in an intensive experience with the participants. Ryan (2005) refers to the difference between reflection and reflexivity, as the latter to have participants investigate their interactions through introspection as they occur. In the reflective mode, however, participants reflect on the elements (verbal, nonverbal, feelings, and thoughts) following an action. The presence of *introspection*, a sustained investigation of ones own feelings, thoughts and impressions, points at the more in-depth nature of reflexivity compared to

reflection. Creswell (2009) strongly urges a researcher to present his role and to explicitly 'identify reflexively ones biases, values and personal background because it may shape interpretation, formed during the research' (p. 177). My narratives testify that I am from within the social world, I research.

My interpretation is influenced by my background and experience and is reflected in the analysis and conclusions. In my writing I have tried, as suggested by Biklen & Casella (2007), to connect writings about "self" to larger issues, to the big ideas my research attempted to address such as having the contextual characteristics of successful entrepreneurs influence education. For ethical considerations, I will refrain from using the actual names of the entrepreneurs in the narratives because, although none of them is alive anymore, my research should not disclose their identities. The narratives are very much interpretivist in nature and I do not suggest that they hold objective truth (for as much as objective truth would exist anyway). In the narratives, I refer to the entrepreneurs as: A) Active Self Made Man, B) Best Visionary Hospitality Prophet, C) Cost Aware Quality Leader, D) Driving Strategic & Marketing Speaker.

Narrative A. the Active Self Made Man

A's restaurant was located in the forests in the Eastern part of The Netherlands. Operating a restaurant like this required a lot of flexibility because besides focusing on culinary work, there were also guests demanding the basic restaurant provision. A was a self-made man who managed his restaurant for 15 years when I entered as, 18-year old, starting professional. A was very outspoken about the practice in his restaurant. Especially when it was busy, he

became very directive. He knew from his extensive professional experience that when the restaurant offer is asked for, it is the duty of the entrepreneur to grab the business.

A would work long hours and also expected his staff to do the same. Rewards would be increasing if staff was loyal and stayed in his restaurant for a longer period of time. I chose not to stay longer after one-and-a-half year because an opportunity presented itself to continue my learning through the “practical pathway”. The restaurant, I worked next turned out to be one of the best restaurants in the country at that time. A and especially his wife, who was intensely involved in the business, were surprised about me leaving the restaurant and could not appreciate my choice. I felt them perceiving me to be a “deserter”. This experience was quite unpleasant for me as a youngster and freshman professional because the way they dealt with me changed significantly after I had communicated my decision to leave the restaurant.

After I had left the restaurant, A and his wife kept in contact with me despite their initial disapproval of my decision, and we evaluated many hospitality related experiences. Working for A, taught me about a lot of operational issues in the hospitality industry, the fundamentals of dealing with customers or “guests” as we would prefer to refer to them and the dedication to work hard in a nice rural environment. It also brought about the notion that an entrepreneur in this type of micro-business feels very close to his venture, same as his partner. It was their life fulfillment and they would defend it with everything they had.

The notion that a connection between entrepreneur and partner (in this case husband and wife) in business matters was also very influential. Later on

in the research among the SSUSCROs, all the elements experienced in A's restaurant came back. According to the strict definition, A was not a real SSUSCRO as defined in this research because his restaurant was not quoted with Michelin star(s), Bib Gourmand or GaultMillau toques. Further on in this research the quality awarding institutions will be explained as one of the two defining components of 'successful'.

A always stated not to be striving to get to the Michelin awards which in a way had a certain ambivalence to it. On the one hand, A wanted to keep the restaurant offer in a range from basic (coffee, drinks, small dishes) to some 'a la carte' at a higher price. On the other hand, A would frequently visit other restaurants, among them the very much luxury Michelin star restaurants, in order to observe their offer and to adopt certain elements of the menu or the service in his own restaurant.

This exploration of the culinary upper segment restaurants was done more frequently by A and his partner when they became older and were operating their restaurant for many years. Visiting culinary restaurants, clearly demonstrated A and his partner to be interested in learning by comparing their business to those of colleagues. It also made me aware that maybe as time passed, their motivation to bring the restaurant into the category of Michelin star restaurants grew. Possibly, it is an intrinsic motivator for a certain category of restaurant entrepreneurs to prove themselves by achieving Michelin related success as a kind of acknowledgment within the business they are in. This is one of the assumptions that needed to be explored in the further research.

An issue that I did not understand at the time I was working for entrepreneur A was related to his, in my perception, sometimes rather upsetting

way of dealing with his staff. Experiencing A shouting at his staff members, left me with the thought that for me respect for people would be more important than in many situation was demonstrated by A. When I announced to leave the restaurant, to start working in another restaurant that would offer new learning opportunities, I experienced the response of the entrepreneur and particularly his partner as disappointing. The experience made it very important for me, in my professional life, to always acknowledge chances that people get, even if they are not directly beneficial to my own situation.

I label A as the 'Active Self Made Man' because his energy, and persisting nature were obvious. He had virtually no formal education in hospitality management and had developed his business by the hard work of himself and his partner. This first experience gave a good foundation to progress in the restaurant business. I needed a lot of what I experienced and learned in A's restaurant, to "survive" in the next restaurant of B, the "Best Visionary Hospitality Prophet" that provided a completely different environment.

Narrative B. the Best Visionary Hospitality Prophet

Because A's restaurant was in the category just below the Michelin starred restaurants, it was in B's restaurant that I first learned what a real "SSUSCRO" was. The restaurant was located in the center of the country in an extremely wealthy environment of successful business people, artists, leading politicians and the likes. Even the Royal family lived close to the restaurant and frequented the place. Customers of the restaurant would come for a lunch or dinner at which they would easily spend about 150-250 guilders (equivalent to current price level of £ 130-220) per person, or even a lot more, which at the

time was the top of the upper restaurant segment spending. Staff, among them myself as trainee, would be paid good salaries.

B was charming, friendly, elegant, flamboyant and the personification of hospitality in dealing with his guests. He managed to make people feel at ease, and at home, straight after they entered the restaurant. The guests all loved him, and he loved them. The sense of customer focus in hospitality offering was in my perception installed in B's genes and he would encourage his staff to practice the same manners and kindness to the guests.

In this extremely customer focused manner of working that B practised was also the enormous pitfall engrained of not really caring about the financial business side of the restaurant. B would frequently treat his regular guests to a free drink, wine or even a full meal if he thought it would be good to grow the relationship with the guest. This notion of taking very good care of his customers made me realize that B was the perfect hospitality driven figure that I labelled as "Best Visionary Hospitality Prophet". Journalists and other writers about restaurants would qualify B as a true prophet in promoting a hospitality sense that could be set in a category beyond comparison. The restaurant which B had taken over from his family-in-law just a few years before, became the rising star in the country. People from everywhere came to eat there.

While I worked in B's restaurant for the first time a second Michelin star was awarded, something fairly unique at that time with only two restaurants having this qualification. In B's restaurant I worked twice: first, one year as an apprentice and then a year later, for four years as a sommelier. B celebrated the event of achieving the second Michelin star, and basically every other event that was good for the restaurant, with his staff and friends. B was a real

SSUSCRO that would thrive every day to raise the quality of the restaurant. He wanted to inspire and that was felt by all the people around him. He took his staff to France to experience good cuisine and took me, as the sommelier, to taste the good wines and meet the wine producers and the chefs of famous Michelin starred restaurants. B had a large number of staff members, both in the kitchen and in the restaurant. The restaurant service team was managed by a very disciplined, almost tyrannical, pair of twin brothers. The structure and discipline in both kitchen and service area were enormously strict, working long hours. The working mentality of the restaurant managers and chef were of a military discipline nature, and there would often be shouting and cursing especially when the restaurant was busy. The contrast between the mentality of pampering the customers in the restaurant and the doctrine of long hours and unpleasant dealing with staff by the managers was significant. It left me at times with very negative experiences and perceptions of being in a secluded world, which was outside the real world of “normal” people.

However, great celebrations were organized if good work had been accomplished, which at some point was almost every day. Throughout the years I worked for B, he changed as a person and lost some of the original focus due to the on-going pressure of performing on the one hand and maybe some boredom from a lack of further success on the other hand. B had aspired to achieve more and to become the first three Michelin star restaurant owner in the country but this did not happen. B's striving for a third Michelin star was most clearly present between 1982 and 1986. The first third Michelin star in The Netherlands was, however, not awarded by Michelin until 2002 to another restaurant. B did not live to see this moment, because he died in 1989. In B's

restaurant the enormous love for the profession was passed on to the people who worked for him and many of them started successful careers elsewhere.

For me working in B's restaurant gave me the awareness that a combination is needed of a sometimes army-like discipline, which was difficult to comprehend in the beginning, together with a deeply rooted passion to deliver the best of hospitality experiences to customers. B died at a relatively young age of 43, when he was shot by a burglar three years after I had left the restaurant. B did not have a wife or partner involved in the business. In B's restaurant, I observed the consequences of management that would neglect financial control. After B had passed away it became clear that the financial state of the restaurant, despite its success on the Michelin quality side, was in a bad state and it was virtually bankrupt. A lot of efforts had to be made by family and others to restore the restaurant to a state comparable to the success, it had before. Overall, working in B's restaurant was one of the most inspiring, enjoyable and meaningful periods in my professional hospitality working years. I still would have loved to ask B many questions about the hospitality profession as he perceived it, but due to his passing away this could not be done.

Narrative C. the Cost Aware Quality Leader

In between the times working for B, as apprentice and sommelier, I spent one year in C's restaurant which had been Michelin starred for many years. C was a very different personality than A and B and would resemble more a lecturer, a figure in public office or even a minister in the church. C would speak with a calm voice, would not easily show emotions such as happiness or anger, yet

would be patient with people and at times would at length analyse and explain his views on the restaurant business.

Although his staff showed great respect for him, C would always present himself as a leader that could easily be approached. Being one of the founders, and later chairman of the Alliance Gastronomique, an association of upper segment restaurants mostly having one or more Michelin stars, made C highly respected outside his restaurant. C became known in The Netherlands as one of the “arch fathers” of gastronomy, and the development of quality in the upper segment restaurant business.

In his restaurant, C worked together with his wife who took care of the financial administration. The restaurant was extremely well organized in terms of administrative procedures and controlling the flow of goods and money in the business. The delivery of hospitality to the customers in C’s restaurant was quite different from B’s restaurant and catered to an elder clientele. Service was given in a more reserved, and even distant manner. The level of enthusiasm put into the service process by management and staff in my perception was much lower than in B’s restaurant.

The salary and rewards given to staff were at the legal minimum level despite the relatively long working hours that were invested in C’s restaurant by the people working there. Having a wife and small child, I chose to travel home between shifts and eat, if at all possible, with my family instead of within the restaurant staff canteen. Monthly, I would find my salary erroneously deducted with a certain amount charged for meals I had not taken. There was an interesting, but also somewhat embarrassing ritual that would take place in which I had to go to the owner’s wife in her office to ask for the small amount to

be refunded. Although this would be done without a lot of arguing, I found it an unpleasant experience which for me symbolized the cost aware nature of C and his partner within their specific management style. The reoccurring experience also indicated to me that staff was not seen as an important aspect of the business by C and his wife.

The learning in C's restaurant demonstrated clearly to me that there can be different balancing between the components of success; quality and business, than in A's and B's restaurant. To find strict administrative procedures in place in an upper segment culinary restaurant was new for me because in B's restaurant, money would easily come in through generous spending of the customers. The earnings would, however, also easily go out because of marginal financial control and the generosity of the entrepreneur towards everyone. After one year I left C's restaurant to return to B's restaurant because of a sommelier position offered to me.

Narrative D. the Driving Strategic & Marketing Speaker

The final working experience of my ten year hospitality industry life took place in D's restaurant. I label D as the Driving Strategic & Marketing Speaker. After working a total of five years for entrepreneur B, in two periods, I started to analyse the entrepreneurial differences while being in C's restaurant. The 2½ years in D's restaurant brought again new and different experiential learning. For D's restaurant I was hired as an operations manager who would essentially be responsible for the daily operations and I would be reporting directly to the owner.

In the position of sommelier in B's restaurant, I was already introduced into a lot of managerial responsibilities such as purchasing, administrating the storage of the wines and selling to customers. Becoming operations manager in D's restaurant, however, put me into a real formal management position. One might expect people working in an operations manager's position to hold formal qualifications such as a degree in hotel management. Unfortunately, I did not have a degree and tried to compensate this by putting in my personal passion, determination, endurance and enthusiasm. I also applied every piece of learning and experience acquired in the previous workplaces.

In D's restaurant I was confronted with the notion that there are certain ground rules of management that a person owning a formal degree in hotel management would have picked up in school. However hard I tried, it was very difficult to overcome the knowledge gap of not having studied in a management programme. D had developed his restaurant over the years into the upper culinary segment. Quality of food and wines would be up-to-standard and appreciated by the steady customer base. D always was looking for strategic options to create new business and came up with ideas virtually every day. He expected me, as his "second-in-command", to follow his enormous creativity in marketing. To generate new ideas myself, while implementing D's innovations at the same time, I did not manage.

The relationship between D and me started to erode in the first year despite the fact that the chef and I brought the restaurant a lot of free publicity in an important competition for culinary restaurants. Gradually, I realised that D did not appreciate my efforts in managing the operations, while his mode of communicating did not appeal to me. After having achieved an award of Best

Sommelier in French wines in The Netherlands individually, I decided to move on. This time, I found employment in hospitality management education in the newly established Dutch hotel school in Leeuwarden.

Particular learning generated in the years in D's restaurant would, later on, turn out to correspond quite adequately with the content of the hospitality management degree programme. Management disciplines such as finance, marketing, human resources management, operations management were all present in my responsibility as manager in D's restaurant. I found it, however, disappointing and somewhat alarming that D seemed unable to relax in dealing with his direct management assistant. I learned in D's restaurant that it would be important to create a more empathetic professional relationship with staff, in order to create balance in life.

Reflection on the Narratives

The narratives presented about working for the four different entrepreneurs (A, B, C and D) may appear to be of a purely anecdotal nature and in a way they are. Nevertheless, they are provided at the beginning of the thesis because they hold many elements of reflection and reflexivity. Clarke (2005) warns that in most grounded theory work, there is inadequate reflexivity about research processes and research products. Some questions, Clarke claims that need to be addressed are: 'Whose knowledge about what counts to whom and under what conditions?', Who is the researcher?, Who is researched?, With what consequences? For whom?' (p. 12) Further on in this research, answers have been provided to these questions. By providing the narratives about my previous working experiences and my reflexivity about the happenings in the

culinary restaurants, I illustrate my working with the SSUSCRO's and the way in which it generated learning as well as confusion.

I follow Willig's (2008) notion that reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meaning throughout the research process. Willig calls upon the researcher to acknowledge the impossibility of remaining "outside of" one's subject matter when conducting research. The questions and misunderstood situations, I took from my work experiences motivated me to initiate the research. My experiences influenced the way I gathered the data from the SSUSCROs and my interpretations of what they mentioned in the interviews. At times I thought in advance to know what the respondent meant to say because it seemed to match with my own experiences, working for one of their colleagues (described in the narratives). I became aware of the influence my own background had in the interviews when I asked the interviewees for further clarification. I then noticed that the respondents sometimes held a different understanding about the situation that we were talking about than I had anticipated.

My perspective in this research was formed by being a staff member in the restaurant, not the entrepreneur. I had only seen part of the managerial processes and had focused on the influence of the SSUSCRO, whom I considered to be the leader in the process. My age and life experience at the time of working with the entrepreneurs were also influencing my understanding. All of the entrepreneurs in the narratives had many years of experience which made them behave, and take decisions the way they did. As a young person, I was trying to get to grips with many challenges in life, while also starting a family relatively early at the age of 22. Working in the restaurants provided me

with a lens through which I looked at the actions of my employers. I knew that when they, or their staff involved in management, required me to work long hours it would take away the time for me to see my first, and later my second child grow up. I dealt with the challenges but the impact on my personal life was substantial. Leaving B's restaurant after a second period of employment was partly done to further my career but partly also to save my personal married life, which had come under great pressure. The intense working situation in the restaurant, involving coming home late and picking up some bad habits would not benefit the relationship with my wife.

The experiences and learning generated by the years working for the extraordinary SSUSCROs made me, however, respect the qualities they held. Coming into hospitality education I realised that an attempt to analyse and describe the contextual characteristics of the SSUSCROs in order to have students benefit from it would be valuable and worthwhile. In table 1, I have summarized the core qualities of the entrepreneurs described in the narratives including my challenges in working with them.

Table 1. Comparing the Entrepreneurs in the Narratives

Case	Core qualities	Challenges for me as practitioner-staff member	Conclusion/evaluation
A.	Self-made, charismatic, creative, determined, down-to-earth, enormously aware of business opportunities and the way to achieve goals.	Could not understand the way of communicating at times of stress, observed sometimes a tendency to cut costs at the expense of quality. Found it difficult to understand the change in approach to me after I had announced to move on for career development purposes.	Would advocate the drive, energy and resourcefulness of this entrepreneur to any starter. Investigate how the way of communication could be done more effectively and how a stronger consequent drive for quality should be installed in a culinary restaurant.
B.	Extremely hospitable	Financial management	Because of the

	<p>and enthusiastic professional, example for the sector, same attitude towards his guests as towards his staff, enormous drive to learn and to have his senior staff join in the learning process, cheerful personality, pleasure to work for. Perfect sense to build good relationships with his customers and people connected to his restaurant. International orientation.</p>	<p>turned out to be a disaster although the compensation for staff was generous. Discrepancy between the behaviour of the hospitalitable owner and his military strict and on many occasions unfriendly restaurant managers.</p>	<p>inconsistencies between providing high quality hospitality and lacking strategic financial management the restaurant would turn out not to be economically sustainable which could be considered irresponsible entrepreneurship. The enormous spirit of hospitality was inspiring and touched many of the people who worked for B.</p>
C.	<p>Well organized, balanced in behaviour, respectful in communication, intellectual approach towards the profession.</p>	<p>Sometimes I could not make sense of the dominantly cost oriented approach specifically where it concerned the compensation for staff that was asked to work a lot of extra time.</p>	<p>Very good example of “old style” professional and well organized manager and leader. His intellectual approach to gastronomy had great value for the upper segment restaurant sector and students could learn from him.</p>
D.	<p>Perfectionist, enormous drive, always looking for innovation in marketing and management, outspoken, respected for his growing of the quality in the restaurant.</p>	<p>Had difficulty coping with his offensive approach towards problem situations. Trust was a challenging issue and it was in this restaurant that I felt the need to have to “watch over my shoulder” while working.</p>	<p>D’s marketing awareness and management innovation are still outstanding when considered in the contemporary upper segment restaurant sector. The sense of “being on top” would be essential for future entrepreneurs.</p>

By doing this research I had the chance to reflect on the first professional phase of my working life while also another purpose could be served. An important point of personal motivation to do the research was to get advanced academic recognition by acquiring an Educational Doctorate. I would follow Scott, Brown,

Lunt, & Thorne's (2004) notion about the doctorate being a 'means of externally validating knowledge and expertise acquired from substantial professional experience thereby offering professional credibility' (p. 123). For me reflecting on the years in the hospitality industry and then systematically researching that world is what Scott et al. (2004) refer to as "curiosity driven" and linked to a process of personal discovery. In the practice of higher education I am working in, the realization of a doctorate degree provides recognition of my knowledge and expertise that previously was unacknowledged.

Context

The successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners (SSUSCROs) are entrepreneurs in the hospitality industry, specifically in the restaurant upper and luxury segment. In this part of the industry providing hospitality, and the enjoyment of high quality food and beverages is viewed as part of a special culture. In this culture 'hospitableness' is one of the central themes. Philosopher Telfer (1996) refers to hospitableness as depending on devotion and a spirit of generosity rather than on skill. As a former practitioner within the hospitality industry I found reward, satisfaction, and opportunities for personal learning and growth in the notion that hospitality and being hospitable held substantive intrinsic value. Telfer (1996) quotes three historic reasons for offering hospitality in a cultural perspective:

Firstly, hospitality originally involved meeting travellers' needs before modern means of travel and facilities existed. A biblical sense is referred to here where strangers should be looked after if they are in need.

Secondly, giving, receiving and sharing food is a bond of the trust and

interdependency set up between host and guest. In some cultures this is a permanent bond between people (e.g. traditional Bedouin will not fight anyone with whom they have eaten salt). Thirdly, giving food (and beverages: note author) is a gesture of friendliness (pp. 83-84).

Particularly where hosts try to give their guests agreeable food, it can be considered as an act of pleasing as well as sustaining them.

The notion of being in a business that offers hospitality to people has been one of the important motives to stay as a practitioner in that professional field for ten years, and to look both for professional and personal development. The philosophy of one of the renowned quality hotel chains of the world, Ritz-Carlton, is particularly interesting in this context. Ritz-Carlton, that could be defined as an institution of contemporary hospitality offering, immerses its workforce in the organisational value of considering themselves as (Henry, 2003): 'Ladies and Gentlemen Serving Ladies and Gentlemen' (p. 172).

Interestingly, the verb 'Serving' is written with a capital letter in order to stipulate the higher meaning of offering hospitality. This notion of 'Ladies and Gentlemen' involved in offering hospitality ('Serving') to customers who in their own right are 'Ladies and Gentlemen', had meaning for me in that particular phase of my professional life and it still has until today.

The dynamics, special contextual characteristics, and the strong entrepreneurial nature of upper segment quality restaurant operations, I consider worthwhile further exploring. Morrison & Rimmington (1999) emphasize the dynamic nature of entrepreneurship in the hospitality industry and the possible positive outcomes of that process. Morrison & Rimmington say about this:

New concepts emerge which have the potential to revolutionize an industry sector and stimulate the competitive environment. These add vitality and can rejuvenate sectors through the introduction of fresh approaches to traditional activities. Furthermore, enlightened employee practices ... can help achieve competitive advantage for new ventures (p. 24)

This entrepreneurialism can be found in different contexts in the hospitality industry. In my practitioner research it is related to the upper segment restaurants, sometimes referred to as the gastronomic or culinary restaurant sector. In this segment the quality of hospitality service, food and beverages is considered to be paramount.

The Researcher's Question

As a practitioner I have had the following question for several years: 'Is it possible to research the upper segment restaurant entrepreneurs' worlds in order to explain some of the important contextual characteristics they share, and the way they deal with their environment and feed this information into the practice of hospitality management education?' I embarked on this research to generate findings and conclusions that could be used to educate and prepare starting professionals (i.e. students) for the hospitality industry and possibly other service oriented industries. The nature of these kind of questions have stimulated me to research this field of entrepreneurship in small upper segment culinary restaurants.

A fair amount of scepticism towards the possible findings of such a research was apparent to me. It might have turned out as a result of this

research, that the contextual characteristics of entrepreneurs in this restaurant practice and the way they deal with the people and issues around them are rooted in unethical foundations. If the entrepreneurs' contextual characteristics are merely connecting to selfish, purely financial, self-indulging motives, they should preferably not be reproduced in education. Being aware of these potential critical outcomes made the personal drive to research the topic as a practitioner-researcher in hospitality management education even stronger. Knowledge about the contextual characteristics of the successful entrepreneurs in the upper segment restaurants is very limited and mostly of a descriptive or anecdotic nature.

Journalists have looked predominantly at culinary restaurants (the scenery), the menu's (food and wines) and in some cases the professional careers of the entrepreneurs (in a descriptive manner; where they have worked and for how long). Limited attempt has been made, however, to look at the successful culinary restaurant owners' value systems and driving powers or the social context in which they function. Exploring the grounding principles that brought these successful entrepreneurs to the point they are now would be interesting and valuable. The outcomes generated by this research provide a contribution to the existing body of knowledge in the field of hospitality management. An even more unique contribution of this research lies, however, in the theory building on how the entrepreneurial contextual characteristics can influence hospitality management education and therefore the development of future professionals for an important industry.

Parameters

Dutch Small Upper Segment Culinary Restaurants

The Dutch hospitality industry is divided in sectors by Koninklijk Horeca Netherlands, the official Dutch Board for the Hospitality Industry: (1) beverage selling establishments, (2) fastfood services, (3) hotels, (4) restaurants, and (5) party catering (Koninklijk Horeca Nederland, 2011). A total of 43.061 businesses are registered of which 10.947 (25%) are considered to be part of the restaurant sector. Within the restaurant sector there is a distinction between [A] bistro including petit-restaurant, pizzeria: 1.323, [B] restaurant: 6.618, [C] café restaurant: 2.906 and [D] wegrerestaurant ('roadside restaurant'): 100. Small upper segment culinary restaurants fall within the category [B] restaurant, constituting 60% of the total 'restaurant sector' (Koninklijk Horeca Nederland, 2011). To further refine into the category that I refer to as 'small upper segment culinary restaurants', Michelin Guide, GaultMillau and Lekker are considered to be the important database sources in The Netherlands.


In a research among 470 restaurant owners (Bijzondere Restaurants, 2008), the following opinion about the value of the three quality assessing institutions was generated: Michelin scored out of 8,5/10, GaultMillau 7,4/10 and Lekker 6,4/10. The fact that the question was asked to the restaurant owners themselves who are also assessed by these organisations probably influenced the scores. On the other hand, the large sample of 470 restaurant owners guarantees a "robustness" of the findings, agreeing on the value and credibility of the assessment in the order of: (1) Michelin (2) GaultMillau (3) Lekker. Critical comments also appear about the restaurant assessing institutions. Habets (2007) notes that the label 'best restaurant of The

Netherlands' is given to different restaurants by different quality assessing institutions. Furthermore the qualification of the restaurant in many cases seems to be based on only one visit by a reporting inspector and occasional errors occur in the publishing of the restaurant guides (Van Craenenbroeck, 2011).

Michelin

Michelin is the oldest restaurant assessing institution in Europe and has been publishing about restaurants and travel since 1900 (Michelin, 1900; reprint in 2000). Despite the growing number of restaurant quality assessing institutions, Michelin has kept its position of being the most reliable among them. Habets (2007) underlines that the Michelin awards still are the most trusted and desirable. In 2011, Michelin qualified 316 culinary restaurants in The Netherlands combining 98 with one to three stars and another 218 that received a so-called Bib Gourmand (Restaurantgids Dinersite, 2011). The definitions of the Michelin stars and Bib Gourmand are in the table below.

Table 2. Michelin Stars and Bib Gourmand (Reed Business Information, 2010)

<p>*** Three-Michelin-star: Exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey. One always eats here extremely well, sometimes superbly. Fine wines, faultless service, elegant surroundings. One will pay accordingly!</p>
<p>** Two-Michelin-star: Excellent cooking, worth a detour. Specialities and wines of first class quality. This will be reflected in the price.</p>
<p>* One-Michelin-star: A very good restaurant in its category. The star indicates a good place to stop on your journey. But beware of comparing the star given to an expensive de luxe establishment with that of a simple restaurant where you can appreciate fine cooking at a reasonable price.</p>
<p> Bib Gourmand: A restaurant offering quality food at a value price. The price of a meal is indicated to be under € 35,00 in The Netherlands (€ 36,00 in Amsterdam).</p>

In Europe, quality gastronomy is synonymous with the Michelin Guide (Johnson, Surlemont, Nicod, & Revaz, 2005) and it is a respected institution

among chefs, restaurateurs, culinary experts and the dining public. Costa (2011) confirms the notion that Michelin is an important institution:

Michelin stars may not be welcomed or agreed on by all, but there is no doubt that it is an authority; a brand in its own right, and an easily recognisable shortcut with a clearly understood identity and definition (Michelin stars may not be welcomed section, para. 5)





Michelin is a benchmark for many restaurant owners and the most distinctive awarding institution to measure and accredit their success.

Culinary restaurant entrepreneur, Rene Brienen, who managed to start up a new restaurant after having gone bankrupt at his former restaurant pinpointed the essence of Michelin's rating. He said the biggest compliment he could get after the renewed start-up was to receive a Michelin a star within the first year of opening (Vermeulen, 2007). Conversely, critical remarks about Michelin indicate that the institution was not always consistent and objective and clear cases of mistakes happened (Van Craenenbroeck, 2011). Despite the criticism, Michelin is still the most prominent organisation for providing an external benchmark to measure the success of upper segment culinary restaurants in terms of product and service quality.

GaultMillau

Henri Gault and Christian Millau of the Paris evening newspaper Paris-Press started to assess restaurants for culinary and service quality in France. In 1972, the first edition of the GaultMillau France restaurant guide was published (Alle Toprestaurants, 2011). In The Netherlands, the Wine & Food Association publishes the GaultMillau since 2006. GaultMillau qualifies its restaurants with a maximum of 20 toques score:

Table 3. GaultMillau Restaurant Rating (Szücs, 2011)

	19 out of 20 toques: Highest mark for the world's top restaurants
	18/17: Highest levels of creativity and quality, best possible preparation
	16/15: High level of creativity, artistry and quality
	14/13: Excellent cuisine, which goes beyond everyday cooking.
No image	12 and 12.5 out of 20: Good cuisine like that served at good hotels.
No image	10 – 12: Restaurant of authentic to interesting level (Kortland, 2010)

A major difference between GaultMillau and Michelin is that the former only focuses on the quality of the food, while the latter also takes the décor and service into consideration.

Lekker

Purely Dutch based restaurant assessing magazine Lekker for the past 30 years published yearly an overview of what it considers the 500 best restaurants in The Netherlands. For this exercise the magazine states to employ 70 anonymous reporters (Mostert, 2010). The best 100 restaurants are described in detail, and for each edition the chefs of the top ten restaurants are interviewed. Mostert describes Lekker as: 'consistent in its reviews, pleasant to read and critical while the reporters seem to be knowledgeable about what they are expected to do' (n.p). Criticism is present about Lekker as it seems to be profiling itself a bit as a type of gossip glossy featuring the restaurant owners.

Taking the overall merged assessment results of Michelin stars, GaultMillau and Lekker Top 100, there are 124 restaurants of which a full overview can be found in appendix A. If I take the 98 Michelin star restaurants together with the Michelin Bib Gourmand restaurants, the total increases to 316. This means that there is a relatively rather small segment of between 0.2

and 0.5% of restaurants ($124/6618 \approx 0,2\%$ or $316/6618 \approx 0,5\%$), within the total that could be considered as upper segment culinary restaurants.

Education

This research is situated in Dutch higher education and strongly related to the multi-disciplinary subject area of hospitality management offered at undergraduate level and to the broader subject of service management at postgraduate level. Cooper, Shepherd & Westlake (1994) come up with the following reasons for offering education in this field of expertise. Hospitality as part of tourism can be considered an important and frequently underestimated activity in terms of world trade that has a major positive effect on the balance of payments in many countries. It is a major industry in terms of the number of jobs offered, both directly and indirectly. Tourism and hospitality are very important as an economic activity in parts of the world that may have few or no other sources of wealth generation. The need for professionalism in the tourism and hospitality industry in the offering of products and services is apparent according to Cooper et al. (1994). Employers and managers in the tourism and hospitality industry, through education, must be equipped with knowledge, ability and skills to plan strategically and deliver on the tactical and operational levels.

Rationale and Significance

Educational programmes in hospitality management have been offered from the 1950's onwards because before that time, training was mainly done "on the job" (Medlik & Airey, 1978 in: Lashley & Morrison, 2000). The programmes in this

sector originated from a strongly industry influenced orientation, which Airey & Tribe (2000 in: Lashley & Morrison, 2000) labelled as vocational and action oriented in nature as opposed to liberal and reflection oriented. In the past two decades, programmes in hospitality management particularly those at the (under)graduate level have been adopting a more reflective, liberal and academic content. While the development of hospitality management education is increasingly heading in the direction of academic and reflective modes, the risk may be presenting itself that the connection with the hospitality industry and its professional orientation will become less strong.

Critical comments about the spirit and manner in which hospitality management education in The Netherlands is offered can be heard among professionals from the industry. One of the concerns they raise is the lack of quality in hospitality (management) education and availability of trained staff. Therese Boer, president of the Gilde for Hospitality and entrepreneur in one of the most famous Dutch three Michelin star restaurants is quite critical specifically about the vocational schools by stating: '50% of the apprentices do not have enough professional skills when they enter the business' (Reed Business, 2006, para 2). Another well-known Dutch restaurant entrepreneur, Peter Klosse, stated that the system of education is not adequate and it would be necessary to bring education and businesses together in order to better convey the enthusiasm for the culinary restaurant branche (Scholten, 2009).

The connection of the hospitality management curriculum with the professional hospitality world is important. It can be defined as in the case of Dutch Stenden University of Applied Sciences (Bosker, Dekker and Van der Hoek, 2005):

Our education can be a help to the progress of the professional practice. It is a case of interdependence. In our programme this is personified by lecturers who join us as staff members after a former career in the hospitality industry (p. 15)

Another area of attention in education is the contribution that can be made by research to the formative school culture. The search for the constant factors in hospitality managers' actions and attitudes was already important for the direction of Stenden's IHM programme (Bosker et al., 2005). In this context hospitality management was defined as a "way of life".

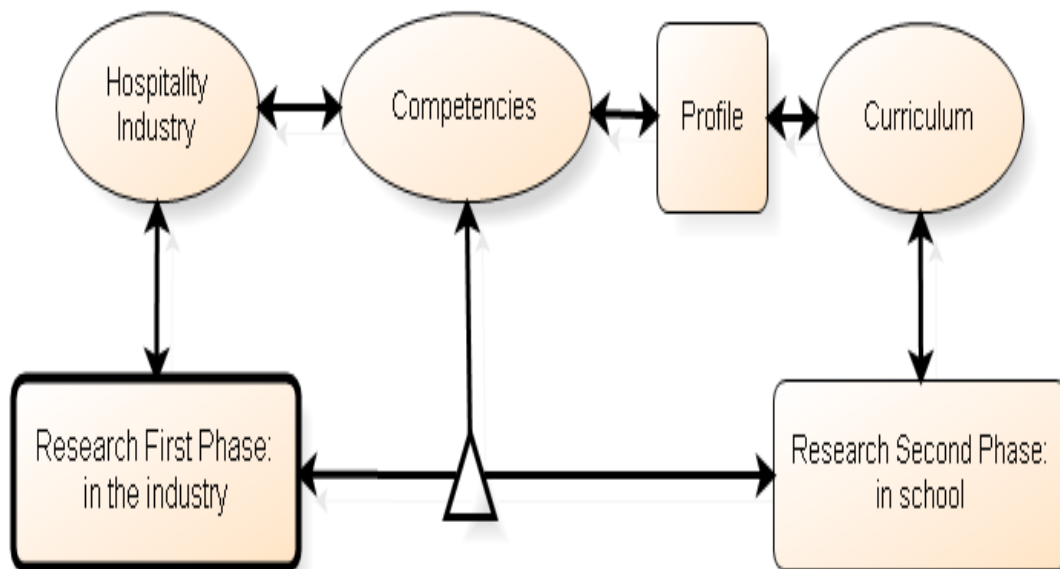
A translation from the constant factors into competencies that guide both the educational programme and the institute has been a leading motive for designing the Stenden IHM curriculum. The principle of connecting the specific competencies of motivated and successful practitioners to the policy of an organisation is supported by Sabatier's (1993, in: Colebatch, 1998) argument that the dynamic of policy is (about) coherence around values rather than the pursuit of agreed goals. Policy is about choosing goals and about choosing the means of accomplishing these goals (Colebatch, 1998). The ultimate goal setting for the IHM institute is comprised in the formulation of its mission statement (Bosker et al., 2005):

International Hospitality Management sets itself the task of offering high quality international and intercultural education at Bachelor's and Master's degree level, which broadly trains sought-after managers for the hospitality industry (p. 13)

Research into competencies of successful and representative hospitality practitioners is formulated as one of the main points of attention in keeping the

educational programme both current as well as legitimate. The relation between research and educational policy setting is visualized in the framework in figure 1.

Figure 1. Relation research and hospitality education (Bosker et al., 2005, p. 16)



In the upper part of the model the relation between the hospitality industry and the competencies derived from it are presented in the first two balloons. From the competencies an educational profile is derived that eventually is translated into the curriculum. Research is a major source of influence in the first phase applied to the hospitality industry in order to outline and monitor the competencies needed for practitioners in that industry. A second phase of research is used to keep track of what the output and evaluation of the curriculum is in order to modify the competencies definition from that side. An extensive exploration of the contextual characteristics of successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners and the influence this can have on hospitality management education yields a contribution to the existing body of knowledge. Better understanding of value systems, driving powers and the

social context in which the SSUSCRO function serves as beneficial for the first phase of problem analysis in policy making as defined in figure 1.

Problem Statement

It would seem to be a loss of resourcing, not to feed the potentially unique contextual characteristics of SSUSCROs and the way they deal with the people and issues around them to possible future practitioners i.e. students of hospitality management programmes. In the current situation there is virtually no systematic analysis available of successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners. Only those students who at some point in their life get exposed to working with them may get some of the learning. In the cases where this learning occurs, it will usually be in just one restaurant and from one entrepreneur. The assumption within this research is that every student but also faculty and management of hospitality management programmes should have access to information about SSUSCROs. By implementing this systematic interpretivist research and analysis, the knowledge about a particular group of successful entrepreneurs becomes available.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is to examine the influence that the contextual characteristics of a specific category of restaurant entrepreneurs potentially can have on hospitality management education.

Central aim:

- To explore how the contextual characteristics of successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners (SSUSCROs) potentially can be

used in hospitality management education, in order to have students, faculty, programme and management connected to the professional work field.

From the central aim the following **objectives** are derived:

- To describe and explain SSUSCROs' value systems, other driving powers and social context.
- To provide an insight into how the SSUSCROs see and experience their professional and personal lives, and what constitutes the definition of being successful based on their careers.
- To suggest ways as to how the characteristics and vision of the SSUSCROs potentially can be used in hospitality management education.

Research Questions

1. Who are the people that can be defined as successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners (SSUSCROs)?
2. How do the SSUSCROs describe their lives in restaurant entrepreneurship and where have the significant moments, interventions and decisions been?
3. What do SSUSCROs define as successful features of their professional and private lives?
4. Which value systems, other driving powers and other circumstantial issues/themes/happenings have brought the SSUSCROs to performing successfully in their business and life?

5. How can the contextual characteristics and vision of the SSUSCROs be used in hospitality management education for students, faculty, and programme management?

Definition of Terms

The relevant terms in this research and their interpretation are:

- **Contextual characteristics (of SSUSCROs)** = the combination of value systems, driving powers and social environmental variables relating to this specific group of practitioners (author).
- **Constructionism** = the *epistemological* (added by author) view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context (Crotty, 2003, p. 42).
- **Driving powers** = the combination of factors that (sub)consciously direct an individual's behaviour and actions in life (author).
- **Grounded theory** = in this research; the constructivist research methodology (Charmaz, 2006) oriented towards the inductive theory generation from empirical data systematically obtained and analysed. The original grounded theory definition was established by Glaser and Strauss (1967).
- **Hospitality industry** = the industry or professional field that is generally considered to be part of the bigger travel & tourism industry. World Travel & Tourism Economy employment was estimated at 8.1% of total world employment in 2004. By 2014, this will be 8.6% of total

employment (The World Travel & Tourism Council , 2011). Current figures about the hospitality industry (KIC Hospitality, 2010), estimate 200 million employees worldwide, 600.000 of them employed at senior management level. Job expansion will continue: each year the number of positions within the hospitality industry grows by 35%.

- **Hospitality management education** = programmes that prepare students at diploma or degree level in the interdisciplinary subject area of managing service and hospitality offering organisations (author).
- **Interpretivist research** = the approach towards research that looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social world (Crotty, 2003, p. 67).
- **Narrative (in research)** = a story or tale insightfully explored and analysed in research by individuals and communities, by organisations, institutions and nations in order to make human and social meaning (Kohler Riessman, 2007).
- **Qualitative research** = research that is defined by the following characteristics: it is naturalistic, words (or pictures) are the data source, there is concern for the process not only for the outcomes, it is inductive which means that theory emerges from the data, meaning is given to the participant perspective (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).
- **Social construct** = in the context of this research, a social construct is the result of a specific reading of certain conditions thereby acknowledging that human experience, including perception, is mediated historically, culturally and linguistically (Willig, 2008, p. 7).

- **SSUSCRO** = successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owner; the specific, relatively small, group of entrepreneurs - practitioners within the hospitality industry with a significant achievement in operating high quality restaurant operations for more than 10 years and recognized by quality assessing institutions (Michelin, GaultMillau and Lekker) for their performance (author).
- **Sus Crofa** = the actual word that most closely resembles the acronym SSUSCRO, which means 'Wild Boar' in Latin (Whitfield, 1984).



- **Value systems** = the system of values that people have incorporated and from which personal behaviour and actions are triggered (definition author combining different sources).

In the next chapter the literature relevant to explain the concepts in the research is reviewed, in order to find the current state of knowledge about the SSUSCROs and how they influence hospitality management education.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Introduction

This research is about successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners and their potential influence on hospitality management education. To explore the relevant concepts, I reviewed for this research the areas of entrepreneurship, restaurant entrepreneurship, leadership, values and hospitality management education.

Starting with Entrepreneurship

The essence of entrepreneurship was noted in 1934 by Schumpeter (Schumpeter, 2009), who mentioned the entrepreneur to be the person influencing development by using production means and sources in order to create a surplus that generates profit. For this activity the entrepreneur needs capital, which is found in the money market. Schumpeter (2009) further projected that others will follow the initiative of the entrepreneur, which results in competition and vanishing of the competitive advantage. In describing the life and work of one of the great Dutch industrial entrepreneurs Anton Philips, Bouman (1956) praises the power of generating ideas and the influence of the creative individual being of a bigger importance in entrepreneurship than most people can imagine.

Morrison et al. (1999), looking at the effectiveness and success of entrepreneurship, consider energy, health, emotional stability, intelligence, capacity to inspire and personal and ethical values as desirable but not so acquirable. Seizing opportunities and creating organisations around that is core in definitions of entrepreneurship (Bygrave & Zacharakis, 2008). Kawasaki

(2004) describes the essence of entrepreneurship in five very tangible statements addressing (potential) entrepreneurs (pp. 3-4):

- i. Make meaning: a product or service should contribute to a better world,
- ii. Make mantra: the meaning of the product or service should be captured in a strong thought that can be resonated by the team around the entrepreneur,
- iii. Get going: the action imperative of creating products or services is paramount and entrepreneurship should not be staying in a writing and planning process,
- iv. Define a business model: even the best product or service can only be making money if there is a sustainable business model,
- v. Weave a mat (milestones, assumptions, and tasks): in order to enforce the discipline in a company and to keep it on track three lists should be created with (a) milestones to be met, (b) assumptions built into the business model and (c) tasks to be accomplished in order to create an organisation.

The fact that a lot more dimensions are involved in entrepreneurship is presented by Lowe & Marriott (2006). They make a distinction between a narrow definition such as the above given, focusing on generating ideas, business plan writing, resources acquiring and business concepts brought to realization and more broad definitions of entrepreneurship.

Broad definitions of entrepreneurship include a focus on skills and attitudes, knowledge and learning, cultures and environments, family connections, personality drivers and life circumstances (Lowe & Marriott, 2006). What Lowe & Marriott further stipulate is that a discussion of entrepreneurship should address issues such as nurture or nature, early life experiences, motivational aspects, entrepreneurs as managers, entrepreneurial actions,

entrepreneurial dealing with information, decision making and learning by entrepreneurs.

About entrepreneurs, Bessant & Tidd (2007) say that both personal traits and characteristics as well as contextual factors such as the availability of support and finance need to be taken into account when describing them. As personal factors that affect the starting of new ventures by entrepreneurs they explicitly point at family and 'religious background', 'formal education' and 'early work experience' and the 'psychological profile' (p. 257). Bovée & Thill (2006) quite validly contend that most entrepreneurs are not glamorous adventurers but instead they are often ordinary people who have a good idea and often plan and develop their product quickly while the rest of the business world is still thinking about whether a market for the product exists.

Going even further, Lee-Ross & Lashley (2009) assert that 'the hospitality entrepreneur does not have to be totally original to be creative ... most creative business ideas are simply modifications of others' (p. 69). In addition to these typologies of entrepreneurs, Bessant & Tidd (2007) refer to entrepreneurs' typical motivation being a high need for achievement. Integrating Bovée & Thill's (2006) and Bessant & Tidd's (2007) definitions, the entrepreneur profile contains the following ingredients.

An entrepreneur thinks positively, is highly disciplined and driven by ambition because he likes to control his destiny. He has a tendency to set challenging but realistic personal goals and likes to take calculated risks while focusing on action and execution, rather than endless analysis. The entrepreneur has an intuitive sense and relates well to others, likes to be involved in, and to energize networks of relationships. By doing so he exploits

the expertise and resources of others, while helping others to achieve their goals.

The entrepreneur is eager to learn whatever skills are necessary to reach his goals, learns from mistakes, and needs concrete feedback on personal performance. He prefers the excitement and potential rewards of risk taking over security. This is combined in the entrepreneurial personality with pursuing opportunities applying discipline and focusing on a limited number of projects, rather than opportunistically chasing every option. Important for the entrepreneur is to passionately seek to identify new opportunities and ways to profit from change and disruption and stay abreast of market changes. Special interest of the entrepreneur is in getting to situations where it is possible to take personal responsibility for finding solutions to problems. Lee-Ross & Lashley (2009) add: 'stamina, commitment dedication to be important in optimizing chances' (p. 12).

Interestingly, most entrepreneurs cite making money as a secondary reason for starting their own business, and not as the primary reason. Lee-Ross & Lashley (2009) provide a model of entrepreneurial cues for the hospitality industry containing the following elements as influencing the decision to behave like an entrepreneur: 'personal environment, personal characteristics, personal goals, business idea, and business environment' (p. 53). In explaining the influence of the different factors in defining the entrepreneur, Bessant & Tidd (2007) raise the issue that it is a complex field of study, which makes it very difficult to present precise implications of the individual factors.

About the question whether entrepreneurship can be learned Murphy (2010) based on a research among graduates from the Harvard Business

School, states: 'They weren't born entrepreneurs ... they learned how to become successful entrepreneurs. And that leads to another obvious but crucially important truth, if they can do it, so can you' (p. 29). Murphy's research suggests that entrepreneurship can be learned. By taking the suggestion forward, the contextual characteristics of the SSUSCROs can be used in hospitality management programmes to have students learn about entrepreneurship in the hospitality industry.

Specific concerns however, about the personal dimension of the entrepreneur have certainly been raised throughout times. Kets de Vries (1985) warned that the same creative energy driving an entrepreneur comes from the destructive internal needs that can ruin a career or a company. In a review of "unmasking the entrepreneur" by Jones & Spicer (2009), Elgar (2011) warns that the broader context that often is used in current literature about entrepreneurship mostly does not extend much beyond related disciplines or fields of study. He raises some interesting questions (p. 273):

- * What is it about the entrepreneurial rhetoric that has an overpowering ability to cast a positive shadow on apparently negative things?
- * Why do we only hear about the successful entrepreneurs?
- * Are there no failures or unsuccessful entrepreneurs?

Jones & Spicer (2009) consider the entrepreneur to be one of the fantasies of economic discourse, which according to them may need to be unmasked.

As Elgar's questions and critical remarks about entrepreneurship touch the essence of my research, I kept them close in the further examining of the successful small culinary restaurant entrepreneurs. Even more alarming was Elgar's assumption that entrepreneurs by engaging in their activities of re-

arranging economic orders upset the arrangement of production and create disequilibrium in the economic system. Elgar (2011) calls it: 'Entrepreneurs consume and destroy the precious resources produced by others by often engaging in costly and wasteful adventures that have little if any purpose' (p. 276). More specifically, Wright & Zahra (2011) alert to the realistic negative effects of entrepreneurship for societies and individuals. They see corruption, solidifying monopolistic market positions, protection of own interest as products of entrepreneurship thereby primarily referring to developing economies.

Closely connected to entrepreneurship is the negative influence on family and personal life stipulated by Wright & Zahra (2011). Entrepreneurs' drive to work hard and sustain create tensions in families which multiply if they try to manage their family members in the day-to-day business. Dominant personalities in entrepreneurship are a potential threat to marriages and other personal relationships whereas the pure labour intensive nature of entrepreneurship per definition leaves little time for personal lives. Besides the growing attention for the negative effects of entrepreneurship, the definitions of entrepreneurship itself have developed.

More recently, definitions include the awareness of entrepreneurship being as much a social as an economic phenomenon (Korsgaard & Anderson, 2011): 'Entrepreneurship is enacted in a socialized context and produces social outcomes ... social value creation suggest(s) that considering only the single dimension of economic growth as outcome overlooks some critical aspects' (p.148). This definition of entrepreneurship as social value creation in addition to material, financial value creation was confirmed by Sheth (2010):

Every enterprise employs and generates social capital as much as it uses and generates material capital. Some economists have accepted the notion of social capital as a significant variable of financial capital. Their definition of social capital includes the degrees of trust, collaboration and shared norms of behaviour that enable people to act together more effectively. It is possible to add to this list such attributes as tolerance, compassion, selfless love, human dignity and freedom (p. 108)

It was important for me to take the socialized context and the aspect of social value creation into consideration while being involved in the primary research.

A personal assumption that was triggered by the concept of “social value creation” is that if students are to benefit from special contextual characteristics of a particular group of entrepreneurs there should be more than just economic, money related indicators. The body of knowledge on entrepreneurship is extensive and many of the aspects mentioned here are very recognizable. Considering the SSUSCROs, there is “marginal exposure” in the literature that connects to this specific group of entrepreneurs. The literature on entrepreneurship does not bring to life the special contextual characteristics of the SSUSCROs, I had worked for. Further search was needed, and accessing the specific more limited literature about restaurant entrepreneurship.

Business in the Restaurant Sector

The body of knowledge on restaurant entrepreneurship is present in the ‘how-to-do’ type of handbook literature while the research literature based on the topic is limited. In general when talking about opening (and managing) a

restaurant, Simon (2006) states that this is more than just “opening a restaurant” but much more a lesson about business and about life. The appeal is to be creative and to set oneself “apart from the crowd”, to take risk and to be passionate about what one does, whatever it is one does. In the category of research-based literature, the emphasis has been put upon restaurant revenue management, service process management, managing guest satisfaction and service recovery (Susskind, 2010). These are all technical restaurant management topics while not directly addressing restaurant entrepreneurship related to the entrepreneur him or herself.

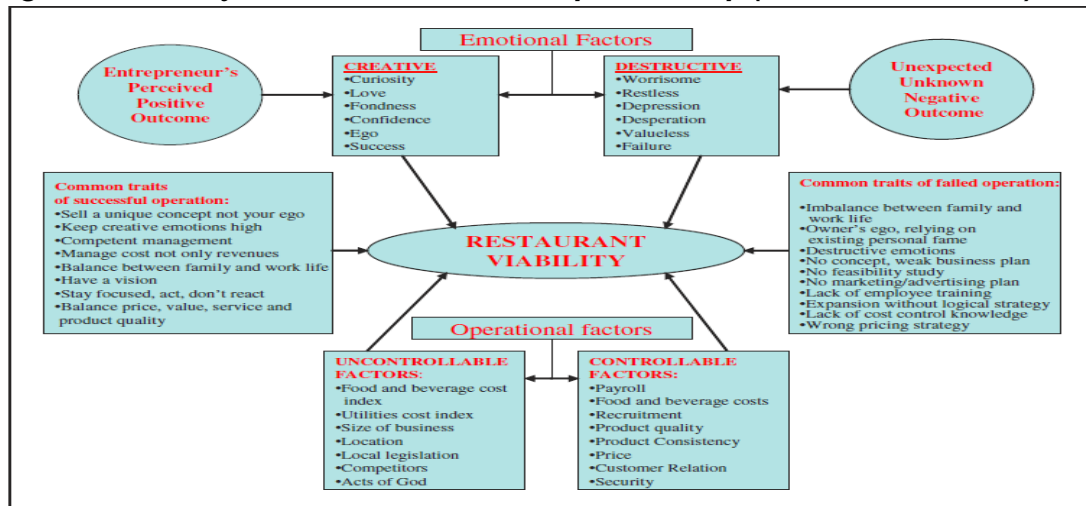
In their research into ‘critical success factors’ for independent restaurants, Camillo, Connolly, & Kim (2008) reported some interesting findings when comparing a sample of nine successful and nine failed restaurants in San Francisco. They looked at the number of years the restaurants were in operation and related that to a number of critical aspects in the managing and leading of the business. Camillo et al. asked the restaurant entrepreneurs what they thought qualified them as a restaurateur entrepreneur. Points that Camillo et al. raised with the restaurant entrepreneurs were about, if they had industry experience and if they had done a feasibility study performed before starting the restaurant. Other questions were asked about the presence of a business- and/or marketing plan, about how the entrepreneurs operated the business (as if they were working-owners or in another format, if family members were involved, and where they got their finances from.

At face value, it was difficult to distinguish the successful from the failed restaurant owners but there were, however, some interesting and clear differences between the two categories appeared. The successful

entrepreneurs had more of the following features than the failed entrepreneurs did: experience, hospitality business education, feasibility study before starting their business, business & marketing plan and a concept for their restaurant. Looking at the successful versus the failed restaurant owners as was done by Camillo et al. (2008), I became more convinced that the restaurant entrepreneurs I observed working in the sector had something very valuable to offer. It would be important, however, not to forget their shortcomings. Camillo et al. (2008, p. 378) drew the elements and contextual characteristics of viable (or successful) restaurant entrepreneurship together in a model (figure 2).

Some concerns need to be raised about Camillo's et al. research in the sense that no firm indicators were given about the segments the successful and failed restaurants operated in. Not precisely defining the restaurants, weakens the analytic value of the research. For further exploration of how the contextual characteristics of successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners can potentially influence hospitality management education, the model serves as a useful reference. It shows a comprehensive overview of dimensions and elements incorporated, and could be used in composing the interview contexts.

Figure 2. Viability Model Restaurant Entrepreneurship (Camillo et al., 2008)



Critical awareness of the nature of being or becoming a restaurant entrepreneur is presented in some myths by Garvey, Dismore, & Dismore (2004) in table 4. Although seemingly put up in a humorous manner, they clearly characterize the nature of restaurant entrepreneurship. They provide a warning for future practitioners to embrace realistic expectations as potential future restaurant entrepreneur. The myths put into perspective, show some essential ground rules for restaurant entrepreneurship and therefore needed to be taken into account in the field study.

Table 4. Interpreting Garvey et al.'s (2004) restaurant entrepreneurship myths

<p>Running a restaurant is easy</p> <p><i>People usually see running a restaurant as glamorous and exciting. It seems to be a fun-type of profession. The reality is, however, quite different involving enormous hard work that goes on every day, every hour the business is operating. The daily sum of activities can get up to 12-16 hours involving intense physical labour while subsequent levels of mental stress can be connected to the work. Outsiders neglect to see what is going on behind the scenes. Both for entrepreneur and staff, staying healthy and maintaining family relations can be challenging.</i></p> <p>I'll have a place to hang out</p> <p><i>People tend to see running a restaurant as acquiring a nice place to be. Being</i></p>

paid while enjoying the environment and products of the restaurant sounds very appealing. There are definitely restaurants which seem to be a place to “hang out” for the owner. In real-life restaurant entrepreneurship, however, there is no ‘hanging-out’ unless somebody else paid for, it is watching the business. A lot of checking is needed while being on the job. Keeping a distinction between friendly relations with staff, and “being friends” with them is essential. It has a devastating effect on the economics of the business if owner (and staff) consume many expensive products.

I can trust my brother-in-law

The dilemma of being involved in the business with family members is often not recognized by entrepreneurs. If family members are absolutely needed in the business, then very strict agreements need to be made about responsibilities, relationship, and expectations. The general advice would be not to engage into a business relationship with family. Expecting that children will be motivated to take over the business is often not the reality. Although family members can supply highly needed labour and expertise, as a result there may also be a continuous aspect of stress caused by the mixing of business and family relationships.

The neighbours will love me

There may be preconceived ideas by neighbours or the wider surrounding community about a restaurant that may not necessary be positive. It is important to know the neighbourhood and surrounding community and to engage in friendly relations with the members. Particularly, where it involves public servants as the fire brigade and police officers this can be crucial for operating a successful restaurant. For especially restaurants that are located far from the urban surroundings, it can be of great value in particularly wintertime to have access to extra assistance from municipal services. It has an additional benefit if restaurants can draw upon the spending of their local clientele in sustaining the business.

I’ve been to culinary school, so I’m ready to run the show

The misconception that having been through education in culinary school or secondary vocational education straight on prepares the way to successful entrepreneurship is highlighted here. Any type of specific vocational education

is just a starting point. Learning to deal with the “controlled chaos” of operating a restaurant cannot be learned in school not even when the classroom looks like one. Time is needed to learn about the trade while really operating the restaurant. Having considerable practical experience in the business of working in, and operating restaurants has great merit. If the work experience is combined with a formal degree in higher education (hospitality management), it will result in an entrepreneur being more sensitive to the conceptual aspects of the business.

I can cut the advertising budget

The importance of marketing in general and advertising cannot be underestimated and the budgets in this area are advised not to be cut when the business is not going as planned. Instead, careful evaluation of where the efforts are made would be needed. For attracting guests to the restaurant, a strong effort in marketing is crucial. Particularly generating free publicity through organizing special events and inviting journalists to (complementary) sampling of the food in the restaurant can have the effect of being in the media regularly.

I'll be home for the Holidays

The reality of having a different life for people in the restaurant business than outside is obvious. Important characteristic of the restaurant business is that in many cases when other people are celebrating leisure time and holidays they will want to visit a restaurant. The implication is that the restaurant operator will have to work while other people are celebrating. This will have an effect on family relations and thus build a significantly different life for the people involved than for people outside the business. The implications of working in the restaurant business, for many practitioners are reason to leave the sector and to change career.

In further defining the essence of restaurant entrepreneurship, Cannon (2005) is helpful in stating that a restaurant entrepreneur should be a hospitality minded person that enjoys dealing with people and the relationship building that follows from that. Cannon asserts for hospitality provision seven basic characteristics to be essential: politeness, smiling, managing eye contact,

greeting, listening, thanking, and bidding farewell to the customer. Lee-Ross & Lashley (2009) add to this: 'truly hospitality behaviour ... is motivated by genuine needs to meet the needs of others and hospitableness'(p. 175). These characteristics are crucial for delivering hospitality and confirm my notions presented in the introduction of this research.

Recent research findings (Ramos-Rodriguez, Medina-Garrido, & Ruiz-Navarro, 2011) suggest that individuals are more likely to be(come) a restaurant (or hotel) entrepreneur when they are young and female and their household income is in the middle or upper categories. In terms of the individual's perception of her environment and her personality traits that affect the decision to become an entrepreneur, Ramos-Rodriguez et al. (2011) found that individuals who perceive good business opportunities in their close environment and who do not fear failure are more likely to start a restaurant (or hotel) business.

Questions, future restaurant entrepreneurs should ask themselves, in order to avoid potential pitfalls and to assess their skills are (Sweeney, 2004): 'What am I good at? - What would I like to do? - What is my background? - How do I spend my dining dollars?' (p. 5). Sweeney clearly assumes a restaurant owner's best chance of success, to be focusing on his or her own background, experiences, and generation. More strongly, he asserts that 'large, established restaurant companies and small, nimble entrepreneurs can both fail for ignoring these considerations' (p. 6). In the primary research among the SSUSCROs in this thesis research, I explicitly posed the questions of Sweeney.

Looking at the value small restaurants can have for a society, it is interesting to look at Miller's (2006) theory about small restaurants (in the USA):

They provide the public with one of the last vestiges of true enterprise and inventiveness in the current economic corporate concentration camp mentality. A small restaurant is one of the few places where ... the owner's hard work and love of excellence show' (p. ix)

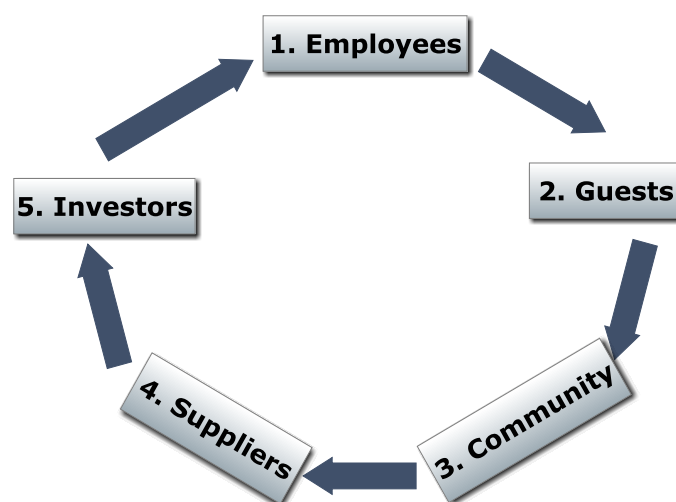
The combination of "the owner's hard work" and "love of excellence" is particularly noteworthy for it confirms the initial interest that I tried to capture in the narratives of restaurant entrepreneurs at the beginning of this thesis research. Other important denominators for restaurant ownership are about how the entrepreneur(s) should operate (Miller, 2006). There are two key positions in the restaurant (assuming there are two owners): one owner should be in the kitchen and one owner in the dining room. This is not the common situation found in every restaurant. In a number of restaurants, I experienced, the owner and his partner were mostly present in the dining room or in a combination of dining room and administration/control.

Finally, Miller (2006) concludes the restaurant to be a theatre in which the voice and the body must convey the entrepreneur's message. This message should be about: giving friendship, calm and graceful service and artfully prepared food of the highest quality. Good theatre performance as a metaphor for successful restaurant operating fits with Goffman's (1959) notion that 'The legitimate performances of everyday life are not "acted" or "put on"' (p. 80). In order to be offering a legitimate performance in the restaurant as a theatre, the actor must be in full control of his role and perform it with the greatest dedication. This notion is confirmed by Lashley (2008) as he concludes that customers are less impressed with staff performance if the person appears to be acting and trying to hide emotions. Lashley warns that the service worker

suffers job stress because of the emotional labour involved. Achieving emotional harmony, where behaviour is congruent with the actual emotions (“not bad acting”) is the desired state.

There is a point to consider about the successful offering of hospitality other than performing a role in the theatre. Derrida & Dufourmantelle (2000) point out that there is a distinction between unconditional hospitality and the rights and duties that are the conditions of hospitality. To explore this distinction, I refer to the ‘virtuous cycle of enlightened hospitality’ (Meyer, 2006, p. 238) in which Meyer visualizes where the actors involved in the “conditions for offering hospitality” are located.

Figure 3. Virtuous Cycle of Enlightened Hospitality (Meyer, 2006) & ordering added



In Meyer’s explanation of the hospitality offering stakeholders, part of the rights and duties are mapped that Derrida & Dufourmantelle refer to. In my perception, Meyer presents a strong position here to suggest the entrepreneur should be showing an interest in the restaurant’s stakeholders in a particular order. It is interesting to mark that Meyer considers the first stakeholders to be

employees, and then in descending order: guests, the community, suppliers and lastly: investors. In terms of hard-line business entrepreneurship, one might expect the investors to be considered as the most dominant stakeholders. Meyer, however, argues that if the other stakeholders starting with employees are taken care of properly, the investors will benefit as a result.

Meyer's (2006) theorem does not match with my experiences in the culinary restaurant sector. To illustrate this mismatch, I compared the four entrepreneurs narratives and their priorities with stakeholders to Meyer's importance suggestion as shown in the table below.

Table 5. Perceived Stakeholder Priority in Narratives compared to Meyer (2006)

Stakeholder priority order	Meyer (2006)	Narrative A.	Narrative B.	Narrative C.	Narrative D.
1.	Employees	Investor*	Guests	Investor*	Investor*
2.	Guests	Guests	Community	Guests	Guests
3.	Community	Employees	Suppliers	Community	Community
4.	Suppliers	Community	Employees	Suppliers	Employers
5.	Investor	Suppliers	Investor*	Employees	Suppliers

*The investors in all four narratives were primarily the entrepreneurs themselves and the bank.

None of the culinary restaurant entrepreneurs in the narratives demonstrated to have employees as their primary stakeholder. Three out of four clearly had the investor i.e. themselves as their most important stakeholder. Retrospectively, this was something which generated regular frustrating experiences.

Employees in most cases are not detached individuals but connected to their partners and families. If employees as stakeholder do not get high priority from an entrepreneur it may potentially threaten the employee's family relations, which can seriously hinder their sustaining in the sector. If a restaurant entrepreneur properly interacts with the community and the environment, this

supports a sustainable position for the restaurant. Cavagnaro (2007) referred to this notion of sustainable service management as:

This is managing for sustainability: the only option if we realize that we are all embarking on a Space Odyssey on the spaceship Earth. If we lose faith and hope that as managers we can balance profit with people and planet and, as individuals, the care for ourselves with the care for others, then we are in real trouble. Fortunately others before us have shown that it is possible to manage services in a sustainable way (p. 58)

I conclude that properly dealing with the stakeholders is part of the rights and duties of hospitality as mentioned by Derrida & Dufourmantelle (2000), applied to restaurant entrepreneurship.

From the exploration of restaurant entrepreneurship, it became clear that entrepreneurs should connect to their social context. Their success or failure is highly influenced by the effective assimilation with the world around them. Muller (2007) points at the special nature of the relationship between restaurant owner-managers and their customers, calling it:

A symbiosis that is time tested and strong enough to withstand all but the very deepest declines. The job of the restaurant owner is to restore people, to reconnect them, to let them see, to be seen and be the centre of a community (n.p)

In the next section a further literature exploration of the culinary restaurant owners' contextual characteristics is provided.

The Special Category of SSUSCROs

There is scarce research specifically about the contextual characteristics of SSUSCROs, although examples are present. Balazs (2001, 2002) did research about French three Michelin star restaurant chefs, in most cases also owners and stipulated the multitude of roles that SSUSCROs fulfil in their restaurant. Balazs refers to them as creator, leader, entrepreneur, businessman, showman, and outstanding representatives of French culture and excellence. Interestingly for her research, Balazs distilled “leadership lessons” from the three Michelin star chefs. Despite the interesting content of these leadership lessons, Balazs did not come up with the notion to apply them to hospitality management education. A clear flaw in Balazs’s research is the absence of critical observations. If we were to take her findings as the norm, the Michelin restaurant owners could be considered as a kind of ‘super heroes’ which they are not.

Johnson et al. (2005) add to the features two and three Michelin star chefs appear to have: ‘leadership, passion, and the almost “sacred obsession” of the chefs who aspire to run the best restaurants’ (p. 171). Balazs and Johnson further list personal qualities, and a high level of technical ability combined with knowledge, a sense of fun, creativity, and intelligence as being part of the personal portfolio of a Michelin star chef-entrepreneur. Gillespie (2001) expands on the essence of culinary restaurant entrepreneurship by stating that culinary restaurant entrepreneurs: ‘most likely are not going to be remembered for their money and astute business sense, but for their productive, original and artistic contributions to the hospitality industry’ (p. 173).

Gillespie summarizes the nature of culinary restaurant entrepreneurs under the three headings of design, vision and leadership. Looking at my own experience in the culinary restaurant sector, I would confirm that the three headings as provided by Gillespie were very much part of what I found to be the special nature of the SSUSCROs, I had worked for. Morrison (2001) looked at the biography of two entrepreneurs in the hospitality industry and Legohérel (2004) examined hotel/restaurant managers, their personality characteristics, attitude towards risk and decisional orientation.

Both studies, Morrison (2001) and Legohérel (2004), however, were not done within the small upper segment culinary restaurants. Entrepreneurs in small upper segment culinary restaurants operate their businesses in a very competitive environment. Johnson et al. (2005) describe SSUSCROs as: 'belonging to the rare species of individuals who are able to take on the dual role of businessperson and creator at the same time' (p. 171). Prices of the meals in culinary restaurants are high and the pressure to perform is extremely high. Michelin star chef Marino Roberto confirmed that it is not easy to have a Michelin star restaurant because it is about delivering high quality every day with a team that is up-to-it. For realizing this, Roberto focused a lot of attention on building a solid team that he could trust despite the general high turnover of staff in the hospitality industry (Griffith, 2011).

Somewhat alarming was that the critical observations present in my own experiences in the culinary restaurant sector were hard to find in the literature about this particular field. While in the general entrepreneurship literature a "dark side of entrepreneurship" was well documented, this seemed absent in the specific literature about the culinary sector. This raised my concern to find

out more about the negative aspects of culinary restaurant entrepreneurship when engaging in the primary research. Financial performance and economic sustainability seemed to be challenging elements for culinary restaurants. Johnson et al. (2005) found that only eight of the 15 three Michelin star culinary restaurants they investigated in terms of their financial performance turned out to be profitable. This is rather alarming when taken into account that more than six entrepreneurs in the same research indicated that after having been awarded Michelin stars, this generated more than 30% revenue increase.

It would be crucial in my SSUSCRO research to find out why, if Michelin stars provide extra revenues, still profitability is under threat in these restaurants. From the literature findings, I decided to adopt the definition of “successful” being for a restaurant to sustain for more than 10 years because that would leave the restaurant owners out of the research who operated “in the realm of the day”.

Johnson et al. (2005) raised another concern, which was related to the great difficulties culinary restaurant entrepreneurs experienced in managing their human resources. The chef-entrepreneurs explicitly stated that recruiting, retaining, and motivating staff with appropriate competencies and highly developed social skills was critical for the long-term success of their restaurants. The problems in human resources management originate from the fact that many chef-entrepreneurs were primarily trained in culinary skills and had virtually no formal training in dealing with staff. Many of the human resources management challenges were connected to the difficult nature of working in a culinary restaurant. Johnson et al. list the negative aspects of the work in the culinary restaurant sector as follows: ‘unsociable aspects of the job,

including the long working hours, tremendous work pressure, and relatively low wages are challenges' (p. 180).

The entrepreneurs in Johnson's et al. research were all chef-entrepreneurs who generally did not go through extensive diploma courses or degree programmes. Exception in Johnson's et al. research were 3 out of 20 chefs who had followed a hospitality diploma course, while only 2 out of 20 had gone through a higher degree non-hospitality related programme. Many of the issues described about the culinary restaurant owners are located in the field of management and leadership, which in the next section is further explored.

Leading and Managing the Business

A statement that connects well to the aim of this thesis can be found in Kennedy's (1963) legendary speech on the day he was assassinated: 'Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other' (n.p.). Exploring the SSUSCRO phenomenon, and students learning from it, most certainly includes investigating the topics of leadership and management. The literature often makes a distinction between leadership and management implying that the leader does the right things and copes with change while the manager does things right and copes with complexity (Mintzberg, 2011). Mintzberg prefers to define leadership and management as being together in what he calls 'communityship' (p. 9) which is about caring and working for each other with a social perspective.

Traditionally, approaches in leadership are more about the individual than about the community. Mintzberg's communityship connects to the core philosophy of 'servant leadership' (Greenleaf, 1977). Further on in this literature

review 'servant leadership' is described and identified as one of the emerging appropriate approaches to leadership for the hospitality industry (Brownell, 2010). In order to properly define leadership and management in the context of culinary restaurant entrepreneurship, it is essential to look at the historical developments in this field.

A wealth of literature has been published on leadership and management in major companies and multi-nationals, and research institutes have been set up to study the subject (Hou, 2001; Dawes, 1999). At the start of this millennium, more than 2000 books came out about aspects of leadership (Gillespie, 2001), and in the decade after that there seems to have been an avalanche of leadership books. Leadership is a very complex topic on which many different opinions exist, and various theories have consolidated. Concrete theories on leadership have started to emerge in the 1920's. Early on, the leader was the central object to be studied and was as Moore (1927, cited in Brownell, 2010) defined expected to have 'the ability to impress the will of the leader on those led and induce obedience, respect, loyalty and cooperation' (p. 364).

Later on the relation between the leader and his followers became the object of research interest. According to Hellriegel, Jackson, & Slocum (2005), leadership involves influencing others so as to achieve team-goals. On the other hand, Coulter & Robbins (2012) stipulate that leadership is what leaders do. Both approaches centre around the leader as an individual. The essential key-terms to understand leadership in these references are "influence" and "do". Other elements, however, require also attention when properly defining leadership. The first theories about leadership were classified as "personality

trait theories". In these theories, traits as characteristics of leaders were considered to be decisive for the distinction between "leaders and non leaders" (Hellriegel et al., 2005).

Northouse (2004) specifically identified key characteristics such as intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability to be important for the successful leader. Various studies identified additional main traits that leaders need to possess such as drive, a desire to lead, job relevant knowledge, and honesty (Coulter & Robbins, 2012). Collinson & Collinson (2009) came to similar conclusions, but added that leaders should be strategic, inspirational, and charismatic. When theories about leadership formed, the valid view of a leader would be that of a stereotype male manager working in an American based firm. He should at least have self- awareness, social skills and -awareness, and self-control (Hellriegel et al., 2005).

In the 1950's a development towards behavioural leadership theories became more accepted. In the behavioural leadership theories, a main goal was to identify behavioural characteristics of leaders and they were labelled as leadership styles (Brownell, 2010). It became accepted to take situational factors into consideration, which required different leadership behaviours in order to adapt to varying circumstances (Coulter & Robbins, 2012). As an instrument to explain leadership, Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1964) became popular (Brownell, 2010). Their theory distinguishes leaders on the basis of their concern for tasks or concerns for people and their tendency to be either directive or participative in their decisions.

Figure 4. Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1964)



Applying the Managerial Grid, results in five main leadership styles depending on a high or low score on the two dimensions “production” and “people” (Hellriegel et al., 2005): **Impoverished Management** – low on both dimensions and exercise minimum effort to get work done from subordinates, **Task management** – high on production; low on people, **Middle-of-the-Road** – compromising between production and people, **Country Club** – low on production and high on people, **Team Management** – high on production and high on people. This last style has been termed as most effective according to Blake and Mouton. The leader feels that empowerment, commitment, trust, and respect are the key elements in creating a team atmosphere, which will automatically result in high employee satisfaction and production. I experienced some of the elements of this team management style in the culinary restaurants where I worked. It seemed to be the most appropriate leadership style for achieving the high quality objectives in these businesses.

The awareness that leadership styles need to be adapted or changed, depending on the specific situation developed contingency theories. An example of contingency theories is the situational leadership model, which emphasizes the level of readiness of the followers, and depending on that factor the leadership style to be chosen in alternative situations (Hellriegel et al., 2005). The follower's readiness for a certain task depends on the acquired skills and training. After thorough analysis, an appropriate leadership style should be chosen, which could be task behaviour oriented or relationship behaviour oriented. Task behaviour does not exclude relationship behaviour but it means that the degree to which both orientations are applied needs careful balancing. As figure 5 indicates, followers presenting a state of low readiness would require a telling style leader that defines, directs, and supervises work processes clearly.

Figure 5. Model Situational Leadership & Maturity of Followers (James, 1998)



Alternatively, subordinates indicating moderate levels of readiness should be led by participating or selling leaders. Both styles give great importance to

encouragement and motivation of employees. If followers are highly prepared, then the most adequate leadership style is a delegating style based on empowering workers to be independent. This contingency theory about leadership considers the follower as the vital key characteristic of leadership, to which leaders have to adapt to be effective and prevail.

Contingency theories consider contextual aspects of leadership effectiveness, recognizing that situational variables are significant in determining the impact and outcomes of various leader behaviours (Brownell, 2010). Consequently, leadership styles are chosen based on the circumstances of the job and follower, and the basic intention of the leader is to motivate his employees towards achievement (Whitener, 2007). Contingency approaches are present in the leadership of high quality restaurants and can be observed in the refined structures in which the degree of directive leading is connected to the skills and knowledge level of the staff member involved.

In the past twenty-five years, developments have led to defining transactional, transformational, and authentic leadership. Transactional leaders orient and motivate their employees toward group achievement (Coulter & Robbins, 2012). Transactional leadership is largely based on the exchange of rewards contingent on performance (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). Transformational leadership is based on the charisma of the leaders and the strong relationships they establish (Brownell, 2010).

According to Hellriegel et al. (2005), transformational leaders incorporate as common characteristics: visionary, trustworthy, considerate, confident, thoughtful, charismatic, and ethical. Furthermore, Scott-Halsell, Shumate, & Blum (2008) contest that emotional intelligence as defined by Goleman (1998),

'the effective awareness, control and management of one's own emotions, and those of other people' (p. 104), plays an important role in transformational leadership. Goleman goes as far as to say that emotional intelligence is one of the critical factors that create effective leaders (Hellriegel et al., 2005).

Research further revealed that male leaders generally resort more to a transactional leadership style, whereas female leaders tend to adopt a more transformational leadership style (Embry, Padgett, & Caldwell, 2008). Authentic leadership has its fundamentals in transformational leadership according to Avolio et al. (2009) and they define this leadership style as: 'a pattern of transparent and ethical leadership behaviour that encourages openness in sharing information needed to make decisions while accepting followers' inputs' (p. 423).

The term "authentic" indicates that there are authentic and pseudo transformational leaders. The essence of authentic leadership is the creation of an open-minded atmosphere with a free flow of information, where subordinate's input is taken into consideration. Reporting from research in the hospitality industry, Brownell (2010) states that *authentic* (added by researcher) transformational leaders are the most effective in generating employee motivation and satisfaction. They are able to inspire shared values among their staff. Within the culinary restaurant business such authentic leaders exist. Balazs (2002) described the success of the great French chefs for a large extent 'to be based on their ability to transmit and embed their own fundamental values of excellence into the organisation's culture and functioning' (p. 249).

A follower centric view on leadership currently more frequently applied, acknowledges that employees are the most suitable individuals to evaluate

leadership performance because they are directly affected by the leader or manager (Collinson & Collinson, 2009). This notion is important in relation to culinary restaurants, to assess how priority is given to 'employees'. In my experiences this was not the case in the restaurants in which I worked.

According to Kousez & Posner (2007) employees value four major traits in leaders: honesty, forward looking, competence, and inspiring. A trait included in the definition of leadership, not mentioned as valuable by employees, is "directive". Kousez & Posner's findings seem to contradict Gemmil & Oakley's (1992) conclusion that leadership only exists due to the "childlike dependency" of followers i.e. employees (Collinson & Collinson, 2009). Some extreme examples built on this concept of dependency, I experienced in culinary restaurants where an overly imposing directive leadership style was applied, not necessarily leading to the proper results.

Collinson & Collinson (2009), further found that employees expected leaders to demonstrate continuously the disposition to be involved with operational aspects. This meant that leaders who "get their hands dirty" gain the trust and respect of their subordinates. Women especially appreciate this "leading by example" style (Collinson & Collinson, 2009). I would add that in the cases I personally experienced in the culinary restaurant sector most entrepreneurs displayed this "hands-on", leading by example approach in their businesses. Obviously there were differences in the frequency in which they would apply this 'hands-on' involvement. In a labour intensive industry sector such as the small upper segment culinary restaurants, employees generally appreciate a leader – entrepreneur (or partner) that would not hesitate to be 'involved' if needed. My assumption based on this, is that a part of the eventual

financial results of a culinary restaurant are connected to the appropriate leadership style of the entrepreneur – SSUSCRO.

Quite critical evaluation about the value of leadership is present in research such as by Bligh & Schyns (2007): 'According to the romance of leadership view, people tend to overuse and glorify leadership as a causal category, due primarily to a psychological need to make sense of complex organisational phenomena' (p. 343). Tourish & Pinnington (2002) also critically argue that, while not questioning the need for leadership per se, research proves that the dominant models within the rubric of transformational leadership are fundamentally flawed. They do call however for more inclusive and participatory models of the leadership process. Grint (2010) suggests that alternatives are possible for 'the sacred element of leadership (p. 102)', but 'require immense effort, are more likely to prevail in very small communities, and place heavy demands on followers who need to accept responsibility without developing alternative structures of power'.

Grint's notion very much connects to the practice in the upper segment culinary restaurants that I experienced where there seemed to be an unwritten law for each employee to accept responsibility in any given situation without that being part of the formal hierarchical structure. This behaviour, expected of employees in the SSUSCRO-led restaurants made it difficult to retain talented employees. If people were competent and self-secure enough to accept responsibilities, they at some point also liked to have it reflected in their formal position.

After working for five years in the restaurant of the SSUSCRO in narrative B, I found myself accepting many responsibilities at senior

management level. Simultaneously, I recognized the two restaurant managers to be attempting to keep me formally at a lower level of position, which made me conclude to leave. Besides that, the enormous labour intensive nature of the work in the restaurant in narrative B had harmed my personal- and family life and so I experienced a strong stimulus to leave the restaurant from that perspective too.

The most recent development in leadership theory suggests that there is a move in the direction of 'servant leadership', which draws upon many of the approaches from the years before. Van Dierendonck (2011) summarizes the essence of servant leadership, indicating it is about empowering and developing people; by expressing humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, and stewardship; and by providing direction. Furthermore, servant leadership starts with a high-quality two-fold relationship in which trust, and fairness are expected to be the most important mediating processes to encourage self-actualization, positive job attitudes, performance, and a stronger organisational focus on sustainability and corporate social responsibility. Servant leaders engage in continuous self-reflection in order to be acting in accordance with their value systems.

As suggested by Brownell (2010), the leader's personal values provide the strongest foundation that separates servant leaders from leaders using transformational and other leadership styles. In the next section of this literature review a more detailed look will be taken at the nature and importance of values and how they influence individuals in their actions and behaviour. Brownell (2010) concludes that servant leaders have the potential to address the hospitality industry's most pressing concerns on a world-wide path towards

responsible and sustainable business. The overview of leadership and management approaches provided above is important to understand which factors influence the SSUSCROs in general before interviewing them as part of the primary research.

Within the many perspectives in the literature on leadership and management that connect to the contextual characteristics of the SSUSCROs, I find it important to highlight two specific approaches. In addition to the “grand theories” in leadership that focus on the “what is leadership about”, they are “how to individually implement leadership” approaches and therefore interesting for the generally very pragmatic culinary restaurant sector. I will explain the two approaches below because they proved to be useful for the hospitality industry and in hospitality management education.

(a) Value Driven Leadership (Covey, 2004) and

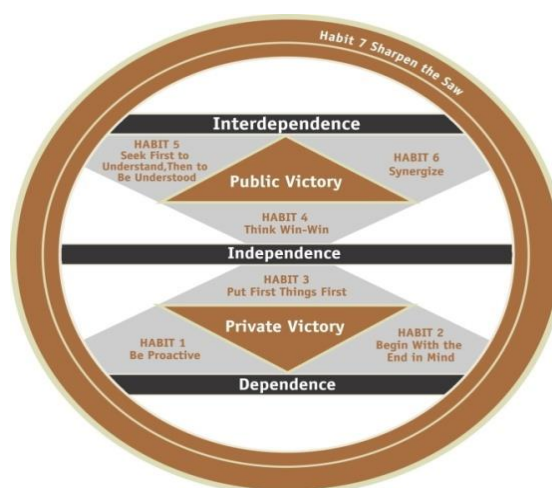
(b) Competing Values Framework (Quinn et al., 2011).

Covey’s value driven leadership materializes in the 7-Habits model that supplies a quite tangible approach for a person to lead one’s own life effectively. The model and personal leadership philosophy guide a person towards becoming effective in dealing with other people in a sustainable manner. The 7-Habits model has been used quite broadly in a diversity of industries. I have been involved in training hotel and restaurant managers in the 7-habits value driven leadership approach in hotel companies, which proved to be appreciated. Totaljobs Group (2012) confirms the attention from within the hospitality industry for the 7-habits approach by quoting Karen Forrester, managing director of TGI Friday’s UK, a prominent casual dining restaurant group:

Our industry attracts people with a certain passion, who put everything into it. This can affect work/life balance ... a licensed Covey facilitator trained sixty of my general managers at TGIF. It improved how they approached tasks and helped them be more efficient at what they do. [Managers] always find it so helpful for their development (n.p)

Training, coaching, and development are essential for any hospitality business. To be effective and successful the assumption is that a team or business composed of 'highly effective people' will improve the end result. The 7-Habits model is also taught in international hospitality management programmes and the educational implementation has demonstrated to be effective. The value driven leadership approach asks individuals to consider their personal paradigms in order to adjust how they see the world. Assumption is that “seeing” situations in a certain way triggers action and from that, result (effect) is generated. The individual person is stimulated to implement seven habits that are ranged in a logical order which leads to effective behaviour.

Figure 6. Seven Habits of Highly Effective People (Covey, 2004)



The first three habits are about moving from the stage of ‘dependency’ (“other people are responsible for my life”) to ‘independency’ (“I am responsible for my

choices and the consequences in life”). Then the next three habits are about getting from ‘independency’ to the most advanced level of ‘interdependency’ (“it is in this life about ‘we’ and not just about me”). The final seventh habit is about ‘working on maintaining and growing in the domains of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual’ (“sharpening the saw”). It seems that if people are better able to effectively lead or manage themselves and the way they deal with other people they are also better equipped to perform their professional duties.

Some typical examples of statements given by people from companies that participated in the course in 2011 and 2012 are shown below as a illustration of the impact it has (FranklinCovey India & SouthAsia, 2012):

Table 6. Effects 7-Habits Training (FranklinCovey India & SouthAsia, 2012)

<i>IBM Global Process Services - Murugappa Management Services - PTCL - Terex India - Deutsche Bank - Early Childhood Education Centre - Sears IT and Management Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is really highly effective training program for both personal as well as professional life. • To learn how to be honest to ourselves and in consequence, be honest to our fellow human beings. • Developed an all rounded personality – balancing all aspects of life. • To be proactive is one of the key requirements in today's international business as of ours. • Concepts of "lead by example" and "Perseverance" were taken as lesson. Time Matrix is phenomenal and is helping focus on Q2 and identify Q3 while balancing Q1 • I learned that there is a systematic way to better manage myself, team and other situation. • Step by step process for improvement ... implement and incorporate each habit ... day to day life one by one.

Although the comments are quite diverse, the general tendency is that people found support in the 7-habits approach to apply to both their personal and professional lives. The type of comments fit with my own experiences as trainer in the 7-Habits for students in higher education and management teams of hotel

companies. It needs to be noted here that serious criticisms are present about Covey's 7-Habits. Harvey (2012), when reporting about the passing away of Stephen Covey summarized the main concern about the rather linear suggestion of the 7-Habits to improve the quality of life of people: ' ... critics tend to see them as part of a cult of the self-help American frenzy of recent decades that tends to trivialize big problems ... '. Others such as Sparks (2010) address the 'just common sense' nature of the 7-Habits and the use of language that is ' ... cumbersome and forced – with a tendency to use big words when smaller ones would do ... '. While the first argument is true, it may also explain why a relatively large number of people worldwide seem to attach value to the 7-Habits. The second of Sparks's criticism can also be considered as valid and should be put into the perspective of the time the original book was written. Odon (2005) warns to be conscious of the much more complex nature of human existence than is conveyed in the 7-Habits:

Time and again, we are humbled and edified by how circumstances often play out by themselves, how things miraculously fall into place over a good intention that is managed and coaxed into realization by our all-too-human designs which, as human designs go, can only clash and conflict with our egos, insecurities, ambition, pride, hurt and other weaknesses. (last para)

More profoundly, the 7-Habits framework and grounding principles were deconstructed by Fenwick & Parsons (1996), who offered five different critical stances based on: post-modernist thinking, elements from different feminist perspectives, one based on critical pedagogy, a non-functionalist perspective, and a perspective called "exclusionary representation". Fenwick & Parsons,

address the questions Christians should ask themselves to consider how to deal with the world around them and putting approaches such as the 7-Habits into perspective. Looking at the critical perspectives surrounding particularly the connection between the 7-Habits framework and Covey's mormon background, I feel it to be important to emphasize the apparent value the framework has provided for people in their professional and personal practical lives. The "dark side" of the Covey phenomenon is symbolized by the extreme business exploiting of the 7-Habits framework by the Franklin Covey organization active in many countries and selling the materials at high prices. Critical evaluation will be needed in the further exploration of how the 7-Habits personal leadership framework relates to the SSUSCROs. It is in this sense very much in line with a response to Sparks's (2010) treating of the framework phrased as a pointed question: ' ... If after 20 years, the model Covey describes for being highly effective is only used by a small percentage of people, does this mean the model is only suitable for a small percentage of people? ... '.

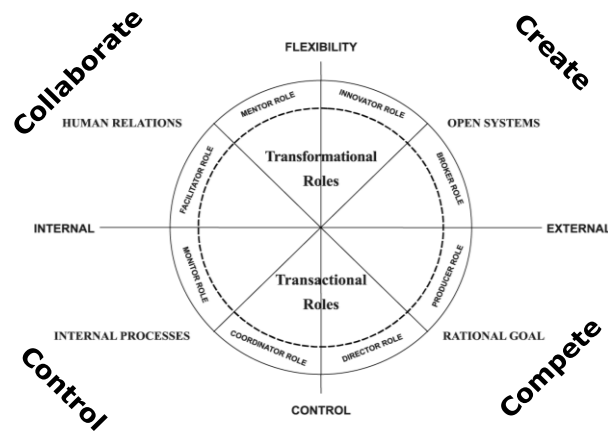
Another 'how to individually implement leadership' approach that has demonstrated to have an impact also in the hospitality industry is the 'Competing Values Framework (CVF)' (Quinn et al., 2011), which was first published in 1996. In the hospitality industry, teaching and researching involving the CVF was done to get more awareness and knowledge on managing and leading. Examples include the use of the CVF in a hospitality management parttime undergraduate programme in both The Netherlands and the Dutch Carribean, in which I as a lecturer was involved from 2000 to 2005.

Wilkinson (2010) looked at leadership role profiles and job satisfaction by using Quinn's CVF and found that although there were differences, overall,

managers in different types of restaurants tended to use leadership roles in the same manner and priority. Wilkinson also found that a leadership role is largely unrelated to manager's job satisfaction. Stevens (2009) used the CVF to investigate how corporate ethical codes as strategic documents in companies had an impact on success or failure in these companies. Assisted by the CVF, she came to the conclusion that companies need to discuss ethical codes in their strategic documents because that process triggers thinking about it.

Another interesting application of the Competing Values Framework in hospitality and tourism management education was reported by Breen, Walo, & Dimmock (2004). They stated that it is very important to incorporate management skills in higher education programmes in hospitality and tourism programmes. From their findings they reported that 23 out of 24 competencies in the CVF could be developed in the programme. Numerous other research results suggest the use of the CVF to be appropriate to assess the presence and development of leadership competencies and to teach students about it, such as Thompson (1993), Parker (2004), Cameron, Quinn, DeGraff, & Thakor, (2006), Belasen & Frank (2008) and Lincoln (2010).

Figure 7. Competing Values Framework (combination of several authors)



The Competing Values Framework originates from synthesizing more than a century of management and leadership research. This resulted in a model with four quadrants that have themes, action imperatives, roles, and competencies. The four quadrants represent apparently competing perspectives such as ‘internal’ vs ‘external’ and ‘control’ vs ‘flexibility’. When there is a strong emphasis on ‘human relations’, this may potentially conflict with a ‘rational goal’ approach that is about generating money and increasing productivity. An internal process approach, which is about strict control and structure, will not necessarily favour the opposing open process approach that is about flexibility and change. The same seemingly contradictions are also present in the competencies needed within the CVF.

Although this may seem surprising for some people, the powerful development perspective in the Competing Values Framework lies in the premiss that a good leader and manager needs to develop in all four quadrants and all competencies, and not just concentrate on one or two. In the field study on the SSUSCROs, referring back to the literature would be important in order to capture their contextual characteristics and to explore how these potentially

could be of value for education in hospitality management. In the next section, the distinctive field of value systems will be explored to see how it plays a role in the SSUSCRO context.

Moving People: Value Systems and Driving Powers

As was found in the literature about restaurant entrepreneurship, a part of the contextual characteristics of successful entrepreneurs relate to personality traits i.e. energy, health, emotional stability, intelligence and capacity to inspire.

Another important part of the restaurant entrepreneur's contextual characteristics is in the values domain, which consists of personal and ethical values. Already in the mid sixties Guth & Tagiuri (1965) asserted that the personal values, executives (i.e. entrepreneurs) hold, have a profound influence on their strategic decision-making. Simultaneously, they found that managers and employees in many cases are not aware of the values they possess and tend to misjudge the values of others.

England (1967) added that an individual manager's (or entrepreneur's: added by researcher) personal value system makes a difference in terms of how he evaluates information, how he arrives at decisions, in short, how he behaves. This applies both to the decisions related to the business for the long term as well as the decisions made on a day-to-day basis. England further concluded that personal value systems influence the way a person deals with business while conversely the personal value system is influenced by organisational life: 'Differences in personal value systems help to explain the nature of conflict between individuals in an organisation' (p. 68). This makes it important and interesting for individuals, as entrepreneurs, to explore their

personal value systems in order to work towards consistency between what one values and what one is. Guth & Tagiuri (1965) more strongly suggest: 'The executive who will take steps to better understand his own and other men's values can gain an important advantage in developing workable and well-supported policies' (p. 124).

Research into the importance and impact of values has developed in the past few decades. Rokeach (1973) defined human values as 'a prescriptive or proscriptive belief, wherein some means or end of actions is judged to be desirable or undesirable' (p. 7), and this effects the preferences on which people act. Rokeach distinguished between values as instrumental and terminal values, wherein the first indicate the values that impact on the desirable modes of conduct – the way we act now. The terminal values influence the desirable end states of existence – the way we see the long term result. He also found that people in certain occupations shared the same type of values such as in the case of entrepreneurs in small businesses 'individual achievement, strivings for independence, material success and comfort, hedonism and the security of the family' (p. 157).

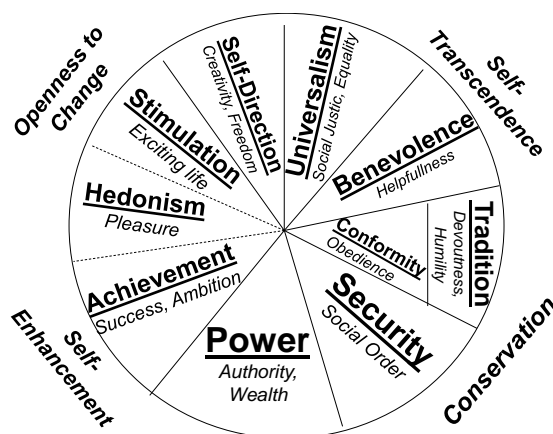
Rokeach's instrument for measuring human values, the Value Survey, asks respondents to rank 18 terminal and 18 instrumental values. He concluded that the value of measuring values is that it offers insight into virtually any human problem one might think of. Later on after further developing his instrument, Rokeach (1979) proposed the notion that personal values can be connected to institutional values and that values change over time and through self-awareness. This latter point is interesting in the light of using this research's findings to influence education. Self awareness of students studying

in the professional field of hospitality management is increased by explaining the value systems of one of the specific entrepreneurial segments within that field (the SSUSCROs).

Expanding on the work of Rokeach, Schwartz in 1992 came up with the Values Theory (Schwartz, 2006). It defines the five features that are common to all values as desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people's lives. Values are beliefs tied inextricably to emotion, not: objective, cold ideas. They are a motivational construct referring to the desirable goals people strive to attain and influence specific actions and situations. Values are abstract goals and this distinguishes them from specific concepts like norms and attitudes, while they serve as standards or criteria that guide the selection or evaluation of actions, policies, people and events.

Schwartz identified ten motivational types of values related to one another. The model in figure 8 shows the ten types of values and their relations.

Figure 8. Theoretical Model of Ten Motivational Value Types (Schwartz, 2006)



In the theoretical model, the ten types of values are organized by motivational similarities and dissimilarities in which self-enhancement stands opposed to self-transcendence and conservation stands opposed to openness to change. From Schwartz's research that stretched over almost two decades, it turned out

that the model holds in many different nations and cultures. Age, life stage, gender, and education have been identified as having an influence on peoples' value priorities.

Olver & Mooradian (2003) present the relation and possible integration of personality traits and personal values. Personality traits are defined as endogenous basic tendencies tied to underlying biophysical response systems; they are strongly heritable, surprisingly immune to parental and social influences, and remarkably stable throughout adulthood. Personal values are considered to be learned beliefs and guiding principles as explained in Schwartz's values theory. When looking at the relationship between personality traits and personal values, Olver & Mooradian (2003) conclude that personality and values both capture distinct and differential characteristics of the individual. Olver & Mooradian also provide evidence that personality traits and values are relatively strongly interrelated. Because personality traits are considered endogenous variables ("nature") they cannot be significantly influenced or modified. Personal values, however, are part of the "nurture" elements that constitute a person's behaviour and actions.

In the choice for this research, I put a strong focus on personal values within the nurture domain because these potentially can be influenced in education. The "driving powers" elements incorporated in personality traits (the nature element), I looked at from the perspective of being the "constituting material". Identifying this constituting material is also important for education when dealing with current or future students to assess their career opportunities. Tepeci & Bartlett (2002) conclude that workers' preference for a particular organisational culture by far is the strongest influenced by "personal

interests including personal values. For me being a practitioner-researcher in hospitality management education”, it is the most interesting in terms of research activity to concentrate on the nurture (teachable and learnable) element.

Lingsma & Scholten (2001) confirm the importance of values for learning by referring to McClelland’s ‘iceberg model’ describing learning processes of people. Values are part of the large underwater part of the iceberg that most strongly influences the learning and changing of people over time. If the underwater part of the iceberg in peoples’ learning and changing containing their values can be influenced, the strongest effect is achieved because it is connected to the will of people to learn or change. It should be noted here that the empirical grounding for the assumed relation between values and behaviour is still in progress and to date has not produced a full comprehensive and evidence based theory yet. Bardi & Schwartz (2003), although recognizing correlations between values and behaviour, hold reservation in emphasizing causality.

Adding to the debate on values are Tepeci & Bartlett (2002) who make a distinction between situationalist and personalist streams of thinking. The situationalists hold the view that behaviour can be predicted by assessing the person’s situation or organisation while personalists suggest that personality traits, values, and beliefs are primarily responsible for behaviour. In addition, conflicts between attitude and actions in a particular context may be activated which can influence a person not to follow his/her general values (Feather, 2002).

Looking at my experience with entrepreneurs, I perceived them to have different value orientations, which had an effect on the way they operated their restaurant and connected to that, their personal lives. In the table below a comparison is presented in dominant and less-dominant value dimensions of the four SSUSCROs I worked for:

Table 7. Perceived Value Priorities of the Entrepreneurs in the Four Narratives

	A	B	C	D
Dominant value dimensions	Power, achievement, self-direction	Hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, achievement	Tradition, security, power, achievement	Power, achievement, self-direction
Less-dominant value dimensions	Universalism, benevolence	Power, security, tradition, conformity	Stimulation, hedonism	Benevolence, universalism

There is not one clear pattern in the value systems of the four entrepreneurs although all four fitted with Bessant & Tidd's (2007) description of entrepreneurs' typical motivation being; a high need for achievement. In the next section I will describe the situations where entrepreneurs' and more specifically SSUSCROs contextual characteristics have been applied to influence hospitality education.

SSUSCROs Connection to Education

In general, there is not a lot of evidence suggesting that successful small upper segment culinary restaurant entrepreneurs' contextual characteristics are currently used to enrich education. Ball (2005) expresses some concern about entrepreneurship in general being present in education:

The extent to which entrepreneurship ... learning and teaching should feature in university programmes is still a topic of debate, with concern

around the degree of relevance of the subject and the potential watering down of academic programmes (p. 1)

Nevertheless, Ball states that entrepreneurship teaching is relatively widespread in hospitality management higher education programmes in the UK, thereby referring to modules in these courses. This type of entrepreneurship teaching does not necessarily include using the contextual characteristics of successful entrepreneurs.

Collins, Smith, & Hannon (2006) describe a very appealing approach to involving entrepreneurs in higher education in which a tripartite format is created. In this synergistic learning approach three parties are involved to generate learning. Nascent entrepreneurs (undergraduate students), active entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship facilitators (faculty) are brought together wherein the students learn from the entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurs from the students. The programme on discovering entrepreneurship Collins et al. (2006) report about, adopts the following underpinning beliefs and assumptions.

1. Existing entrepreneurs have a great deal of knowledge and experience to share with others, some of which, will be of value to nascent entrepreneurs who wish to act in entrepreneurial ways.
2. Nascent entrepreneurs have a knowledge and experience set that may be different from existing entrepreneurs but which may be of value to them, where nascent entrepreneurs may bring a new or naive view of business through viewing the world via a different lens of experience.
3. Collaborative and co-learning environments are a potential medium for encouraging exchange of knowledge and experience.

4. Creating mutuality and reciprocity between nascent entrepreneurs, existing entrepreneurs and facilitators may enhance both the learning environment and the development of entrepreneurship capacities.

Particularly premiss 1 very closely fits the core assumptions that I brought to this research. I assume the richness in knowledge and experience of the SSUSCROs to be of potential value to students in specifically undergraduate programmes. The learning element mentioned in assumption 2., I had not yet explicitly considered. Having entrepreneurs benefit from the different type of experience and view of students seems quite interesting if it can be facilitated through a “discovering entrepreneurship tripartite approach”.

Overall, Collins et al. (2006) conclude that valuable learning is generated. Challenges encountered in this project were the labour intensive nature of the delivery, getting enough (fresh) entrepreneurs in the future who are willing to participate and the need for training the people involved. Collins et al. conclude that ‘this synergistic learning approach is unlikely to be an easy fit with a traditional higher education learning environment’ (p. 352).

Considering the contextual characteristics of SSUSCROs and the way that they can be used to influence hospitality management programmes, raises the question of what kind of elements are present in these programmes. Analysing the curricula of the prominent hospitality management programmes in the world generates the following areas of attention. A combination was used of Huckaby’s (2007) and Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS) Travel & Tourism (UK) (2011) top 5 lists of schools that are the top deliverers of hospitality management education in the world.

Table 8. World Top 5 Hospitality Management Programmes

Ranking		Main curriculum areas (that could explicitly be found)															
			Operations	Foreign Languages	Accounting	Economics	Statistics	Mathematics	Information Technology	Law	Marketing	Human Resources Management	Strategic Management	Finance	Entrepreneurship	Research	Leadership
Huckaby, 2007	TNS, 2011	Hospitality Management Programme															
	1.	Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne Switzerland Glion	X	X	X	X	X	N	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	?
	2.	Institute of Higher Education Switzerland Les Roches International	X	X	X	X	X	N	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	3.	School of Hotel Management Switzerland Cornell	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	?	X	X	X	X	N	X	X
	4.	University U.S.A.	X	N	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	5.	Hotelschool, The Hague Netherlands	X	X	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	X	?	?	?

X = Available, N = Not documented, ? = Cannot be explicitly found. The Hotelschool The Hague (nr.5) expressed on its website to have the curriculum under reconstruction. Furthermore the explicit topic areas in the latter school are described in terms of themes which makes it difficult to make a distinction between the main curriculum areas.

The elements of the programmes are operations, foreign languages, accounting, economics, statistics, mathematics, law, marketing, human resource management, strategic management, finance, entrepreneurship, research, and leadership. Operations as a topic area comprises all the direct skills and vocational elements of the profession including food & beverage, culinary art, rooms division and other.

Within the programme elements, I identify three distinctive categories related to the learning process based on how these elements are used:

- Theoretical dominantly school based learning:** foreign languages, statistics, mathematics.

2. **Management disciplines:** in which learning both in school and in practice takes place such as operations, accounting, economics, law, marketing, human resource management.
3. **Leadership related disciplines in which learning takes place in school but further developing in practice:** strategic management, finance, entrepreneurship, research, and leadership.

This categorization may be disputable but the reasoning is as follows. Some topic areas are primarily learnt in school and then applied in the world of practice. That indicates, it would be very difficult to use the knowledge or skills if no previous formal learning has taken place. Then next, there is a category of topics needed by the practitioner to be able to perform in the profession of hospitality manager. These topics are management related and in the most logical order are learnt in school before put into practice. Some practitioners, however, go through the learning first in practice and then later pick up the theoretical framework behind it. The third category, I refer to as the leadership related topics explicitly needed when a practitioner progresses in responsibilities and span of control. This is not to say they are not there in the early stage of professional development but they are paramount for senior managers. Leadership is learned in school in terms of approaches and frameworks but the learning is extended while engaging in the world of practice.

There is no research available on the meaning that the SSUSCRO's contextual characteristics potentially could have for hospitality management education. This is remarkable when looking at the special nature of these entrepreneurs and the success they generate in their businesses. Balazs's (2001, 2002) research, which resulted in the leadership lessons of the great

French three Michelin star chefs could have been used for higher education. The element missing in Balazs's research, however, was defining the critical aspects of the SSUSCROs.

In the field of vocational education, SSUSCROs have taken initiatives to influence students. In 2007, SSUSCRO Cas Spijkers (famous Dutch former two Michelin star chef who unfortunately passed away in 2011) connected his name to the The Cas Spijkers Academy. This school offers a 5 year programme with dominantly culinary related subjects (Cas Spijkers Academie, 2009). In 2011, SSUSCRO Cees Helder (first three Michelin star chef in The Netherlands) attached his name to a two-year vocational programme, which leads to the diploma of 'Gastronomic Entrepreneur' (Miermans & Mout, 2011). Both programmes officially classify within the structure of vocational qualifications in The Netherlands (professional diploma level).

Another SSUSCRO, Peter Klosse (owner of a Michelin star restaurant) offers since the early nineties a range of courses to the commercial market (Klosse, 2012). Some of the courses are qualified in the official Dutch professional diploma structure. Although these courses offer a high and specialized level of knowledge and skills in the field of culinary arts (food and wines), they are not referring to a more comprehensive definition of SSUSCRO contextual characteristics. Interestingly, Klosse was also appointed as a parttime professor in Gastronomy in one of the Dutch universities of applied sciences.

A three-year programme, Masterclass Hospitality, was offered 2000-2005 from within the structure of a university of applied sciences (Gehrels & Schmitt, 2000). This Masterclass Hospitality programme was set up in a close

cooperation between the G-7, the alliance of the leading seven Dutch culinary restaurant associations and the Dutch employer representation board.

Participants were professionals working in culinary restaurants who needed their skills and qualifications upgraded to a higher education validated level.

Unfortunately the Masterclass Hospitality was terminated in 2005 because insufficient participants registered.

In 2007, the official Vereniging Les Amis Gastronomiques (VLAG), in English: Association of Gastronomic Friends was founded in which seven SSUSCROs with a total of 306 years of experience and 13 Michelin stars united. They put in an effort to improve the hospitality culture in The Netherlands and to provide a knowledge base for starting professionals in the culinary restaurant sector (Hilhorst, 2007). The SSUSCROs stated to offer their knowledge and experience to (higher) education in order to have students at hospitality management programmes better educated in the core of hospitality skills and knowledge as required for the culinary upper segment restaurants. The SSUSCROs in the VLAG expressed a feeling of dissatisfaction about the current higher educational setting and by presenting their initiative would like to show their commitment.

Figure 9. Founding of Association Gastronomic Friends VLAG (Hilhorst, 2007)



Hearing the initial ideas about founding the VLAG from the initiator around 2006, I decided that this would be an interesting group of people, SSUCROs and former SSUSCROs, to involve in this thesis research and so I did.

Conclusions from the Literature

From the literature review, it became clear that the contextual characteristics of SSUSCROs and the environment in which they operate could only be partly described and explored by taking entrepreneurship and specifically restaurant entrepreneurship as the starting point. The Viability Model for Successful Restaurant Entrepreneurship of Camillo et al. (2008) has potential leads to explain what influences successful restaurant entrepreneurship. There are weaknesses in the fact that the model was not defined specifically for the culinary restaurant sector.

Furthermore, the 'Virtuous Circle of Enlightened Hospitality' (Meyer, 2006) sheds light on the essence of hospitality offering, as practised in restaurants including the upper segment culinary restaurants. It is worth to note here that the entrepreneurs I experienced did not seem to adhere to the principles of the model. Empirical research based material on the specific SSUSCRO contextual characteristics proved to be scarce, but some examples were present: Balazs (2001, 2002) and Johnson et al. (2005). These research outcomes were about the Michelin star chef or chef-owner only, which offers a more narrow scope than looking at the SSUSCRO as owner-entrepreneur.

Looking for evidence in the literature of cases where the contextual characteristics of SSUSCROs were used in education, I virtually arrived at a 'tabula rasa', an unwritten page. There are examples of (former) SSUSCROs

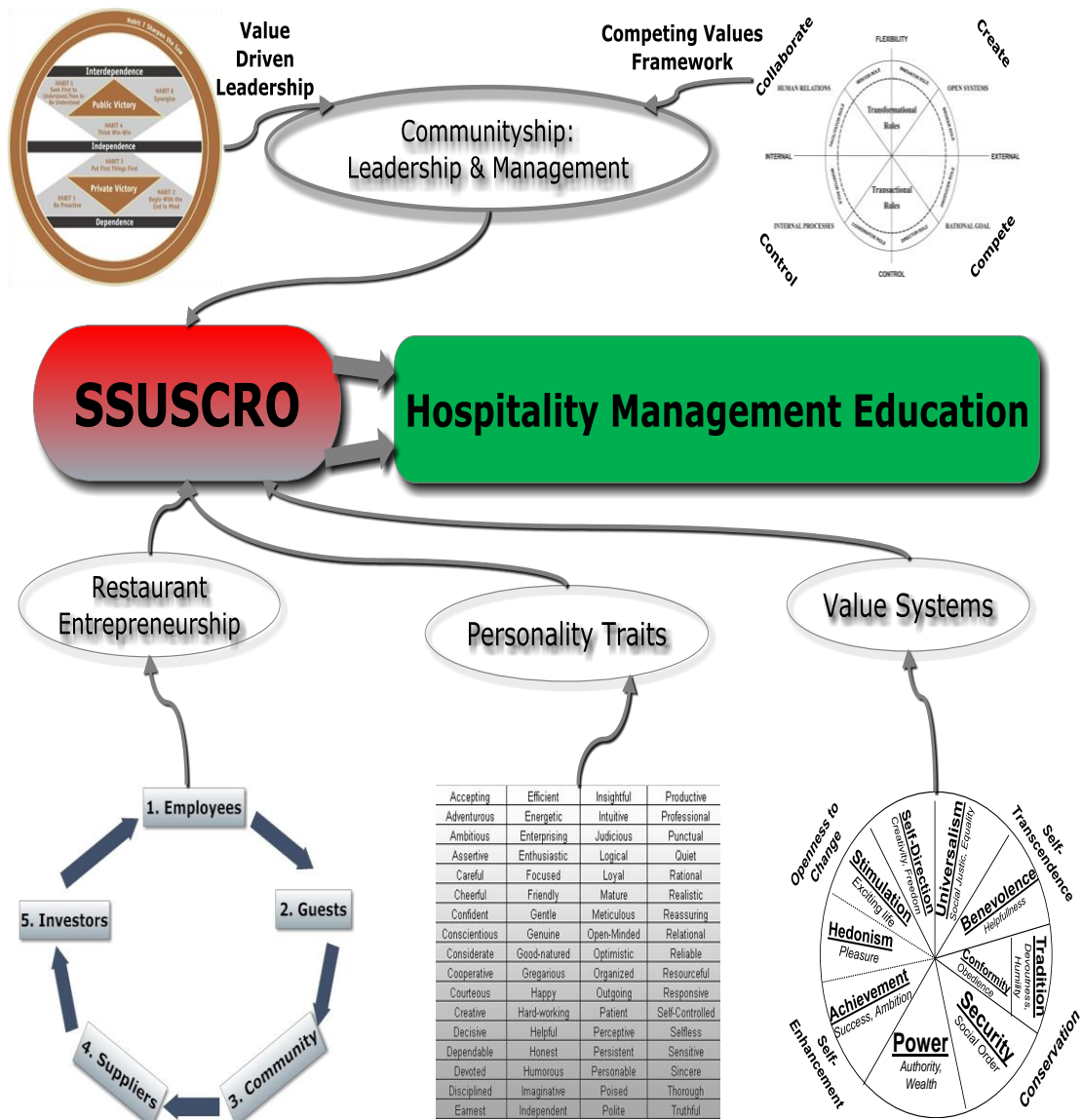
who have entered into culinary education or people in higher education who have attempted to offer some of the SSUSCRO contextual characteristics to young professionals in the industry. The closest notion available could be considered the initiative of the VLAG group of SSUSCROs that offered their services to education (Hilhorst, 2007). Unfortunately, there is no evidence of this initiative having been effectively implemented.

Leadership and management, captured in Mintzberg's (2011) heading of 'communityship' might play a role in exploring the SSUSCRO contextual characteristics. In the category of "how to implement personal leadership" literature, the 'Value Driven Leadership model' (Covey, 2004) and the 'Competing Values Framework' (Quinn et al., 2011) have demonstrated their potential for application. Covey as the author of the first has received also critical reviews, which makes it important to scrutinize the value driven leadership approach. Both the VDL and CVF incorporate the elements that potentially can connect the SSUSCRO contextual characteristics and the way they deal with the people and issues around them to education. The fact that the two models appear to have a track record, makes them potentially interesting for this research.

Finally, looking at the individual personality of the SSUSCRO, the literature on 'value systems' and to a lesser extent 'driving powers' (personality traits) provides information that explains why people behave like they do or as in the cases of the four narratives "like they did". The literature review helped to formulate direction and approach for the field study and it assisted in setting the context for choosing a grounded theory methodology and the content for the interviews with the SSUSCROs. In figure 10, I present a preliminary descriptive

conceptual model of the SSUSCRO based on the literature. Although this model was not created for straightforward testing purposes, it did serve as a visualization of the elements that were explored in the primary data gathering.

Figure 10. SSUSCRO Descriptive Conceptual Model



Summarizing, the literature provided some elements of foundation for the research into the particular nature of the Dutch successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners in terms of:

- The elements describing the general nature of entrepreneurship and the descriptors of the people as entrepreneurs, which had some connection to the narratives (explored in the introduction of this research),
- The specific nature of restaurant entrepreneurship and the gap between the entrepreneurs' contextual characteristics such as in this research and the literature,
- The contextual characteristics of the special culinary restaurant entrepreneurs as available in Balazs (2001, 2002) and Johnson et al. (2005) and the gaps in connection to the Dutch environment.

It became clear from the literature study that in order to properly explain the potential influence Dutch SSUSCROs' contextual characteristics could have on hospitality management education, an original and grounded research approach would be needed. Early exploration of the research literature demonstrated a possible application of Glaser & Strauss' (1967) grounded theory approach. Glaser & Strauss examined a specific group of practitioners to find out about their perceptions of life and practice. In the case of the SSUSCRO research, there was no real previous example available in the literature to serve for comparison or testing, which made a grounded theory approach interesting. In the next chapter on research design the potential of using a grounded theory approach will be examined and explained.

Chapter 3. Research Design

Introduction and Research Approach

In this research, I applied a grounded theory approach in which 10 successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners (SSUSCROs) were asked about their experiences and perception by means of depth interviews.

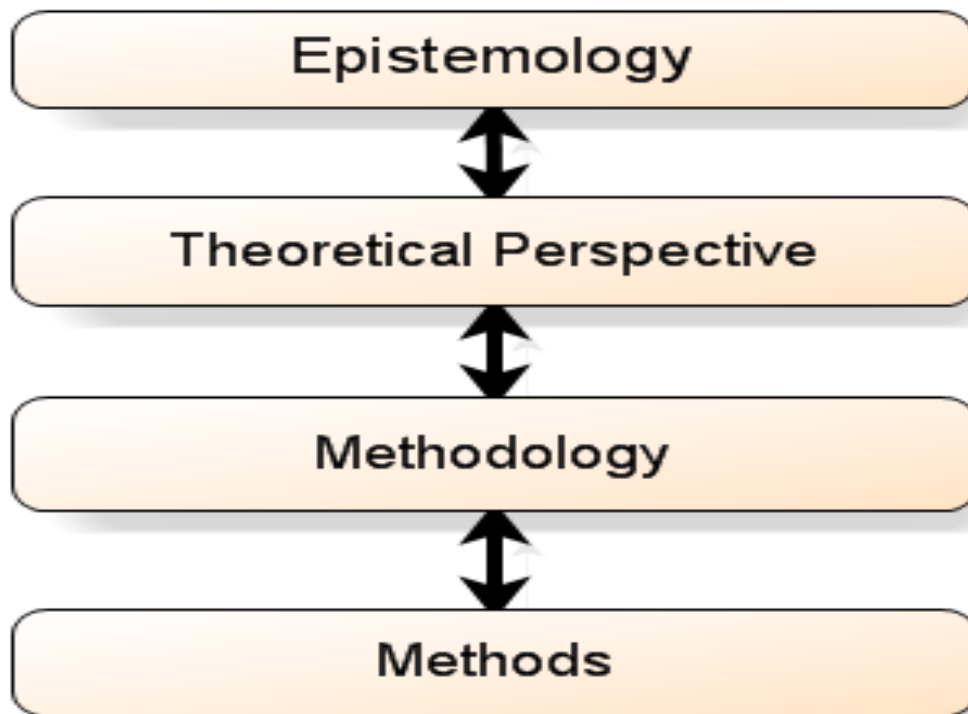
Furthermore, I interviewed one respondent who knew the community of SSUSCROs from closeby. This research approach is not necessarily the most efficient or easy for applying in doctorate research because vast amounts of data are collected. Phillips & Pugh (1994, pp. 50-51) strongly suggest to go into 'testing out' type of research when doing something substantial as doctorate research and to stay away from 'exploratory' research such as in this SSUSCRO research. They add that if the researcher has a lot of practical experience and very strong support from the supervisor, it may be feasible. Both preconditions, I felt comfortable about.

The research process started by doing a pilot-interview with a former practitioner who had worked as chef for one of the SSUSCROs. This pilot-interview was done to test the feasibility of the chosen method with a respondent who was familiar with the topic setting. After each of the following interviews, I looked for further refining and verifying the preliminary categories I found in the data. The information obtained from the first eight individual interviews subsequently formed the basis for defining code labels and categories that captured the SSUSCROs worlds and from which the SSUSCRO social construct emerged. After tentatively formulating the social construct of the SSUSCRO, three additional interviews were done more explicitly to engage in theoretical sampling in which the findings were compared and validated.

Theoretical sampling is defined (Birks & Mills, 2011) as ‘the process of identifying and pursuing clues that arise during analysis in a grounded theory study’ (p. 69). It served in my study to further clarify the preliminary findings I generated from the first eight interviews. Through simultaneously continuing the literature study and analysing the findings, I refined the concepts I found. Although I did not go into any formal triangulation of the data, the comprehensive review of the literature and comparison of the data refined and validated the data collection methods used. Coding labels and categories were thus further developed on-going, as suggested by Bloomberg & Volpe (2008). The last three interviewees were selected because of their specific knowledge about the substantive field and their higher level of abstraction which provided me with a lot of important insights.

The successful small upper segment culinary restaurants presented a very dynamic segment within the hospitality industry that has traditionally been outside the academic research world. It was crucial to find and apply the appropriate research design to “delve” into the minds and practices of the SSUSCROs and then to use the findings to define ways in which hospitality management education can be influenced. A useful framework to build the research process is offered by Crotty (2003). Crotty suggests to look at four elements and in fact four levels that constitute a research and therefore should be taken into account when doing research (figure 11).

Figure 11. Four Basic Elements Research Process (Crotty, 2003, p. 4)



The four elements are: 'epistemology', 'theoretical perspective', 'methodology' and 'methods'. In this model, epistemology deals with the nature of knowledge or as Rosenthal & Rosnow (2008) define it: 'the origin, nature, methods, and limits of human knowledge or human understanding of the world' (p. 744). The theoretical perspective deals with "how we know what we know" and is the philosophical stance informing the methodology. The methodology is the strategy, plan of action, process, or design that lies behind the choice and use of particular research methods. The methods are the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data in relation to some research question or hypothesis.

Other authors have made similar suggestions in providing a conceptual and philosophical structure to the research process. Fisher (2004, pp. 12-13), in talking about the 'isms' and 'ologies', offers a framework in which the

dimensions of the 'nature of knowledge (epistemology)' and the relation between 'knowledge and reality' are plotted. DePoy & Gitlin (1998) state:

Despite the fact that one does not have to be a philosopher to engage in research, it is important to understand the philosophical foundations and assumptions about human experience and knowledge on which ... research traditions are based (p. 25)

DePoy & Gitlin make a distinction between philosophical foundations, research traditions, and design strategies. Flick (2006, p. 22) compares the qualitative research perspectives 'theoretical positions', 'methods of data collection', 'and 'fields of application', while Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey (2011, pp. 11-12) try to capture the approach to research under the term 'paradigm'. Creswell (2009) speaks about three components involved in a research design: 'philosophical worldview', 'selected strategies of inquiry' and 'research methods' (p. 5).

In essence, the different authors all suggest taking a reflexive approach to designing and implementing research in order to be able to properly argue why choices are made. They all give context to research terms such as "truth", "objectivity", "generalizability", "validity", "reliability" as characteristics of quantitative research, and "interpretation", "voices of people", "narrative and discourse" being more common to qualitative research. In the reasoning for this specific thesis research both the subject of research and the position and world view of the researcher were included. Although Crotty's (2003) approach may be highly modelled and suggesting a clear cut and identifiable reality, this is not the case because there is not a strict linear relationship between the elements of the model. I chose to apply Crotty's model, thereby following May's (2001) claim:

These issues (the elements in the research process; added by researcher) should not deter us ... they provide food for conceptual thought by producing new ideas about the process of validating our inquiries and the concept of objectivity (p. 44)

In my perception, Crotty (2003) offers a good plate to serve May's suggested food for conceptual thought because the elements are explicitly defined and covering the context of doing research as defined by others in the field. I use the term "plate" here because of the connection to both "food for conceptual thought", and the nature of this SSUSCRO research located in the restaurant practical world.

Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson (2008, p. 60) suggest using almost the same modelling as Crotty where they refer to 'ontology', 'epistemology', 'methodology', and 'methods' thereby suggesting that ontology in their modelling and theoretical perspective in Crotty's approach have similar meanings. Easterby-Smith et al. (2008) strongly alert the researcher to the issue of research design by saying: 'that failure to think through philosophical issues ... while not necessarily fatal, can seriously affect the quality of management research' (p. 56). Dyson & Brown (2006) warn against 'firm and fixed picking of an epistemological stance from the beginning' (p. 3), because that would automatically discard a number of others. They assume that the philosophical alternatives have been produced by respectable researchers, who obviously were more clever than any relative novice.

On the other hand, Dyson & Brown (2006) also acknowledge the potential advantage of approaching research by starting from a clear paradigm or epistemology that then drives decisions at the level of strategy or

methodology, methods and analysis because there will at least be consistency imposed onto the research problem. In choosing Crotty's model, I followed Silverman (2005) who argues:

Purely theoretical debates are often less than helpful if we want to carry out effective research. The point is to select a model that makes sense to you ... The strengths and weaknesses of any model will only be revealed in what you can do with it (p. 11)

Furthermore, I thought it to be crucial to keep in mind the words of Miles & Huberman (1994), in which they loosen up the debate by saying:

In epistemological debates it is tempting to operate on the poles. But in the actual practice of empirical research, we believe that all of us- realists, interpretivists, critical theorists- are closer to the center with multiple overlaps (p. 4)

By adhering to a certain model including an epistemological choice, the intention was to provide framing and structuring to the research. It was not my intention to present an assumption of being "into the matter" at the same level as the famous authors/philosophers of the past centuries that created the paradigms. I feel comfortable to remain the practitioner researcher that as Burton & Bartlett (2005) claim does the research because it is fundamental to develop a *better* (added by author) understanding of one's work as teacher and what happens in the classroom.

Before looking at all four elements as defined by Crotty (2003), the aim, objectives and from these the resulting research questions needed to be related to the information required to answer the questions and to realize the objectives of the research (table 9).

Table 9. Relation Aim, Objectives, Research Questions and Information Needs

CENTRAL AIM	To explore how the contextual characteristics of successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners (SSUSCROs) potentially can be used in hospitality management education, in order to have students, faculty, programme and management connected to the professional work field.	
OBJECTIVES	1.	To describe and explain SSUSCROs value systems, other driving powers and social context.
	2.	To provide an insight into how the SSUSCROs see and experience their professional and personal lives and what constitutes the definition of being successful based on their careers.
	3.	To suggest ways as to how the contextual characteristics and vision of the SSUSCROs potentially can be used in hospitality management.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO INFORMATION NEEDS		
Research Questions		Information Needs
1.	Who are the people that can be defined as successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners (SSUSCROs)?	First-hand information from restaurant entrepreneurs through (A) accessing publications about them, or (B) by asking them directly. Option (B) eliminates the journalist's interpretation, only admit my interpretation.
2.	How do the SSUSCROs describe their lives in restaurant entrepreneurship and where have the significant moments, interventions and decisions been?	Same information as for answering question 1. In answering this question very personal information is needed not likely available in publications other than in a(n) (auto) biography.
3.	What do SSUSCROs define as successful features of their professional and private lives?	Ibid
4.	Which value systems, other driving powers and other circumstantial issues/themes/happenings have brought the SSUSCROs to performing successfully in their business and life?	Same type of information as for answering question 1-3. It is very important to have the reflection of the entrepreneurs on their value systems and driving powers.
5.	How can the contextual characteristics and vision of the SSUSCROs be used in hospitality management education for students, faculty, and programme management?	Interpreting the information generated by research questions 1 – 4, and reflecting, on it as researcher, educational practitioner and former professional in the world of successful small upper segment culinary restaurants.

In table 9, the central aim and the related objectives are connected to the research questions. After each of the five research questions, the information that was needed to answer them is formulated. From that point on it was possible to properly define methodology and methods that were appropriate for

the implementation of the research. Grounded theory presented itself as being the most appropriate for answering the research questions, which made the exploration of epistemology and theoretical perspective as suggested by Crotty (2003) important in order to define the research approach.

Epistemology and Theoretical Perspective

The epistemology nesting grounded theory is constructionism, which has been developed in many disciplines in different ways. Crotty (2003) defines constructionism as the epistemology situated at the middle position between objectivism on the one extreme and subjectivism on the other. In constructionism, the belief is that the essence of creating knowledge is not by finding an objective truth waiting for us to be discovered. As Crotty formulates it: 'Truth, or meaning when we engage with the realities in our world, is constructed whereby subject and object are partners in the process' (p. 8-9).

In my choice for designing the research in the tradition of constructionism, I followed the definition of Flick (2006): 'It (constructionism) informs a lot of qualitative research programs with the approach that the realities we study are social products of the actor, of interactions and institutions' (p. 78). Knowledge is seen as being constructed in a process of social interchange between the subject (meaning here the researcher) and the object (in this case the entrepreneurs being researched). Gergen (2009, p. ix) makes a strong plea for constructionism stating:

Outside the academic world, constructionist ideas have stimulated an enormous expansion in forms of practice thereby referring to educators,

therapists, social workers, organisational change specialists, peace workers, community builders among others (p. ix)

Constructionism follows the same relativist ontology as in the case of constructivist paradigms mentioned by Denzin & Lincoln (2005, p. 24) meaning that there are 'multiple realities'. They refer to constructivist paradigms adhering to a subjectivist epistemological, (knower and respondent co-create understandings), naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures and findings usually presented in terms of the criteria of grounded theory or pattern theories.

It was important to define the founding principles for doing this research being in the constructionist tradition. In this way, an objectivist and positivist approach were rejected that would traditionally start from the theory found in the body of literature to produce hypotheses to be tested. The philosophy of objectivism is that research should be value free and objective. In my research approach the results, analysis and theory building generated, interacted with my own understanding and interpretation. In the encounter with my research sample (the SSUSCROs), reality is constructed and not value free. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) concluded that 'to develop a grounded theory for the 21st century ... it is important to build upon its constructionist elements rather than objectivist leanings' (p. 508). This approach, Denzin & Lincoln (2005) state:

interestingly has moved in a different direction from the original Strauss, Corbin and Glaser stances towards grounded theory's roots ... In divergent ways, Strauss and Corbin's works as well as Glaser's treatises draw upon objectivist assumptions founded in positivism (p. 509)

I followed the notion of 'a constructivist grounded theory' that adopted the methodological guidelines as tools, while not subscribing to the objectivist, positivist assumptions as in other earlier formulations. Constructivist grounded theory has been documented by Charmaz (2006), and Clarke (2005) who took it in the direction of situational analysis.

In terms of theoretical perspective in Crotty's (2003) model, the original research foundation of grounded theory is situated in symbolic interactionism, which takes the perspective that reality is 'negotiated between people', 'always changing', and 'constantly evolving' (Blumer, 1969/1986 in: Richards & Morse, 2007, p. 59). Glaser & Strauss as the creators of grounded theory had their roots in the Chicago school of symbolic interactionism. The relationship between classical Grounded Theory and the interpretive tradition of Symbolic Interactionism is strong and historical (Aldiabat & Le Navenec, 2011). Symbolic interactionists 'study behaviour at both the interactional or behavioural level and the symbolic level' (Locke, 2001, p. 24). Researchers must enter the social world of the people (i.e. the SSUSCROs) they study in order to understand the situation from the subject's point of view and to observe (i.e. establish through depth interviews) first-hand what the subjects find meaningful (their value systems and other driving powers) and how they deal with the social context they are in.

Grounded theory's association with the symbolic interactionist school of thought is repeatedly articulated. Locke (2001) says: 'it is particularly important for those organisation researchers who work outside sociology's disciplinary boundaries to appreciate the link between grounded theory and symbolic interactionism' (p. 25). Symbolic interactionism sees the "self" as arising in

social interaction from processes of 'reflected appraisal' and 'taking the role of the other' (Stryker & Statham, 1985 in: Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994, p. 459). In this explanation of symbolic interaction the "self" traditionally means that each of us has a fundamental or core sense of "self" as Gergen (2009) puts it: 'to this fundamental sense of self (or identity: added by author) ... we should be true to. To stand firm in one's sense of identity is to have integrity' (p. 69).

The "self" or identity of the SSUSCRO was very important to explore and define in this research because it is one of the core drivers for success, I looked at in my research. In some sense the SSUSCROs could be considered as a native tribe of people living and working in their "jungle" of extremely labour intensive small scale restaurant enterprises (almost like the Sus Crofa, wild boar, that literally is in the forest). It would have been tempting to approach this research from an ethnographic point of view and to have considered the research activity as living with the natives (the entrepreneurs) for a while. Although ethnography presented an interesting option, I chose to set the research methodology in a different direction. In the next paragraph on methodology, explanation is offered on how the research design was created following the constructivist grounded theory stance as formulated by Charmaz (2006).

Methodology and Methods

Different methodologies appeared to be appropriate to study the SSUSCROs contextual characteristics. I considered grounded theory to be the most effective methodology for this research. Idealistically, it would be to derive a

general, abstract theory of the SSUSCRO entrepreneurial process, actions and interactions that could be grounded 'in the views of the participants of the study' (Creswell, 2009, p. 229), but that turned out to be very difficult. Grounded theory methodology was first presented by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and taken further by Glaser, Strauss, Strauss and Corbin, Charmaz, Clarke and many others.

The essence of grounded theory is to derive theory from (to ground in: added by author) data systematically gathered and analysed in the research process (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). In this methodology as Strauss and Corbin further developed it, data collection, analysis, and eventually theory stand in close relationship to one another. There is not one universal way in which grounded theory can be applied. Soon after Glaser and Strauss described their research approach in the sixties, they both started diverting in different directions. Strauss and Corbin would allow the research problem to be defined at the start of a project, which was countered by Glaser as this would pre-empt the 'real' (added by author) emergence of theory (Fisher, 2004). Glaser and Strauss built their definition of grounded theory on a positivist epistemological view on qualitative research. This meant that they see the researcher to be detached from the subject to be researched.

Authors like Charmaz (2006) and Clarke (2005), emphasized a more social constructivist approach to grounded theory. The constructivist approach stays true to the essence of grounded theory as defined by Punch (2009): 'a distinctive strategy for research which aims to generate explanatory theory grounded in data' (p. 357). In the positivist approach towards grounded theory

such as propagated by Glaser and Strauss the theory emerges from the data through application of strict procedures.

In contrast, Charmaz and Clarke talk about “discovering” the theory in which process the researcher has to use reflexivity and personal interpretation to arrive at the theoretical implications. A researcher applying grounded theory does not generally begin a research project with preconceived theory in mind but rather begins with an area of study. Then the theory emerges from the data or as in the constructivist version of grounded theory, the theoretical implications are discovered in the data. In this research the way SSUSCROs deal with their social context and how that can be used in hospitality management education form the subject area.

The distinctive advantage of grounded theory is as Douglas (2003) states ‘it commences from specific naturalistic situations, with the intent of understanding the nature and rationale of observed interactions and processes’ (p. 53), as in this research presented by the SSUSCRO cases. Grounded theory is a rather open approach to data analysis, which is particularly good for dealing with transcripts of depth interviews (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). Rubin & Rubin (2005) support this approach by stating that depth-interviewing research requires openness to new ideas not anticipated at the beginning.

There are critical observations about the application of grounded theory, which I had to deal with in the design of the SSUSCRO research. Firstly, there is a notion that the original epistemological starting point from grounded theory lays in positivism, which would not consider the reflexivity of the researcher involved instead letting the data produce the theoretical implications through strict application of procedures. Constructivist grounded theory as developed by

Charmaz (2006), acknowledges the fact that it is the interplay between data and researcher that constructs the outcomes of the study.

Another criticism to grounded theory in any version is the focusing on uncovering social processes, avoiding psychology driven phenomenological questions. For capturing the essence of the SSUSCRO as a person the latter type of research questions should be asked to be able to look at Tepeci & Bartlett's (2002, p. 152) distinction between 'situationalist' and 'personalist' streams of thinking in the effectiveness of entrepreneurship. For countering the second mentioned criticism of grounded theory, Charmaz's notion of a constructivist approach to grounded theory was followed. I examined the SSUSCROs in this research in terms of the process they had been in as entrepreneurs. It was important to look at how they perceived their personal and social experiences. The role of the SSUSCROs in their restaurant and the way in which they dealt with their environment were very important in the construction of how they became 'successful'. By mapping the SSUSCROs' social context, asking questions and writing memos, I captured more about the phenomenon of the entrepreneurs and their relations to the people around them. In table 10, I present the considerations for applying a constructivist grounded theory methodology.

As mentioned earlier, there is criticism towards the use of grounded theory. Easterby-Smith et.al. (2008) stipulate that the systematic nature of the grounded theory process, in order to provide rigour for academic peers, takes away some of the "feel" that is characteristic for qualitative data. Although this moving away from the "feel" may be perceived as moving away from the core approach of qualitative research, Miles & Huberman (1994) point in a different

direction: ‘the researcher’s role is to gain a “holistic” (systematic, encompassing, integrated) overview of the context under study; its logic, its arrangements, its explicit and implicit rules’ (p. 6). Charmaz’s (2006) constructivist version of applying grounded theory gives sufficient space for the element of “feel” by allowing the construction of theory to be combined with the reflexive position of the researcher in an organized and structured process.

Table 10. Overview Motivation for Applying Constructivist Grounded Theory

Consideration	Constructivist grounded theory
Kind of knowledge ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and explaining contextualized social processes • Concepts and categories emerge from the data and are identified by the researcher • Produce theory grounded in the data
Assumptions about the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks at how humans negotiate and manage social situations and processes • Studies the changing world as a product of human participation and negotiation • Focuses on process and change • Subscribes to the symbolic interactionist perspective and relativist ontology. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) define a relativist ontology as: ‘ ... realities that are locally and specifically constructed or co-constructed (p. 193) ... ’
Conceptualization role researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher actively constructs understanding about the phenomenon under investigation • Questions participants to understand what they are doing and why • Researcher tries to clarify own assumptions and expectations while analysing
Mode of working adopted from Charmaz (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research problem+opening research questions • Data collection +initial coding • Initial memo writing+raising codes to tentative categories • Further data collection+focused coding • Advanced memos+refining conceptual categories • Theoretical sampling+seeking specific new data • Adopting certain categories as theoretical concepts+theoretical memo-writing+further refining of concepts • Sorting memos • Integrating memos+diagramming concepts • Writing the first draft+further theoretical sampling if needed • Writing the final grounded theory in my case as a narrative of the SSUSCRO social construct
Type of analysis	Iteratively moving between data, codes, concepts and categories to result in a theory.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumptions and background of researcher can be too dominant in the analysis if not properly acknowledged • Study is very time consuming

Application to SSUSCRO research	Constructivist GT seemed to be very appropriate to apply to the research questions raised about the SSUSCROs and the way that their contextual characteristics could influence hospitality management education. Particularly the social processes that the SSUSCROs are involved in could be described and explained by adopting a CGT approach. Challenge was to take account of the psychology of the individual SSUSCROs and the way that had influenced them.
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I agree with Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey (2011) who state: 'it (grounded theory: added by researcher) is therefore an appealing approach as it provides a rigorous and "scientific" approach, yet it also remains faithful to the interpretive nature of qualitative analysis' (p. 207). The interpretation offered by Hennink et al. (2011) came closest to my view on the merits of applying grounded theory, combining rigorous analysis with an interpretivist approach. For me this meant thoroughly applying grounded theory procedures in data gathering and analysis, while simultaneously constructing the narrative of the SSUSCRO social construct and its potential influence on hospitality management education.

Charmaz (2006) confirms qualitative interviewing to be an appropriate instrument for grounded theory: 'intensive qualitative interviewing fits grounded theory methods particularly well ... both grounded theory methods and intensive interviewing are open-ended yet directed, shaped yet emergent, and paced yet unrestricted' (p. 28). Interviewing is interactional because of the exchange or sharing, of roles, responsibilities, feelings, beliefs, motives and information (Stewart & Cash, 2006), and it can take account of many characteristics of the respondent (Keats, 2000). Rubin & Rubin (2005, pp. 30-36) emphasize the complex nature of the type of interviewing as used in the SSUSCRO research and refer to it as 'responsive interviewing'. Very important in this type of responsive interviewing, also described as 'depth interviewing', is

the defining and detailing of the interaction between two (or more) human beings. Many authors have confirmed the use of interviewing as an appropriate instrument in grounded theory (Oliver, 1997; Clark, Riley, Wilkie, & Wood, 1998; Remenyi, Williams, Money, & Swartz, 1998; Willig, 2008), and the connection to a interpretivist constructivist philosophy (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

A more modest application of interviewing is proposed by Denscombe (1998) in which interviewing is seen more 'as an information-gathering tool that serves alongside other methods (surveys: added by researcher)' (p. 112). Critical comments about interviewing as research method are made by Burton & Bartlett (2005). They warn the interviewer of the possibility of influencing or leading the respondent, the time intensive nature of the method and the possible variation in interviews which makes collating difficult. In choosing for interviewing as the research instrument, I will keep in mind Burton & Bartlett's (2005) premiss: 'the quality of the outcomes is dependent upon how well the researcher crafts and deploys their chosen tool' (p. 127).

Veal's (2011) observation about the application of depth interviewing advanced my thinking about the sample choice and size for the interviews. Veal suggested that for using depth interviewing usually relatively small numbers of individuals are selected that generate relatively large amounts of information. I interviewed the SSUSCROs and the recordings & transcripts became the core data produced for this constructivist grounded theory research. While engaging in interviewing and analysing through grounded theory, interesting evaluation and learning for me took place. The transcripts of the interviews used for the process of coding presented themselves as a kind of two-dimensional data

source. Text as a literal coverage of the words used by the interviewee and myself did not completely capture the construction that was created by the interaction between us.

The SSUSCROs opened up for me when they recognized I came from the same world as in which they (had) lived and worked as entrepreneurs. Locke, Silverman and Spirduso (2004) warn a researcher engaging in grounded theory that the theory is not just lying around in the data but that it is the duty and skill of the theoretically sensitive researcher to extract it from the data. I was responsible for guiding the data collection as useful concept linkages and categories began to appear, and then to organize the process of constant comparison.

Another point of critical reflection on the use of grounded theory is raised by Locke et al. (2004). The theory generated by my research is a new one and did not exist before my study. Because the theory came from this particular study on the SSUSCROs, it is very specific to the context in my study. It will potentially have implications for the design of effective practice, in my case in hospitality education but it will most probably, as Locke et al. stipulated, lack “grand generalization”. This latter implication of my methodology I acknowledge and accept because of the specific nature of my central aim of looking at the specific group of SSUSCROs. The outcomes can be used in hospitality management education in order to have students, faculty, programme and management connected to the professional work field. This is a very specific context defined aim which does not assume grand generalization. Richards & Morse (2007) refer to grounded theory to produce usually midrange theory specific to a particular process and a particular situation.

In this research on SSUSCROs, I felt in line with the views of Hammersley (2002), where he defines the outcomes and importance of this type of highly context specific research as providing “moderate enlightenment”. The underlying line of thought that explains the use of the term moderate enlightenment in this case is that policymakers and practitioners are per definition “in the dark”. Research is needed for them to shed light on the reality of what they are doing and how they should be doing it (Hammersley, 2002). Moderate enlightenment is appropriate in my view because it puts the outcomes of research in a context of consideration, by taking away the strong generalization claims that research makes in the natural sciences approach and their strong adoption of positivist viewpoints. An important assumption of the moderate enlightenment thinking is that it accepts the tension between research and practice and does not expect the outcomes of research to be fundamentally in harmony.

Sample and Data Collection

A very important component in the definition of the sample laid in the description “successful” which in this research is connected to two indicators. First, I take the recognition in terms of service and culinary achievement as indicator. Second, business achievement is very important to indicate success of a company. For the first indicator of success, I looked at the three reputable publications in The Netherlands, mentioned in the introduction, that “set the tone”: Michelin Guide, GaultMillau and Lekker Top 500 Restaurant Guide. To pinpoint the really successful restaurants and thereby identifying their SSUSCROs, I took the Michelin Guide as primary and leading source by

looking at the privately owned restaurants that managed to achieve one, two or three stars, or a Bib Gourmand. Furthermore, restaurants quoted in GaultMillau (14+) and Lekker (quoted in the top 100) were included.

The other criterion of business success would best have been assessed by looking at revenue, value generation and the realization of profit objectives. It would however have been virtually impossible to assess these “hard” financial criteria because the owners would never have allowed me any insight into their figures. A related indicator of business success, however, is sustainability of the company. Sambas (2009) and other authors have stipulated the relationship between survival of a business and applying of critical success factors. If a restaurant is able to sustain for over ten years in the highly competitive range of upper segment restaurants, it could be considered as business wise successful. While detailing the selection of the sample, I was able to uplift the criterion of sustainable business success significantly. Most of the SSUSCROs that were interviewed operated their business 25 years or longer. This made the aspect of business wise success more robust than initially planned.

The choice and size of the sample and the number of interviews followed the notion of data saturation. Dyson & Brown (2006) state:

Saturation occurs when each new act of data collection does not add anything new, and the researcher is reassured that the issue has been fully explored and no longer requires detailed coverage, unless something has changed (p. 167)

Charmaz (2006) says that whatever method is chosen, it is important to plan to gather sufficient data to fit the task on hand so that it will give as full a picture as possible. Very important for me in this process of applying grounded theory was

to get to the point where I achieved “theoretical saturation”. Theoretical saturation was originally introduced by Glaser & Strauss (1967), to describe the moment to stop (theoretical) sampling when the data in the process of grounded theory application led to no new findings being generated that would complete a certain category.

The exact number of interviews to be implemented for this SSUSCRO research, was very difficult for me to estimate beforehand. Guest, Bunce, & Johnson (2006) came to an evaluation about saturation that retrospectively matched with my experiences in the SSUSCRO research when referring to data from a study involving sixty depth interviews with women in two West African countries. They operationalized saturation and made evidence-based recommendations regarding non-probabilistic sample sizes for interviews. A core characteristic of non-probability sampling techniques is that samples are selected based on the subjective judgement of the researcher, rather than random selection (Lund Research Ltd., 2010). Based on the data set, Guest et al. (2006) found that saturation occurred within the first twelve interviews, while the basic elements for the big themes or categories already were present as early as after six interviews. They stated, however, that guidelines for determining sample sizes in this type of qualitative research are virtually non-existent.

In a critical review of the concept of “saturation” in PhD studies, Mason (2010) concluded that many students plan their sample size more on the number they expect their university of supervisor would honour than based on the nature of their study. From the same study, Mason (2010) asserted that PhD researchers tend to make their samples bigger than needed and apply

round figures (ending at '0') when it comes down to the sample size. They do this to have the sample choice to appear to be more robust and precise than it needed to be. Findings from Mason's (2010) research on the sample size used in 174 grounded theory PhD studies showed a number between 87 interviews as maximum and 4 as minimum. Looking at these enormous variations in establishing a pre-fixed number of interviews for grounded theory, I remained with the original core concept of looking for saturation based on the moment that no new findings would be appearing.

My sampling process in this SSUSCRO research confirmed the findings from Guest et al. (2006), mentioned earlier in this section: the big concepts emerged after 6 interviews, while saturation occurred in my research after 11 interviews. In my data collection, the core production of significant text for analysis was generated through depth interviewing. The interviews were recorded by simultaneous use of Olympus, WS-300 and DM-10 digital voice recorders that allowed me to transport all the recordings to the computer and the database of the research project. Two digital voice recorders were used simultaneously to eliminate the risk of technical failure that would potentially jeopardize the producing of digital recordings. As a preparation for the interviews I had a list of the important questions that needed to be answered following the research questions as formulated. In table 11 I present and explain the connection between research questions and interview questions.

Table 11. Transferring Research Questions to Interview Questions Matrix

Interview Questions	Research Questions
2. Could you tell me about the education and work experience you have been going through in your life?	<p>1. Who are the people that can be defined as successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners (SSUSCROs)?</p> <p>By speaking about and relating to their education and work experience SSUSCROs share their pathway that led to being successful. Students in hospitality management education either can take certain steps as referred to by the SSUSCROs for their own future planning (“copying”) or they are warned about steps that yield risks and disappointments.</p>
3. When and why did you decide you wanted to be a entrepreneur in a culinary restaurant?	<p>The critical point(s) in life where decision making was triggered that led to the SSUSCROs becoming the successful people they are provides very valuable empirical founded information for students to plan their own careers but also for faculty to insert into education construction (real-life cases for the curriculum and educational materials) and management to evaluate the proximity of the school culture to the ‘real world’ of this sample of practitioners (SSUSCROs) in the hospitality industry.</p>
4. What drives you in your life as an entrepreneur in a culinary restaurant?	<p>To know which value systems and driving powers have brought the SSUSCROs to being the successful entrepreneurs and people they are, gives students in hospitality management programmes the knowledge of how to approach and how to deal with this segment of the hospitality industry.</p>
5. Could you tell me about your most important values please?	<p>Based on the literature there is the assumption of values directing people’s behaviour and actions. To hear the SSUSCROs own definition of ‘successful’ would shed light as to whether this was the case in their specific lives.</p>
6. Are there differences between values in your personal life and at your work? Do you try to separate these or do they fit together as one?	<p>Because SSUSCROs are entrepreneurs in an extremely labour intensive segment of the hospitality industry it was very important to learn from them how they managed or did not manage to balance work and private lives. The learning effect would not only be interesting for students but also for faculty and management in education.</p>
	<p>2. How do the SSUSCROs describe their lives in restaurant entrepreneurship and where have the significant moments, interventions and decisions been?</p>
2. Could you tell me about the education and work experience you have been going through in your life? 3. When and why did you decide you wanted to be a entrepreneur in a culinary restaurant?	<p>The development of SSUSCROs through education and work experience and the way they have dealt with the life connected to that specifically relating to having become successful, provides formative feedback about critical situations and points in time that can be used by students in planning their own future but also by faculty and management to shape the programme and the school environment. Elements of the way the SSUSCROs developed into being successful can be seen as positive (good example) or negative (avoid).</p>
8. Is there anything else that should be considered when looking at entrepreneurship (management) in culinary restaurants?)	<p>This question would allow the SSUSCROs (stimulated by the interviewer) to bring in any type of vision, facts or knowledge that can shape hospitality management programmes further.</p>
	<p>3. What do SSUSCROs define as successful features of their professional and private lives?</p>

1. What would you define as being successful as an entrepreneur and a person?	The description of the SSUSCROs lives and their definition of 'successful are important to give students the notion of what successful in their own (future) professional and private lives can be. If students compare their current perception of the term successful with the definition of the SSUSCROs this will initiate reflection and from there-on learning about how to view their own future. To facilitate the process of reflection it is important to embed the SSUSCROs definition into the content of the educational programme.
	4. Which value systems, other driving powers and other circumstantial issues/themes/happenings have brought the SSUSCROs to performing successfully in their business and life?
Questions 2 - 6	All the information generated from these questions.
	5. How can the contextual characteristics and vision of the SSUSCROs be used in hospitality management education for students, faculty, programme and policy making?
Questions 1 - 8	All the information generated from the first eight questions.
9. Are you aware of the topic of 'sustainability'? If yes: can you share your opinion about the topic with me and explain in which actions/activities you work(ed) on sustainability issues?	Although this question about 'sustainability' is not directly connected to the context and purpose setting of the SSUSCRO research there were reasons to include the interview question: A. To provide information about this very current topic for research and educational purposes. B. To contribute to a specific research in sustainability line that was developed earlier within the institution where the researcher is working.

The questions for the interviews were formulated in a manner that would encourage the interviewees to talk about their lives and profession in a flexible manner but without incurring the risk for me to forget to address certain topics connected to the research questions. I followed the suggestion by Rubin & Rubin (2005) to formulate main questions and then to follow up based on the answers given. Sometimes interviewees, as mentioned by Rubin & Rubin, would offer new ideas and relevant stories but in some cases they would omit certain information, which then I could further explore by asking follow up questions.

In the beginning of the data gathering process, I personally transcribed the interview recordings, while later on transcripts were made by research students. The transcripts were analysed as described in the analysis section of this chapter. Respondents were situated in different locations in The

Netherlands and a maximum of two interviews per day was feasible, taken into account travel arrangements and accessibility of the respondents. The practising SSUSCROs were preferably available around 10.30 am or 3.00/3.30 pm for a maximum of one-hour interviews because they were busy around lunch and dinner time. In two cases, practising SSUSCROs gave me more time to do the interviews. The retired SSUSCROs allowed me a lot more time for the interviews.

A particular challenge presented itself by the fact that my interviews were done in the Dutch language, while the resulting thesis document would be written in English. I considered which strategy would be the most effective in working across two languages in this process of conducting and analysing the interviews. To stay close to the discourses offered by the SSUSCROs, who were all Dutch nationals, it was paramount for me to do the interviews in their own language in order for them to provide in-depth rich descriptions and explanations. As the researcher, I made the choice to start converting to English while analysing the transcripts. At that stage I still had the flexibility to re-visit my texts and reconsider my analysis. Because of the iterative nature involved in the analysis process of going back and forth between the interviews and the meaning derived from them, the chosen approach proved to be effective. The approach was supported by the findings of Temple, Edwards, & Alexander (2006) where they asserted:

Cross-language field researchers produce a new (secondary) text of which they are an integral part. Researchers can debate influences on the texts they get, including the effect of moving from source language to final dominant language text (art.10).

As an alternative, the full analysing and writing in Dutch to postpone translating to a later stage would have taken me further from the original meaning.

Ethical Considerations

The research was undertaken in accordance with the:

- British Educational Research Association's Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2004), and the
- Scottish Educational Research Association's Ethical Guidelines (2005).

Before I could start the research I received approval of the University of Stirling, Institute of Education's Research Ethics Committee (IOEREC), because I complied with the measures for ethical research practice as formulated in the guidelines. The following issues were looked at and secured in terms of ethical considerations. Participants were informed about the aim, objectives, research questions and the process of the research. When the initial contact was established by telephone, the participant was asked to be involved, after having been explained about the nature and purpose of the study. Before starting the interview, this procedure was repeated. At the two occasions (when making appointment and in the introduction to the interview), the participants were asked for their consent. The participants were all non-vulnerable adults. The transcripts from the interviews were used for analysis, applying a grounded theory methodology and in the transcripts there were no names mentioned of the respondents. By omitting the use of names of the participants, virtually no reference to the exact participants could be made, which assured confidentiality.

Publically available information about the participants could be obtained by reading publications about the restaurants and their owners. It was explained twice that if the interviewees after the interview decided to withdraw then this wish would be respected. None of the interviewees exercised the right to withdraw. There were no significant power differences between researcher and researched. The data was kept in a personal file on the researcher's computer of the researcher protected by password and he had sole access to the data. The aim and problem statement of the research clearly indicated the use of research data for teaching purposes, which was explicitly mentioned when asking the interviewees for consent before starting the interviews.

The interviews were audio recorded and photographs of the interviewees were made if they agreed. The recordings and photographs served for the researcher as background information. There were no ethically problematic issues and the subjects chose to participate in the research from their free will. No deception was involved in this research and full information about the research was given to the subjects beforehand. The research involved no risk of physical or emotional stress for the respondents nor the researcher. Summarizing the key issues that I explicitly set out to respect when doing my research centred around: informed consent of the respondents, confidentiality in writing about my research and doing justice to the participants (SSUSCROs) in analysing data thereby also following Flick's (2006) suggestions for acting ethically in research.

Data Analysis

Essentially the data analysis in this grounded theory approach involves dealing with vast amounts of written findings (transcripts) from depth interviews. First step taken as suggested by Simons (2009) was to draw a concept map directly from listening to the audio recordings of the first interviews. Simon suggests that listening to the recordings directly dismisses the assumption that the transcripts carry all the meaning. The notion of using the recordings as an important source instead of over-valuing the transcripts was confirmed by Hill (2009) who explained that listening to the voices of the interviewees, in her case students, allowed a more intuitive analysis. In my SSUSCRO research, it was very important to get the reflection on how the respondents presented their worlds and themselves and my interpretation and self-reflection listening to the recordings proved to be effective.

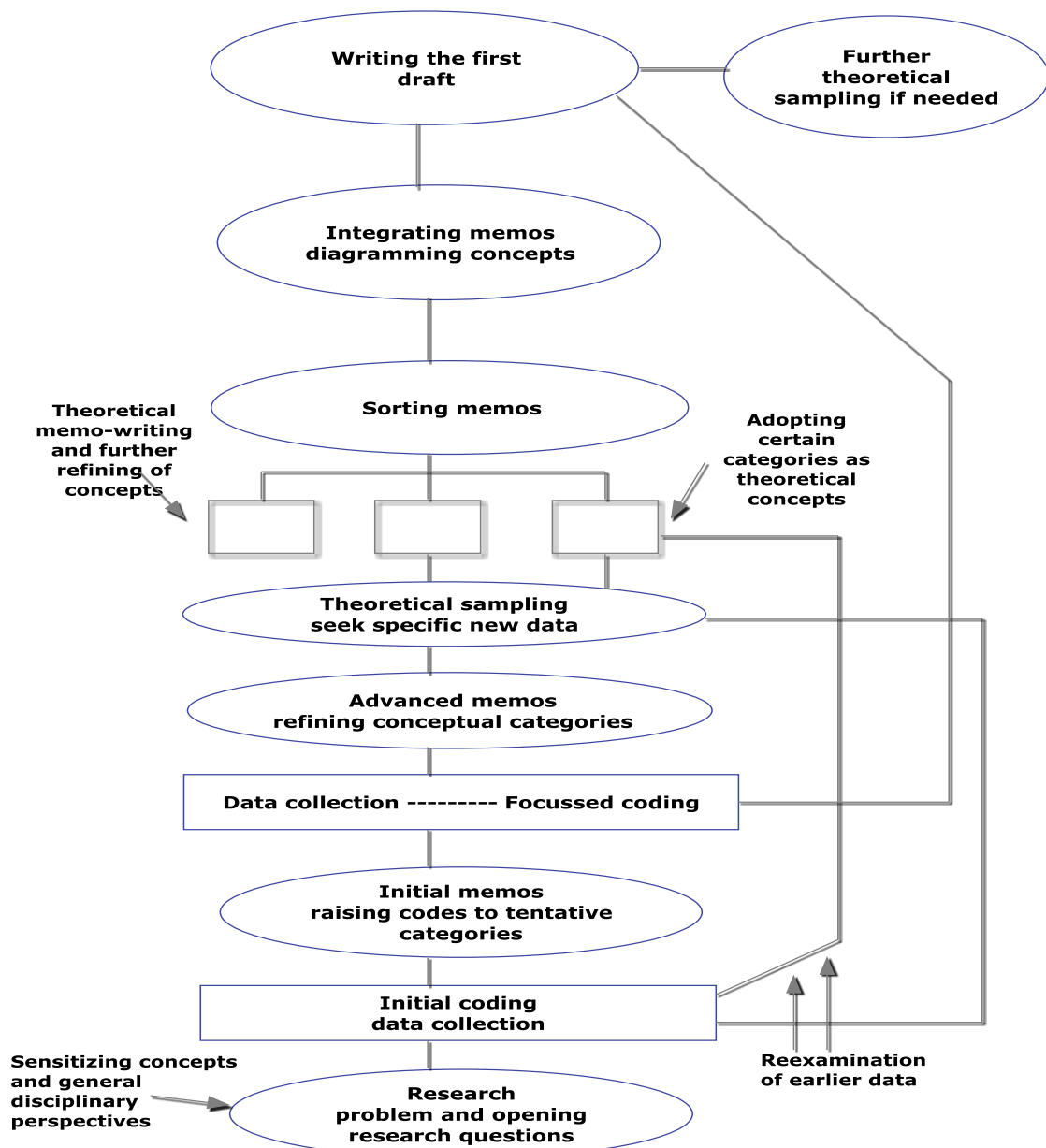
The first step of creating a mind map (Buzan, 2010) in an intuitive way, opened the process of analysis. Charmaz (2006) suggests to use a technique referred to as “clustering”, because: ‘through clustering it is the visual representation that gives the researcher control over the data before starting extensive writing about it’ (pp. 86-87). Second step in the analysis process was to apply the sequence and iterative nature of a constructivist grounded theory approach. Silverman (2005, p. 179) summarizes and simplifies the whole grounded theory process in three stages, in my opinion, quite effectively:

- i. Develop categories which illuminate the data,
- ii. Attempt to ‘saturate’ these categories with many appropriate cases in order to demonstrate their relevance,

- iii. Develop these categories into general analytic frameworks with relevance outside the setting.

Charmaz (2006) provides a more comprehensive and specific overview of the constructivist grounded theory process which clearly visualizes the steps that need to be taken (figure 12).

Figure 12. Constructivist Grounded Theory Process (Charmaz, 2006, p. 11)



I organized the data analysis in the grounded theory process of my research following Charmaz's (2006) constructivist approach (figure 12). The analysis of

the first few transcripts started by coding the important and interesting issues, mentioned by the respondents. For this purpose, I created a three-column table in which the first column held the transcript divided per question and answer, the second column held the interpretation that I took from the coded text and the third column contained the code label, which was used to identify patterns in the transcripts. For the purpose of demonstrating the coding process, I supply here an excerpt of the table used for the coding (table 12). The full coding tables are presented in Appendix B, as a digital file together with the interview recordings.

Table 12. Excerpt Coding Used to Analyze the Transcripts

Transcript	Code text	Code label
JO: Ik zeg altijd: "succesvol ben je op het moment dat je afrekent". CE is succesvol. FO, dat weet ik niet of die succesvol is.	<i>JO has a definition of success in which he refers to the moment of finishing the business. He assumes CE to have been successful but is not sure about FO.</i>	Successful
SG: Wil je mijn meningen ook horen daarin of niet?		
JO: Als je die kwijt zou willen, dan wil ik dat well horen. Er zijn er maar een paar die ooit succesvol zijn geweest. GF is natuurlijk een fantastisch restaurateur, verschrikkelijk mooie tent, en in die tijd draaiden ze daar acht miljoen gulden omzet. Naar verhouding was dat de top van de top in onze branche. Alleen hij hield er geen gulden aan over. Op het moment dat die piep ging, moesten zijn broers allemaal gaan kijken hoe ze de tent uiteindelijk iets succesvoller konden maken, om het te kunnen verkopen. Dat is altijd het gevaar in onze branche van wie is nou succesvol en wat is succesvol voor de ondernemer zelf? Kijk, als ik in mijn leven harder had gewerkt, dus een wezenlijk onderdeel was geweest van de keuken- of de bedieningbrigade, dan had ik al dat	<i>Contemplation about another SSUSCRO (one of the narratives at the beginning of the thesis) who he thinks was a good hospitality professional but not good in business.</i> <i>The entrepreneur considers that he would have had the opportunity to make more money if he</i>	Successful Critical Financial Entrepreneurship Personality Financial Entrepreneurship

<p>geld wat ik daar nu aan uitgeef kunnen besparen. Dan was ik nu waarschijnlijk helemaal klaar geweest. Maar omdat ik van nature lui ben en omdat ik veel moet nadenken, laat ik anderen datgene doen waar ik geen zin in heb. Dat betekent dat ik een redelijk gezellig privé leven heb, dat kun je ook als succesvol bestempelen. Alleen dan weet ik natuurlijk niet hoe het straks gaat als ik denk ik heb er geen zin meer in. Dus succesvol is altijd heel moeilijk te omschrijven. Wat voor de één een succes is als hij een fiets koopt, is voor de ander een zwarte rolls royce.</p>	<p><i>would have taken more operational responsibility but he chose deliberately not to do so.</i></p> <p><i>JO describes himself as naturally lazy and therefore choosing not to be fully operationally involved. By doing so he created a different life style and quality of life. He is not sure what successful means in this context.</i></p>	<p>Personality Successful Relativism Quality of life</p>
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From the ‘three column’ table in which I did the coding of the transcript in the first column, I then took the interpretations in the second column (the ‘coded text column’) and collected them in a new table under the labels that were used in the third column of the original table (‘code label column’). Following this procedure, a new table was created that contained the interpretations of each interview and the label that I attached to it. The code labels were described with the meaning that I gave them and with some of them a description was added as to how the literature defines the particular code label. As an example the excerpt below from the table is provided (containing the interpretations of only two respondents’ answers). The full tables are presented in Appendix B.

Table 13. Excerpt Coding for Labels & Meaning in the Literature

Category in SSUSCRO construct [Memo SSUSCRO Construct]
Code + Description
Definition according to the literature
Respondents reference to the code
Problems (challenges) encountered in life and work, effects that had on the entrepreneur and notions about how to deal with them. This code is intended to demonstrate where challenges had an impact on the entrepreneur’s life and how he/she dealt with it.
Challenge(s) in the literature
A challenge can be defined as a continuous process towards growth, learning, and understanding in which definition it is used related to teamwork (Baker & Brash,

2010). More traditional definitions put a 'challenge' in the context of sports where it usually is referring to a cause to be won or lost.
FO Having problems with formal school because of home sickness (FO) Having problems with formal school learning because of dyslexis (FO) Through experience a person becomes more self-secure [Memo Nurture + nature] (FO)
CE Wanted to go to degree programme in hotel management but was not selected. Wanted to go to HHS Maastricht but that was too expensive. There were two more brothers that were studying. Working in the restaurant generated a lot of learning but was very challenging because of long hours. After deciding to stop as apprentice applied for a job as a sales person. Was rejected because of lacking a driver license. CE has the ambition to take the challenge of a new position. The new position brought challenges and the company had financial problems. Company is less vulnerable when e.g. the maitre leaves the restaurant if the SSUSCRO and his partner cover both kitchen and service areas.

As can be seen in the excerpt from the coding table (table 13) above, in my analysis of the transcripts, I simultaneously generated memos in which the contemplation, triggered by the interviewees' story lines, materialized. Charmaz (2006) suggests to start writing advanced memos after initial coding. I followed Saldana's (2009) suggestion to see the writing of analytic memos as: 'whenever anything related to and significant about the coding or analysis of the data comes to mind, stop whatever you're doing and write the memo' (p. 33).

The process of going through the transcripts, interpreting the answers of the interviewees and then creating the coded texts and the code labels triggered many thoughts that I tried to capture in memos, whenever possible. The memos provided, as Birks & Mills (2011) testify: 'the written records of a researcher's thinking ... generated from the early stages ... until completion' (p. 10). Two examples of the crude memos are given below and they connect to the tables of analysis as provided before.

The first memo 'SSUSCRO Social Construct' was written in the process of analysing, when the thought started to emerge that this research is not just

about the SSUSCRO as a person but that there is a social construct defining the successful entrepreneur. Although this finding might seem small, it would be in fact very powerful and important to explain to future practitioners i.e. students of hospitality management programmes. It touches the core of this practice related issue and it warns students not to only concentrate on the possible “person related” ethos of “success”. Students might possibly overlook the social construct that is surrounding the entrepreneur.

Table 14. Example Memo: SSUSCRO Social Construct

<p>Memo SSUSCRO Social Construct</p> <p><i>An awareness starts to emerge while coding that the SSUSCRO is not just a person but more a ‘construct’ that consists of a number of elements. In my definition the SSUSCRO construct at the heart has the individual of the person that is the entrepreneur who can be defined in terms of personality and value system. Furthermore there is an interaction between the profession, managing the culinary restaurant, and the person. Then other influential elements of the construct are the issues/happenings (passive), and the activities (active) that influence the SSUSCRO. This research, being nested in the epistemology of social constructionism, tries to define the SSUSCRO Social Construct in order to describe how this construct can influence hospitality management education.</i></p>

The second example of a shorter type of memo ‘Nature or Nurture’ shown here as excerpt of the analysis process as it was planned.

Table 15. Example Memo: Nature or Nurture

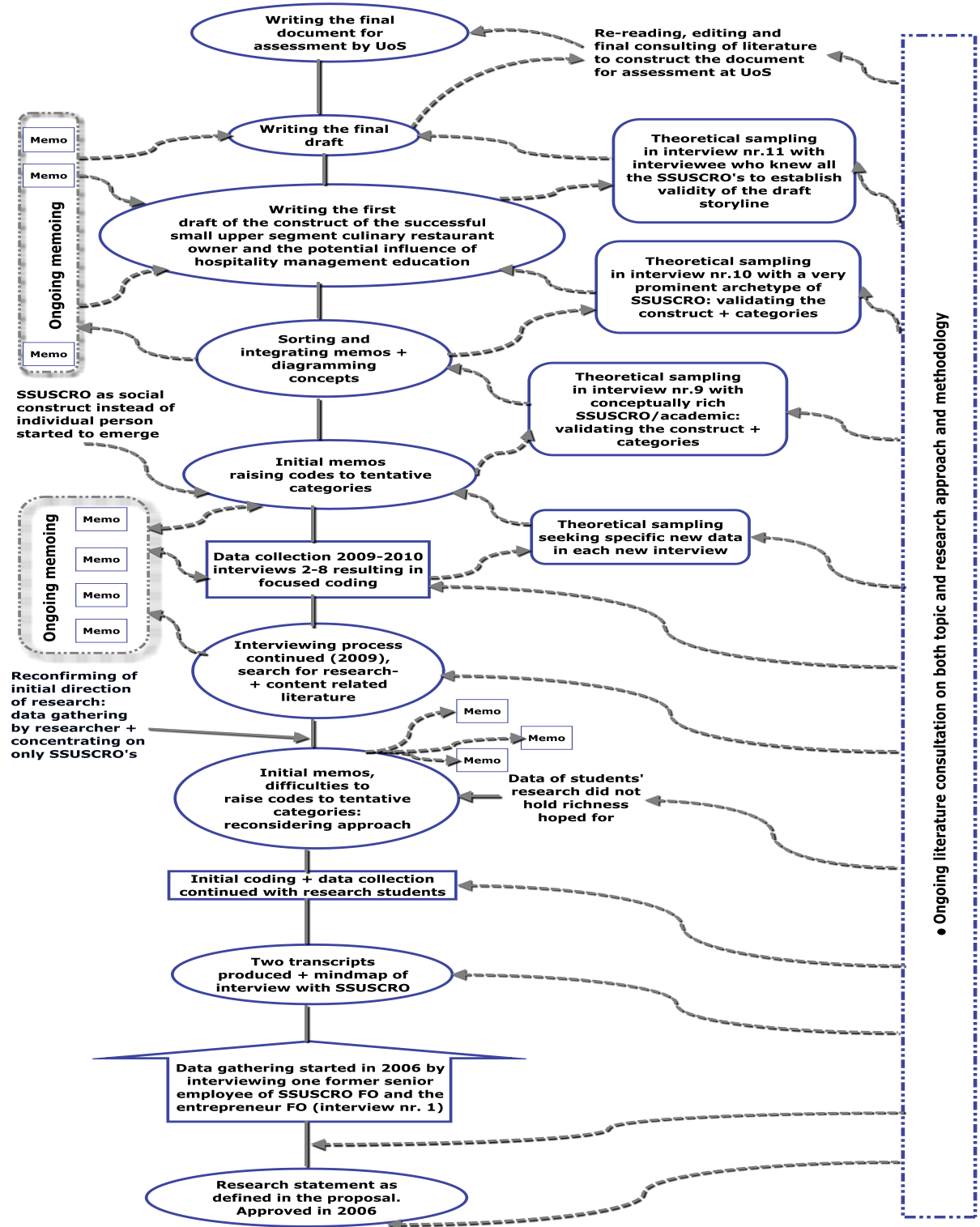
<p>Memo Nature or Nurture</p> <p><i>In the literature there is a discussion about ‘nature’ or ‘nurture’ as influence in the shaping of entrepreneurs. It will be important to engage in conversation about the topic with the SSUSCROs that I will be interviewing further on in my research journey.</i></p> <p><i>Then later, I added to the memo:</i></p> <p><i>In a recent documentary on television it was interesting to see the search of former World Champion 110m hurdles, Colin Jackson who wanted to find out if his ability to run fast could more be attached to ‘nature’ or ‘nurture’. As it turned out to be the ‘nature’ element was heavily over estimated by many people. So it was not the fact that he had the muscular system of a Caribbean/Jamaican person but more the consequent process of nurture by himself and people around him in the conditions where he was living that made him so successful as an athlete.</i></p>
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This memo was helpful in starting the process of theoretical sampling the concept: 'is entrepreneurship connected to nature and/or nurture'? The idea as to whether successful entrepreneurship is connected to 'nature' or 'nurture' emerged in the first interview, but was also identified in the literature review referring to the effect of personality traits or personal values. Theoretical sampling is an important element of grounded theory methodology but also outside that context in other qualitative research as Richards (2005) describes it: 'as a label for this reviewing and revisiting process' (p. 20). Theoretical sampling is used to focus and feed the constant comparison of the data (Birks & Mills, 2011), while it concerns a strategic decision to choose the most information rich source of data to meet the analytical needs. Theoretical sampling is a mode of sampling that is 'not necessarily driven like in quantitative research by attempts to be representative of some social body or population' as Clarke (2005,) signals, and adding: 'especially and explicitly by theoretical concerns that have emerged in the provisional analysis to date' (p. xxxi). Clarke's point about theoretical sampling meant for me to verify, contrast and further develop the findings whether they were of preliminary nature or the substantial theoretical outcomes in the end.

It was as Willig (2008) explains in the early stages of grounded theory necessary to have 'maximum openness and flexibility to identify a wide range of mostly descriptive categories' (p. 37). Then later on in the process, theoretical sampling was concerned with refinement and ultimately with saturation of the increasingly analytic categories. In my research this led me to interviewing the respondents nr. 9, 10 and 11, who were able to provide me the verification of how the emerging social construct of the SSUSCRO could be further described

and explained. To visualize how I implemented my particular interpretation of the constructivist grounded theory process and where I applied theoretical sampling, I provide the model in figure 13.

Figure 13. This Thesis Research's Constructivist Grounded Theory Process



In the following section on time timeframe and reflection in table 16, I offer the explanation of figure 13 about how my constructivist grounded theory progressed.

Timeframe and Reflection

In order to explicitly present the process of the analysis and my reflections connected to each stage of the process, I outlined the stages in table 16. As can be seen from the table and the time frame described, some of the stages were moving simultaneously while others were in a certain time frame. The labour intensive nature of this type of research made me consider to involve my research students in the process as mentioned.

After the first interview in 2006, several students embarked on research projects that potentially could be embedded in my own research. From these projects one research publication was generated (Gehrels, 2007). It became apparent, however, that the nature of this grounded theory research required the researcher(s) i.e. the students, to engage in very personal interviewing and to be highly immersed in the topic, in order to do value adding- and content rich interviewing. Rubin & Rubin (2005) say about this: 'skills are required that take considerable practice' (p. 12). As a consequence, preparation is needed to know or understand the topic of research whether through sensitive reading or from own experiences (Arksey & Knight, 1999). The literature was clear about it (Flick, 2006): 'successful carrying out of ... interviews depends essentially on the interviewer's situational competence' (pp. 153-154). With some exceptions,

it was a very difficult exercise for both undergraduate as well as postgraduate students to manage the preparation and personal skills for doing the interviews.

Table 16. Research: Timeframe and Reflection

Activity & time frame	Description and explanation
(I).End 2006: UoS agrees proposal & supervisor	The research proposal was the last of four extensive writing exercises in which I explored my topic area. I reflected on my own background and relation to the topic, and explored the possible research approaches to take. The thesis proposal finalized the two years of the taught programme (2004-2006).
(II).2006-early 2009: with research students in similar research projects	It was interesting to have research students go into the interviewing process and meeting with a diversity of entrepreneurs. These investigations generated one publication, and many learning points for the students and me (their teacher in the process). It became, however, obvious that a thorough understanding and background knowledge related to the topic were needed. End of 2008, I decided to no longer involve students in the research because the interviewing proved to be too difficult for students.
(III).2006-2012: data gathering	In the first two years the emphasis was on the data gathering by students. When that proved not to be fulfilling the need for quality rich data, I went back to interviewing the SSUSCROs myself again (2006: 1, 2009: 2, 2010: 5, 2011: 2, 2012: 1)
(IV).2007-2012: investigating the literature	Looking at literature about my sample and entrepreneurs, continued until the end of the analysis phase. In order to interpret the findings in the social context of the SSUSCROs I connected, compared and contrasted, building the full size inductive inquiry.
(V). 2006-2012: data analysis & memo writing	From 2006, relatively slow and in 2009/2010 accelerating, I went back and forth between the data and writing memos, identifying themes in the process of constructivist grounded theory. The themes emerged from interview to interview. In 2009 they started to become visible initially and then further developed in 2010-2012
(VI). 2009-2012: theoretical sampling	While interviewing and analysing each interview, the notion of theoretical sampling became apparent. Being involved in the second interview in 2009, I probed some of the assumptions from the first interview and small slices of the students' work from the years before that. In 2011 and 2012, I did another three interviews: two SSUSCROs and a prominent culinary recesent who had worked with the SSUSCRO for several decades. Testing, disconfirming or validating, the first eight interviews' codes and categories were done.
(VII). 2008-2012: writing up the thesis	In the beginning the writing process progressed slowly mainly by interpreting (coding + categorizing) the data and writing memos. Simultaneously I worked on constructing the preliminary thesis document. In 2010 the writing process of the thesis increased in speed. This resulted in the handing in of the first chapters in 2011 and the final version of the thesis in September 2012 at the University of Stirling for assessment.
(VIII). November 2012: Viva	

I realised at some point, not to have invested enough time in the process to develop and improve the interview skills of the students. I failed to make sure, the students understood the ‘deceptively complex interviewing process and its many interacting variables’, as Stewart & Cash (2006, p. 9) refer to it.

After two years of working on the data, students produced, I discussed with my supervisors whether this approach could be turned into a more productive and worthwhile endeavour. If I were to continue, it would have had consequences for the research question and sample choice. The advice was unanimous in suggesting to stay with the original specific SSUSCRO sample, and not to divert to other groups of practitioners in the hospitality industry. As a consequence, I decided from that point onwards no longer to involve students in replicating my research approach. Beginning of 2009, I continued with interviewing the SSUCROs until 2010 in order to build the codes and categories. In 2011 and 2012, I did a second round of interviews, which were used to verify and validate my categories and to move to theoretical saturation. In table 17 an overview is provided of interviewees and interview moments.

Table 17. Overview interviews

First round of eight interviews to build codes, categories and themes		
Code, age, status interviewee + date interv. *1	Status Michelin & Location	Education & Context
FO (62, retired): 17.06.2006	*** East NL	Started HHS Maastricht + partner who did MHS (secondary vocational education programme) Started on hotel management programme but stopped because of dyslexia. He indicated to have highly appreciated the limited time in the programme and to have learned a lot of valuable things for his career as a SSUSCRO.
CE (61, retired): 05.01.2009	*** West NL	Vocational & management courses + partner MHS Wanted to start HHS Maastricht or The Hague but never started because parents did not have the finances. As an alternative, CE built a portfolio of other certificates and diplomas to get to the proper level of knowledge.
JO (54, practising): 17.06.2009	*** West NL	HHS The Hague Did the programme, graduated and mentioned having had valuable insights from the programme.

AS (66, retired): 22.02.2010	✿ West NL	HHS The Hague Same as JO.
JU (58, retired): 26.02.2010	Bib 🐼 South NL	HHS Maastricht Did the programme, and valued it but also indicated having learned a lot from the other work experiences after graduating.
PB (57, practising): 12.03.2010	✿✿ South NL	Vocational courses + partner who did MHS No degree programme. Is self-educated entrepreneur who benefitted also from his wife having done MHS.
PA (63, retired): 12.03.2010	✿✿ South NL	HS Lausanne Did degree programme abroad at high level, high esteem programme. Also wife did a degree programme. Together with the accumulated knowledge of the two generations SSUSCROs (father & grandfather) before them, they seem to be a archetypical case of well developed entrepreneurs.
PI (63, retired): 19.03.2010	✿ South NL	HBS + courses in marketing No hospitality related educational programme but a portfolio of secondary education and courses at degree level.
Second round of interviews to test and validate the findings of the first round		
PE (55, practising): 26.08.2011	✿✿ East NL	Nyenrode (partner same) + PhD Highest formal of education among the SSUSCROs at master degree level and then completed a PhD. His wife also has master degree.
LI*2 (n.a., practising): 24.02.2012	✿✿✿ & ✿✿ East NL	*3 HHS Leeuwarden + MHS In this SSUSCRO case there was a mix of educational backgrounds. The original entrepreneurs had both education at secondary vocational level. When they ran into problems of a financial managerial nature, additional management staff was appointed. The hotel manager, whom I interviewed, held a hospitality management degree.
WI: 29.03.2012	Culinary Restaurant Reviewer	
<p>*1: where mentioned in the interviews, the education of both SSUSCRO and partner are indicated.</p> <p>*2 LI is used as combined coding for the interview with the hotel manager of this enterprise and the written answers that were provided by the original SSUSCRO who currently is acting as a manager within the holding.</p> <p>*3 LI the data from this SSUSCRO case were combined. The hotel manager that I interviewed had an undergraduate degree in hospitality management while the original SSUSCRO (now member of the management team that operates the venture) had a secondary vocational education level (MHS).</p>		

I interviewed six retired SSUSCROs which generated interviews of 1.5 – 3 hours and four practising SSUSCROs for 1 – 2 hours.

Early Thoughts and Further Analysis

While analysing the codes and the categories into which they mapped, a first important notion started to emerge. When I first designed the SSUSCRO research, I assumed that the SSUSCRO could be researched as a person, an individual with certain characteristics. Furthermore, I expected that value systems, driving powers and other characteristics related to their personality

would explain their success. This idea may have been in line with Wagener, Gorgievski, & Rijdsdijk (2010) who suggested to focus explicitly on the link between personal characteristics, and specific goals and behaviours of entrepreneurs/small business owners. I produced a rather linear formula in the early phases of the research, including a sample of hotel upper segment restaurant managers (Gehrels, 2007). I considered the formula to explain the different contextual characteristics of practitioners and the way they impacted on professional and managerial success (p. 47):

$$\mathbf{Eex + Edu + Wex + Cha = Pos}$$

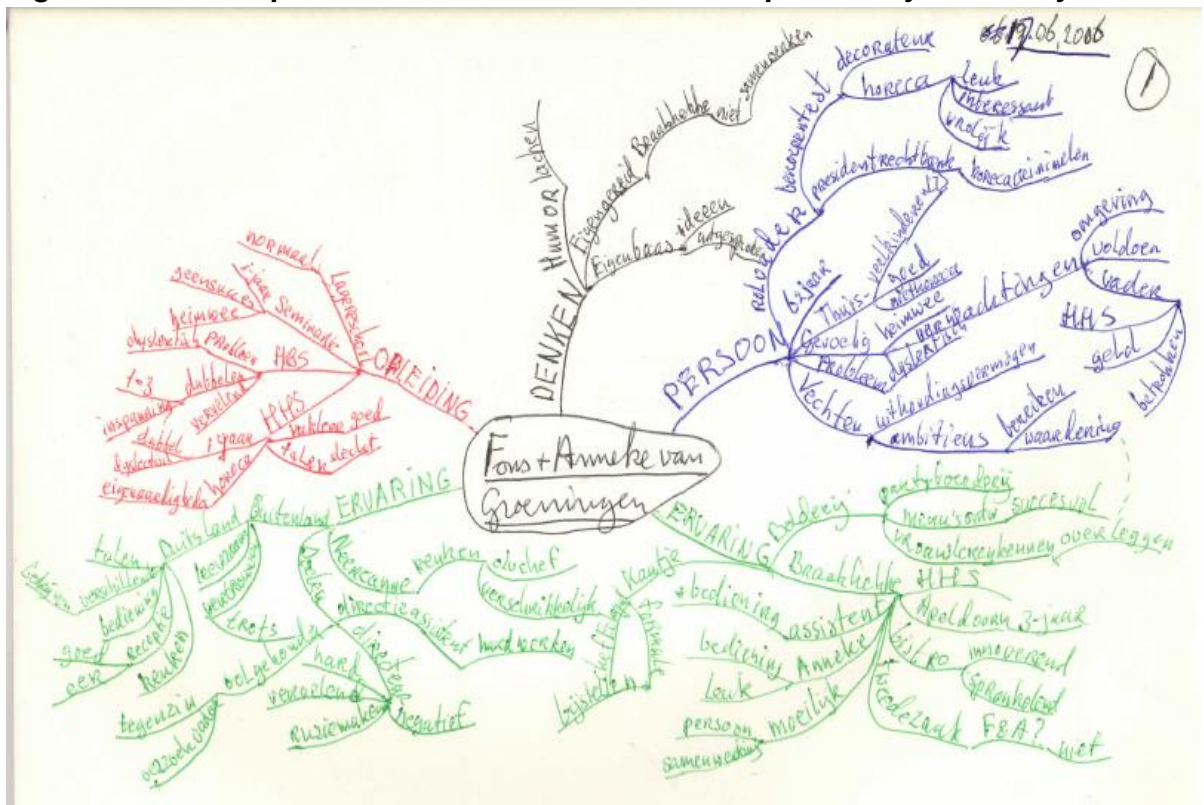
Eex = Early experiences relating to generating a 'hospitality awareness', **Edu** = Education, **Wex** = Work experience, **Cha** = Characteristics of the particular professional (value systems and driving powers), **Pos** = Position fulfilling and success

The elements captured in this formula proved to be of relevance in the process of defining the phenomenon of the SSUSCRO later on in the research.

It was, however, hugely oversimplifying to assume that by looking at the elements: experiences (early in life and later in working), education, work experience and the personal characteristics, 'position fulfilling and success' could be adequately explained. The categories generated in the actual thesis research suggested, a diversity of elements that were needed to define the SSUSCRO phenomenon. My growing understanding of the SSUSCRO construct exposed the rather simplistic nature of my early analysis. Looking at the explanation of the questions in the first SSUSCRO interview made me realize that I had put too much emphasis on the individual. Later on, I started to become more sensitive to the social context in which the SSUSCRO was nested. Exploring and explaining the essence of the SSUSCRO construct was fascinating, because it took me to some remarkable interviewees. In the coding

process, I read line by line and marked the passages where the SSUSCROs talked about their life and their work. After the first interview, I drew a Mind Map presented as example in figure 14.

Figure 14. Mind Map first SSUSCRO interview as example of early data analysis



Soon, however, I concluded that the number of codes and categories could not be captured adequately in Mind Maps. It would require paper of disproportional size. I discarded the idea of using Mind Maps as the visual presentation of the analysis and decided to use mapping in analogy with the type of situational mapping as Clarke (2005) proposes.

While coding the interview transcripts, I continued to search the literature in order to validate my code label definitions, and to see if they would fit the body of knowledge. Birks & Mills (2011), in discussing the use of literature throughout the application of grounded theory refer to this process as:

Raising theoretical sensitivity ... through the comparison of theoretical concepts (taken from the literature; added by researcher) with coded data, the literature can potentially become a source of data in itself ... if it earns its way into the developing theory (p. 61)

While defining the codes, I wrote memos that materialized my understanding and analytic threads induced throughout the working on the data. The whole process was iterative and on-going. It involved going back and forward between data, coding, and further defining the codes and writing memos, while my understanding and interpretation developed. Certain primary interpretations were modified by comparing to the content of later interviews and by reading the literature connected to the codes generated.

The approach taken fitted the grounded theory inductive code generating process as suggested by Charmaz (2006), in which data collection and initial coding are followed by writing memos and raising codes to tentative categories. Then this process was finalized after theoretical sampling, and collecting specific new data by integrating the memos and concepts. Hennink et al. (2011) confirm this, talking about: 'involving reading for overall content, annotating the data, noticing repetition, identifying topic changes, reading analytically, exploring underlying concepts' (pp. 220-232). In the practice of analysing the data, I came close to what Birks & Mills (2011) describe as:

Moving through three phases being initial coding, intermediate coding and advanced coding. In doing so, initial codes emerged from the reflexive activity of thinking carefully about the analytical meaning in the text (pp. 94-98)

I progressed gradually towards intermediate coding which had the key task to link together and integrate categories of codes. After finishing the first interviews' analyses, categories emerged that appeared to hold the codes and their meanings. I continued in this process, of coding, and reflecting in the next interviews and it allowed me to further develop the codes, their meanings and the categories. Some codes were merged, while others were added and this process was taken further until the eighth's interview. After finishing the first eight interviews, interview 9 and 10 were used to verify the concepts that had emerged.

Having finalized the first iterative round of coding and analysing the interviews, I went back to the first interview and started a second round of reading the interviews. The purpose of re-visiting the interviews was to see if the codes and categories developed, could be re-applied to the earlier interviews. Finally, interview nr.11 (WI) inserted the "outsider's view" of the culinary reviewer and writer who had significant experience dealing with the SSUSCROs. WI presented me an interesting perspective that "added extra flavour" to the SSUSCRO accounts. The final interview allowed me to complete the elements that constitute the SSUSCRO construct. WI was able to compare and connect most of the life stories generated in the earlier interviews.

Clarke (2005) states that at its simplest, constructionism assumes that the only realities possible are those that we construct. We must do this through shared language, and to "agree to agree" about the possible unstable meanings and agreements. Clarke warns that many scholars working in the grounded theory: 'have embraced constructionism and truth with a small "t" ... a certain naive realism or "bottom line-ism" also lurks' (p. 11). Although Hacking (1999)

resents the use of the term social construction in his work, he stated it, in many contexts to be a truly liberating idea. Burr (2003) defines as the focus of inquiry in social constructionism: 'the social practices engaged in by people and the interaction with each other' (p. 9). This latter definition of Burr, seemed for me to fit best how I arrived at the findings in this SSUSCRO research.

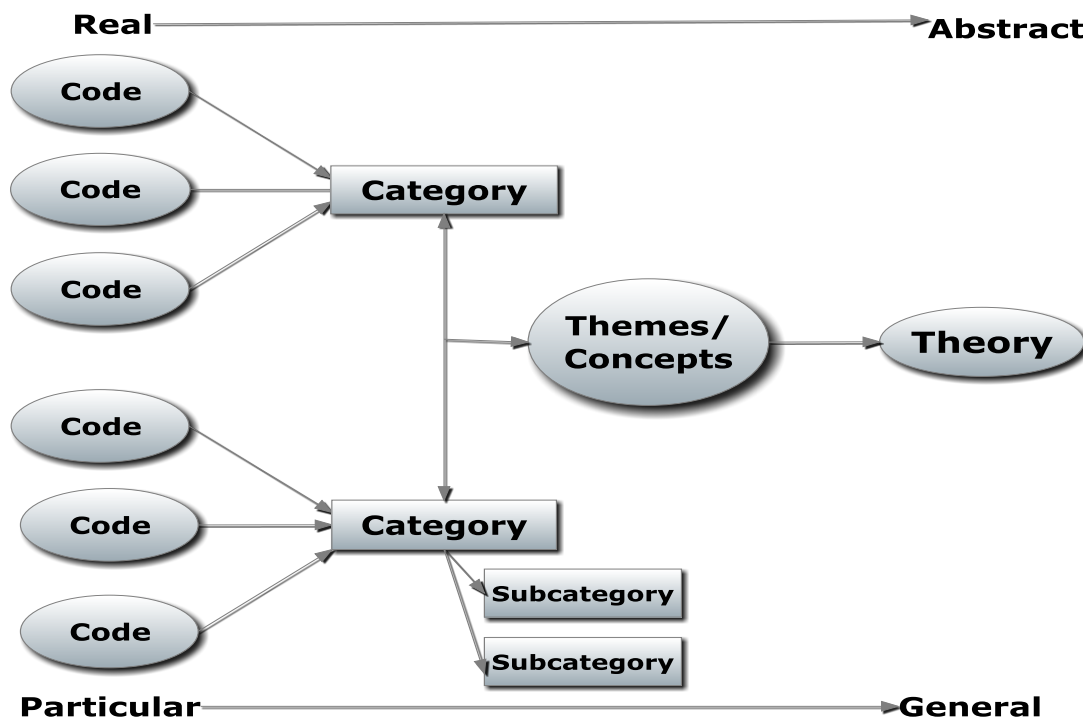
The SSUSCROs were no clearly definable individual personalities but were people within their social context. Their lives were the result of a complex set of person related factors, people around them (partner, family, staff and others), activities and circumstances. The choices they made were in many cases influenced by certain happenings or people. In the process of simultaneous data gathering and analysis, slowly but steadily the social construct of the SSUSCRO in this research became clear. Also the influence that this phenomenon, defined as social construct, could have on hospitality management education started to emerge. Gergen (2009) makes the important point that looking from a social constructionist perspective, 'challenges long honoured words like "truth", "objectivity", "reason" and "knowledge"' (p. 2). I realised retrospectively that in my research implementation, I did not go into validating the SSUSCROs stories by interviewing people who had worked closely with them as I had considered earlier in the design phase. In the interview with respondent WI, however, I verified the SSUSCROs stories by hearing the outsider's perspective. The "outsider", WI offered a broader perspective on the world of the SSUSCROs into this research. Although he had not been "one of them", he had been in contact with them for several decades.

Looking at the SSUSCROs lives, their development, the way they dealt with the people they encountered and the decisions they made started to make

sense. While reading the transcripts of the interviews and thinking about the SSUSCROs involved, I kept the research questions close. As a starting point of the analysis, I tried to find out who the people were that I defined as SSUSCROs. It was important for me to establish if they were the same as most other people. Alternatively, there might be something particular or special about them, which would confirm my initial assumptions as laid out in the narratives at the beginning of this thesis research.

The SSUSCROs' characteristics, as a person, were of importance. Analysing their personalities and to see what made them to who they were, was an important element in the coding. Furthermore, it was important for me to find out how their socialisation had happened. There had to be an influence of the family they came from, the education they had followed and the experiences both before and throughout their entrepreneurship. Some SSUSCROs defined situations in which specific individuals had been influential. In order to find out what had made them into the people they were, I asked my interviewees - SSUSCROs to describe their lives in restaurant entrepreneurship and to indicate where they had perceived to have been the significant moments, interventions and decisions. While they described their lives, I could insert follow-up questions in order to get more in-depth and to find out if their descriptions remained at the surface or if more content rich meanings could be uncovered. I was alert to the SSUSCROs perception of what they considered to be the definition of 'successful'. With this exploration of the term 'successful', I looked for indicators and features in both their professional and private lives. In order to summarize and understand the process of analysis, the schematic presentation from codes to theory by Saldana (2009) provided clarity.

Figure 15. Codes-to-theory model qualitative inquiry (Saldana, 2009, p. 12)



It needs to be noted here that the model presentation as offered by Saldana shows the streamlined, ideal, and maybe somewhat linear flow from codes to the eventual theory. The actual process was a lot messier than suggested. Categories did not emerge nicely and neatly from the codes as might be suggested in figure 15. The iterative process took time and involved going back and forth between the data, initial thoughts and writing of memos.

Issues of Quality

In this section the criteria I used to build the quality of my research are discussed. As suggested by Bloomberg & Volpe (2008), it is 'important in qualitative research to demonstrate to clearly understand how to employ strategies to enhance trustworthiness' (p. 67). Bloomberg & Volpe draw particular attention to credibility, dependability and transferability as the important indicators for the quality of qualitative research. Comparing

perspectives on quality assessment of qualitative research from different sources (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992; Elliot et al., 1999; Willig, 2008) provided the criteria which I merged into one overview in table 18.

Table 18. Quality Criteria & Measures to Deal With Them

Quality criterion & definition	Dealing with criterion of quality in SSUSCRO research
<p>1. Reflexivity - owning ones owns perspective: Qualitative researchers (QR'ers) should clearly disclose their background and the assumptions they bring to the research and consider how those may have influenced the findings.</p>	<p><i>In the introduction, choice of research design and analysis of the data as well as in writing the concluding narrative of the SSUSCRO social construct and its possible influence on education, a constant approach of reflexivity was applied. My role, background and values were consequently fed into the writing, thereby acknowledging my position which was contextually highly connected to the SSUSCROs.</i></p>
<p>2. Transferability-situating the sample: The possible applicability of the findings should be explained and the QR should report the contextual features of the study.</p>	<p><i>Specific applicability of the findings is in the research question including the context of hospitality management education. In the methodology, I explained to adhere to 'moderate enlightenment' (Hammersley, 2002), thereby discarding 'grand generalizations' based of the findings.</i></p>
<p>3. Grounding in examples-importance of fit: QR'ers should provide examples from the data to demonstrate the analytic procedures used and the understanding generated.</p>	<p><i>In the writing of the final SSUSCRO narrative and its application to hospitality management education, I provided direct quotes from the respondents to illustrate on which empirical findings I based my interpretation and formulation of conclusions.</i></p>
<p>4. Credibility checks – negotiated realities: The QR should check whether his accounts are credible to others such as participants, colleagues, other researchers.</p>	<p><i>The process of checking early assumptions, clues and preliminary concepts throughout the interviewing process allowed me to check for credibility. Implementing the process of theoretical sampling facilitated checking credibility. Where ever I could, I discussed my findings with other researchers.</i></p>
<p>5. Coherence – integration of theory: The QR should present coherent and integrated analyses e.g. in the shape of a narrative or story while preserving nuances in the data.</p>	<p><i>The SSUSCRO social construct narrative and the way in which it can influence hospitality management education, presented as the conclusion of this thesis, integrated the analysis from the interviews, the connection to the literature and my own reflexive narratives that served as starting point for the research.</i></p>
<p>6. Documentation: The QR should provide an inclusive and comprehensive account of what has been done and why in the research process.</p>	<p><i>Relevant research documentation is presented in the final thesis. Digital recordings and verbatim interview transcripts are provided. Codes and categories can be found in detail. Research design and choices made, are described in the thesis. The documentation allows following the research journey and replication.</i></p>
<p>7. Theoretical sampling and negative case analysis: By theoretical sampling the QR should seek to extend and modify constructed theory. Critical is to explore the cases that do not fit so well so as the cases that are likely to generate new insights.</p>	<p><i>In the on-going process from interview 1 to 8 theoretical sampling was applied to test and verify findings from each consecutive interview. For the interviews 9 to 11 theoretical sampling and negative case analysis were brought very explicitly to the foreground in order to be able to conclude and write the final SSUSCRO social construct.</i></p>

My approach and design in this research can be considered to hold some limitations when looking at the current body of knowledge on research. Most authors situated in the objectivist, positivist, and often in their own perception pure scientific lines of thought would discard my research in terms of methodology. Hair jr, Money, Samouel, & Page (2007) talk about the characteristics of the “good” scientific method (p. 44) that: ‘(A) it should be objective, meaning that the researcher’s opinion is independent of the results, and (B) that it is logical, meaning that conclusions are drawn from the results based on logic’ (p. 44). Both, (A) and (B), are not implemented in their strict meaning in my reasoning and design for this research because I started from a reflexive personal and therefore subjective narrative based on my experience. My opinion as a researcher had an influence on the process of interpreting the findings, but I acknowledged when it had impact and where this was triggered by my own background, experience and values in life. The assumption in (B) about “logic” being the basis for the conclusions was only partly followed. Despite the fact that I attempted to provide a logical argument, a substantial part of the final grounded theory was based on interpretation of the facts and stories as they were shared by the interviewees.

Another point that Hair jr et al. (2007) raise is that research should be theory driven, meaning that it relies on a previous body of knowledge. Although I have extensively looked at the existing body of knowledge in my literature review, I concluded that this would not explain the SSUSCRO social construct in-depth, as much as I was looking for. It would not connect to my own reflections as (former) practitioner in the SSUSCRO world. Another point that I have respected, is the rigorous nature research should have. I followed the

criteria defined before, to be rigorous in order to avoid “quick fix type of conclusions”, based on face value analysis.

Providing the full documentation of the digital interview recordings, the verbatim transcripts, the coding, categorizing and interpretation narrative, allows any observer to follow my research trail and to check as to whether rigour has been applied. Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler (2008), although confirming their preferred approach to research to be positivist, acknowledge that good research not only exists in extreme forms. It is more often a combination of the different schools of thought; positivist and interpretivist. This position of being in the middle would fit my approach of starting from a constructionist epistemology that sits in the centre position between objectivist and subjectivist (referred to: positivist and interpretivist by Blumberg et al.). I am confident that rigour and trustworthiness of my research were secured, despite an apparently relatively small sample (11 interviewees) and inclusion of personal interpretation. I have provided a piece of research that holds value for (future) practitioners i.e. hospitality management students as well as faculty and management in these programmes.

Chapter 4. Constituting and Valuing

Introduction

The first round of interviews resulted in the unstructured overview of code labels in figure 16.

Figure 16. Codes in SSUSCROs non-categorized



I started to connect the code labels within the somewhat messy overview into categories from interview to interview. Developing categories as the second step in the analysis process allowed me to start searching for the theoretical elevation in the process. Intuitively, I grouped the code labels with potential categories in my mind. Comparing the codes while moving from one interview to the next, I started to identify categories that seemed to be moving in certain

relatively consistent directions. The emerging categories were connected to the research questions from which I had derived the interview questions. In the first few interviews I asked the SSUSCROs about their lives in terms of education and experience. While answering these questions, the SSUSCROs talked about who they were and how they felt about the way their lives had developed.

I called the first category: 'personality related', which held the codes that were closely related to the person, the individual entrepreneur himself. A person's drive to take responsibility, having the characteristic of being passionate, the urge to be critical but also the sense of looking at issues in life in perspective are examples of the codes in this category. These codes all reflected to a varying extent, the 'me', the starting point in life that the SSUSCRO brought to the scenery of culinary restaurant entrepreneurship.

Then closely connected to the person in the story were the situations happening or the issues presenting themselves to the SSUSCRO in life. This category was marked as 'Issues/happenings/themes' and contained codes like 'challenges', 'moments of change', 'the economic situation', 'family & partner', 'perceived quality of life' and 'influencing people or situations'. Throughout the interviews, a code 'Dark side of SSUSCRO life' emerged, which was used to mark the negative occurrences that SSUSCROs encountered. Themes such as sustainability and the ideas and perceptions about social entrepreneurship were also captured in this category.

Dealing with the world around them, SSUSCROs take decisions and make choices, which is a process driven by value systems. As England (1967) asserted, it is the individual manager's (entrepreneur's) personal value system that makes a difference in terms of how he evaluates information, how he

arrives at decisions – in short, how he behaves. This applies both to the decisions related to the business for the long term and the decisions made on a day-to-day basis. All SSUSCROs were asked explicitly to talk about and explain their value systems and they did. Items coded in the category of value systems included reliability, respect, freedom, independency, loyalty and cheerfulness. Reference to a social approach in entrepreneurship was made by some SSUSCROs, by which they indicated the value attached to being sociable to staff and other people. Also some SSUSCROs talked about elements in their lives that I connected to the Value Driven Leadership approach (Covey, 2004).

Finally, two categories emerged that contained the codes, which related to what the SSUSCROs undertake as activities in their lives and businesses. The first category referred to a general group of codes qualified as 'activities', while the second category 'management related' specifically captured actions and issues related to the management life of the SSUSCROs. I expect this latter category particularly to be recognized by people involved in hospitality management education because it can be found in the curricula of these programmes. The category 'management related' held codes such as 'innovation', 'creativity', 'customer focus', 'teambuilding', 'personnel', 'financial' and 'publicity'. Also codes that were related to the network environment that SSUSCROs work in, were noted in this category. Examples were: 'restaurant associations', 'Michelin', 'networking', 'colleagues', and 'friendship'.

In figure 17, the overview of codes within the overarching categories is provided.

Figure 17. Semi-abstract map of codes and categories



Each of the categories, 'issues/happenings/themes', 'personality', 'activities', 'management related' and 'value system', is of a rather different nature but they all could be found in the stories of the entrepreneurs interviewed.

In table 19, an overview of the codes and categories is provided.

Table 19. Codes and categories

Personality Related	Value Systems	Issues/ Happenings/ Themes	Activities	Management Related
Responsibility Passion Direction Differentiate Personality Critical Identity Realism Sense of perspective Natural Vanity Ambition Reputation Wisdom Astrology Headstrong Curious Impulsive/active Vision	Reliability Respect Freedom Independency Loyalty Recognition/ Appreciation Cheerfulness Core Values SSUSCRO Core Values partner Covey 7-Habits Successful Honesty Commitment Friendship Social entrepreneurship	Challenges Change Partner Influence Quality of life Religion Nature Nurture Experience Fatigue Education Essence Entrepreneurship Future Sustainability Family Economic situation International Dark side SSUSCROs	Balancing Learning Achieving Planning Developing Knowing Enduring Non-enjoying Enjoying Fighting Caring Focusing Exercising Retiring Deciding	Hospitality industry Innovation Creativity Networking Customer focus Publicity Michelin Profession Managing Financial Successful Teambuilding Discipline Complaints Restaurant associations Colleagues Property-Real Estate Advice Information Technology Personnel Menu Purchasing Life cycle culinary restaurants

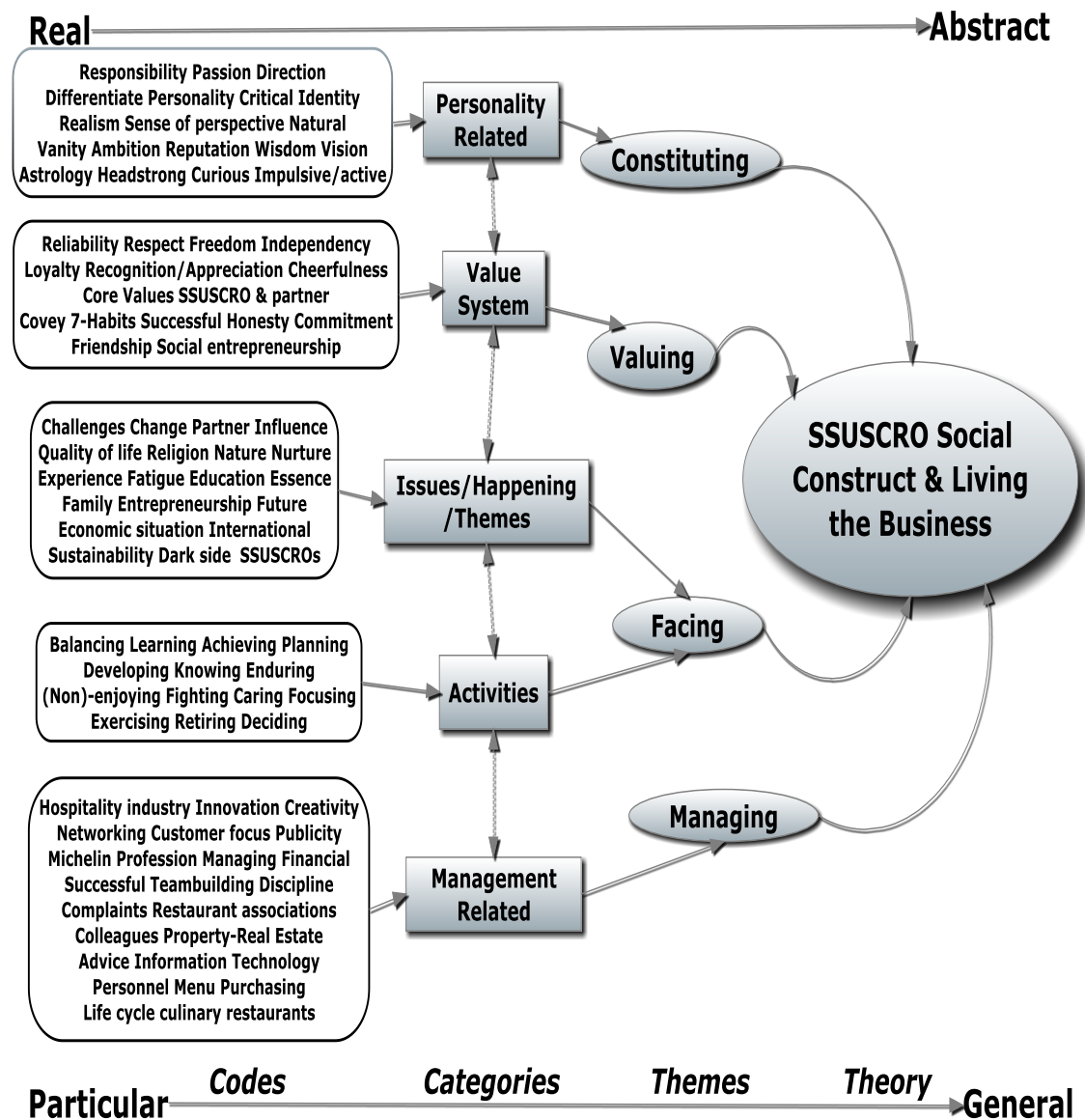
Moving from Categories to Themes

Thinking about the categories in which I mapped the codes, brought me to consider them in a more abstract way and for that purpose I looked at the core of the process. What was going on here? Clearly the SSUSCROs came into this world like any other human being and brought their, by “nature given”, characteristics. The category “personality related” could then be seen as the individual, the starting point which conceptualized in the theme of “*constituting*”, the beginning. The second category captured the codes which signified that the SSUSCRO was continuously “*valuing*” the world around him, while moving through life and making decisions.

The individual SSUSCRO, talked about how he engaged with issues/happenings/themes which are around him. I considered this category as the world around, that he needed to face in order to progress through life and refer to it as: "*facing*". In this process of facing the world around, the individual used and further developed his value systems. In the dominant part of his life, running his restaurant and dealing with the people in that context, the SSUSCRO is involved in management, he is "*managing*". All the themes, "constituting", "valuing", "facing" and "managing", characterize the essence of the SSUSCRO's "being", which is active, moving and fluid. It is not a static, pre-defined format, that can be replicated without careful reflection and contemplation. It is a dynamic process, but it can be analysed in order to learn from it. The essence of engaging in this activity of analysing is to learn what went right, what went wrong and what did not go at all.

The process followed Saldana's (2009, p. 12) suggestion to progress from the coding to the eventual theory, as illustrated in the methodology chapter. By doing so and elevating the analysis via categories and themes, I moved from the "real" and "particular" captured in the coding process to the more "abstract" and "general" in the theory of the SSUSCRO social construct and Living the Business. In figure 18, the abstracting from the codes to categories, and then to themes and theory is visualized.

Figure 18. From codes to theory



In the next section the theme of “constituting” is explained and analysed.

Constituting

From the literature there was clear evidence that personality as a starting point for entrepreneurs, significantly influences their decision making (Littunen, 2000; Morrison, 2001; Legoherel, Callot, Gallopel, & Peters, 2004; Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2009). A question about a particular personality characteristic came up after meeting the first respondent FO a highly respected former two Michelin

star SSUSCRO. FO indicated to be dyslexic and this condition had influenced his life significantly. It was interesting to see what kind of influence a personality issue such as dyslexia could have on the way entrepreneurs lead their life. In the behaviour of FO, it seemed that he would compensate by demonstrating an enormous persisting in certain situations to get it “his way”. Calling FO a “pusher” would in my perception be justified and this had a positive effect on getting things done related to his business.

On the other hand, I observed this “pushing” as a negative characteristic in some situations. I interpreted FO’s behaviour as somewhat intimidating when he was overly stating his opinion and insisting on implementing ideas. The same type of behaviour was apparent with the SSUSCRO in narrative D, who most of the times insisted on getting things done “his way” or to suggest “to go the highway”. Having been his direct assistant I encountered D’s approach at many occasions in the two-and-a-half years working for him.

Among the personality related behaviours of SSUSCROs, is the enormous focusing by the entrepreneurs in this category that was mentioned by PB. Possessing characteristics resembling “ADHD” or “bipolar disorder”, as PB described it, these SSUSCROs seem to have the capability to allocate enormous energy in order to achieve a particular goal. Extreme focusing, as a consequence, can have effects such as anxiety and restlessness that potentially negatively impact the entrepreneur. PB said about this, when referring to a stressful period in refurbishing his restaurant:

‘ ... Well look, I have had that often in my life and still ... I really felt exhausted. When I was screwed by a contractor and had to use anti-depressants ... ‘

Crucial in the perception of personality related challenges is the way SSUSCROs deal with these challenges. If the “specific personality” is properly connected to the activities needed to be a high performing entrepreneur or professional in the restaurant business, it turned out to be quite valuable.

The culinary restaurant segment puts a high demand on the people working in it, and may well serve as a good “environment” for people with specific personality characteristics such as hyperactivity. While in other professions this particular personality characteristic would be considered as a deficiency, it might very well be put to good use in the culinary restaurant sector. Hartmann (1996) found positive aspects among those diagnosed with ADHD/ADD, and one is their ability to multitask. Hartmann suggests to move into a direction: ‘of work, careers, and a lifestyle which uses and celebrates ADD, rather than trying to be a tax accountant, groaning under the daily weight of detail and calculations’ (p. 195).

Discussing the nature of ADHD in a down-to-earth school essay, Cobyyy (2005) came up with the awareness that if someone’s work or friendships are not impaired by the behaviour, it should not be diagnosed as ADHD. Nor should a person be diagnosed as such according to Cobyyy if he seems overly active, but functions well for instance in a profession, such as in the culinary sector. In the context of running the culinary restaurant, hyperactivity may well be put to work as PB’s wife stated about her husband:

‘ ... well he is very restless. He is always searching for new challenges.

Because after writing this book, he again gets restless, something new has to happen ... and not necessarily only in the restaurant ... ’

In furthering the analysis of the SSUSCRO discourses, it became clear that a range of personality related elements all could be put in the same category.

Passion, fighting, headstrong, (hyper)activeness, impulsiveness, creativity, curiosity, search for innovation all seem to be located within the domain of what respondent PB referred to as “drive”.

Drive is considered here as the on-going urge of the SSUSCRO personality to establish a place in life through his profession in which he wants to be good or preferably the best. PB added that if a person has the drive, the motivation and the power to perform, the rest (the money) will subsequently follow. This notion of drive or passion, being an important success factor for entrepreneurs and influencing their financial performance was confirmed by Haar, Taylor, & Wilson (2009):

An owner’s passion plays a major role in the development of entrepreneurship within their firm ... firms who focus on their passion, risk taking propensity, innovativeness, and ability to exploit opportunities should benefit by competing more aggressively with other competitors and benefiting financially (p. 28)

A fair amount of activeness or passion may also serve well as a beneficial characteristic for people who would like to become successful in industries other than the hospitality industry. I personally experienced that being involved in a diversity of activities in education was possible because of an enormous focusing of energy and “drive” such as defined by PB in the case of the SSUSCROs. It made me realize that I employed a more than average level of activeness myself.

Among the SSUSCROs both JO and AS were identified as hyperactive personalities by their colleague PB, who knew them well. In overview, the

personalities of SSUSCROs, practising or retired, could be classified as in table 20, based on the interviews, publications and my observations.

Table 20. SSUSCROs and active personalities

Personalities among practising and retired SSUSCROs and the narratives described at the beginning of the research, in terms of how active people are perceived by their peers or the researcher, or how they perceive themselves		
	Regular active personalities	Distinctive active personalities
Practising	PE	JO, PB, LI
Retired	CE, PA, PI	FO, JU, AS
Narratives	C	A, B, D

The overview shows that the majority of the SSUSCROs discussed in this research can be characterized as possessing personality traits that would tempt other people to state that they perceive them as “distinctive active”. The category of retired SSUSCROs was more equally divided into both categories than the practising. It needs to be emphasized here that no firm conclusions could be drawn from the categorizing above because there is no empirical psychological basis to this element in the research. It did, however, provide an indication of the SSUSCRO personalities and a perceived level of “activeness” in that.

Fieve (2006) distinguishes a condition, which is referred to as “Bipolar IIB(eneficial)”. This latter state of behaviour may be interesting to consider in terms of the perceived personality aspects of the entrepreneurs in the SSUSCRO category. Fieve’s description of bipolar IIB seems to be “spot-on” and is in line with what I encountered in the interviews and observed from the SSUSCROs involved:

Those with Bipolar IIB can use the mild mania to attain great accomplishments ... special hallmarks ... include being bold and adventuresome, successful and driven, gifted and entrepreneurial,

exuberant and confident, highly productive with an antipathy towards sleep, controlling but cool, chatty and persuasive, intuitive and captivating, and charming and creative (p. 133)

PE made a firm statement about another SSUSCRO's characteristic, which is having a strong personal work discipline:

' ... I think that discipline, in many ways, one of the major qualities has to be. I think that SSUSCROs are extremely disciplined in many respects ... they will not be swept away easily, they just cannot have that happen ... '

I recognize this notion of discipline from my own experience of working in the culinary restaurants. The long working hours, high work pressure and work related stress, the presence of wine and other alcoholic beverages would make practitioners only "survive" if they had a strong notion of discipline. In my own situation I perceived this sense of personal discipline as something I learned as a staff member in culinary restaurants, and it has proved useful in my current life. Personal discipline and having the dedication to endure and sustain will serve an individual in his life especially when circumstances are demanding and challenging.

Another feature of the SSUSCRO personality is their display of having a distinct need for freedom and independence. It was interesting to see that some of the entrepreneurs, mainly the manager – owners, deliberately tried to have strong people next to them on the key positions in their restaurants, such as the chef and maître d' (restaurant manager). They did so in order to be able to take on responsibilities outside the restaurant. Examples of SSUSCROs that applied the principle of trying not to be indispensable in the daily operations of their restaurant were JO, PI and PE. Another example was AS, who transferred at some point in his career from entrepreneurship to employment. He stated that if

one is employed in the position of restaurant manager in a big company, this is essentially a different situation than being a self-employed entrepreneur. Being a manager, employed by someone else requires asking approval for certain decisions from a “higher authority”, for example if responsibilities outside the restaurant were taken on. PE summarized his sense of needing freedom as follows:

‘ ... freedom is vitally important for me ... plan your own day, implement your own priorities and of course you have tasks, meetings and responsibilities, things that have to be done, but freedom means reducing issues to accessible chunks, in the sense of “okay, that I can still handle”, but you know it is about deciding yourself when to do something ... ’

PE admitted that had he not have been so insistent on his freedom and had he taken one of the key positions in the restaurant, it might potentially have made his restaurant more successful and it would definitely given him more profits.

JO pulled the essence of this notion of freedom or independency nicely together by saying:

‘ ... well, I am not part of the operational hassle ... that is what I always kept as my vision, I am a self-employed entrepreneur and so, I want to be independent ... ’

This finding conformed with what Rokeach (1973, 1979) found as one of the dominant values of entrepreneurs in small businesses.

To summarize, it would be correct to say that a number of the SSUSCROs in this research were remarkable active personalities but at the same time disciplined professionals. They valued a sense of freedom and independence and were strongly focused on deciding about the direction they took.

Getting to Grips with Reality

Another important aspect of the SSUSCRO is the insistence on level-headedness meaning “to keep the feet firmly on the ground”. JO summarized it as follows:

‘ ... Our profession gets enormously romanticized. Not only by journalists or on television, but also by students in hospitality management programmes. They think we are busy the whole day preparing nice dishes and that kind of thing. Effectively, you should teach them that this is just a plain profession because it is forgotten often, a profession which is about managing ... ’

AS and other SSUSCROs confirmed that it is not wise to be displaying more expensive clothes, car or other elements of personal spending than the customers because they will perceive this as: *‘ ... we have paid for it ... ’*. PB referred to the SSUSCROs B and JO as people who really enjoyed spending money which is something very recognizable with other SSUSCROs. Despite their level-headedness, many SSUSCROs also seem to like spending money which has an element of ambivalence to it. Other examples showed the same type of behaviour, such as FO, JU, and LI.

Where does this drive to spend money come from? Is it the luxury life-style that SSUSCROs see from their clientele or is it more related to their personality? Most SSUSCROs seem to be extroverted people who as mentioned enjoy being active. The notion of entrepreneurs spending money connects to Jones & Spicer’s (2009) discourse. They critically assess the tendency among entrepreneurs to have excessive patterns of spending and in many cases wasting more than average resources. It is Jones & Spicer’s assumption that entrepreneurs feel that they are entitled to such spilling of resources because that is part of their position as an entrepreneur. Jones &

Spicer have a valid point in relation to B and D who cherished a luxury lifestyle and justified it as the natural fruit of their hard work and responsibility.

Overall, however, the successful entrepreneurs who know how to sustain their business over a long period of time are “down-to-earth” with a strong sense of realism which can be found in their statements. JO made it quite clear how he views his position within the luxury Michelin star restaurants:

‘ ... very important in entrepreneurship in a (Michelin star) restaurant: some see it as having a star status. But if you see it like a star status, without a shadow of a doubt, you will fall flat on your face. Never forget, high trees catch a lot of wind ... ’

Or as PB formulated it: *‘ ... keep both feet firmly on the ground ... ’*. PA assessed the behaviour of many people in the hospitality industry and specifically within the restaurant business. When asked what to address to future professionals i.e. students in hospitality management programmes about the practice in the restaurant sector, PA commented:

‘ ... Always stay true to yourself. Because that is the major problem. The level of the hospitality industry, with all due respect, I say this, is not what it should be. I know some established people (restaurant entrepreneurs: added by researcher). If those guys drink a few glasses, you really get to know them. And then they start throwing with money, and then I think “be wise, you will have to work much too hard for it”. And then they show cars, or they go on holidays or have excessive jewellery, I just don’t know what is the need for that. Probably, it has to do with their upbringing. And then it is like this, I only know the hospitality industry in the upper segment, which is 90% okay. But what is below there, ... and I am not referring to the established names, is not my world ... ’

In his assessment of the level of people, as practitioners in the hospitality industry, PA touched upon an important point, which is about the diversity in background and upbringing among them. Some of the SSUSCROs have come through the line of hotel-restaurant owning families being relatively well-to-do, while others came from a less well-off background.

Another point of influence might be educational background. It was interesting to see that none of the SSUSCROs that came from modest family background had gone through higher education. Spending patterns and excessive behaviour, as mentioned by Jones & Spicer (2009), appeared in the case of the SSUSCROs in this research to be more individually determined and not so much related to background or education level. This finding is different from recent research of Leclerc (2012) who indicated social agents such as family and also education to be of influence on spending patterns. More support is found in what Fieve (2006) describes as the connection between Bipolar IIB and excessive spending patterns. Fieve concluded that people with the Bipolar IIB condition can be high-achievers at times when in their high energy phases (hypomania), while simultaneously facing the risk of misjudgement. PI offered a quote about the behaviour of many entrepreneurs in the business which summarizes the striving for status and presenting themselves as successful business people, while not even really being that: '*... they first buy the BMW before they pay the BTW (Dutch for VAT) ...*'.

Overall the SSUSCROs in this research, despite the perceived appreciation of spending among a number of them, indicated to have a sense of realism. Both FO and CE said that after having retired, they would not go eating out in the Michelin category restaurants they used to work in. Implicitly

they referred to it not being within their appropriate spending pattern. Keeping the balance between level headedness and spending is most probably one of the factors that differentiates the successful and sustainable entrepreneurs from the ones who are not.

Something related to what emerged in the stories of the SSUSCROs, I experienced in education when organizing international internships or other international experiences for students. If we as educators, in organizing or supervising, visit the international locations where our students go, students (and their parents) often say: ‘ ... *that’s luxury and we pay for that* ... ’. These type of statements signalled to me as educator that people quickly perceive something connected to travel and the hospitality industry as excessive spending, despite the possible functional application of these activities. This happens especially when people have paid for the service or product that is delivered in the process.

Another phenomenon connected to the SSUSCROs personality is a sense of putting things into perspective, cheerfulness and aspiring for quality of life, they display. JU described his life after retirement in which he has a hobby of repairing old-timer cars with a friend. It seemed to be something completely different when compared to his previous work as restaurant entrepreneur. On the other hand, the Latin words for renovating or restoring are: “renovare” or “restoratio”, from which the word restaurant was derived. So one could perceive there to be more in common between restoring old cars and offering hospitality in a restaurant. An example of the way SSUSCROs display a sense of perspective and cheerfulness (sense of humour) was offered by CE when he talked about how his wife dealt with his sometimes difficult personality:

' ... if by then it would not be completely good again (after they had a disagreement: added by researcher), then I went, always half-an-hour earlier from home to the restaurant, and then R. came half-an-hour behind me because I would also go home half-an-hour earlier. And then, when R. came, we also had a dog, and R. would take the dog with her in the car. And then she said to the dog: "what an asshole, is that CE, isn't he?". And the dog would look up from the backseat in the car and ask "who?" and then say, "yes, you are right" ... '

Also in other comments, SSUSCROs demonstrated a sense of perspective when it came down to their highly rated Michelin star restaurants, accommodating rich clientele. AS came up with a notion that clearly put his responsibilities as entrepreneur and manager in perspective. He said that, as one of his tasks, he really put in the personal effort to call debtors because he found that to be a very important responsibility for him as entrepreneur, adding:

' ... what else is there to do as a manager than drinking coffee ... '

Although seemingly insignificant, his statement shows that he as the entrepreneur in his responsible position could relativize the seriousness of his work. FO, when asked what he would convey to future professionals, i.e. students, said:

' ... very important in our profession is the cheerfulness. It is obviously a feast. You really need to see the cheerfulness and the relativity of what we are doing ... '

It is important to note that SSUSCROs have a personality that is not only extremely focused and driven to perform.

As a balance the SSUSCROs also possess the characteristic of putting the serious nature of their profession into perspective. I perceive this additional

aspect of the SSUSCRO personality as needed, to balance the other side of high focusing and performing and being able to endure.

Choosing a Critical Perspective in the Upper Segment

The SSUSCROs are critical individuals and express their critical stance towards many issues they deal with in business and life. A good example of the critical approach to his profession was expressed by FO when he commented about his successor. FO made it clear that he had always implemented higher standards than the relatively young entrepreneurs who took over the restaurant. FO held a similar view about another SSUSCRO who took over the restaurant of his colleague CE.

FO also critically assessed the situation in the hospitality industry in terms of customer focus. He suggested to use the available relatively easy accessible information technology related means, such as customer database software much more than done at the time. Simultaneously FO, however, warned about creating a detailed computer system in which the data about the customers are stored. He expressed to be cautious because if the data would end up in the wrong hands, this could harm the company. FO referred to some of his employees who at the point of starting their own restaurant might take the content of the customer database with them.

From a social entrepreneurship perspective, FO was critical about restaurants that do not treat their staff honest and fair according to labour law agreements. He displayed a sense of critically examining current practice in the culinary restaurant sector: '*... I think it is essential, they should treat their personnel fair ...*'. Because FO expected staff to remember the preferences of their

customers he was also critical about them if they would not read about the preferences of the guests in the customer database. All SSUSCROs identified the input of the entrepreneur as a critical factor for successful restaurant entrepreneurship. CE and partner referred to the examples of good chefs who became entrepreneurs and then lacked the financial managerial knowledge to do this successfully. CE and FO both critically assessed colleagues who were financially not successful.

FO took on a critical view about restaurant associations, such as Alliance Gastronomique and Relais & Chateaux and argued that the members from outside The Netherlands could not be trusted. JO as former chairman added that the cooperation with the Belgian colleagues of the Alliance was challenging, because of the differences in organizing and their apparently reluctance to pay the fees for the association's membership.

The majority of the SSUSCROs were criticizing the needs and mentality of the current younger people who worked in their restaurants. A characteristic of the younger generation was the lower level of endurance, according to them. CE's partner typified this changing mentality and aspirations of the contemporary youth as:

' ... they just want a big car and to be traveling around the world, even before they properly started working ... '

CE presented a critical stance towards the quality offered in the lower segment restaurants and compared this to buying the ingredients himself and preparing them at home, which he assessed to be adding more value.

Another point of criticism was raised by FO, about the capacity of the current culinary restaurants to organize creative ventures. According to him all

restaurants do the same type of activities and copy these from their colleagues. PE and LI expressed at several occasions their criticism about hospitality and catering education. Further on in the findings more is said about this latter phenomenon. SSUSCROs thus seem to be critical about their business and their environment. This critical approach appears to originate from their strong urge to sustain their business and the necessity to compete.

Although the characteristic to be critical both inwardly in the restaurant and outwardly towards the environment was common among the SSUSCROs, it has a downside. Kets de Vries (1985) identified when talking about the dark side of entrepreneurship the risk of an entrepreneur's strong capabilities going out of control. Kets de Vries concluded that sometimes the same creative energy that drives an entrepreneur has its source in destructive needs that can ruin a career, or a company likewise.

The case of French Bernard Loiseau, at the time three Michelin star SSUSCRO, illustrated the extremes. Loiseau committed suicide in 2003 after losing two "toques" in the GaultMillau ranking and anticipating his third star in the Michelin ranking to be taken away. After this tragic happening there was a suspicion that this famous SSUSCRO had suffered from *a non-mild form of* (added by researcher) bipolar disorder (Leopold , 2005). In the case of Loiseau, the depression phase of the disorder had destroyed him. It turned out after his death, that Michelin had not taken his third star away.

The choice of SSUSCROs to operate in the upper segment seemed to have been triggered in different ways. Some of the SSUSCROs had worked their way up in the restaurant business (FO, CE, JU, PB, AS), either through the chef-route or the manager-route. Others came into this part of the

restaurant business in a different manner. JO, PI and PE never intended to go into the restaurant of their parents after having done a degree programme. JO took over the restaurant of his parents merely because of circumstances, as he called it. PI took over the restaurant after the sad event of his father-in-law dying in a car accident. JO described the situation in which he finally took over from his father, as one that developed steadily and which was not always easy:

' ... At some point, I said: "dad, I am not going to put up with it like this anymore, because you are a bit in my way". Then he said: "yes, I had the impression already but did not want to start about it". When I hired a good chef ... in the evening he would be shouting at him ... He was already so long in the business and got tired and a bit paranoid. He thought, all staff to be robbers. I told him, this is not going to work. I will do it my way and I have the impression that you have seen it all by now. "yes, in fact, I have", he said. Then, I said: "let's hand over the final shares and you can go nicely to rest" ... '

In the case of PA, his parents had deliberately pre-destined him to take over the family business and prepared him for this. PA acknowledged the hard work his parents had put in the restaurant, and praised them for the achievement of creating a highly respected business in the culinary sector:

' ... My father and mother have both worked very, very, very hard. My mother maybe even harder than my father. My father was of course always in the front of the business and had top staff in the service. Okay, he led the business. He directed and because of his drive, the restaurant became what it was ... that I have seen obviously and as a result I am very dutiful, I am loyal and secure ... '

It is not completely clear how the differences in background influenced the way of operating the restaurant of the different SSUSCROs, and what it precisely can entail for the students in a hospitality management programme.

It seemed apparent that the SSUSCROs who succeeded the previous generation took quite some learning from that, either positive (“how to do it”) or negative (“how not to do it”). JO referred to some of the learning from his parents’ situation that he would not want to replicate:

‘ ... my parents have always worked very hard, they specially in the start-up years had very little time for their children. Nobody blames them, because we had a fantastic childhood and everything could be done. However, they have been sweating their guts out from the time they were in their twenties. If I look back on that, I would never have wanted to do the same ... ‘

The accounts mark the sometimes ambivalent feelings the SSUSCROs had, who took over from the previous generation. On the one hand they respected their parents, but on the other hand they realised that enormous sacrifices had gone into the achievement. JO, PA, PI and PE had explicitly organized their entrepreneurship in a manner, which would avoid the flaws of their predecessors. PI had passed over the restaurant to his son a few years before, and described the process as harmonious:

‘ ... because R. who was manager of two hotels ... worked completely his a.. off. And my daughter-in-law, we have a pan cake restaurant, and she was the manager so she and her husband did not see each other often. So at a certain moment, I said to my son: “you can much better, if you work your guts out, it to be for your father instead as for a stranger“ ... And he took it into consideration and then said “yes” ... ‘

PA stated that his upbringing in an entrepreneur’s family had brought him a lot of the important knowledge about the profession. PA also suggested that a genetic component was needed in order to become a good entrepreneur. As one of many examples, PA talked about a former colleague from the restaurant

association who was a good restaurant manager, but a bad restaurant entrepreneur and seemed to be missing this genetic component of entrepreneurship.

It became clear that SSUSCROs came into the culinary restaurant business with different backgrounds and vision in life. PB defined his drive in life not to come from his parents or upbringing because that was not an entrepreneurs' environment. PB was more from a socialist family context, and he defined himself as a liberal socialist, which was similar to AS who defined his view as:

' ... I have always, despite being an self-employed entrepreneur, tried to implement a socially responsible vision ... '

By implementing a socially responsible vision, PB and AS meant to do justice to their staff and the people around them, with the added comment that they did this in the way they felt was right.

Other examples of vision became apparent in the interviews with PA and PE, who both had gone through management degree education. Their exploration of how to develop the business had many of the essential ground rules of entrepreneurship in it. They had a clear vision of what kind of business works and what did not, how to diversify a business (or not), and how to clearly establish where the limits of a restaurant business are. PA and PE could also explain how a dynamic market drives changes to be implemented for the restaurant (or not) and how to take over a business from a previous generation, as well as other very essential processes. Their knowledge gained from having gone through higher education, fits closest with the body of knowledge as defined in hospitality management education.

Valuing

Following ones Values

Most SSUSCROs talked quite openly about their values and acknowledged the impact these had on their lives and business. They knew what is important for them, and what not which fits findings of Lindsay, Jordaan, & Lindsay (2005). They asserted that values tend to be enduring, do not easily change over time and are instilled in people from an early age onwards. Particular values should be intrinsically present in hospitality professionals in order to be effective in the sector, according to some of the SSUSCROs. These intrinsic values make it more relaxed and less forced for them to work in the sector. FO provided a straightforward statement about the core value that is needed to become a successful restaurant owner:

‘ ... Love plays a great role in friendship, and love has everything to do with respect, of course. Those are the values that matter. Yes, in fact, I think a restaurant owner should have, and maintain a great sense for this ... and it may sound odd, you need to love your guests ... Obviously, you will give your best ... as if you have good friends visiting you ... That is the way you do it for the guests in your restaurant and I think that if you take a less forced effort, it will be a success. And if you are authentic, it is okay but if you start forcing, it will not work. And that bit “loving the guest” implicates also to be considerate ... So, loving is meant in a broader meaning ... ‘

What FO was saying very much touches the essential values of hospitality. Loving, caring, respecting and being considerate are what drives hospitality. Lashley (2008) confirms these core values of hospitality offering and summarizes them in the term ‘hospitableness’ (p. 13), which is needed by people working in the offering of hospitality. It contains the desire to please

others, to be open and friendly and benevolent, as well as compassionate and concerned about others with a desire to help.

As found by Emenheiser, Clay, & Palakurthi (1998) it is also the perception of recruiters in the USA when they hire for upscale restaurants that service attitude is the most important characteristic for future staff: 'the upscale restaurant recruiters believe that service attitude is the most important and job skills can be taught' (pp. 61-62). Lashley connects the ability to demonstrate hospitableness for managers and front line staff to possessing emotional intelligence.

FO indicated his adherence to the core value hospitableness to religion, and his Catholic upbringing:

' ... your attitude to life, I think, in fact, the whole Christian religion is based on it. Yes, that for me is in the early years of life. To be good for others. Whether that is successful, is secondary but it is the essence and for that, this profession (SSUSCRO) is well suited ... '

The religious and cultural grounding of being hospitable, however, is not as strong as in the past (Lashley, 2008).

Two other values mentioned by FO as important for him and needed for the hospitality professional are "cheerfulness" and "sense of perspective", which were already discussed in the section about the personality characteristics of the SSUSCRO. The potential tension and ambivalence of the SSUSCRO value system was mentioned by CE, one of the most successful Dutch culinary entrepreneurs, and JU. They stipulated that making money was one of their core values. CE said:

' ... what I highly value, is that you are not working for nothing. That as an entrepreneur you make money ... Make sure, you get your income because

that is very important. If you have retired and you need to be “begging” as some of our colleagues have to do now, then you have not been successful. Make sure, you try to score high but also try to find a balance in it ... ‘

CE went on to put this striving for financial success into perspective:

‘ ... we put in the effort to be successful, but not at all cost ... still, you put in more than the average Dutch person, I think. Yes, because you work not necessarily the eight hours a day. And if it is busy and somebody is ill, then you work ... I think that is the difference between the entrepreneur and the member of staff ... ‘

JU specified his core values, which were in the combining of making money, working with good food and having a nice ambience in the restaurant:

‘ ... the incentive, essentially, is to make profit. If not, you are no entrepreneur. You go for profit. And then you look at the trade, nice ingredients and good ambience. Because if these are not in line, it will not be successful. All three are important and count for the same value. Everything has to correspond and fit together ... ‘

Closely connected to the essential core values for SSUSCROs, a set of more instrumental values, as Rokeach (1973, 1979) refers to them, came to light. JO explained why “respect” was essential for him to be a prime value and doing so defined the required value reciprocity between host and guests in his restaurant:

‘ ... to have respect for each other and for everybody. I also find it very important that guests show respect for me and my staff. Simultaneously, I find it important that my staff has respect for the guests. I think that this profession (offering hospitality in a upper segment culinary restaurant: added by researcher) is one of the few professions where values and norms play such a considerable role ... ‘

This perceived element of reciprocity in hospitality was very much present in Lashley's (2008) debate about some of the original, culturally determined acts of hospitality in rural communities. Interestingly, JO also connected the core value of "respect" particularly to dealing with family and staff. This is an important notion because it might counteract the grim side of how SSUSCROs sometimes deal with their family relations as will be presented furtheron in this analysis chapter.

One of the distinctive features of how SSUSCROs can maintain their success may be found in consistently following the value of "respect", both in work as in private life. Other SSUSCROs in this research also testified about the respect they would ascribe to their personal relations. AS, PA and PI mentioned, they would organize the family meals in order to be together with their children, despite the often hectic business they were operating. LI although not as successful in business terms as in culinary quality awards, explicitly stated to have family as priority number one in life, which definitely demonstrated that she valued "respect".

Another core value that surfaced among the SSUSCROs and explained earlier in this analysis chapter was "freedom". An often quoted value closely related to "freedom" was "independency", which was expressed as the need to make decisions not relying on somebody else to be involved. AS expressed his notion of being independent as:

' ... most important is therefore, that if you undertake a venture and you believe in it, that you will not have to ask someone about it ... like you say: "well, this is the way we will do it" ... '

AS was one of the few SSUSCROs who in the second half of his career moved to managing a culinary restaurant owned by a big company. He stated to value

being as independent as possible by having a position in which he would only report to the CEO of the company. For FO and his partner this strong value of independency was a bigger driver to become entrepreneur than the financial incentive. They explained:

‘ ... We have in fact from the beginning said: “as long as we can be happy in independency”. Then eventually we are willing to deal with a bit less financial benefits. But the independency, we both found so important that we did not need these top salaries. As long ... as we can do our work in the way we like it ... finances will follow ... ‘

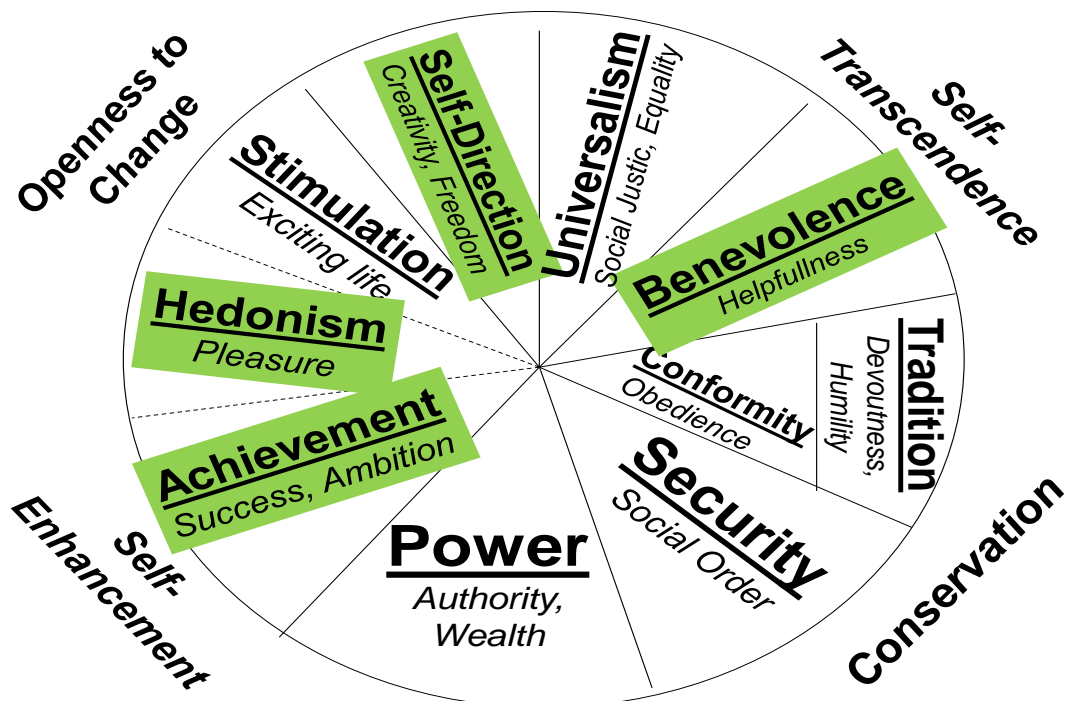
Bibby (2010) confirms this value of ‘independency’, and asserts it as the one element that separates entrepreneurs from all others. He calls it their extra measure of “independent spirit.” Meredith, Nelson, and Neck (1982, in Lowe & Marriott, 2006) mentioned ‘a strong desire to be independent, to be one of the five core traits of the entrepreneurial personality. Concluding, it can be said that “freedom” and “independency” are connected elements, SSUSCROs value. In table 26, the values are listed as they emerged in the SSUSCROs discourses. Connected to the value systems a “distinctive feature” of the particular SSUSCRO is mentioned as it was discussed with PE (the SSUSCRO that experienced and knew all the other SSUSCROs) and WI (the culinary reviewer and the comments from colleagues about colleagues). The value systems are not the same for the different SSUSCROs, as can be seen in table 21. Next, I compared the SSUSCROs’ values to the Schwartz Circumplex (Schwartz, 2006) which was identified in the literature as one of the most prominent frameworks for the purpose of explaining value systems. It became clear that the SSUSCROs’ values are more dominantly located in certain areas of the circumplex than others.

Table 21. SSUSCROs' values and their distinctive feature

		Values	Distinctive feature
Narratives	A	<i>hard working, achieving, money, security, independence</i>	<i>business instinct, activeness</i>
	B	<i>creativity, friendly, welcoming, hospitality, charm</i>	<i>hospitality and welcoming</i>
	C	<i>knowledge, quality, respect</i>	<i>professional and academic</i>
	D	<i>profitability, achieving, recognition</i>	<i>commercial and restlessness</i>
SSUSCROs	FO	<i>professionalism, inner harmony, creativity, health, self-respect, responsible, helpful</i>	<i>hospitality</i>
	CE	<i>honesty, commitment, loyalty, ambition, passion, achieving, profitability</i>	<i>commercial and consistent</i>
	JO	<i>respect, loyalty, motivation, enduring, creativity</i>	<i>hospitality</i>
	AS	<i>freedom</i>	<i>management</i>
	JU	<i>entertaining, profitability, quality, customers, ambiance</i>	<i>relaxed hospitality provider</i>
	PB	<i>appreciation, recognition, achievement</i>	<i>hyperactiveness, restlessness</i>
	PA	<i>hospitality, freedom, active</i>	<i>hospitality</i>
	PI	<i>enjoying, connecting, profitability, recognition</i>	<i>relaxed hospitality provider</i>
	PE	<i>freedom, academic recognition</i>	<i>academic</i>
	LI*	<i>family, shared goal, happiness, enjoying, shared goal, appreciation, respect, reinforcing</i>	<i>hospitality and culinary excellence</i>

* values LI were communicated in written form and not explained by the SSUSCROs themselves which makes it not fully sure that it is their personal interpretation or that of a personal assistant.

Figure 19. Comparing SSUSCROs values to Schwartz Circumplex



The comparison of the SSUSCROs value systems to the Schwartz Circumplex showed that SSUSCROs are people who value self enhancement, in the sense

that they would like to achieve success in their restaurants. They want to be recognized and appreciated for that.

The aspect of achieving wealth is acknowledged, but generally the SSUSCROs realize that entrepreneurship in culinary restaurants can provide enough benefits to have a good life, while not making them extremely rich. They know that helping their customers to a good experience is an important direction, which affects their motivation to deliver hospitality to their customers. They appreciate hospitality but clearly see it in a professional context. In some cases such as with FO, AS, PA, and PI, the SSUSCROs also explicitly extend their benevolence to their staff.

Chapter 5. Facing and Managing

Facing

Overcoming Challenges

An important theme in the stories of the SSUSCROs was “challenges”, and how they dealt with them. FO talked about his dyslexia, which made him repeat classes at secondary school and forced him to leave a hospitality management degree programme after one year. He described as the learning effect:

‘ ... but the good side of the situation was that I learned (from the challenges; added by researcher) how to fight and acquire a good sense of endurance ... ‘

CE originally wanted to do a hospitality management programme, but could not because his father did not have sufficient financial resources to support him.

Then when he worked as a manager, he encountered the financial burdens of a company that struggled for survival. It made him aware of a situation he would at all cost avoid when being an entrepreneur himself.

JO admitted, his restaurant was really suffering from the economic challenging times and this had affected his business significantly. The same challenge was faced by PB who saw his originally good market deteriorating because the whole region where his restaurant was located had changed in identity and declined in prosperity. For AS and PI, tremendous personal challenges appeared in which AS had a divorce from his wife with many dramatic consequences. PI first lost his father-in-law and later his wife in car accidents.

PI also had to deal more than once with serious flooding because his restaurant was located next to a river and the flooding caused severe financial damage to the business. JU described his great feeling of failure because at the

moment of successfully retiring, he and his wife divorced. This challenge, however, seemed to be of a lesser burden than how JU described to experience it, because he introduced me to his new girlfriend during the interview. The interview took place at the same time as he was finalizing the divorce. PE, just before opening his new hotel, faced an enormous challenge when the inadequately installed waterworks broke down and flooded the building. Besides postponing the opening and losing a lot of money on that, PE also had to fight the insurance companies that attempted to disclaim their liability.

LI's SSUSCROs built their three Michelin star restaurant and acquired a name of excellence in the Dutch culinary world. Van Craenenbroeck (2011), former chief inspector of the Michelin guide, said about the chef in the entrepreneur couple:

I am thinking about LI, still always the symbol of success. I have seen him working for a boss in a cellar restaurant in the past. Nowadays, he has a three Michelin star restaurant and a small commercial empire (p. 129)

LI expanded their activities by creating a hotel. This process of getting into hotel investment brought them at the verge of bankruptcy and they barely survived it, business wise.

JO voiced his feeling about dealing with challenges in his culinary restaurant when referring to the diminished market, like this:

' ... to face this, you have to armour yourself. I am thinking continuously about where I can make changes. You cannot close your eyes for the situation. It is your responsibility, to make sure that everything turns out well in the end ... '

This statement touches the two crucial elements of the way SSUSCROs deal with challenges. Firstly, complete focus on the business and on-going contemplation on how to improve it being paramount. Secondly, never ignoring problems but instead facing them and dealing with them is essential. Implicitly, JO said that it is the core responsibility of the entrepreneur to deal with the challenges and not to leave them as they are. Although this might easily be taken for the rhetoric that can be found in many of the popular management publications, it was for the SSUSCROs that managed to sustain for several decades the only reality. PB explained about dealing with challenges in a very personal manner:

‘ ... well look, I have had that many times in my life ... I felt wasted ... But, my psychologist, my doctor said specifically: “you are someone that perseveres” and that is a particular mentality. That is something in your genes ... ‘

Keeping the Business Alive

Another major challenge, first mentioned by JO, that entrepreneurs face in their culinary restaurants is the economic situation that from 2008 onwards declined rapidly. The practising SSUSCROs interviewed between 2009 and 2011 testified how the changing economic conditions had impacted their business. SSUSCROs are aware that the culinary Michelin star restaurant is an economically sensitive business because of the high price setting. Culinary restaurants operate at high cost levels because of the way they work involving expensive products and a lot of human labour, and this results in high prices.

The challenge of keeping the business alive is about offering value to the customer while keeping costs at acceptable levels. LI expressed the importance of customers value:

' ... It is a difficult moment in time. The guest chooses for real value for money, so it has to be good: quality and hospitality have to be at a high level ... '

Facing and dealing with challenges is one of the essential contextual characteristics that sets the “real” SSUSCRO apart from the entrepreneur that does not “survive”. The SSUSCRO’s capacity to do this is in line with what Parsa, Self, Njite, & King (2005) determine as why restaurants become successful or not: ‘it is the restaurateur’s responsibility to prepare for impending external “weather” conditions’ (p. 316). The essence of sustaining in the culinary restaurant business was summarized by PE:

' ... Looking at the Michelin star restaurants, there has been a period that the returns on investment in that segment were very feasible and today there are still a few restaurants that realize it. They are the three star restaurants, SH and LI, and why, assuming they manage the costs properly, are they doing okay? Because of the traffic. And the problem that we have to deal with, I think, nowadays is that a number of people say there is no living to be made in Michelin star restaurants ... it has become very difficult in the Michelin star restaurants. The reason is that we have come to a level of gastronomy in kitchen and cooking, which is so labour intensive, it is simply not feasible anymore. On top of that, we are in a kind of gastronomy which is so exuberant, involving 16 courses, 12 courses, another amuse, that offering double shifts has no chance, although ... ? In New York, they do double shifts, they throw in 14 courses in two hours, how they do it, I don't know. Every seven minutes one course, I calculated, so it can be done ... but what the average entrepreneur does not understand, is that you should not only look at margin, but also at how many times you can realize that margin, so traffic is very important. And with the current price level that has developed, combined with the complex dishes

and their consequences and the low occupancy, the mix is lethal. Something needs to be done ... ‘

PE said that entrepreneurs have to face the challenge of developing the restaurant offering to an extent that consists of enough traffic (people visiting the restaurant) and sound margins (enough profit per dish sold).

The restaurants that need to attract their customers to remote locations (JO, PB, PI, PA and PE) had particularly major challenges. Customers have become more reluctant to drive long distances, after having consumed wines with their meals. Overcoming the challenge of customers hesitating to come to remote culinary restaurants by constructing a hotel was a choice made by some SSUSCROs. PE claimed that his efforts to build a hotel have had a positive effect on keeping the business going. The counter side of this expansion of his business was the huge investment that needed to be made, which PE saw as necessary. LI almost collapsed under the huge investments of creating a hotel close to the three Michelin star restaurant but chose to involve an investor to save the business.

FO referred to the economic situation of around 2000 as having been particularly challenging. In a similar sense, AS went even further back in history to talk about challenging economic conditions in the 1970's and 80's, while PI remembered the "oil crisis" of around 1973. A realistic conclusion is that challenging economic conditions are re-appearing regularly, and therefore it is the SSUSCRO who is able to face the economic challenges that will be able to sustain.

Influencing the SSUSCRO

In the early years, and later on in life, the SSUSCRO is influenced by people around him. Some people from within the work context have a major influence on the choices SSUSCROs make in their lives and businesses. Some of the influential people could be of a positive nature such as providing a desirable example, but others could also be influencing in a negative way. FO referred to one of the people he worked with, Joop Braakhekke a renowned restaurant owner in The Netherlands who was characterized as a very creative, artistic person with a lot of television exposure over the past decade. Joop Braakhekke had an important influence on how FO developed his restaurant and how he managed to get the attention of the press in The Netherlands. FO realised, however, at some point in the cooperation with Braakhekke that he himself would be able to perform at a similar level. This realization stimulated FO to start his own business.

CE talked about two great entrepreneurs in the business world that influenced him, Eimert Teekens a famous entrepreneur meat wholesaler, and Mr. Knijnenburg the founder and former CEO of the Bilderberg Hotel Group. The influence of the meat wholesaler on CE changed his view on taking initiative and on how to engage in entrepreneurship. Knijnenburg the founder and CEO of the hotel group, despite having been full of initiative, brought many of his companies into financial problems. This frustrated CE and convinced him to do it differently in his own entrepreneurship.

PA's experiences and the influence of the previous generation made it obvious for him that he felt more like an entrepreneur than like being the operational professional in the kitchen or restaurant area. Similar development

happened in PE's case. He also was influenced by his parents but in a slightly different way. PE explained that his mother stimulated him to take a broad business management degree programme instead of a hotel management school. It was initially not in PE's planning to become the entrepreneur and taking over the restaurant from his parents. He recalled the influence of his mother as follows:

' ... my mother was so wise to say: "if you are not sure going into the restaurant business, then do a general business management programme. If later you would come to the conclusion to take over your parents' restaurant, you can do internships to improve on the specific professional side" ... '

PE explained that his mother's advice had been crucial for his further career, and it influenced his choice later on in life to combine operating the restaurant, and being involved in education.

Family influences were found to be specifically present in entrepreneurial settings. Looking at the family composition, it seems that most of the SSUSCROs came from a large family most certainly FO, PB, JU, and narratives A, B, D. Defining a large family would in this case be a family consisting of 4 or more children. Some famous examples in the Dutch hospitality industry can be found in which large families built a business portfolio.

The SSUSCRO in narrative B, came from a very well-known restaurant operating family in which the parents had started the first restaurant. Seven sons had their own restaurants at different moments, and in different locations from the 1970's until the early years of the third millennium. SSUSCRO B who showed a particular capacity in offering high quality hospitality did not demonstrate a strong money driven sustainable business instinct. This

essentially concentrating on the “art of hospitality”, more than on the money making perspective, was present with at least six out of the seven brothers from this hospitality business family. The influence that led to the specific orientation of the children came from the original values insisted on by the father. Born (1985) quotes from the family archives about the vision and values of the parents as the mother recalled it:

My husband was always obsessed by his restaurants. His priority was not about making money. His great ambition was to see satisfied customers, to make people happy, to really deliver the best hospitality. And that vision he has given to the boys. If needed for your guests, you have to put everything aside. Work an hour longer, do the unpleasant tasks and get into the kitchen. You are in a service delivering business, you are there for your guests (p. 13)

It is interesting to see how such a strongly formulated family vision on hospitality influenced SSUSCRO B. He lived his business in the way his father had inspired him to do, which led to one of the most high quality restaurant offerings in the early 1980's. The dark side of the business turned out to be the absence of firm financially sound management. These non-financially oriented values were evident in the statement by B's father and founder of the family business, as recalled by his wife and influential mother (Born, 1985): ‘my husband ... was not a money counter. He has always helped people who had no money’ (p. 14).

Central in FO's reference to his childhood was the organisational family structure, which operated like a hotel with each family member having a set of tasks, and the caring element being paramount. These family experiences

effectively influenced FO's own operating in the restaurant sector. In different words, AS acknowledged the influence, his family had on the choice to go into restaurant entrepreneurship:

' ... my father ... was always in the hospitality industry, and even my grandfather ... a banqueting manager ... and my father, he was a director in the hotels ... in Amsterdam. So, yes, I am from within that type of atmosphere ... that was decisive for my choices, that family hospitality industry background ... '

Also other SSUSCROs referred to their family background, as having been of influence on their choices to go into the restaurant business. In the literature the importance of family in building and maintaining entrepreneurship can be found. Danda & Reyes (2007) refer to what they call 'familiness':

Team building, access to financial capital and decision making are distinctive "familiness" in this family firm. It is obvious that family members, in this business, work efficiently as a team and constitute an important asset for the organisation to achieve superior performance ... family members work well as a team ... creates a positive environment that fosters entrepreneurship in this family firm ... access to financial capital ... can be obtained from family members ... to finance their venture activities (p. 46)

Another important and decisive format influencing the existence and life of the SSUSCRO, was the way in which the individual was connected to his partner. Without an effective symbiosis between two people, the phenomenon of SSUSCRO cannot be sustainable. The top-performing SSUSCROs, FO, CE, JO, PB, PS, PI, PE and LI, were examples of combinations in which entrepreneur and partner were cooperating effectively. There is a qualitative and a quantitative element in the cooperation between the partners.

Qualitatively, the partners in the SSUSCRO situation preferably provide complementary expertise, knowledge, skills, and personality, and attributes to make the rather tight design of running a culinary restaurant complete. Having the “eyes of the owner” always on the spot is a requisite to maintain quality standards. In the main two areas of attention, dining room, and kitchen, constant control of the environment is essential.

The quantitative aspect is in the extra source of human labour available for the restaurant. It seems that the quantitative effect of operating the business as partners may have the biggest influence in the starting years of the restaurant, as the qualitative effect of the partnership will become more influential the longer the restaurant exists. In the start-up of the restaurant, the investment is considerable and the cost level needs to be monitored carefully. Having the partners both in the restaurant will save on costs of other human resources. When the restaurant has developed, the entrepreneur can more carefully evaluate his costs and the business flow. This will allow careful planning of human resources and then the role of the partner can be defined more specifically in certain areas in the restaurant such as finances and administration.

The SSUSCRO and partner are in fact a construct that consisted of two people in equal roles and closely aligned. The SSUSCROs that seemed to have had a good connection with their partner stated that they would enjoy the ambiance of cosiness and eating together with a glass of wine. This life style connected their private life and the life in the culinary restaurant. SSUSCROs need the connection between their interests in work life and private life in order to sustain. Camillo et al. (2008) define it as being crucial to have the presence

of more than one owner to guarantee a quality conscious context in the restaurant.

The quality of the “SSUSCRO + partner format” may well be decisive as to which level the restaurant can develop. There may be a limit to the level of success the combination of SSUSCRO and partner can achieve, based on the competence and effectiveness of their cooperation. For potential future entrepreneurs i.e. students in hospitality management education it will be important and interesting to assess their position in life and possible entering into culinary restaurant entrepreneurship taking the notion of the “partner” into account.

Contemplating the roles of the partners made me realize that the choice I made not to engage in entrepreneurship of a culinary restaurant was influenced by the fact that my partner warned me against it. Alternatively, I chose to go into employeeship in education. It is remarkable that in the formal body of research literature, there is not a lot of writing about the impact and importance of the combination of partners as entrepreneur couple in the culinary restaurant sector. There is some anecdotal evidence suggesting the value of “partners as couple” in a culinary restaurant. Starchefs (2012) refer to this notion as: ‘culinary couples - demonstrating that the whole is greater than its parts!’ (n.p.). Charles Forte, one of the legendary UK hotel entrepreneurs mentions in his autobiography about his wife (Forte, 1987): ‘whenever I had to bring business problems home I have discussed them with Irene, who has always had good, sound common sense advice to give’ (p. 198).

Kets de Vries (1985 in: Wright & Zahra, 2011) warns about the negative effects that obsessed entrepreneurial personalities may have on family relations

such as marriage: 'Obsession with one's work and making the company successful leaves little time for family. Intense entrepreneurial personalities could also challenge marriages, frequently leading to their demise' (p. 3).

If there is no partnership between a couple as entrepreneurs present, an alternative could be found in the role of long staying loyal senior employees. In a number of culinary restaurants there were examples of these particular "partnerships" in which employees fulfil a life-time role, socially contextualized in connection to the entrepreneur. AS mentioned his bad marriage and non-connecting with his wife, when operating his independent culinary restaurant. He would compensate the omission of having a partner in the business by building a great deal of rapport with his senior staff and explained:

' ... I found these forces in people who have been working for me a long time. I had for example ... she started off as a cleaning woman but at a certain moment ... she did basically everything ... that lady worked for approximately 35 years in the restaurant ... you search other people who can replace it (the wife as partner in the restaurant: author) and do it in the similar way ... '

PI also wanted to keep people in their positions for a longer time because that would allow him to take on responsibilities outside the restaurant. He stipulated the importance to be good for personnel. Proof of the loyalty his staff displayed could be found in the fact that in 60 years he had successively employed only three chefs, which is remarkable and not a very common practice in the segment of culinary restaurants. The examples of AS and PI in my perception, confirm having "staff seniority" as one of the potential indicators for successful restaurants as mentioned by Camillo et al. (2008).

A connected issue within the situation of having partners in restaurant entrepreneurship lies in the way they manage to achieve a work-life balance.

Making a distinction between work and private life for PB focused on the difference between days in the week and weekend days. Throughout the days in the (working) week, there was a cross-over between work and private life, of which PB stated that his children liked it a lot. I have a concern here, which is based on the discourse of my own wife who spent her childhood in the SSUSCRO household described in narrative A. She experienced the challenges of being in the middle of a developing entrepreneurial restaurant business, which did not leave her untouched.

Personally, I have been at times involved in my work more than maybe would have been appropriate looking at creating work-life balance and spending enough time with my children. I consider this as a downside of the experiences in the culinary restaurant sector in contrast to the previously mentioned sense of discipline, I acquired. For future professionals i.e. students of hospitality management programmes there should be a thorough consideration of the work-life balance related issues, preferably before they start in entrepreneurship in this business. Other comments were made by the interviewees about children in SSUSCRO environments, not appreciating their parents' commitment to the business, despite the positive picture the parents would present. Also examples of colleagues in the culinary restaurant business were mentioned by the SSUSCROs that described the sad situations restaurant entrepreneurs' children faced.

There is this distinct dark side of SSUSCRO life involved, which does not surface in a lot of publications. Having grown up in a traditional SSUSCRO family, PA acknowledged not having always appreciated the situation by saying:

‘ ... Look, I think we did not come out of our upbringing without any damage. I think, I am normal and my brothers are normal. Still, you notice that we did not have a normal family life ... ’

PA's wife added to this: *‘ ... Well, not a lot of love, not a lot of parents ... ’*. The perceived inadequacy of parents taking care of their children is not uniquely connected to the SSUSCRO construct but it is definitely present, and influences the perception and outcomes of it. WI, as external observer of the SSUSCROs, mentioned, to see a change in the way, the current generation deals with work-life balance and their children compared to the previous generation. He asserted:

‘ ... the young chefs (SSUSCROs) take more effort to see their children. That was not so common in the Spijker (famous late Dutch SSUSCRO: added by researcher) generation. In many cases it turned out the wrong way ... ’

As an extreme example of a situation that went horribly wrong, WI provided the story of a famous Belgian SSUSCRO who insisted his daughter who suffered from anorexia, to eat a special roast he had prepared. As an effect, the daughter choked while eating the meat. Although this terrible incident could not be confirmed, it presented the extreme image of a SSUSCRO as a person that can have unbalanced priorities in life.

Doing the Right Things Right

As illustrated in the previous chapter, SSUSCROs value the situations they encounter in life and business. Their value systems are the main driver for their actions. They act and by doing so, their lives take shape. There is not a homogeneous pattern of things the SSUSCROs like to do, but there are commonalities. Going abroad both for work as well as for holidays was enjoyed

by most SSUSCROs (FO, JO, AS, JU, PB, PA, PI, PE). Favourite countries to explore for their business in order to get new ideas were France and Spain, which traditionally with Italy are known for their culinary richness. Lonely Planet (2012) ranks France and Spain in the contemporary top 5 of best countries for food. SSUSCROs defined visiting their peers' Michelin star restaurants as a value adding activity. The primary aim of visiting these restaurants was to look for benchmarks, in order to compare their own business to, and to find new ideas for their restaurants.

Especially, the older generation would be focusing on France and its Michelin star restaurants to get inspiration. As FO explained:

' ... We went out to dine, once every two years ... for a week to France to 2 or 3 star restaurants. It cost a fortune, horrible, it was actually working but it was also very meaningful. You knew a bit of what was going on and you would speak to a lot of colleagues. We were in our own way, friendly cheeky ... and that way we always tried to speak with the chef or the owner ... '

Looking for innovative menu preparations and new wines, made the SSUSCROs travel. An extreme example was provided by PB who with his wife wrote a book about their visits to all 54 three Michelin star restaurants in Europe (Van de Bunt & Van de Bunt, 2009). Some SSUSCROs would take their chef or other staff along to get inspiration, and to see how the great Michelin star restaurants were doing their business.

I travelled to France with my employer B, at a young age as a sommelier in his restaurant. Experiencing a number of two and three Michelin star restaurants in two days accelerated my understanding of the culinary restaurant business and the profession of working in it. After the experience I realised what Balazs (2002) said about these Michelin star restaurants to be true: 'They

truly “delight” the customer. What they sell is not necessary a product, but something intangible and ethereal; something like a fairy-tale’ (p. 250). Visiting the type of restaurants that one is working in is important, as mentioned by Hemmington (2007):

Hospitality businesses must focus on the guest experience and stage memorable experiences that stimulate all five senses. They must behave like hosts taking responsibility for the experience and creating lots of little surprises. They must appoint and develop their staff as performers and the cast in the experience (p. 752)

Later on, D, would also send me as his operations manager to investigate the competition’s restaurants, but I did this alone or with the chef. It impacted on me less than when having the SSUSCRO present as happened in the time working for B.

Enjoying a nice climate and the good life-style of other countries is appreciated among SSUSCROs. Besides France and Spain, other favorite locations visited by SSUSCROs, were South-Africa and Thailand where FO, PI, PA and JO would go. More explanation about how the SSUSCROs move through life is found in the matters that they did not appreciate. In essence, the unenjoyable elements in life are outside the SSUSCROs value systems and therefore they tend to avoid them.

The world and the culture of the education sector was generally experienced by SSUSCROS as unpleasant. Although some expressed to have appreciated their own education at a hotel management programme (FO, JO, AS, PA), they virtually resented the, in their eyes, bureaucratic nature of the educational sector. PB described it as follows:

' ... so little is made of it. There are few teachers who have the "drive", who do something extra for their pupils. Something that irritates me, is that when there is a meeting, the time is taken from the pupils ...'

AS assessed the quality of the people in education as not being up to standard and in his opinion this created the situation that education is always behind the real world.

Another assumption, voiced by PB, and supported by other SSUSCROs was that the real and successful people from the restaurant business are the entrepreneurs. People who decide to leave the business to go into education are perceived as "less competent" in the profession. Besides generating a separation between the two worlds of industry and education, the disliking of education by restaurant practitioners makes it challenging to establish a connection between the two worlds. The almost "natural" misalignment between the culinary restaurant sector and education was confirmed by other SSUSCROs. CE described not having much affinity with education, although at the end of his career, he started contributing to an academy for practitioners who would like to progress from employment to entrepreneurship (Miermans & Mout, 2011). JO, quite influential in the Dutch culinary restaurant world as chairman of one of the most prominent associations of culinary restaurants, expressed his doubts about higher education in an explicit manner:

' ... if you look at how studies nowadays are composed, I ask myself: "is there enough pressure?". I mean, everything is possible now. If you have come through the first year and have finished the propaedeutic phase, you can virtually study on for another 21 years and everything is already taken care of ... if you come from a hotel management programme, you cannot cook or provide proper service ... '

The comment by JO was supported by some evidence because his son was one of the students who had taken many more years than anticipated to finish a degree in hotel management. Non-alignment between education and the restaurant world is not unique to the Dutch setting.

Emenheiser, Clay, & Palakurthi (1998) expressed their frustration about the attitude of practitioners in the hospitality industry in a large-scale USA based research among quick service, midscale and upscale restaurants:

As educators, we find it discouraging that all three restaurant types value education as one of the least important components for being a successful manager in the restaurant industry (p. 62)

A very interesting example of bridging the two worlds was provided by PE. While starting off as a well-known critic of hospitality education, he completed a PhD in gastronomy while being a Michelin star restaurant entrepreneur. He then realised that the only direction to take when being at this high level of knowledge and research, was to join the higher education world. To be publishing, to be involved in education and to teach turned out to be the most effective way for PE to influence and potentially change hospitality management education. PE now is a part-time professor in gastronomy besides operating his restaurant.

Five other code labels that connected to “facing” by SSUSCROs are: “learning”, “developing”, “focusing”, “fighting” and “enduring”. Learning and developing in a SSUSCRO’s life, illustrate a line of progression. Cobb (2009) offers an interesting definition and context of learning, by saying that learning is a lifelong process of transforming information and experience into knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attitudes. Cobb adds that learning does not necessarily

depend on formal learning situations, such as schools and universities. He points at the means for generating learning from practice through reflection, interaction socially and with the environment, and taking place consciously or unconsciously.

Looking at Cobb's definition, the first two action prerogatives "learning" and "developing" are logically connected. Learning is the process of acquiring new knowledge, skills and approaches, which then leads to developing. FO referred to this process of learning and developing:

' ... You can in our profession learn a lot in school but most of it, you should see in practice. And especially, when it is about the details ... I think that in every profession the higher level you get to, the more you will need to observe. Then it is no longer possible just to read ... '

Unconsciously, FO appeared to go further than just talking about learning and developing. He was, implicitly, emphasizing the necessity of engaging in activities such as researching in an empirical manner, by observing and experimenting in order to generate real knowledge. PA emphasized this continuing need for learning and developing by comparing the restaurant business to other professions that require high qualifications and up-to-date knowledge and skills of their practitioners:

' ... you need to keep developing. Then restaurant practitioners think: "well, I have arrived and I have achieved something", while a medical doctor or lawyer still has to get additional training. It is really very important to keep on learning and developing ... '

It is unusual to compare hospitality management with the medical or law professions as the hospitality profession is usually considered to be at a lower degree of complexity than the former professions. The similar drive for learning

and continuing development was found by Balazs (2001). As the first of the 'Leadership Lessons from France's Great Chefs', she quoted:

Turn life into a learning process. Learn the basics thoroughly, but don't get stuck in them; try to surpass them. A solid knowledge base in one's profession is a must. Even Picasso knew how to draw figuratively, before he ventured into cubism. The most outstanding restaurant chefs have both a deep respect for traditions and basic knowledge, and a flexibility, openness, willingness, and desire for constant learning and improvement (p. 138)

Lynch, Molz, McIntosh, Lugosi, & Lashley (2011) address the underestimating of hospitality, in the editorial of their research journal *Hospitality & Society*:

This narrow focus reduces hospitality to an economic activity, just as it reduces the interactions between hosts and guests to commercial exchanges and the elements of hospitality (food, beverages and beds) to commodities. Until now, however, there has not been a suitable outlet to bring these various perspectives and approaches together to debate the terms of hospitality and to share critical insights (p. 3)

Learning and developing are important in the SSUSCRO social construct and for that reason need to be taken into account, when coming to the conclusions about the potential influence the construct can have on education.

Getting Towards the End

The other side of the high need to concentrate and to endure as a SSUSCRO is, specifically where it concerns the older entrepreneurs, related to the notion of fatigue that appears after years of intensive practice. FO mentioned the

awareness of getting tired and weary towards the end of his career as SSUSCRO. It triggered the question: “does the hospitality spirit suffer from fatigue for SSUSCROs?” When referring to this matter by other SSUSCROs, it became clear that there is a common awareness of fatigue. AS mentioned having had physical problems the older he became and realizing that the younger generation thought in a different way. PB talked about it in his own manner:

‘ ... I said, when you get older the flexibility gets less ... specifically because of the complexity of all these emails, flowers and ... cooking. But, anyway, as long as I stay healthy, I will keep on doing this ... ’

Although PB’s statement illustrated his drive and commitment as a SSUSCRO, there was also a quite worrying element in it. If an entrepreneur does not have a plan for if he were to become ill or worse, it would leave all the people working in the restaurant without a job and harm them. When I confronted PB with this notion, he contested:

‘ ... I would find it a social punishment to (consider retiring now: added by researcher ... like PA, I cannot think about it. Your day (left idle: added by researcher) ... ’

There seemed to be a defence mechanism installed in PB that made him reject the idea of planning retirement. He compared himself with another SSUSCRO whom he felt to have entered into an undesirable situation after retiring. PA, to whom PB was referring made it very clear, however, that retirement had been well planned and had given him and his partner a completely new quality of life. Retiring is definitely an issue, although it might seem inappropriate to discuss with young entrepreneurs, and to consider and discuss it in hospitality management education.

Interestingly, CE discarded the notion of fatigue at the end of his career by saying: ‘ ... *we enjoyed the work till the last day ...* ’, then continuing by stating that he hadn’t appreciated the challenges, when the process of handing over to the chef did not go as planned. It can be observed that the SSUSCROs’ definition of “quality of life” changes throughout their life. Enjoying other things than “just” performing successfully in the restaurant became more important. Being with one’s partner, loved-ones and family were identified as crucial. The practising older SSUSCROs mentioned this explicitly. JO stipulated his drive towards actively balancing in life when he was talking about the yearly holidays he plans with his wife and two sons:

‘ ... to be together and drink rose ... we love to have good food and drinks. We enjoy a bit and don’t care about the worries in the world. They (the SSUSCRO’s children: added by researcher) will never forget it, because they still enjoy it so much. I do not force them to join, really not, it would save me half the budget. But they like it and me too. If I am there (in France), then it is for me a sign of success and if it means, we are not making any money in the restaurant, I don’t care. Yes, I do care, but I temporary do not listen to that idea, I will see it when I get back ... ’

When asked about their perception of the proper retiring moment and age, there were essentially two types of answers: 1. To plan a particular age for retiring and to work to realize this plan, 2. Not to have a particular plan and then as a consequence to keep on working. FO stated to have aimed at retiring around 57, which retrospectively he experienced as slightly too old. The last few years turned to be much more difficult than expected. He described the process, which took place after having turned 50, as follows:

‘ ... Because between 50 and 55 you become older and more mature while still being full of energy. Between 55 and 60 you ... experience, particularly in my situation ... that the kind of “freshness” disappears. Also, and that was very important for me, other things in life became more important. Leisure time and the idea of “I want to enjoy life a bit more” ... ‘

He added to this notion of seeking more quality of life after 55, that it is absolutely unrealistic to assume that a culinary restaurant owner should consider to work until the age of 65-67 before retiring.

Looking at the contemporary discussion in many European countries, it is fair to say that the extended retiring age of 65-67 would not be appropriate for a category of self-employed entrepreneurs such as the SSUSCROs. PI indicated to have originally planned retiring at the age of 55, but because of his business dealings eventually did so at 59. The retired SSUSCROs all did so between 57 and 60. PA who retired at 59 emphasized that this was absolutely necessary, because it became increasingly difficult for him to adapt to new ways of thinking and managing being introduced by the younger generation. PA’s operational orientation made it particularly difficult to sustain, and he marked the fact that his colleagues stronger in marketing were more able to deal with this process of getting into retirement. PA said about this process of getting through the last few years before retiring:

‘ ... the highest revenue the restaurant generated was in 1999 (when PA was 55: added by researcher). And the lowest revenue was in 2005 (PA-59). Then, I realised that I was not capable to ... I was not a marketing person ... that is an art and you have it or not ... FO is really a marketing person, he could do it like nobody else .. I have been too much operational ... and then you notice that the business has changed so much and that the resilience comes to an end ... ‘

The external SSUSCRO observer WI described the process of the final career phase culinary restaurant owners go through, and confirmed the view expressed by most of them:

‘ ... a SSUSCRO should be decreasing his activities between 50 and 55 ... to give other people in the company more responsibilities. Then after 55, they should only be having a representative function, which can continue until they are 60 and by then the restaurant should have been taken over ... ‘

The second way of dealing with retirement SSUSCROs described was not to have a particular retirement age in mind because of feeling still very productive or because of financial reasons.

JO, PB and PE, as practising SSUSCROs were within this category of “non-retiring considering” entrepreneurs. Interestingly, CE who had retired at the age of 58, mentioned having experienced this age as having been too early and then after retirement took up work again. Some of the SSUSCROs could provide examples of colleagues, who had not planned retiring properly and it had harmed either their restaurant, their private lives or both. The group that had planned to retire, worked towards the end and attempted to stay within the range of 55-60.

The other category that did not plan retiring in some cases created a space between the direct operations of the restaurant and themselves, as was also suggested by WI. This meant that the entrepreneurs put themselves in a position, which did not require their immediate presence in the restaurant on a daily basis. Organizing in this way would reduce the physical involvement of the entrepreneurs, which put less strain on them compared to the “always available” operational type of entrepreneurs.

There even appears to be an exceptional category of SSUSCROs who by their nature might work onwards after reaching the age of 65. WI explained his conception of this rare and special category:

‘ ... There are some notable exceptions to this idea (of retiring between 55 and 60), with people like Joop Braakhekke and Paul Fagel ... ‘

WI calls them the “hospitality animals” who continue actively in their restaurant up to the age of 70+. He asserted that a person like PE would also be able to go on for a long time because he has a certain academic distance to the profession. Realizing this distance to the profession is crucial.

Having an academic orientation is not very common among SSUSCROs, but changing the management format in order to better facilitate the final years of restaurant entrepreneurship might be an option for all. JO and PE made sure that their personal involvement in the business was reduced and had senior staff in the key positions of chef and maître d’. Research about retiring of entrepreneurs like the SSUSCROs is scarce. Noll (2012) confirms that many restaurant owners have shied away from retirement plans because of the cost. Mealey (2012) adds that restaurant owners need to figure out how they want to save for retirement.

Managing

Managing Costs and Traffic

From the SSUSCROs reflections on the essence of successful culinary restaurants three elements emerged: (1) Michelin’s appreciation, (2) financial results and (3) delivering good entrepreneurship. FO stated that the element “financial results” was absolutely the most important indicator for success in

business, despite possible appealing restaurant awards such as given by Michelin and others.

LI's case, is a good example of this. When SSUSCROs like JO, PB, PA and AS spoke about their colleague LI, they described the SSUSCROs "husband and wife team" as the example of extreme success. Added to that, there was the widespread perception that SSUSCRO LI was able to generate a lot of publicity and on the other end, appeared well-balanced in their responsibility for taking care of their two children. Although having achieved the three Michelin stars and the admiration by everybody in The Netherlands, LI almost went bankrupt in 2010/2011, and could only be saved by the intervention of an investor.

Looking at other SSUSCROs' comments about the, in their eyes, very successful LI, I recalled some observations made earlier before the information of financial mismanagement became public. When LI as partners were interviewed in a TV show about a periodical that they had just started to publish, I observed how tired LI (the partner that works front of the house) seemed. At that moment in 2010, it was visible that these entrepreneurs were under a great deal of pressure. Sometime after this television performance, news appeared in the press which made it clear that LI had experienced a dramatically difficult period with their restaurant and had to be "saved" by an investor. Financial problems had hit their restaurant and LI acknowledged not having been fully competent in dealing with financial management.

The cases of LI and much worse, the restaurant Vossius in Amsterdam that was projected to become a three Michelin star restaurant but did not exist more than a year (RTL, 2003), confirmed the "financial issue" in defining

success of culinary restaurants. The enormous importance of financial management for SSUSCROs was further mentioned by several other interviewees (CE, AS, JO, JU, PI, PA and PE). SSUSROs acquire their knowledge about financial management in different ways. Some have built their knowledge through experience, such as FO and CE, and had the additional knowledge of their partner having secondary vocational hospitality management education. In the case of PB, the partner was fully taking care of the financial management in the restaurant. Others had a management degree such as JO, AS, JU, PA and PE.

FO suggested that it is crucial for a SSUSCRO to have independent advisors especially for the financial aspects of the restaurant. Although FO did not have advisors in his culinary restaurant, looking back he concluded it would have made him financially more successful. A warning is issued about involving consultants or advisors by Lee-Ross & Lashley (2009): 'before opting to use a consultant or business advisors, founders must engage in their own research to establish the credibility of the potential advisors' (p. 151).

The conclusion was clear that either by education or experience, entrepreneurs need financial management skills and knowledge in order to become and stay fully successful. Because LI had not been able to fully maintain their independent financial position, they in fact changed from being "real" SSUSCROs into managers in a management team. SSUSCROs can remain independent entrepreneurs, only on the basis of their financial results. Having a high profile by Michelin is not a guarantee of maintaining the entrepreneur position.

For some SSUSCROs, being an independent entrepreneur may entail being financially connected to the bank and/or investors, because of the money needed to invest in the business. CE, JU and PI stated to have bought the financial shares back from the external investors that initially were involved in the business. Other SSUSCROs that mentioned having had independent advisors were JU and PA. The importance of having people who advise and supervise culinary entrepreneurs, especially those who are young, is evident. The drive to achieve success with Michelin is high for young entrepreneurs, but the capability to properly manage finances is maybe of less interest to them.

Comparing the risk of exceeding the acceptable level of costs to a: ‘... *monster that should be put on a short leash ...*’, by PE is an accurate metaphor that can be used effectively to illustrate the importance of controlling costs in a restaurant operation. The importance of “generating traffic” is immense for culinary restaurants and was mentioned in this findings chapter because the level of costs is high. PE stipulated:

‘... those restaurants that succeed to generate traffic, they will have a good return on investment and they will never complain. And those restaurants of whom we have too many, counting lunch as well, who have not enough occupancy, they will always, with or without Michelin stars, have problems with the margins ...’

PE made an interesting reference to Meyer (2006), who wrote that it is not so much being the best restaurant that makes it successful but to be somebody’s favourite restaurant. FO, CE and PE claimed to have had good financial results when they had two or three Michelin stars. According to Johnson et al. (2005), a significant proportion of the two or three Michelin star restaurants in France, UK, Belgium and Switzerland turned out not to be profitable. PA and other

respondents stated that having two or three Michelin stars combined with a good management and marketing organisation should generate enough revenue.

Working, Changing and Sustaining

The important question was: “how can a viable and sustainable culinary restaurant venture be realised?” The LI case suggested that if SSUSCROs have a pure vocational background and maybe excel in it, but lack the managerial knowledge and experience there is a great risk of failing especially when the company is expanding. Ventures such as the Okura Hotel, the Intercontinental Amstel Hotel and the NH Barbizon Palace Hotel in Amsterdam, host Michelin star restaurants within a big hotel organisation. Multi-national hotel corporations have the management structure and the finances needed to sustain operations like Michelin star restaurants.

A format that presented itself as being viable for the particularly small scale, culinary restaurant-only venture is the “chef-owner working together with partner” format (CE, PB, JU). In this situation there may be some hotel rooms attached to the culinary restaurant but no substantial hotel activity. The format, “manager-owner”, such as was operated by FO, JO, AS, PA, PI and PE, seemed to be losing momentum in the two- and three Michelin star segment, when looking at the two major Dutch restaurant associations in which these type of culinary restaurants are organized. PA, in comparing to the decades that he and the generations before him had been operating their restaurant, commented:

' ... I think, and that is my personal perception, that if you would like to own a top quality restaurant, say Michelin stars, one star can be realised but for two or more, it should be a chef-owner. This cannot be done otherwise, for you will be too much dependent on your chef ... At this moment, I would say, we were extremely lucky (operating a manager-owner format: added by researcher) ... '

AS asserted that financial success in one Michelin star restaurants will be relatively low but the way of working will be more relaxed. The real pressure starts in the two and three Michelin star category.

PE, the only Dutch SSUSCRO that combines a Michelin star restaurant with a permanent position as professor, recognized the potential application of the research findings about SSUSCROs for higher education. He pointed at the possible designing of an assessment instrument for future professionals as being quite useful:

' ... somebody has the ambition to become a SSUSCRO and needs to have sufficient skills ... Then, it would be possible to do an assessment to see if you would be fit to be a SSUSCRO ... '

FO compared the strengths and weaknesses of the Chef-Owner (CO) construct with the Manager-Owner (MO), from the perspective of a MO. In FO's opinion, MOs are better educated than COs, have more control over the figures, and communicate easier and more effectively with the guests. It was, however, the prediction of FO that it would no longer be possible to operate the two- and three Michelin star restaurants without having sponsors. The cases of LI and the big hotels, confirm the assumption that there needs to be an external financial safeguard in order to keep restaurants in the top category viable.

It is possible to distil a hierarchy of appropriate management formats for culinary restaurants. The feasibility for SSUSCROs, to operate a two- or three

Michelin star category restaurant is realistically limited to options 1 and 2. JO seemed to be an exception as example of a manager-owner operating a two Michelin star restaurant.

1. **Part of (larger) business concept** secured by private or corporate investors: LI, Okura Hotel Amsterdam, Amstel Hotel Amsterdam, NH Barbizon Palace Hotel Amsterdam
2. **Chef-owner with partner** in the restaurant with own finances secured by bank or private investor(s): CE, PB
3. **Manager-owner with partner** in the restaurant or in administration with finances secured by bank or family heritage: FO, JO, PA, PE, JU
4. **Manager-owner alone**: managing and working with own finances (acquired from bank): AS, PI

For the associations such as the Alliance Gastronomique, it provided a challenge that the members were becoming more dominantly chef-owners because they are generally tied up in the operational work and appear to have fewer “management skills”, as AS described it. WI stated that many of the COs who currently operate their culinary restaurants do not necessarily have the educational and/or knowledge background to be managing their restaurant effectively on the long run. The CO, as the only person operating the restaurant, without a partner involved, may have difficulties in situations where customer contact is concerned.

An important moment in the life of the SSUSCRO can occur when there is a changing of the business format. PI described this crucial moment of choice when the decision was taken to invest in the business by creating hotel rooms. Fortunately, in his case the brewery that had owned the property was willing to

sell the real estate. The brewery was at the point of being taken over by an international partner and therefore wanted to have a good balance sheet. PI was advised by his real estate advisor to buy the restaurant and he invested close to three million guilders, a choice he said never to have regretted:

‘ ... well then, buying the property and refurbishing came down to almost three million, or 2.8, that I have invested then. It was a lot of money at that time.

Never regretted it ... ‘

Most of the SSUSCROs in this research have had a point in their entrepreneurship of considering to create and operate hotel rooms alongside their culinary restaurant. It seemed that for some of the SSUSCROs, the option of creating hotel rooms was a critical moment of change, and it impacted upon their professional life (FO, PE, PI and LI). For others (PA, PB and JU), the hotel rooms were already in the operation. When they started, they were more or less satisfied with the exploitation of a relatively small number of hotel rooms and saw them as connected to the restaurant. Conversely, there were SSUSCROs that did not create hotel rooms, and stayed with “just” operating a culinary restaurant (CE, AS, JO). Much of the latter category’s choice related to disliking the hotel side of the business, as JO put it:

‘ ... As far as I am concerned, it (hotel business: added by researcher) is often a bureaucracy with a lot of intrigue. I encountered, as a down-to-earth person, things in the hotel business of which I thought “how is this possible?” ... ‘

AS was also very critical about the organisational formats and culture in the hotel business compared to the restaurant sector. He perceived people in the hotel business as not being committed, the organisations as too big and the mentality as bureaucratic. For him, experiencing working in hotels made him explicitly choose for the restaurant sector.

PE explained about the expanding of the restaurant activities by adding a shop in the restaurant, a school, a shop elsewhere and other business activities that were done to generate more revenue. It was, however, not easy to go into all kinds of added activities because some of these, such as a shop in the restaurant, may have the same busy hours as the restaurant itself. PE referred to an ambitious young Dutch chef-owner, Niven Kunz who also started a shop with his restaurant but did not properly realize the consequences. He then had to terminate the activities after a relatively short time span.

Focusing on the Big Picture and the Details

Entrepreneurship in culinary restaurants is implemented in different ways by different people. Balazs (2001) came to the observation that the great three Michelin star chef-owners in France combine an overall “helicopter-view” with a strong attention to details. Balazs referred to it as: ‘They are both “micromanagers” and “general managers,” constantly on the outlook for minor details that need correction, while never losing sight of the “big picture”’ (p. 140).

From my own experience working in the culinary restaurant business and doing this research, I observed the differences between the SSUSCROs in the level of detail they would apply in their management. Narratives B, C and D and interviewees JO, AS, JU, PI and PE were “big picture” people, while the others were more primarily focusing on the details. The nature of the culinary restaurant’s success is most certainly in the details of the services and products offered. For the entrepreneur, it is tempting to be “on the spot” to make sure the details are secured. On the other hand there is the notion of an entrepreneur

having to look at the “big picture” of his restaurant. PE made a distinction between “management and entrepreneurship” in culinary restaurants by saying:

‘ ... the manager minds after the shop and the entrepreneur does the enterprising. That’s what in essence it comes down to. It is not for the manager to be like the entrepreneur, to start new things. A true entrepreneur loves to take initiatives and to set up, and puts incredible energy, vision and power into it. Once he loses his interest, because the business is operating, then its time for something else. However, the culinary restaurant entrepreneurs are such enormous creative do’ers. Most entrepreneurs do not have much interest in managing but they have to do it because it’s your own money and your own business. You usually have to, but I think for most entrepreneurs managing is not the most fun part of their job ... ’

Clearly, PE is an example of the well-educated (degree level) entrepreneur, while others indicated to be more interested in the detailed aspects of the culinary profession. AS added that there is a necessity for the entrepreneur to maintain a strict discipline in administrative processes. It was challenging to keep an administrative and managerial organisational discipline in very small companies like in PB’s restaurant where only six people were full-time employed. Restaurants like PB’s, require a particular extraordinary entrepreneur personality in order to sustain.

Getting the Money In and Out

CE and JU benefited from financing by people who knew their qualities as SSUSCROs, and who showed commitment to invest in their new businesses. The credibility of the entrepreneur before starting his own restaurant is leading in this process. CE said about it:

‘ ... at the time, I worked for the Bilderberg Hotels, I knew a few people, guests, who said: “CE, if ever you would like to start your own restaurant then let me know”. And that was a while ago before I needed the money (to start the restaurant: added by researcher), and then I called them. The answer was so nice. “Mr. CE”, the guy said: “if you come now and you tell me how much you need, you can take it with you straightaway” ... ‘

After years of operation the investors allowed CE to buy all the shares:

‘ ... We had very pleasant shareholders. They did not begrudge us and they also told us: “we have done this to help you and not to get rich from it” ... ‘

The interesting and important notion to be taken from CE’s experience in getting his finances is in the awareness that the people who financed his restaurant did on the basis of his performance in the restaurants he worked in. In a sense, he made some of his guests into friends and they supported him. This notion of a relationship like friendship being part of the restaurant experience was confirmed by Lashley (2008), who described it as growing into a bond between host and guest:

If the guest experience is to be such as to create memorable experiences and ultimately enable the guest to feel a bond of friendship, hosting behaviour needs to reflect the traditions of hospitality and hospitableness (p. 12)

In the case of JU, starting his restaurant in a relatively late phase of his working life around 45, it became clear that he had a relationship with his investors that resembled friendship:

‘ ... the money needed to buy the restaurant, I financed with friends. As a consequence, I never had to borrow money from the bank. And after three years, I paid all these friends a part of the money back plus the interest that

goes along. I invited them every year for an afternoon to play golf. In the evening a dinner. I called them "The Friends of ...". And when I said farewell to them after buying the shares from them, they winked away a tear because they really would have liked to stay part of it ... I started this restaurant ... and I had my knowledge and experience. In one weekend the six gentlemen – friends said: "we will follow you" ... '

Creating a network of friends who would also be their regular guests in the restaurant like CE and JU did, is an important notion for future entrepreneurs, which could benefit them. Obviously, there can be a downside to this. When guests become connected to the restaurant in business terms, they become investor and if business is not going as well as planned, they may take away the independence of the SSUSCRO. Another danger of the "guest-friend relationship" presented itself in the case of the entrepreneur in narrative B. I observed the process of intertwining relationships between this SSUSCRO and his regular guests. The situation of B developed in an alarming direction because he became too closely connected to some of his guests. The lifestyle and habits of these particular wealthy guests turned out not to be supportive to the work of the initially highly committed culinary restaurant entrepreneur.

In B's case in the five years I worked for him, it became clear he followed his guest-friends into patterns of behaviour that cost him more money than he could afford. Connected to that he adopted behaviours such as drinking more than average and at some point using cocaine, which was quite common in the circles of his friends. Slowly but gradually, this made B starting to neglect his restaurant and concentrate more on the "enjoyment in life" rather than the responsible ways of celebrating the culinary restaurant. In the end, B's behaviour destroyed the viability of his restaurant.

Being Successful or Not

It was interesting and important to take notice of the definitions and explanations SSUSCROs, offered about the nature of culinary restaurant entrepreneurship and what made it successful or not. In the literature, there are a number of popular publications about success in entrepreneurship and how to achieve it. The suggestions are in most cases quite general and normative in the style of “you should do this or that”. An example of the “self-help” type of resources is ‘The 10 rules of successful business’ (Murphy, 2010), which talks about: ‘Make the commitment - Find a problem, then solve it - Think big, think new, think again - You can’t do it alone - You must do it alone - Manage risk - Learn to lead - Learn to sell - Persist, persevere, prevail - Play the game for life’ (p. 36). Although some of these ten rules might find resonance in the findings of this research to a certain extent, they are much too general to apply them to the SSUSCRO practice.

Another example provided by Cioffi & Willig (2011) promotes the six habits of highly successful managers, and similarly in quite general terms refers to: ‘Set goals all the time - Focus on the process, not a plan - Coach the right people - Serve the right customer - Empower you entire team - Do the right things right’ (n.p.) . Apart from taking the last habit as one of the themes in this SSUSCRO analysis, I found these habits again to be too general in describing what entails success in the operating of culinary restaurants.

A point of criticism about the two sources referred to above, as examples of the popular “success literature”, is their normative presentation of the “rules” or “habits”. The accounts of the SSUSCROs provided more focused, and

specific elements of defining success in the culinary restaurant sector. FO's "down-to-earth" explanation of good entrepreneurship seems quite useful:

' ... It (the restaurant: added by researcher) is not well decorated. There is disorder. People are wearing unclean clothes. The interior has not been cleaned properly. Wrong color plants. Wrong chairs. Everything wrong. Really so wrong, that you think, yes it may linger on, based on the name, but "stop with it, please". It will continue, until it cannot do otherwise than stop ... But when does a restaurant entrepreneur stop, usually not straight after his peak. In most cases, he only stops when he has to stop ... '

When talking about his children and their possible succession in the restaurant, JO made an important point. He asserted, it would be better to take over a business that one can still develop as an entrepreneur instead of buying a successful culinary restaurant that is at the top of its life cycle. The investment in such an established successful business will be very difficult to earn back.

Owning real estate or property is important for SSUSCROs. It seems that where people go wrong in the retiring phase, in many cases it has to do with this aspect of real estate as well. Other SSUSCROs confirmed this, and FO explained:

' ... if we would not have taken some clever action with real estate ... we could have spent the money in other ways ... But by investing in a sensible way in real estate, we eventually earned a lot of money, which we would otherwise never have earned with our restaurant ... '

In AS's case, not owning the real estate in combination with an unsuccessful marriage affected his notion of what successful restaurant entrepreneurship meant.

Quite the opposite was realised by JU who acquired the real estate and combined with good earnings, managed to secure his pension in a relatively short period of 11½ years. He sold part of the land, his restaurant was built on, to an investor who wanted to create apartments. JU's case stipulated the important role owning real estate had for him even into his life after retirement:

' ... In 11½ years, I have accumulated my pension. This way I never have to work anymore after 57 ... that is rather unique looking at the national average ... and live behind the restaurant. The property next door, I also own and the upper-floor I am going to refurbish and live in ... '

PA bought the parking lot and real estate of the restaurant before he retired, which was interesting because he would pay less taxes, the moment he would sell it in the future.

CE mentioned that owning the real estate of his restaurant was important and was done gradually. In that process the so-called "right to buy" the restaurant, which at first was rented proved to be very important. AS explained the essence of what happens if a SSUSCRO does not own the property, in relation to retiring, by referring to his colleague and friend JO and his two Michelin star restaurant:

' ... that's where the problem slides in ... stones are of importance, do you understand? ... he (JO) is not the owner of the stones ... he has to sell the place to another two Michelin star type of entrepreneur ... '

There is a challenge JO will have when in the future, he will want to sell his restaurant in which he does not own the real estate. There are not many entrepreneurs, who would be willing and able to buy a high esteem and high priced two Michelin star restaurant without the real estate. CE was successful in finding an ambitious chef who aspired to become chef-owner and rented his

property to him. PA, however, had a devastating experience with an assumed Michelin star(s) aspiring entrepreneur who in the first year after taking over the restaurant went bankrupt.

Some SSUSCROs explained that it is not just about owning real estate. FO, CE, PA and PE stipulated that as an entrepreneur, one should have a solid return on investment from the daily operations. FO said, when asked if he agreed about the notion of real estate being the dominant long term factor:

' ... I don't think so, I think you should really very well look into the business generating potential of the restaurant ... '

PE provided a detailed analysis in which he offered a critical stance towards some of the common misconceptions in restaurant entrepreneurship:

' ... (viability or success: added by researcher) is very dependent of many factors, for example if you are the owner of the real estate, where that real estate is located and if it eventually has intrinsic value. That is something, nowadays a bit less of course, where many colleagues thought, that the value was in the business property but that is not true ... '

PE confirmed, as did other SSUSCROs, that many entrepreneurs in the culinary restaurant world have a very low return on investment but see the value of their business in the real estate. Many restaurant owners manage to survive for a long time because they “live out of their business”. PE stated:

' ... This is the crucial point, you can sustain for a relatively long time on a very limited return on investment ... and make no money at all. You can drive your car, eat, take your holidays ... buy books, in short: all activities that potentially can make life expensive, you can do it all on the business account. The costs for the business are then relatively high, but the net profit is low or negative ... if

still you can pay the depreciations and once in a while you do some refurbishment .. you can sustain for an unbelievable long time ... ‘

Daily revenues and return on investment are crucial for sustaining, and in combination with owning the property contribute to operating a successful culinary restaurant.

Shining Stars Not Always Found

The SSUSCROs, especially the older ones such as FO, JO, AS, PA and PE, explained that the nature of the culinary restaurant industry had dramatically changed over the past three decades. AS confirmed that having a distinctive feature as a contemporary culinary restaurant is much more difficult than some years ago:

‘ ... at that time we could distinguish our selves much easier, you would be a better restaurant, because you would just do something different. So in fact, it was quite simple. Nowadays it has become very difficult, they are all good ... to be different than the rest now, you have to be exceptionally good, that was not the case at that time in the past ... ‘

The Netherlands has developed tremendously, in terms of culinary restaurants, which is illustrated by the number of Michelin star restaurants increasing from 35 in 1980 (Brandligt, 2012), to 102 in 2012 (Van Spronsen, 2012). Chefs get their Michelin stars at a much younger age, products from all over the world can be acquired easily and television presents an array of culinary programmes, which have influenced the market. People know more about the process and products, and this has changed the nature of culinary restaurant entrepreneurship. PA explained the changes, while implicitly expressing a cynical perception:

‘ ... And then came the times of people, who knew a lot themselves ... they were all connoisseurs, who had been to courses, cooking courses, and they knew it all ... ‘

The culinary world is now much more liberalized and this has resulted in much more knowledgeable customers. To deal with better educated customers puts a higher claim on the capacities and knowledge of the SSUSCROs. For JO, it was important to implement a clear planning process in order to realize the changes in the restaurant. Greater emphasis on the product was established, and many three Michelin star restaurants were visited where ideas were generated to implement in his own restaurant. All was driven by JO himself as SSUSCRO.

From the testimonies of the SSUSCROs, it became clear that Michelin stars are a desirable target to achieve. Van Craenenbroeck (2011), as previous chief inspector of the Michelin guide for the Benelux, recalled a conversation with one of the Dutch SSUSCROs:

A great culinary restaurant entrepreneur once said to me: “If Michelin would not exist, then the institute should be invented, it is the benchmark for success” ... Nicely phrased, but still, I answered to him, that it is not the Michelin Guide, but the customer who decides about the success of the restaurant ... Michelin is only there to assist the unknowing customer and by doing so provides some extra clientele (p. 49)

After retiring from his two Michelin star restaurant, FO asserted that a meal in a top culinary restaurant in France might be worth a high price, but comparing many Michelin star restaurants in The Netherlands he found the majority of them disappointing.

Beyond shining stars that cannot always be found, is the dark side of the SSUSCRO phenomenon. In a lifetime as SSUSCRO, PI encountered a number of staff members that committed fraud or cheated:

‘ ... we have had fraudsters and people that drank wherever they could ... yes, jealous, then they see a guest in a beautiful Bentley or something of the like ... and then I had an assistant for 40 years and he cheated ... was married with a Belgian wife and had a second relationship here ... and then I told my son-in-law ... keep an eye on him. That was the way, how we eventually found out that he was plainly cheating ... it concerned somebody with whom you had been working for 40 years ... ‘

It would be correct to say that the nature of the culinary restaurant business, in which people work long and irregular hours, has an impact on their personal lives. One might wonder of course if it is the restaurant business that impacts on people and triggers them into certain behaviour, or that certain people with particular personality characteristics are drawn to the business. It will be difficult to find out exactly which is the cause and which the effect. There is definitely a dark side to the SSUSCRO social construct, when it comes down to the people working in the sector.

From a pedagogical, or learning, point of view it could be contested that working for a certain limited period in the challenging culinary restaurant business can have value. Sustaining the experience, and getting out in “one piece” could make a person stronger and more able to deal with other challenges in life. PI presented the disturbing story of two of his senior management staff members that throughout many years working together in the restaurant, were basically most of the time fighting. He described the situation:

' ... what I have experienced, almost nobody knows, X (the chef) and Y (maitre d'), they did not communicate with each other ... we had every Monday management meetings and then there was always quarrelling. So after two or three times, I sent them a note, we can in the future better communicate by letter. There was no purpose in continuing. And actually they only met to harm each other... that I have persevered for 25 years! I communicated with each of them separately perfectly, that was no problem at all and still now it isn't. Something must have happened and I tried to investigate what it was ... I took them on a wine trip to the Burgundy and we would be sipping on Armagnac or something, and then they again continued to argue ... I never found out what the reason was ... '

This strange phenomenon of two people working together who do not wish to communicate constructively for such a long time is extreme but not an exception in the culinary restaurant business as I found out from my own experiences.

The type of behaviour as described could be qualified as part of the dark side of the culinary restaurant world, which will alarm starters, young people to stay away from that world. It may also lead them to exit the sector when they are in. At times, however, there seemed to be a kind of role play involved in which people presented themselves as being less pleasurable to deal with than they actually were. This phenomenon had a depressing effect on me at the start of my professional life. Later on after experiencing it on different occasions, I developed my own defence mechanism and ways of dealing with it. Enduring the dark side of the culinary restaurant sector created a "strong will" mentality and made me more resistant to stress than the average worker. Nevertheless, I would never adhere to the type of negative communication patterns as being

“normal” or “desirable”. It should be avoided or eliminated in my opinion, because it is a dark side of SSUSCRO entrepreneurship that can potentially destroy lives, relationships and resources.

The SSUSCRO construct can cause a negative impact on society, although not a lot is published about it. Another example provided by PA of his many years of culinary restaurant experience was about how a former staff member had gone bankrupt in his own restaurant and left his wife. He had then engaged in criminal activities and disappeared. The temptation of having access to alcohol was too big for him. PA assumed this former staff member wanting to copy a status, such as that of his employer and did not realize what was actually involved. The dark side of the SSUSCRO construct is something to warn future professionals about.

Being in a People Business

FO commented that Michelin should not only be assessing the quality of the food but also the way culinary restaurants deal with their staff. JO added that a Michelin star restaurant does not mean, the owner has a star status and that he should be respectful to his staff. This was confirmed by PA, who testified about his appreciation of staff in the decades he operated his restaurant:

‘ ... I was a social restaurant owner, I have always given consideration to my staff. Staff is gold that you have in your hands ... ‘

In PA’s explanation of how he viewed his staff, he stipulated the value of staff and the importance of them having self-esteem. He confirmed having tried to be a socially sensitive SSUSCRO, especially throughout the last years of his entrepreneurship.

Almost all of the SSUSCROs that were interviewed confirmed the notion of staff being the important element in a successful operating culinary restaurant. This connected to the Virtuous Circle of Enlightened Hospitality (Meyer, 2006). In this model presented in the literature review, the generating of value i.e. return on investment for the investors is defined as a result of putting in the effort of making employees, guests and suppliers, satisfied first.

PA mentioned good and bad practices in the current restaurant business. A good hotel business was described where young apprentices were honoured and respected, while another one (that of the still practising SSUSCRO PB) was mentioned as non-respectful towards young staff. I recognised PE's mentioning of being able to attract good staff when the restaurant has a reputation such as in the Michelin guide from my own experience in the culinary restaurant sector. PE said about this process:

' ... The best people (staff) that like this sector will look for and find the Michelin star restaurants. And if you do not have a Michelin star restaurant, but you have the ambition and quality, then they will not come and work for you ... '

Although the frustration of PE is quite understandable, it would be fair to put a historical note alongside. Having worked for PE's father, I experienced extremely long working hours without compensation for overtime at the particular restaurant.

There are two elements involved in the preference of staff to work in Michelin star restaurants. One is the CV-building exercise which aims at getting good restaurants on to one's curriculum vitae, in order to be more employable. The other element is much more profound, where it suggests that the practitioner has seen and experienced the benchmark of high quality standards.

The assumption here is that having worked (and lived) in a high quality context raises the potential to evaluate and deliver high quality work output oneself.

The effect Michelin stars have not only on attracting customers, but also on attracting good staff is paramount. This was confirmed by PA's daughter, counsellor for human resources matters in the vocational restaurant sector when she explained that apprentices choose to work for culinary restaurants, to increase the value of their CV. She, however, added that in order to learn properly about the profession it is better to work in a really good restaurant, which is not necessarily a Michelin star restaurant. In my experience, learning the basics of the restaurant work is done better in many restaurants that are not in the Michelin star category.

In A's restaurant which was positioned just under the "real" culinary restaurant segment, I learned as an apprentice the basics of hospitality and the technical skills that are needed for the profession. Then moving to B's Michelin star restaurant I found out that there was less opportunity to learn the basic skills and techniques, because the restaurant had already a established system in place. Having staff members who were apprentices and therefore might question the practice in place would not be commonly accepted. The high quality Michelin star restaurant would be under high pressure of doing business every day and this would not allow a lot of contemplation about the system by an apprentice.

The notion of Michelin star restaurants being able to attract better staff connects to research on employer branding. Gehrels & Dumont (2011) suggested that for employers who are able to make their company an attractive place to work, it will be more effective to attract and retain the right staff. The

Michelin star restaurants are not only able to profile themselves with their culinary quality, but also as an employer brand because it is valuable for staff to work there in terms of building their CV.

The practice in culinary restaurants in the way they deal with staff on the other hand is worrying and definitely one of the dark sides of the sector. Apprentices in many cases are not treated properly in terms of working conditions and do not get the opportunities to develop, as PA's daughter explained from her experience dealing with the young starting professionals. This category of apprentices needs a lot of coaching and without it, they will not be able to properly develop. If people start in entrepreneurship with an experience that is not about proper dealing with staff, they will be unaware of how to do it correctly themselves.

FO referred to honesty as being a core quality of a good restaurant owner and he connected this to the relationship with employees. Implementation and maintenance of the collective labour agreement was considered very important, by FO. His vision of honesty in the relationship with staff connected to the way PI talked about appreciating his staff, in the time of tremendous challenges such as losing his wife and his father-in-law.

The accounts of the SSUSCROs again would suggest the validity of the Virtuous Cycle of Enlightened Hospitality (Meyer, 2006), in which the importance for a restaurant entrepreneur is stipulated to focus first on his staff because they are the starting point towards success for the other stakeholders. PA's daughter emphasized the importance for staff in culinary restaurants, to be also engaged in professional competitions and not just working 14 hours a day. My own transfer from the culinary restaurant sector to higher education was

aided by having become a national champion in sommeliership (the wine service profession). Participating in, and winning the competition was very meaningful in its own right and it also gave me an additional reference on my curriculum vitae. This was recognized by the university of applied sciences where I applied for the position of senior lecturer, and it assisted in the process of transferring from the restaurant business to education.

FO talked about another issue related to staff in culinary restaurants. He described the way the team would finalize the working day usually late at night, and stipulated the social process involved in having a drink with the team and sitting together. The social structure and cohesion of the team would facilitate a process of “letting go or unwinding” after hard work and celebrating success, when it had been very busy. According to FO it was about creating a family-like environment by having meals together and a social gathering after work.

‘ ... trying to build a team with your staff, we found to be very important. We had a meal together twice a day, not always with the same fun and occasionally a challenge. But it was good and that is why we had it ... we gathered with our staff about half to an hour after work to talk ... ‘

I fully recognize the notion of this process from my own experience. In all the restaurants where I worked, as described in the narratives, there was an opportunity to evaluate the day and “unwind”. There was, however, also a dark side to these moments of “unwinding” together as a team after work. Alcohol use and abuse would be occurring and the relationships “at home” were jeopardized because “new relationships” would develop among colleagues if people were sensitive to that. Some staff members would lose track in their lives because the sheer physical strain of going to bed late, and in many cases getting up relatively early in the morning again would take too much of them. In

my personal case, looking back at the years in the culinary restaurants, I got close to completely destroying my personal life and marriage, particularly in B's restaurant. After carefully consideration, my wife and I decided to leave the restaurant and to find a place with a more steady work environment.

Profiling and Connecting

The importance for culinary restaurants of generating publicity and staying in the spotlight, in order to attract customers was highlighted by the SSUSCROs. FO was a clear example of a person, particularly skilled in generating publicity. He acknowledged to have learned a lot from his former employer, Joop Braakhekke, and explained the value of publicity:

' ... generating publicity, I had learned from Joop Braakhekke and it was enormously effective ... one of the first things was a fashion show of a flock of lambs that went through the restaurant. Fashion shows were actually not so new but lambs acting in it, was completely new and it got to the national news ... then these eatable roses, that generated a lot of extra business and the interesting part was that people looking for something new came to the restaurant of whom 30% thought it to be so nice that they would return ... getting publicity and to be seen, was very important because the restaurant was at a remote location. There should always be a reason to come to us and the reasons should be clear by being always in the newspaper ... for that we did a lot of things ... '

FO acknowledged to have accepted the position as chair of the Alliance Gastronomique restaurant association in order to expand his possibilities to generate publicity. On the other hand, FO acknowledged it to be crucial to keep a balance in generating publicity, and not having too many side activities

because that might have worked out negatively for the core business. JO confirmed the importance and power of public relations:

‘ ... I think it is important to work well on your public relations ... you need to be able to speak out in the media when you are asked to do so ... ‘

If customers expect the SSUSCRO to be actively in the restaurant, it will disappoint them if they don't see him because he might be out for external publicity generating activities. CE's partner warned about the glamour effects of publicity and stipulated the importance for education professionals to share this with students in hospitality management programmes:

‘ ... that is what they (students: added by researcher) often do not realize ... They see the nice glamorous exterior ... the publicity and being in the news and the bits of show ... but it does not happen without the effort ... It is not just glamour, but hospitality is in fact ... hard work ... ‘

An important means for generating publicity and emphasizing marketing for Dutch culinary restaurants has been the Alliance Gastronomique, culinary association of restaurants. The definitions of the Alliance Gastronomique by FO,AS, PA and PI, made it clear that the association started as a club of friends, being SSUSCROs, benefitting from sharing knowledge. The concept of “synergy” (*The whole is greater than the sum of its parts*), as mentioned in Habit 6 in the 7-Habits framework (Covey, 2004) would resemble the goals of the Alliance Gastronomique. PE confirmed the importance of the Alliance Gastronomique, of which his father had been one of the founders, for business purposes:

‘ ... the Alliance Gastronomique ... had business motives: comparing figures, joint purchasing, to help each other to get better ... ‘

Other SSUSCROs emphasized “friendship” as being the strong liaising factor of the Alliance Gastronomique and other restaurant associations. FO voiced a certain feeling of ambivalence about the restaurant association, which on the one hand taught him a lot but on the other hand did not grow to its full potential:

‘ ... and from the Alliance, I learned a lot. Many frank conversations and also the willingness to share information. For the rest, I had my doubts about the association and I would ask myself: “what am I doing there?” ... the lack of strong PR or marketing. That was all a bit weak ... ‘

It also became clear from PI and PB’s accounts, that there is a changing composition of SSUSCROs within the association from around 50% manager-owners to a dominant percentage chef-owners. This development has changed the friends’ network, compared to when it started and it has now become more like being business partners than the original real “friend” meaning. The CO as chairman of the association has a more symbolic role of the “craftsman” being in charge while still the manager-owners monitor the process.

The connection between colleagues in the world of the SSUSCROs is strong, based on the accounts they produce about each other. Virtually every interviewee knew the other SSUSCROs and could describe their personality and contextual characteristics. Entrepreneurs as part of their social context, operated within a tight knit community of professionals and developed friendships which, for the older SSUSCROs continued after they retired. The VLAG association of former SSUSCROs started in 2007 mentioned in the literature review, is a connection of friends who wanted to stay in contact as PA commented.

PB, as current Alliance board member, expressed “disliking” the time and effort that needed to be invested in the association’s activities “on a day

off". I perceive the sometimes critical and sceptical tone in the comments of the SSUSCROs about the networks, as being part of the spirit of such a community. An interesting and somewhat hilarious incident happened in 2010 and illustrated the "short fuses" SSUSCROs have at times. A retired SSUSCRO, Emmanuel Mertens formerly possessing a two Michelin star restaurant stated in the national press (Klopper, 2010) that his colleague PB could better seek employment with Rank Xerox, because he would only be copying the dishes of famous three Michelin star restaurants. PB responded straightaway in the same national newspaper by addressing the issue directly to his colleague making the comment:

' ... Your eternally contempting en denigrating opinions about even your friendly colleagues have made you sink to a sad nadir. But of course it is not easy for you to live on as an unemployed, bitter and rancorous human being ... '

Despite sometimes appearing personal confrontations between SSUSCROs, it became clear that there was "synergy" derived from the networks in the culinary restaurant sector.

SSUSCRO Social Construct and Education

The findings show that SSUSCROs, rather than just being individual people, fit into a "social construct" that is composed of several elements. The SSUSCRO social construct at the core has the individual, the person, the entrepreneur mostly closely connected to a partner and can be defined in terms of personality and value system. This person faces life and acts upon the experiences, happenings and issues in which process his value system is leading. The person is interacting with the profession of managing the culinary

restaurant. The SSUSCRO social construct has interesting aspects to potentially offer to hospitality management education. In this process of connecting the outcomes to education, I expand on the research of Balazs (2001, 2002) who first suggested to extract leadership lessons from the French three Michelin star SSUSCROs.

Looking at the findings, a core concept, a central theme emerged: “Living the Business”. “Living a business” is about people who commit a dominant part of their lives to building a world in which they as a person together with their close-ones can sustain. The SSUSCROs expressed as very important in “Living the Business”, the strong urge to realize their potential. Their world is for a dominant part centered around the culinary restaurant in which they unleash their thinking power, psychical resources, creativity, and managerial competencies. Running a culinary restaurant can only be done if it is lived as a comprehensive existence, and not just as a means to get income. As FO put it: ‘*... when properly done, a culinary top restaurant is a goal in its own right ...*’.

Another metaphor to compare the life of a SSUSCRO to, is that of a top athlete who commits a major part of his life and time to training and performing. A “real” SSUSCRO shows the discipline of the athlete who is committed to achieve certain goals and in order to do so, preparation and time plus energy investment, are paramount. Same as with the top athletes, hardship and suffering can be connected to achieving the goals. The appreciation by customers and Michelin, as well as the financial rewards could be considered as the medals that athletes aspire to win. In the case of Michelin’s stars the gold medal would be three stars, silver would be two stars, and bronze could be classified as one star.

Financial rewards are important but not the most dominant motivator for the SSUSCROs. This matches with what Cox & Jennings (1995) found about the main drivers for a diversity of entrepreneurs in Great-Britain:

All work very hard and for very long hours. They are intrinsically motivated by interest in, and enjoyment of, their work and the sense of achievement it provides ... most claimed that money was not their main motivator (p. 8)

Next metaphor that emerged about the people in the culinary restaurant sector is that of the artist who puts in an enormous effort in his performance. FO as distinctive and highly respected Dutch SSUSCRO, however, disagreed firmly with the reference to “artist” and “performing”. He contested that the essence of working as a SSUSCRO should be “real” and “authentic”. There could be neither acting nor performing, according to FO and it should be done from within and in extension to ones personality. FO emphasized that it is crucial that somebody who works in a culinary restaurant “lives” the values and behaves from “within”, meaning that there should be an intrinsic connection to the way the hospitality is delivered in culinary restaurants.

Only by having this “inner connection”, it will be possible to execute the profession in a relaxed, non-forced manner and to sustain in it. If the behaviour is forced, it will be virtually impossible to sustain over a longer period of time in such a demanding situation as working in a culinary restaurant. FO, and in a slightly different way, JU and narrative B were clearly examples of SSUSCROs who went through their work and private lives in a manner that can be qualified as “authentic”. All three were considered to be exceptionally capable hospitality providers by their peers and the outside world. CE and his partner when they

talked about their private life, expressed to enjoy life in a way resembling the hospitality in their restaurant. They said:

' ... for example on New Year's Eve, there were constant people about the house, one person brings red wine, we have red wine, he has woodcock ... and then CE is continuously in the kitchen, we dress the table ... where can I be better with a nice woodcock and ... lobster and ... oysters ... '

The believe in leaving a legacy of having been successful in their business, is in the stories of particularly the retired SSUSCROs important, and they provided examples. Initiatives such as the VLAG association of retired SSUSCROs (FO, CE, PA), the setting up of culinary vocational programmes and lending their names to it (CE, PE, LI), publishing about their sector and the profession (PB, PE, LI) or about the culinary products their restaurants have generated (FO, JO, CE, PI, PE, LI), were all indicative of a drive to leave a legacy. Although achieving and being acknowledged for it was important for SSUSCRO FO, he at the same time expressed to experience it as very relative. The sense of perspective, in FO's story showed when comparing himself to real "big business people".

' ... the bothersome for many business people who earn a lot of money is that they do not have many occasions to show their wealth except for owning a nice house and a big car. But if they are in a group of people, they are just Mr.X, and who knows Mr.X?, well nobody knows him. And then there is this non-significant FO who has a small restaurant and everybody knows him, while these business people are really big with more than 1000 staff ... '

Living a business but not to get swept away by it, is crucial to become and stay successful. There are numerous accounts of entrepreneurs and staff members in the culinary restaurant business who did not manage to live their business in

a “healthy” and sustainable manner, as was mentioned earlier in this analysis chapter.

Important question remains about where the connection between “Living a business” and education is. The answer to this question was central in this thesis research and closely connected to the central aim:

‘ ... To explore how contextual characteristics and social context of successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owner’s (SSUSCROs) can be used in hospitality management education in order to have students, faculty, programme and management connected to the professional work field ... ‘

The findings of this research provided examples of where SSUSCROs themselves, individually or with colleagues, have been actively involved in influencing hospitality management education. FO was one of the initiators to start a programme offered by a hospitality management school to bring current practitioners to a higher level of knowledge and skills. Although relevant and needed for current practitioners, this was only addressing the learning needs of a part of practitioners in culinary restaurants i.e. the current staff members who might develop into entrepreneurs. The initiative had to be aborted after five years because of insufficient interest.

CE sponsored a combination of secondary vocational schools with his knowledge, experience and name. The CE Academy produced its first graduates in March 2012 (Scholten, 2012), and is an example of direct involvement of a SSUSCRO in this case into secondary vocational education. PE since many years has an Academy for Gastronomy that teaches a diversity of students about taste and culinary processes including pairing of wine and food. Added to his own academy, PE accepted a post as a professor in gastronomy at the Dutch universities of applied sciences, in order to share his

knowledge, with both undergraduate and postgraduate students. PE, a SSUSCRO who has a PhD, is an example of how an individual SSUSCRO influences hospitality management education. Other SSUSCROs indicated to have connections to hospitality management of secondary vocational education programmes (JO, AS, PB, PA and LI). Despite the diversity of efforts made by individual SSUSCROs, there is no structured concept that secures the contextual characteristics of the SSUSCRO construct to be substantially of influence on hospitality management education.

In the final conclusions chapter of this thesis, I will explain how the SSUSCRO social construct and “Living the Business” can potentially influence and benefit hospitality management education. Incorporated in the SSUSCRO social construct are the valuable lessons as presented in the findings of this research, paired with the warnings about the construct.

Chapter 6. Conclusions

Introduction

In this last chapter of the thesis I will reflect on the research in terms of the theoretical approach applied and what was learned from it. The benefits and drawbacks of the chosen research design will be considered. Furthermore, I will present what the findings contribute to the practice of hospitality management and education in that field. The social construct of the successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owner, the so-called SSUSCRO, will be reflected upon. I will demonstrate how the central theme “Living the Business” that was identified in the context of the SSUSCRO construct can be put to use in hospitality management education. The value for students i.e. future practitioners of considering the SSUSCRO construct - and world - will be explained and the “dark side” of the SSUSCRO construct and the disturbing relationship between the restaurant practitioners’ world and education will be highlighted. I will present my personal learning from this research as an education provider and the value this process can provide for colleagues in education.

In the first part of this chapter I will go back to the initial research objectives to evaluate how they were achieved. In the next section, I will present my personal reflections on the process of doing the research and the limitations of the chosen approach. Next and most importantly, I will demonstrate how my research contributes to the current practice in hospitality management and education in that field, which in essence answers the “so-what” question related to this thesis research. Finally, suggestions for further research will be given.

The contribution to current practice has been organised around three themes:

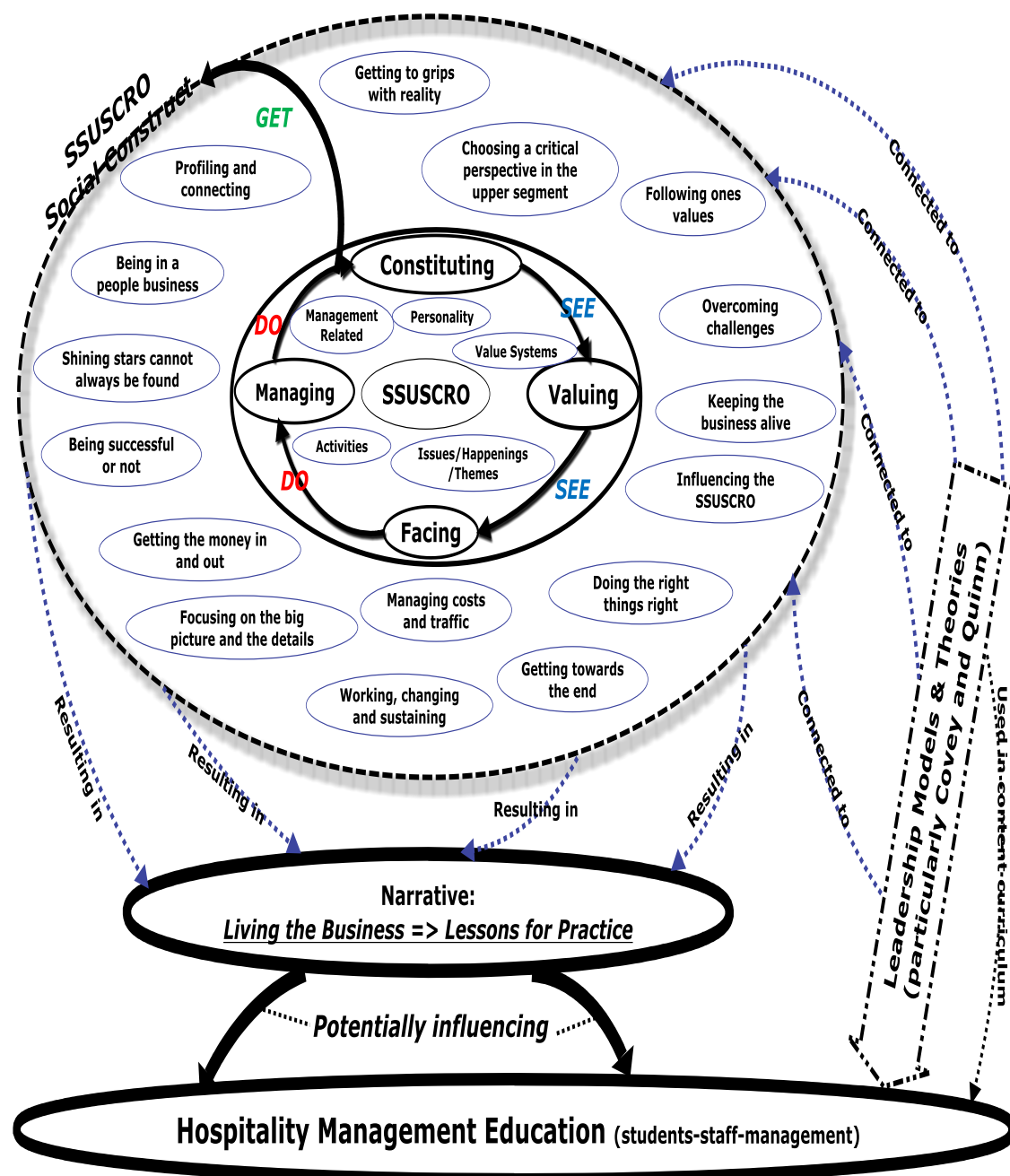
- A. Advice to would be SSUSCROs – entering, sustaining and exiting
- B. Educational support and preparation for hospitality management
- C. Bridging the gap between the two worlds

Considering the Initial Research Objectives

1. *To describe and explain SSUSCROs' value systems, other driving powers and social context (what makes these entrepreneurial practitioners perform, behave and organize in the successful way they do?).*
2. *To provide an insight into how the SSUSCROs see and experience their professional and personal lives and what constitutes the definition of being successful based on their careers.*
3. *To suggest ways as to how the contextual characteristics and vision of the SSUSCROs potentially can be used in hospitality management education (how can the contextual characteristics, actions and vision be presented to students, faculty and management in hospitality management programmes in order to have them benefit from it?).*

To demonstrate how I answered the objectives of this thesis research I present here as a visualisation of the conclusions, my theoretical framework. This framework represents the grounded theory of the SSUSCRO social construct and its central theme of “living the business”. The research found that a social construct of the Successful Small Upper Segment Culinary Restaurant Owners (the SSUSCROs) explains their existence and “Living the Business” emerged as a central theme in the findings. In figure 20, the SSUSCRO social construct and its central theme of “Living the Business” are visualised.

Figure 20. SSUSCRO construct and hospitality education



The SSUSCRO as an individual is part of a complex construct, which explains how he progresses through life. The personality related elements and the influence from the SSUSCRO’s socialization in life are the constituting factors. Attaching value to what the SSUSCRO encounters, based on his value system

(valuing), makes him face life in relation to issues, happenings and themes. The phases of constituting and valuing are conceptualized by the term “SEE”, which indicates the paradigm of the SSUSCRO. In the culinary restaurant setting the SSUSCRO as entrepreneur is managing, which is a major influence on becoming successful. The phases of facing and managing are conceptualized in “DO” and follow how the SSUSCRO sees the world and his part in it. From “SEE” and “DO”, the SSUSCRO “GETs”, to what is considered here the social construct of a successful culinary entrepreneur.

The core element in this construct is the central notion of “living the business”, which as became clear in this research means the full immersion in the activities one engages in. The SSUSCRO social construct with its central theme of “living the business” can potentially influence hospitality management education, primarily students, but also faculty and management. The influence of the SSUSCRO social construct and “living the business” can affect the constituting and valuing phases of students, which assists them in leading their lives and choosing their professional pathway.

For faculty and management of hospitality management programmes, the influence of the SSUSCRO social construct and “living the business” can affect their constituting and valuing phases. In their situation, however, most effectively “valuing” may be influenced because faculty and management are in a different stage of life than students, and for them the constituting phase will most presumably have been settled already. The grounded theory of the SSUSCRO social construct and “living the business” does not suggest providing a particular prescription that will guarantee success. For the potential application in hospitality management education, I would stipulate, it as serving

as a contemplative approach that presents points for particularly students to consider instead of suggesting a “how-to-do” type of model. In the section on the contribution to practice, I will further explain how the process of influencing can be modelled.

Special people

The personalities of SSUSCROs, although individually different, show common features. They are people who are active, and in some cases, they tend to be hyperactive. From my own experience in the culinary restaurant sector, I confirm this. The idea that personalities with a mild form of hyperactiveness can be successful achievers is in line with previous research findings (Hartmann, 1996; Coby, 2005; Fieve, 2006). I conclude that this condition may be beneficial for working in a sector such as culinary restaurants. People possessing enormous drive will be able to put more than average levels of energy into the process.

It will, however, be of the utmost importance that there is a “balancing factor” in the SSUSCROs’ life, such as a partner or (a combination of) other people that they can liaise with in their work environment. SSUSCRO personalities show a passion for their work, which is driven by an urge to achieve, and to be recognized for that. SSUSCROs are proud of their achievement. Sometimes, SSUSCROs who strive for recognition display a certain degree of vanity, insisting on some achievement to be theirs.

Contrastingly, most SSUSCROs see the nature of success in perspective. They know very well that business comes and goes and they realise that basic processes affect the environment for their restaurant business. After several decades of practice in a competitive environment,

SSUSCROs tend to become realists. They know that it is not advisable to present themselves as being at the same level as their wealthy clientele. Indulging in a lifestyle which includes overspending of money will drain them financially and most of them are aware of it. SSUSCROs enjoy visiting their peers' restaurants and put effort into that, in order to access their professional practices.

SSUSCROs are critical people who like to evaluate the culinary restaurant business, their own restaurants, their colleagues' personalities, and education in the field of hospitality. They appear to be headstrong in many cases because they will regularly insist on having things "their way". It is interesting, however, to see that enduring a hard life as entrepreneur and retiring successfully takes away some of the "rough edges" of the SSUSCRO personality. The retired SSUSCROs display certain wisdom about what is going on in the sector and looking back at their hectic lives are able to point to the right and wrong decisions. This sense of wisdom makes the retired SSUSCROs particularly interesting for educating future professionals.

SSUSCROs are inquisitive people and keen to find ways for improving their business. The essence of the SSUSCRO personality is about having "drive", the conviction to accomplish "something" and to overcome any hurdles in the process. Being passionate, possessing drive, being creative, and being able to endure are all needed to become and stay a long term practitioner in the culinary restaurant sector. These contextual characteristics materialize in many aspects of the SSUSCRO social construct and I refer to this as "Living the Business".

In the personality of the SSUSCRO there is also a sense of cheerfulness i.e. knowing how to enjoy life. Challenges are faced “head-on” by the SSUSCRO type of personalities. The successful entrepreneurs find the power and resilience to face the situations and to keep on going in order to keep their business successful or to revert it back on the way to success. They are people who together with the support of those in their surroundings fight for sustainability of the culinary restaurant. The bottom-line of the SSUSCROs’ accounts was about living their business as an entrepreneur because they see this as their prime and ultimate responsibility.

Staying on top

To become and sustain as a successful culinary entrepreneur means to never let go even when the situation seems desperate. This conviction of how to sustain is closely connected to a strong belief in one’s own potential and professionalism. Balazs (2001) formulated, as a leadership lesson of the French three Michelin star chefs, to “keep one’s feet on the ground while reaching for the stars”. This recipe is built on a strong knowledge base and perfect mastery of the fundamental skills. The SSUSCROs awareness of facing challenges and acting upon them can be compared to achieving the “private victory” in the value driven leadership approach of Covey (2004). If SSUSCROs are able to practise the habits of being proactive, having a long term goal in mind, and from that making day-to-day choices, they are more likely to become successful.

SSUSCROs are influenced by people and situations that provide them with learning. The influence can be about resisting particular behaviour or actions of people they perceive as undesirable, and reflecting on situations

in which things went wrong. Very influential in the quest for success is the direct social context around the entrepreneur. In all cases of SSUSCROs in this research, there was a combination of people, mostly a husband and wife couple who operated the restaurant. Sometimes, a loyal member of staff complemented the partner role in the daily operations of the restaurant. SSUSCROs approach family life in different ways, but for all of them the business is closely connected to the private domain. Tensions, however, are present in handling this process. Having the old - and the new - generation present in the same operation can potentially be dissatisfying for both, although exceptions exist. Lee-Ross & Lashley (2009) call this phenomenon 'business creep'; 'when work and family become merged' (p. 153), and usually happens because couples and other family members want to make the restaurant successful. The younger generation chef-owners and their partners are recognised as putting more emphasis on the value of family life than the older.

Creating a balance is one of the keys for sustainable entrepreneurship because there is in most cases such a particular thin line between private and business life. The successful restaurant entrepreneurs came to grips with the ever existent tension between the private and work domain, but reaching a balance did not happen without sacrifices. The number of terrifying examples in the SSUSCRO world of less successful entrepreneurs and staff members who destroyed their family lives was substantial. "Living a business", as a core existence in culinary restaurant entrepreneurship, comes at a price and it is hard for many restaurant practitioners and entrepreneurs to remain "on their feet".

Enjoying a notion of freedom or independence is important for SSUSCROs. They generate energy from the idea of not having an employer who will tell them what to do. SSUSCROs trade gladly the perks of employment, such as a steady salary, vacation rights and pension, for independent entrepreneurship. The SSUSCROs in this research came from different backgrounds and having been brought up in a hospitality environment helped to grow the interest in the business for some. For others, it was the home environment, the structure of which had similarities with a hospitality setting that stimulated them to go into the restaurant business. The “induction into hospitableness” is crucial and as Lashley (2008) identified, in many cases grown in the home and family upbringing.

Customers, or “guests” in the upper segment of the hospitality industry expect to see “hospitableness” in the person who is providing the “hospitality experience”. Gehrels & Dumont (2012, p. 76) referred to this as a ‘show’ or ‘wow-effect’ that is needed to generate an unforgettable experience. Guests will expect great value, while “value for money” has also become crucial in this luxury sector. This means that guests who are interested in spending their money in the culinary restaurant will also be quite critical about the “offering” or “experience” they get. SSUSCROs do not usually take complaints about their offering lightly and for some of the passionate SSUSCROs, it took time to learn how to deal with complaining customers. The awareness that a complaining customer can be transferred into a friend and loyal customer was recognized by a number of the SSUSCROs.

There is no educational programme that prepares people to become a SSUSCRO. Most of them have a mix of formal education, experience and

“learning by doing”. The mix is different for each SSUSCRO and partner. It is clear that, in order to sustain, SSUSCROs need a broad package of knowledge and understanding about the world around them. This package of general development can be acquired through experience, although it was clear that the SSUSCROs who had a higher education background benefitted from that. It is difficult for SSUSCROs to delegate a majority of their responsibilities to their staff because by the nature of their profession they are expected to see and manage the details. This paying attention to both detail and the bigger picture was confirmed by Balazs (2001, 2002). SSUSCROs acknowledged that in order to stay successful they needed to keep innovating their business for which taking a “view from a distance” is important.

Michelin and other restaurant assessing media are feared by the SSUSCROs because getting the stars, and into the quality rankings is very important for the business. Losing such awards as Michelin stars or dropping in the ranking of GaultMillau or Lekker can have a severe impact on the restaurant owner for it means public exposure of dwindling success. SSUSCROs hate this happening because they define the achieving of particularly the Michelin stars, but also other awards as one of the important benchmarks for being successful. Furthermore, Michelin stars have an impact on the restaurant’s potential to generate revenue, which is recognized by potential investors and will affect their potential business interest in the restaurant.

Every SSUSCRO, in his own words, defined being successful as the combination of (a) financial rewards generated by their revenues, (b) getting the recognition and appreciation of the external quality assessing bodies such as Michelin, (c) the appreciation of loyal customers, and (d) knowing themselves to

be good entrepreneurs. SSUSCROs agree about the importance for students of hospitality management programmes to have learning experiences in the real world. Experiencing high quality demanding work situations adds value to a person's education. Merritt (2008) confirmed this notion of value adding by real world experiences in the context of student internships, because they represent a unique, innovative, non-traditional educational approach.

Experiential learning in internships takes students out into the community and the real world. If the internships are challenging and high-quality they have proved to be an effective approach with many advantages and few disadvantages. Research by Merritt (2008) shows a direct correlation between the internships in which students have served and their ultimate career paths. Similarly, challenging work experiences in the culinary restaurant sector can make a developing professional better equipped for working in other sectors. This notion is well recognizable to me from ten years in culinary restaurants because one builds experiences and quality standards by working in these places.

SUSCROs are already involved in some educational settings. VLAG (Vereniging Les Amis Gastronomiques), the initiative mentioned in the findings, consisted of a group of retired SSUSCROs who expressed as one of their objectives the improvement of Dutch culinary education. While the VLAG initiative started with good intentions, it became clear from the SSUSCRO comments that it was actually more a social and leisurely connection between retired SSUSCROs and had only a very limited impact on education.

The findings of this research suggest that the direct involvement of SSUSROs in hospitality management education may be desirable. Some

SSUSCROs were involved in specialized culinary programmes at secondary vocational programme level and one SSUSCRO actually owned a private school in gastronomy. This latter SSUSCRO provided the example of a strong connection with education, simultaneously operating a one Michelin star restaurant, an academy for gastronomy, and having a position as professor in gastronomy in Dutch hospitality management programmes. A SSUSCRO in a position as professor has the opportunity to significantly influence hospitality management education and can therefore be considered as a significant answer to the third objective of this research.

Personal Reflections and Limitations of the Research

Reflecting on the Research Process

As explained in the introduction of this research, I acquired a substantial portion of my practical learning and experience throughout ten years of working in culinary restaurants. Observing the entrepreneurs as distinctive personalities with interesting features, visions and actions, instilled awareness in me about them having something “special”, which was worth investigating and sharing. Although at times I could not understand what made them act as they did, I observed their restaurants to be successful and receiving attention from the outside world. When I later moved from the restaurant world to hospitality management education, I realised that working in the culinary upper segment restaurants had given me a useful set of skills.

In hospitality management education I then started to transfer my experience to future professionals who were taking a degree course. This was at first done instinctively and I noticed it worked to a certain, but limited extent.

Some students would follow my line of thinking and instruction, while others gazed at me as if I were from “another planet”. As I developed more in the theory of learning and education, I realised that my own starting point was shaped for a significant part by the experiences in the culinary restaurants. I decided to start exploring and researching what the essential elements were that impacted on the hospitality settings I had experienced. By doing research I would be able to better understand the people that, as owner and entrepreneur were central in the culinary restaurants.

This doctorate research would, I hoped, allow me to provide an explanation of successful upper segment culinary restaurant entrepreneurship. This experience then potentially could benefit future professionals i.e. the students in hospitality management programmes, by offering a wisdom or theory of practice. In this research I applied a theoretical approach in which the contextual characteristics of the SSUSCROs were analyzed by using grounded theory methodology. Assuming to be able to learn from the contextual characteristics of a particular group of practitioners was not new. For this specific category and industry, however, there was limited previous research that followed the same premiss.

Accessing the narratives of ten highly renowned and experienced Dutch SSUSCROs was a worthwhile exercise that generated interesting findings, which are applicable for hospitality management education. The retired SSUSCROs all demonstrated their willingness to share their experiences and knowledge with me as a representative of education. They, in most cases, even opened their home to welcome me for the interview. Some prepared very thoroughly by writing their thoughts down based on the questions I had sent to

them. They all answered my questions and provided even the most personal reflections and details about their business and life. They talked about success but also about the challenges and failures they had experienced both in the managing of the restaurant and their private lives. I sensed that they were at ease and that they felt it to be important to assist in this education related research and to speak to me as the mediator.

Getting the practising SSUSCROs involved in the interviews was more challenging. The most senior entrepreneurs sincerely showed their interest by allocating time and sharing their vision fully, but this was not done by all of them. Overall, doing this research and employing a grounded theory methodology was a beneficial exercise that generated valuable findings for hospitality management education. In terms of the originally projected contingencies I projected as one of the major challenges of this research the access to the subjects, in line with Locke (2001). There was the estimation that the extremely busy work practice of my respondents would not make it easy for them to spend approximately one to one-and-a-half hour of their precious time with me to answer my questions.

Fortunately, my previous life in the world of these SSUSCROs, and maintaining contact with them throughout my educational life for the past years had given me relatively easy access to their professional - and in many cases their personal - habitat. There appeared to be a tendency among my respondent group to want to "leave a legacy", in the form of their success story for future generations because they were essentially proud of their achievements. Accessibility to my respondents turned out not to be an issue.

Another concern was related to the enormous time that was involved in the transcribing of the interviews. On the one hand, it was a strong point to do that work myself because it allowed me to become familiarized with the data. On the other hand, the time needed of approximately ten hours for one hour of interview transcribing turned out to be a challenging endeavour.

I decided to transcribe the first interview and then to listen to the digital recordings of the subsequent interviews. From some of them, I prepared mind maps (Buzan, 2010) as visual diagramming of the data and their interpretation. The transcribing of the interviews was done by others such as university students who were familiar with the topic area of hospitality management. This turned out to be effective and because I read every transcript while coding and interpreting I was able to trace any inconsistencies or uncertainties that might still have been in the transcriptions.

Reflecting on the Literature

Looking at the literature on culinary restaurant entrepreneurship, Balazs's (2001, 2002) research on a group of French three Michelin star chefs seemed to be the strongest example of earlier investigation related to the SSUSCRO study. Balazs identified the value this exercise could have and wrote a PhD thesis about her research. As she uses the leadership lessons derived from the famous French three Michelin star chefs in her practice as associate professor of Strategy and Organisation at the ESCP Europe Paris campus, this could be considered as an example of SSUSCROs' contextual characteristics indirectly influencing education. Dutch culinary restaurants were, however, first awarded three Michelin stars in 2002, and the number of these restaurants is still limited

to two. I found Balazs's approach valuable but also limited when considering my research into the SSUSCROs in the Dutch situation. From my perspective and experience, there were many more interesting places and people to research than only three Michelin star restaurants and successful restaurant owners were not necessarily also the chef. Another important dimension missing in Balazs's research was the dark side of the SSUSCRO world, in which elements of business and personal life go wrong.

There was only one example of empirical research that found many of the two- or three Michelin star restaurants in France, Belgium, Switzerland and UK, to have severe challenges with finances and staff (Johnson et al., 2005). Neither Balazs nor Johnson et al. came up with the notion that hospitality management programmes could potentially benefit from their findings, and in contrast this aspect became clear from the SSUSCRO research.

Relating to the more general restaurant entrepreneurship literature, it was interesting to see that the Virtuous Circle of Enlightened Hospitality (Meyer, 2006) was not reflected in the practices of the SSUSCROs. Putting staff as a first priority for entrepreneurs is not custom and illustrates an interesting point for further discussion. The Viability Model for Successful Restaurant Entrepreneurship of Camillo et al. (2008) had potential leads to explain what influences successful restaurant entrepreneurship and many aspects were found to be valid among the SSUSCROs. They reported specifically about the creative emotional factors that had affected their success and gave examples of the destructive factors that had caused some of their less successful peers to lose track in their entrepreneurship practices. The influence of operational factors both controllable and uncontrollable were confirmed by the SSUSCROs

with particular emphasis on the cost-, location- and human resources related issues. The assumed weaknesses in Camillo et al's model not being defined specifically for the culinary restaurant sector was echoed throughout the interviews. In the specific small upper segment culinary restaurant sector, aspects of culinary performance and artistry, and balancing this with financial aspects, turned out to be much more important than presented in Camillo et al's model.

The sense of communityship such as presented by Mintzberg (2011) was found to be present in the way the SSUSCROs referred to their way of managing but none of them actually used the term nor indirectly indicated being aware of it. Personal leadership strategies such as the popular 7-Habits (Covey, 2004) approach or Quinn et al's (2011) Competing Values Framework were not recognized within the culinary restaurant sector. In building the SSUSCRO Social Construct as the grounded theory of this research, there turned out to be some aspects of the See-Do-Get circle present, which seem to support one of the principles in the 7-Habits approach. The SSUSCRO Social Construct also reflected the critical comments to the 7-Habits model in the sense that becoming successful is much more complex and more dependent on other than individual factors than is acknowledged in the 7-Habits model.

Limitations of the Research

I found the grounded theory research approach to have value in uncovering in-depth personal meanings. Analysing verbatim transcripts and interpreting the meaning by me as a researcher, with knowledge and experience in the particular field strongly fitted the suggested application of this particular type of

grounded theory. I fully agree with Locke (2001) who confirmed the value of using grounded theory in a setting such as in my SSUSCRO research, by saying that this 'style offers the possibility of creatively exploring dimensions of organisational and managerial life' (p. 131).

A limitation may be located in the sample size and choice of my respondents. Although I applied the rules of grounded theory and qualitative data saturation when choosing interviewees, other choices could have been made. As the list of potential additional respondents further on in this chapter suggests, there may be other good examples of SSUSCROs. They might have added perspectives not produced in the current research. In relation to the particular SSUSCROs I chose, there may be a limitation in the division between six retired and still four practising. As explained in this research, I found the retired SSUSCROs to be wonderfully prepared and willing to share even their most confidential narratives which justified the eventual choice of respondents.

The third limitation may be located in my close connection to most of the SSUSCROs. They may have provided me with accounts that they knew I would accept, given my background in the culinary restaurant sector even if it was not necessarily fully correct. On the other hand, it would have been more likely that a researcher with less background knowledge of the SSUSCRO "tribe", would have recorded incorrect representations.

Contribution to Current Practice

Introduction

In this section I will explain what the implications are for practice, what I would recommend that needs to happen and who needs to do what. The contribution

to current practice is divided in three sections: A. Advice to would be SSUSCROs – entering, sustaining and exiting, B. Education and support, and C. Bridging the gap between the two worlds. In this thesis research a rather specific and unique segment in the international hospitality industry, the successful small upper segment culinary restaurants, was accessed.

Throughout the past two decades, attention to culinary aspects in society such as high quality food and beverages, has significantly increased. Furthermore, a wealth of information has become available about the chefs and restaurants that offer culinary products and services. People have become more interested and increasingly knowledgeable about culinary aspects of life. Television shows about preparing high quality food such as 'MasterChef', are broadcasted in many countries in the world, and this has increased the awareness of the general public about this topic.

Hospitality management programmes educate students to be employed in a diversity of hospitality management related fields. Although the culinary restaurant sector only constitutes a relatively small proportion of the total Dutch hospitality industry (0.2-0.5%), it is the segment where customer quality demands and prices are high. This means that practitioners, and particularly entrepreneurs, within the culinary restaurant sector are faced with a challenging profession. They need to perform at a high level in order to sustain and to be successful.

The increasingly available information about culinary products and the media presence of chefs would make it tempting to choose a career in the culinary restaurant sector or one that is closely related. Hospitality management programmes are in many countries one of the most obvious pathways towards

a career in management or entrepreneurship in the hospitality industry. Although knowledge and skills related to the culinary restaurant sector are part of many hospitality management programmes, the literature review in this research revealed that there is virtually no research based in-depth knowledge about entrepreneurship in this specific segment.

A. Advice to Would Be SSUSCROs

1. Entering

Getting to know entrepreneurship

It is fair to conclude that as a result of the growth in the number of Michelin star restaurants, it is becoming more important to provide information and learning materials about this segment to students on hospitality management programmes. For future professionals in culinary restaurants, i.e. students of hospitality management programmes, it will be crucial to understand the nature and potential of even this micro size culinary restaurant business. The examples from within this research provided a lot of valuable lessons about how to proceed in becoming a SSUSCRO, to be involved in some other micro-size enterprises or to progress into management of any other organisation.

Having solid knowledge about culinary restaurant entrepreneurship is important for any future professional aspiring to build a career in the sector. It is, however, difficult to find solid evidence of how people become and stay successful in culinary restaurant entrepreneurship, which makes this thesis research's explanation of the essence of successful culinary restaurant entrepreneurship valuable. Empirically grounded knowledge about the successful small upper segment culinary restaurant owners such as produced

by this research had not been published previously, neither in The Netherlands nor internationally.

By reading, considering, contemplating, discussing and further applying the information and knowledge generated in this research, future practitioners and particularly entrepreneurs in the culinary restaurant sector will be better able to prepare properly for a career. For hospitality management education, the findings can be used in organising internships, practicals, and developing case studies, lectures, seminars, workshops, and learning materials such as books. Future practitioners i.e. entrepreneurs need to be knowledgeable beforehand about all the contingencies in seeking a specific career in the culinary restaurant sector. The knowledge of practice as provided in this research is unique and should be studied in detail by people aspiring to become a SSUSCRO.

What made the outcomes of this research particularly valuable for future practitioners, is the grounding in the accounts of existing real successful entrepreneurs and their actual careers over a life span. A SSUSCRO needs to properly understand the “stage” on which the performance of providing hospitableness is set. It will be certainly easier to accept the role setting in which there is a distinction between the “guest” and the “host”, if one has a full understanding of it before going into this type of business. Getting recognition, appreciation and the reward of successful business is realised by offering their customers the ultimate guest experience and SSUSCROs need to be unconditionally committed to getting their customers to happily pay the exclusive sum involved for the meal and wines at their restaurant.

Hospitableness is key for the SSUSCRO and connected to this is the concept of turning restaurant guests into friends. Examples in this research testified of the additional value, loyal guests as friends can have when financial support is needed for investments. For an entrepreneur, it can be interesting to create a group of “guests as friends”. This would not only apply to having access to additional capital, but also in the sense of having customers choose the specific restaurant as their favourite (Meyer, 2006). A critical note, however, is that if business is not successful and investments cannot be paid off, the “guest as friend” relationship may be disturbed.

Another important conclusion for the practice of culinary restaurant entrepreneurship from this research is related to the connection between the two components of “success”: (1) getting recognition (e.g. Michelin stars) and (2) achieving good financial results. The usual attention in public discourse towards culinary restaurants is to relate success of these places primarily to the recognition by Michelin, GaultMillau, Lekker and similar organisations. This is in line with research by Carree & Verheul (2012), who assert that one of the satisfaction criteria for entrepreneurs is their human capital (i.e. getting recognition), which would be indicative for the motivation of SSUSCRO by non-pecuniary benefits such as the Michelin awards. I found the SSUSCROs’ motivation to resemble what Lee-Ross & Lashley (2009) captured in the concept of ‘lifestyle firm characteristics’; that is ‘motives which are not primarily concerned with profit maximization and growth’ (p. 57). Also Herzberg’s two-factor theory of motivation (Teck-Hong & Waheed, 2011) explains the attraction of Michelin star type of awards for SSUSCROs, as a sign of recognition, while financial results if not positive, would be considered unsatisfactory.

Scrutinising motives

Being alert to the celebrity draw of the hospitality field and to the dark side of it is very important for future practitioners and entrepreneurs. To be aware of the, in current research seldomly discussed dark side of culinary restaurant entrepreneurship is extremely important. To understand the potential threats of a life amidst customers who are well-to-do, and even excessively wealthy is crucial. As mentioned in this research, it is vital for those involved in culinary restaurant entrepreneurship to recognise the dangers in concentrating solely on the external recognition, such as the Michelin stars.

By focusing primarily on the stars, financial results may be forgotten, which makes the importance of having a solid financial management, besides striving for Michelin star awards paramount. Even cases of SSUSCROs who were considered to be extremely successful fell prey to insufficient dealing with the financial management aspects of the business.

2. Sustaining

Developing oneself as a SSUSCRO social construct

The most interesting outcome of this study, and new for the knowledge base about the hospitality industry, was the definition of the SSUSCRO social construct. This SSUSCRO social construct captures the elements, contextual characteristics and dimensions of successful entrepreneurship in the sector. To understand that a practitioner and entrepreneur should not only be considering their own person and competencies, but also should be considering a social construct was identified as crucial. Having the discipline to deal with the always present alcohol and being able to endure long working hours into the evening

and night are all paramount in securing a sustainable existence in the culinary restaurant world.

Furthermore, it was the characteristic of being able to spread attention that made SSUSCROs a special type of entrepreneurs. In general, having active personalities helped them in the process of multi-focusing. When digging deeper into the forces that made the SSUSCRO successful, certain principles could be found. The explicit concept of an entrepreneur in this sector of relatively small businesses needing a partner or “support person” to be able to endure, came out as immensely important.

In line with Meyer’s (2006) research was the indication that staff is another one of the crucial factors for successful culinary restaurants. With the right, extremely motivated and loyal, people great achievements can be made. Culinary restaurants have the potential to present themselves as employer brands. The focus on staff in order to be seen as the employer brand, a place where people aspire to work (Gehrels & De Looij, 2011), is contrastingly in most cases not connected to favourable labour conditions. Staff members in culinary restaurants have to work hard, long and irregular hours while monetary compensation mostly does not match the demand put on them.

People join the work force of successful culinary restaurants in order to benefit from the experience. Especially for the kitchen staff, it is essential to have worked at the great restaurants in order to be able at some point to start their own place. This building of a curriculum vitae with the names of well-established restaurants on it, is crucial for career seeking professionals in the business. SSUSCROs are aware of this search of particularly kitchen staff for work experience in the restaurants, and those entrepreneurs who have

managed to accumulate Michelin stars use this recognition to get the best staff members on their team.

Identifying contingencies

It is not easy to become and stay successful in the culinary restaurant sector. The business is dependent on the spending power of a “happy few”. When economic recession kicks in, the high priced upper segment restaurants are among the first businesses to suffer. It seemed that at the time of researching, the economic situation was on the way to becoming the worst ever. Older SSUSCROs, however, talk about previous crises and point to the necessity to be good entrepreneurs as the essence. Conditions change and success is dependent on how this continuous process is dealt with. What sets very successful and enduring entrepreneurs apart from the others is the ability to face the world around them and to deal with it. Contemplating the right concept, menu and restaurant lay-out are essential, and doing so without losing track of the details of on-going operations is difficult. Constantly seeking for contingencies, defines the essence of the SSUSCRO entrepreneurial spirit.

3. Exiting

Planning a retirement strategy

For future SSUSCROs it is important to realize that there is usually only limited contemplation about when to leave the business, and the connected retirement strategy in the sector. When SSUSCROs reach their mid-fifties, they should be able to retire, or to step back from the daily operations, if they feel like it and engage in activities outside the restaurant. In order to organize a situation like

that, they need to look at the organisational format of their culinary restaurant in a conceptual manner. Research about planning retirement among entrepreneurs like the SSUSCROs is scarce. It became clear that many restaurant owners shy away from retirement plans because they are afraid of the cost involved (Noll, 2012). The need for restaurant owners to figure out how they want to save for retirement is apparent (Mealey, 2012).

From this research, it can be concluded that for future professionals, i.e. hospitality management students who aspire to go into entrepreneurship, it would be important to learn to project their future even as far as to the moment they would want to retire. This conclusion is extremely important because SSUSCROs, due to the intensive nature of their profession suffer from fatigue towards the end of their career, estimated as between 55 and 60. Although exceptions to this average retirement estimation exist, it is clear that SSUSCROs have a limited lifespan and should consider this aspect carefully.

B. Education and Support

1. Encountering the SSUSCRO's World

A concept of having SSUSCROs influence future practitioners, is valuable for hospitality management education. If a person is able to function in the most demanding work conditions as in the upper segment culinary restaurants, it will be easier to do so in less challenging circumstances. Restaurateur experiences such as are explored in this research help illuminate a tension between culinary artistic achievement, hospitableness, and commercial business. Practitioners within the researched SSUSCRO segment must negotiate the tension on a daily basis and to learn about this reality is meaningful to consider in education.

Visiting culinary restaurants can serve as a valuable learning experience for students in hospitality management programmes. Experiencing the type of hospitality as offered in the culinary restaurants is important to grow young starting and future professionals' (i.e. students') awareness of hospitality. Balazs (2001, 2002) even identified leadership lessons from her observations of great three Michelin star chefs, SSUSCROs, in France.

Another and further impacting conclusion from this research, is about the potential value working a limited period in the culinary restaurant sector could have. The high claim on delivering quality and the always present demanding customers could explicitly be valuable to experience for a pre-defined period within the learning process in hospitality management programmes. This approach of defining work in the culinary restaurant sector as a process of staged learning, would be new for both education and the hospitality industry. A limited time of experiencing the Michelin star culinary restaurant format could potentially serve as a pedagogical phase for the students involved. Introducing such a concept into hospitality management degree programmes would be offering students opportunities for self exploration, assessment, and personal and professional growth.

Internalising high quality benchmarks to be implemented on a daily basis would influence students in a hospitality management programme and their perception of life. Crucial to introducing such a pedagogical experience in a hospitality management programme setting would be the appropriate preparation of the students involved. A solid base of skills and knowledge should be made available to them in the professional area and most

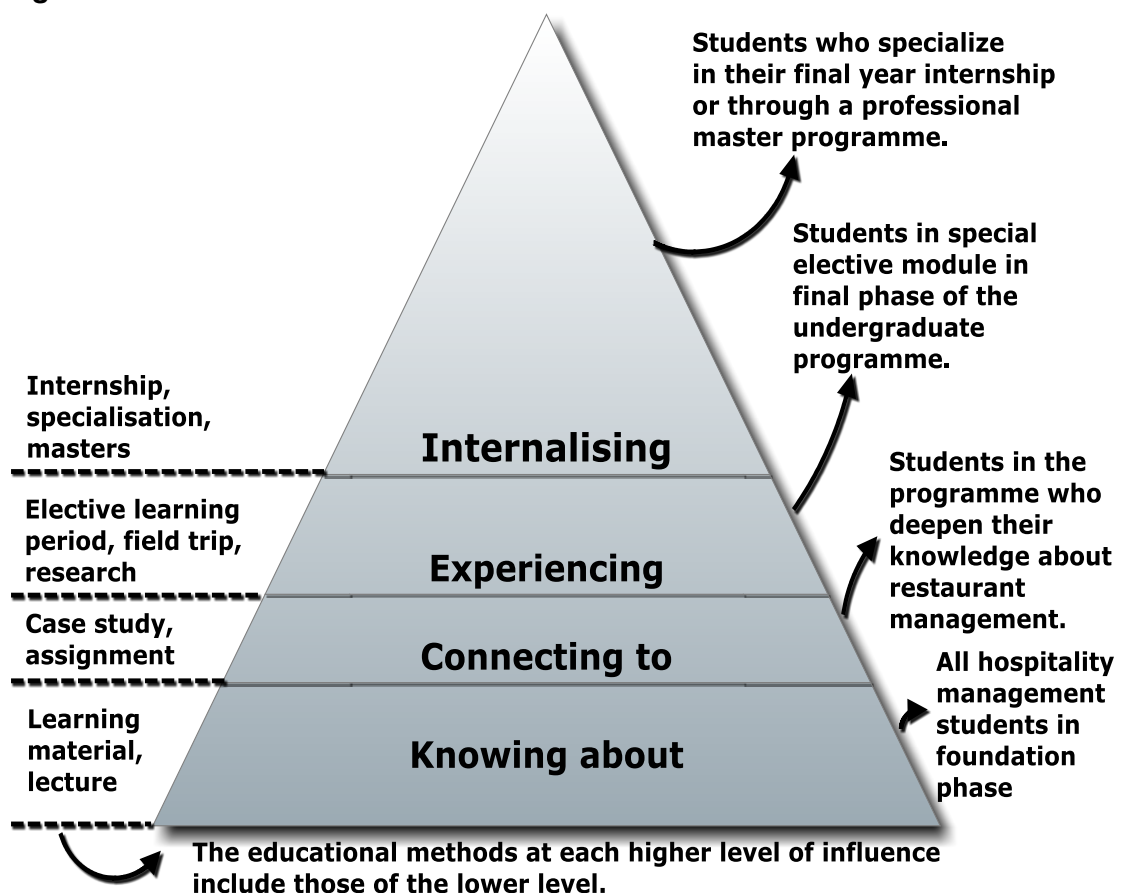
importantly, in understanding the SSUSCRO social construct as explained in this research.

There may be a connection between the level of education and experience in life of the SSUSCROs and the feasibility of them being directly involved in education. SSUSCROs with a background in higher education could effectively be involved in hospitality management programmes.

2. Modelling SSUSCRO's Influence

The framework provided below in figure 21, shows the different levels of influence the SSUSCRO social construct could have in education. The level of influence is related to the number of students involved and the educational methods employed.

Figure 21. Level of influence of SSUSCRO construct in education



The two highest levels of influence would be requisite for future entrepreneurs, in order to prepare for a career in culinary restaurant entrepreneurship. Both future SSUSCROs as restaurant owners and professionals who go into employment such as food & beverage manager or general manager may benefit from seeing the construct of successful entrepreneurship. The SSUSCRO social construct, and its application in education presents a wealth of insight knowledge for managers aspiring to operate in an environment seeking Michelin stars or providing high quality food and beverage. The professional knowledge captured in the SSUSCRO construct can potentially be of importance to the practitioners who are employed by bigger companies i.e. hotels, when they aspire to start a culinary restaurant within such a setting.

3. Accommodating Hyperactivity

A next conclusion from this research, which is virtually undiscussed in the current practice of organizations, connects to hyperactivity and employability. Connecting successful performance in the culinary restaurant sector, to a mild condition of hyperactiveness leads to the tentative conclusion that there is employment for those people who in other sectors might be rejected. Despite some anecdotal evidence, there is no previous research offering suggestions in this direction. Hospitality management programmes could fulfil an important role in the educational sector to provide opportunities for people with such a condition.

C. Bridging the Gap between the Two Worlds

1. Difficult Communication

There are many examples of difficult communication between SSUSCROs and representatives from education, and there is an obvious difference in thinking and acting between educationalists and SSUSCROs. In my practice in higher education, I experienced differences in thinking and acting between hospitality industry practitioners i.e. SSUSCROs and education people when setting up a joint-programme (Gehrels & Schmitt, 2000). Hospitality industry people, and specifically SSUSCROs favour quick action and results and resist the idea of spending too much time on properly discussing the design of programmes and evaluating them extensively.

Education representatives insist on thorough documentation and descriptions of process and structural aspects. Irritation, particularly on the part of the SSUSCROs is a potential result when people from “both worlds” meet. Having the SSUSCRO social construct influence hospitality management education will not be an easy process especially when it comes down to the direct involvement of the SSUSCRO personalities.

2. Differences in Professional Cultures

The gap between the SSUSCRO world and education is primarily a result of the cultural differences between the two professional categories. Schneider & Barsoux (2003) confirm the impact of professional cultures on the working lives of those in particular fields, with the differences in professional cultures caused by the specific values and beliefs in each group. The biggest difference between the cultures in education & research and the SSUSCRO world is the

search for abstract truth validated by statistical samples by the first and the impatient drive to work out practical solutions by the second. Schneider & Barsoux (2003) assert that the “clash” between the different professionals will create a tension that undermines the potential value-adding of bringing the cultures together.

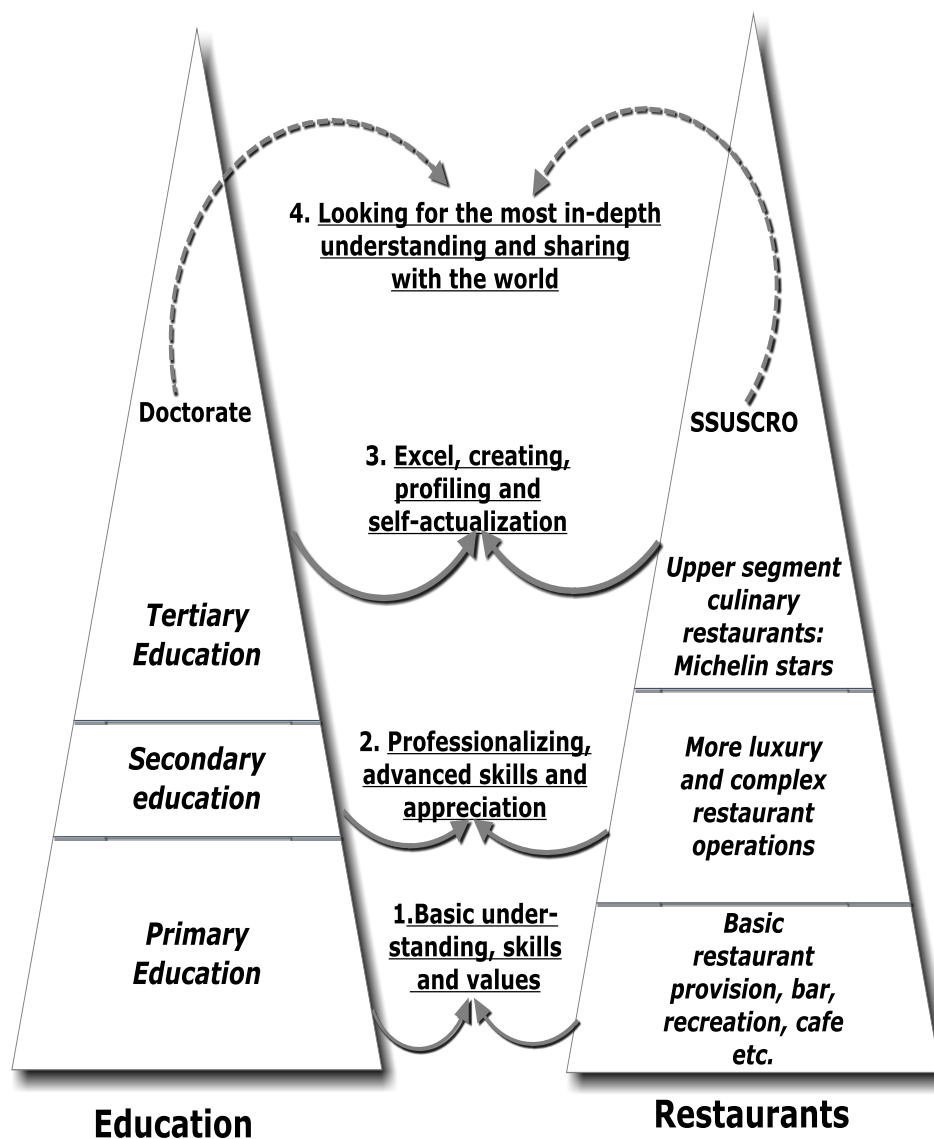
The main cause of this culture shock is the lack of knowledge about each other’s worlds, therefore the first pre-condition to get closer to the other culture would be the willingness to explore. This is in line with Hickson & Pugh’s (2001) emphasis on “willingness” found for international management, as the pre-condition to be successfully operating with a different culture.

Another important prerequisite in the process of bridging the gap between education and the SSUSCRO world lies in the attitude with which both groups approach each other. Hickson & Pugh assert that flexible and subjective thinking are important, with a need for the individuals making the crossover between the two worlds to ‘treat each person or occurrence on its own merits’ (p. 287).

3. Connecting by Metaphor

The gap in culture between the SSUSCROs’ world and education, in my personal view needs bridging and for that purpose a metaphorical comparison between the two completely different professional worlds could be useful. The model in figure 22, visualizes the metaphor in which the structure of education and its phases are compared to the restaurant sector, including the culinary levels.

Figure 22. Metaphorical comparison between education and the restaurant sector



In the model, primary education is compared to the part of the restaurant industry where basic provision is involved, the starting point of learning. Next, secondary education is compared to the restaurants that offer more luxury and are more complex. In both worlds, they add professionalizing, more advanced skills and appreciation. Then furthering this metaphorical comparison, higher education is situated next to the world of the culinary restaurants, symbolizing the striving to excel, create and self-actualize. At the top of the pyramid, there are the successful and recognized SSUSCROs' restaurants that are compared

to the doctorate level as stage of looking for the most in-depth understanding and sharing within the world (publishing research). In both education and the restaurant sector the top of the pyramid has the ingrained notion of presenting oneself to the outside world.

I intend the metaphor to provoke people to compare two worlds that seemingly do not share much. For me as a practitioner in education and former culinary restaurant professional, the metaphor proved to be extremely useful in the process of researching the SSUSCROs. While metaphorically explaining the nature of this thesis research to the SSUSCROs, a further symbolic detailing of the model arose which visualizes the parallel between the structure of degree levels in education and the Michelin stars. A bachelor degree may symbolically be compared to one Michelin star, a master degree to two stars and a doctorate to three stars.

The metaphor provides an important “stepping stone” for a dialogue between people from the two worlds. If SSUSCROs, by considering this metaphor, can understand how their world has a particular analogy with education this would lower any pre-destined feelings of possible contempt. From my personal experiences with educationalists, I expect it to be difficult for them to accept the possible relevance of the proposed metaphor because it compares apparently completely different variables. If, however, educationalists could access the metaphor for the purpose of better understanding “the other”, this would help in the process of bridging the gap between the two professional worlds.

4. Getting People Involved

Experience of working in the culinary restaurant sector although different in orientation than for students but with a similar set of objectives, should be made available for faculty in hospitality management programmes. By going through a coordinated work experience exploring the SSUSCRO construct, lecturers would be better able to understand the nature of the hospitality industry.

Becoming aware of 'hospitableness' can benefit other professional sectors, and most definitely education, as was argued by Lynch, Molz, McIntosh, Lugosi, & Lashley (2011). As a consequence, I would stipulate it to be important for education practitioners in hospitality management programmes at some point in their career to be exposed to a learning experience in a culinary restaurant. Especially, a restaurant with the SSUSCRO social construct present would be appropriate.

Recommendations for Further Research

- I. An interesting and worthwhile expansion on the findings of this research would be to do similar research among another specific group of practitioners in the hospitality industry to get more in-depth knowledge and understanding about their contextual characteristics and social constructs. Such research would provide a further explanation of practitioners in different segments of the industry, which could potentially influence hospitality management education.
- II. Another direction for further research, would be to undertake similar research with an equivalent sample to be investigated in other countries in the world. Since I identified in my literature review that there is only scarce

and partly dated research material available internationally (Balazs, 2001, 2002; Johnson et al., 2005), adding to the international body of knowledge would be important.

- III. The category of restaurant owners that were not successful was not accessed in this thesis research. It would be interesting and important to research why restaurant owners end up not being successful. Future professionals could learn a great deal from such an exercise.
- IV. More specific further research into the employability of people with mild conditions of hyperactiveness, as mentioned in the conclusions of this research would be advisable since this might serve a group of people in society for whom employability is difficult.
- V. As one of the conclusions in this research, the implementation of staged learning phases for students and faculty in hospitality management education in the culinary restaurant sector was mentioned. Further research is most certainly needed to design a format, which can be used to facilitate such learning experiences.
- VI. For the exploration and explanation of the SSUSCRO social construct, suggestions to include other respondents for further research were made by the SSUSCROs in this research. The names of potential SSUSCROs mentioned were:
 - Kees and Maartje Boudeling (retired, two Michelin star restaurant)
 - Cees Wiltschut (retired, two Michelin star restaurant)
 - Martin Kruidhof (practising, two Michelin star restaurant)
 - Margot and Paulo Cools (practising, two Michelin star restaurant)
 - Sergio Herman (practising, three Michelin star restaurant)

- Roland Peijnenburg (practising, one Michelin star Restaurant)

Some of the names mentioned here could be considered of a younger generation than the practising SSUSCROs who were interviewed in this research. There are however also a number of interesting contemporary SSUSCROs in their thirties and forties, who could be involved as respondents for further research.

Epilogue

Exciting, challenging, deepening

Contemplating the title of my doctorate programme “Doctor of Education”, I define it as a “Doctor of Profession” which would be justified by the official categorisation of the outcome being a “Professional Doctorate”. Now the number of “Doctors of Philosophy” in my university and The Netherlands is growing, I was thinking about the needs of our students in Stenden University of Applied Sciences. What would the best progression be for them after graduating from a Master degree in an institution such as ours, a “Doctor of Philosophy” or a “Doctor of Profession” programme? I do not know the answer but I am convinced, it would be good to get more people who through research and writing a thesis, can take their profession to the “next” level.

The further I progressed into the research for this thesis, the more I realised that I am a constructionist who firmly believes in generating knowledge by collecting “firm data” and interpreting these. From this type of research something valuable can be constructed, which by its nature may have different outcomes when done by others. The awareness of being a constructionist has developed me as a person, and my thesis. Speaking about my research with colleagues and fellow-researchers in Stenden UAS was interesting and stimulating at many occasions. A major challenge I encountered was related to the fact that the type of research I engaged in, seemed to be remote from the research world, my colleagues were familiar with. Ongoing discussion took place about the nature of research which was sometimes dissatisfying not because of different points of view, but because of different starting points. Particularly colleagues in research who were clearly adhering to a positivist

epistemology would insist that even considering the topic of “epistemology” is a waste of time.

I felt at times like a traveller having seen new and exciting, and in some respects quite different landscapes and having connected to interesting people. Then talking to the “folks back home”, in my case my colleagues would just cause them to raise their eye brows and look at me in disbelief. Some would not even acknowledge that my journey had taken place or the destination I had been to, existed. At some point, one of my dearest fellow-lecturers in research would contest that qualitative research had not evolved since the legendary Miles & Huberman (1994) textbook about qualitative data analysis. Talking with him and others about “reflexivity” of the researcher and the professional seemed like as if I was referring to the Chinese language, which we both did not have any grasp of.

Meeting and discussing, however, with colleagues who had recently embarked on doctorate studies in other fields was enlightening. These colleagues had been introduced to the writings of Charmaz, Clarke, Foucault, and others and were willing to share their point of view. Maybe we would not agree but still we had stimulating debates at a level of mutual understanding and respect. It also became apparent, particularly towards the end of the thesis research exercise that there is a difference between educationalists as practitioners at the undergraduate and postgraduate level. Now having finalised the thesis, I can firmly support the strategies of authorities in higher education to put mild pressure on all faculty, to progress at least to a master level and preferably a substantial percentage of them to the doctorate level.

Sjoerd Gehrels, September 2012

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Appendices

**Appendix A. Scores Restaurants in Michelin, Gault Millau and
Lekker**

Overview Culinary Restaurant Assessing Institutions: Michelin, Gault Millau and Lekker

	Name restaurant	Place	Michelin   	Gault Millau 1 - 20 pnts	Lekker ranking 1 - 100
1	De Librije	Zwolle	***	19,5	003
2	Oud Sluis	Sluis	***	20	001
3	De Leest	Vaassen	**	19	003
4	De Leuf	Ubachsberg	**	18	021
5	De Zwethheul	Schipluiden	**	18	006
6	Parkheuvel	Rotterdam	**	18	016
7	Brouwerskolkje	Overveen	**	18	028
8	De Bokkedoorns	Overveen	**	18	009
9	Ron Blaauw	Ouderkerk ad Amstel	**	16	027
10	Beluga	Maastricht	**	19,5	005
11	Da Vinci	Maasbracht	**	17	012
12	Inter Scaldes	Kruiningen	**	19,5	002
13	Boreas	Heeze	**	18	010
14	De Lindenhof	Giethoorn	**	18	015
15	Ciel Bleu	Amsterdam	**	17	018
16	Librije's Zusje	Zwolle	*	16	089
17	't Schulten Hues	Zutphen	*	16	072
18	De Groene Lantaarn	Zuidwolde	*	16	043
19	De Vlindertuin	Zuidlaren	*	15 or less	046
20	Het Reymerswale	Yerseke	*	15 or less	x
21	Mijn Keuken	Wouw	*	15 or less	x
23	Katseveer	Wilhelminadorp	*	15 or less	076
24	Brienen aan de Maas	Well	*	16	071
25	Bretelli	Weert	*	16	088
26	De Moerbeij	Warmond	*	15 or less	x
27	O Mundo	Wageningen	*	15 or less	081
28	De Treeswijkhoeve	Waalre	*	16	029
29	De Heer Kocken	Vught	*	15 or less	x
30	De Nederlanden	Vreeland	*	16	055
31	Savelberg	Voorburg	*	16	031
32	Valuas	Venlo	*	15 or less	037
33	Karel V	Utrecht	*	15 or less	064
34	Verwenneij Bij Jef	Texel-Den Hoorn	*	16	x
35	Aubergine	Steyl	*	15 or less	074
36	La Trinité	Sluis	*	16	056
37	Wollerich	Sint-Oedenrode	*	17	041
38	Merlet	Schoorl	*	16	019
39	De Vrienden van Jacob	Santpoort	*	17	013
40	Restaurant Ivy	Rotterdam	*	17	007
41	Fred	Rotterdam	*	16	038
42	Amarone	Rotterdam	*	16	051
43	One	Roermond	*	15 or less	x
44	Paul van Waarden	Rijswijk	*	15 or less	x

45	Hermitage	Rijsoord	*	15 or less	036
46	Frouckje State	Rijperkerk	*	15 or less	067
47	Cordial	Oss	*	17	011
48	De Wanne	Ootmarsum	*	15 or less	x
49	De Lindehof	Nuenen	*	17	033
50	Latour	Noortwijk	*	16	086
51	De Gieser Wildeman	Noordeloos	*	15 or less	x
52	De Burgemeester	Montfoort in Linschoten	*	15 or less	x
53	Posthoorn	Monnickendam	*	15 or less	x
54	Le Marron	Malden	*	16	095
55	Chateau Neercanne	Maastricht	*	15 or less	083
56	Coin des bons Enfants	Maastricht	*	15 or less	090
57	Tout a Fait	Maastricht	*	15 or less	068
58	Toine Hermsen	Maastricht	*	16	023
59	't Amsterdammertje	Loenen a.d. Vecht	*	15 or less	x
60	Tante Kooisje	Loenen a.d. Vecht	*	15 or less	x
61	Schatthoes Verhildersum	Leens	*	15 or less	063
62	De Molen	Kaatsheuvel	*	15 or less	098
63	De Kromme Watergang	Hoofdplaat	*	17	050
64	Lakes	Hilversum	*	15 or less	x
65	Cheval Blanc	Heemstede	*	15 or less	x
66	De Kromme Dissel	Heelsum	*	16	077
67	t' Nonnetje	Harderwijk	*	16	062
68	Basiliek	Harderwijk	*	16	065
69	De Bokkepruik	Hardenberg	*	15 or less	078
70	ML	Haarlem	*	15 or less	x
71	Muller	Groningen	*	15 or less	080
72	Solo	Gorinchem	*	16	047
73	De Zwaan	Etten-Leur	*	16	087
74	Avant Garde vGroeninge	Eindhoven	*	15 or less	032
75	De Karpendonkse Hoeve	Eindhoven	*	15 or less	040
76	La Provence	Driebergen- Rijsenburg	*	15 or less	x
77	Koriander	Drachten	*	15 or less	x
78	Niven	Den Haag	*	16	x
79	Seinpost	Den Haag	*	17	034
80	Calla's	Den Haag	*	17	014
81	Chalet Royal	Den Bosch	*	18	059
82	Soigné	Bussum	*	15 or less	x
83	Wolfslaar	Breda	*	16	084
84	De Hoefslag	Bosch en Duin	*	16	025
85	De Stenen Tafel	Borculo	*	16	053
86	Hof van Sonoy	Blokzijl	*	16	058
87	Kaatje bij de Sluis	Blokzijl	*	16	070
88	Chapeau!	Bloemendaal	*	15 or less	024
89	Het Koetshuis	Bennekom	*	16	048
90	Apicius	Bakkum	*	16	020

91	Le Restaurant	Amsterdam	*	15 or less	082
92	Yamazato Restaurant	Amsterdam	*	16	049
93	The Dylan / Vinkeles	Amsterdam	*	17	045
94	Vermeer	Amsterdam	*	17	017
95	La Rive	Amsterdam	*	18	008
96	Aan de Poel	Amstelveen	*	16	079
97	De Saffraan	Amersfoort	*	15 or less	x
98	Onder de Linden	Aduard	*	16	039
99	De Fuik	Aalst	*	15 or less	026
100	Château St. Gerlach	Valkenburg		15 or less	044
101	Wilhelminapark	Utrecht		15 or less	097
102	Mes amis	Urk		15 or less	060
103	Villa Copera	Tolkamer		15 or less	054
104	De Limonadefabriek	Streefkerk		15 or less	094
105	Le Défi	Sprang-Capelle		16	057
106	Bellevue	Simpelveld		15 or less	075
107	At Sea	Scheveningen		15 or less	092
108	De Harmonie	Rotterdam		15 or less	093
109	Kaagjesland	Reeuwijk		15 or less	069
110	Kasteel Heemstede	Houten		15 or less	030
111	Madame Cheung	Hoorn		15 or less	096
112	Het Jachthuis	Hoog Soeren		16	x
113	De Gastronom	Harlingen		15 or less	066
114	Lambermon's	Haarlem		15 or less	042
115	l' Atelier	Gulpen		15 or less	022
116	De Luytervelde	Eindhoven		15 or less	085
117	Kandinsky	Den Haag		15 or less	073
118	The Raffles	Den Haag		16	x
119	Resto-Bar Pure-C	Cadzand		16	x
120	Dorset Mansion House	Borne		15 or less	061
121	De Heeren v. Harinxma	Beetsterzwaag		15 or less	052
122	Lastage	Amsterdam		15 or less	100
123	Bridges	Amsterdam		15 or less	099
124	Bordewijk	Amsterdam		16	091
125	Halvemaan	Amsterdam		16	035

The restaurants marked green were included in this thesis research with either the current SSUSCRO or a previous generation entrepreneur.

Appendix B. Transcripts & Recordings (Confidential) and Coding Process

In the digital appendix B (DVD attached), the actual data (digital interview recordings and verbatim transcripts) and coding process are provided for verification and further research purposes. This part of the thesis is confidential because it has the names of the interviewees and their actual accounts connected. In the spirit of ethical research foundations as explained in chapter 3, it is forbidden for people, other than examiners or previously agreed third parties, to disseminate the data in appendix B.