



The determinants of a culture of partying among managers in the hotel industry

Partying among managers in the hotel industry

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore the apparent norm of partying that persists in the hotel industry despite evidence suggesting it can negatively affect both employees and organizations.

Design/methodology/approach – Telephone surveys of 544 managers from 65 hotels were conducted. Multiple regression analyses and analyses of variance were performed to examine the extent to which differences in hotel organizational culture, hotel classification, hotel corporate organization, hotel size and manager age affect the extent to which employees spend time gathering and partying with their work colleagues outside work.

Findings – The paper finds that in hotels with organizational culture oriented towards work and family balance, managers displayed less partying behavior. It also finds that such work and family culture may vary based on certain hotel corporate organizations, hotel location classifications, and hotel sizes, because partying behavior significantly varies based on such corporate, locational and size differences. Findings also indicate that relatively older employees spend less time than younger employees partying with work colleagues outside work.

Research limitations/implications – Limitations include the use of self reports of hotel managers from full-service hotels in the USA.

Practical implications – A workplace culture oriented towards work and family balance may yield less partying behavior, which may be particularly relevant in certain hotel types and sizes, and may have positive implications for reducing turnover and health care costs.

Originality/value – This study explores the common practice, but understudied topic of hotel employees partying with colleagues outside work. In so doing, it provides greater understanding of the phenomenon to researchers and practitioners.

Keywords United States of America, Hotels, Organizational culture, Managers, Working patterns, Partying, Management, Work, Family

Paper type Research paper

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Introduction

One of the defining characteristics of the hotel industry may be a significant amount of time spent “partying” or socializing with professional colleagues outside of work. Cleveland *et al.* (2007) have quoted one hotelier as saying:

We work hard and we play even harder. And when you're working until 11 o'clock at night and then you go out and have a couple of drinks and then you're back in again the next morning, you know. It tends to take a heavy toll on you.

This quotation suggests that time spent socializing with hotel colleagues outside of work not only may be common, but may also have a deleterious effect on employee morale and health. At the same time, partying, or social gathering involves apparently voluntary behavior, and it provides benefits to those involved in addition to having potentially negative effects on employees.

Gathering with work colleagues outside work is natural, and is a socio-dynamic behavior that is desirable to a certain extent by many workers, although the extent to which employees gather outside work may vary based on the organizational culture of the particular company (Dooley, 2003). In any case, it is a common ritual in a multitude of industries for work colleagues to consume alcohol together after work (Flores-Pereira *et al.*, 2008). A problem with such partying is that recent research concludes it is likely to lead to alcohol misuse in general (Campbell and Oei, 2010), and particularly risky drinking behavior among 17 to 34 year olds (Lyvers *et al.*, 2010). The problem of social drinking has resulted in alcohol abuse being on the rise, and concomitantly, an increase in related liver disease, heart disease, stroke, depression, memory loss, impaired judgment, and violence (Ainsworth, 2009). One recent report indicated that concerns regarding heavy alcohol consumption are at an all-time high, and that same report queried whether such alcohol abuse may in fact be caused or exacerbated by the organizational culture in certain organizations or fields (Hope, 2006). Further, such partying can have a negative effect on workers' families (Mulvaney *et al.*, 2007).

While partying is apparently widely discussed within the hotel industry, there is a lack of academic research regarding the topic. Thus, in the subject study, a definition of partying has been developed, including both its social gathering aspect and its element of involving alcohol consumption. Specifically, in this study, partying is defined as social gathering with work colleagues outside of work hours and outside of the work location, including drinking alcohol. The measurement section of this paper presents the survey scale for partying developed by the investigators of this study.

Cooper (1998) identifies a related phenomenon known as “presenteeism,” which he describes as being seen by work colleagues beyond normal working hours. Presenteeism may be considered an expression of commitment to the job or to the company (Munck, 2001; Bailyn, 1993; Thompson *et al.*, 1999) or as a way for employees to distinguish themselves from peers and signal to management that they are committed beyond normal work hours (Perlow, 1997). Thus, partying may be a way hotel employees demonstrate presenteeism.

Partying occupies a place of significance in the hotel culture, particularly concerning the related construct of work-life balance (Cleveland *et al.*, 2007). Along with irregular schedules and intense guest contact, partying may exert an effect on a number of negative outcome variables, including work-family conflict (Cleveland *et al.*, 2007; Mulvaney *et al.*, 2007). Despite recognition in the hotel industry that a culture of partying can have negative outcomes for both employees and the organization, partying continues to be a standardized norm across the hospitality industry (Mulvaney *et al.*, 2007), and the

focus of this study is on hotel managers. However, such partying has been an understudied academic topic. Therefore, to assist in understanding why the norm of partying persists in spite of evidence to suggest that it may negatively impact employees and organizations, this exploratory, empirical study investigates the related theories of organizational culture, and the macroculture of the hotel industry, in particular.

Literature review: organizational culture and macroculture

Organizational culture

Previous literature has described organizational culture in terms of shared rituals, heroes, symbols, practices, myths, assumptions, beliefs, and values (Hofstede *et al.*, 1990; O'Neill, 1997; Schein, 1985; Thompson *et al.*, 1999). Although there is no overall consensus regarding an exact definition of organizational culture, it is generally agreed that the construct is historically determined, constructed in a social context, and resistant to change (Hofstede *et al.*, 1990). Organizational culture can be a dynamic process (Schein, 1985) that develops regardless of intent on the part of management.

The model of organizational culture popularized by Hofstede *et al.* (1990) posits concentric circles composed of symbols, heroes, rituals, and values. Hofstede *et al.* (1990) suggest that these aspects of culture are supported by practices, which are visible to observers, such as organizational partying. The core of organizational culture, values, is by contrast, intangible and cannot be identified through observing practices. Organization values are similar to the more traditional understanding of personal values, in that they are unconscious, somewhat indefinable, and not necessarily based in rational thinking.

According to Sims and Lorenzi (1992), organizational culture is a schema agreed on by the organizational members, suggesting that members have learned to process and understand information the same way, and have agreed to do so. Organizational culture can be seen as an explanatory factor, illuminating the causes behind various outcomes observed in the organization (Ajiferuke and Boddewyn, 1970). Organizational culture may be an explanatory factor which can help us to understand partying as an outcome of an organization measured at the individual level. Some previous literature hypothesizes that organizations are not a product of culture, but in fact produce culture (Louis, 1980; Siehl and Martin, 1981), such as partying. In this model, the organization is seen as producing the culture, including rituals, legends, and ceremonies, including partying, as a byproduct of producing goods and services (Smircich, 1983). Thus, each organization produces its own unique culture, such as attitudes and behaviors regarding partying, although organizations producing the same goods and services may have similar culture, and thus, organizations in the hotel industry may possess similarities regarding partying.

Macroculture

Historically, the majority of literature regarding organizational culture has focused on the culture of individual organizations (Everett *et al.*, 1982). Pfeffer (1981), for example, suggested that organizational culture results in a socially-constructed reality, shared by the members of an organization. However, it is conceivable that such socially-constructed reality could be shared by members across organizations within an industry, particularly an industry like the hospitality industry where employees' career paths tend to move from one hospitality organization to another. The presence of this socially-constructed reality, coupled with shared beliefs and values, creates a macroculture in the hotel industry (O'Neill, 1997). According to Abrahamson and

Fombrun (1994), macroculture consists of consistent strategies, processes, and operations across organizations that operate in the same industry. O'Neill *et al.* (2004) present a constituent definition of macroculture based on Abrahamson and Fombrun's (1994) definition, and they expand on the construct of macroculture when they consider behavior patterns and define macroculture as "organizational culture manifested in behavior patterns shared among organizational participants in an industry resulting from shared beliefs, needs, and/or circumstances, and resulting in similar mental models" (O'Neill *et al.*, 2004, pp. 4-5). Abrahamson and Fombrun (1994) note that macroculture indicates a level of agreement or homogeneity among managers across organizations in an industry. A macroculture can be vertical, as when the culture includes suppliers, distributors, and retailers in the same industry. A macroculture can also be horizontal, with competing organizations across the industry included (Abrahamson and Fombrun, 1994). It is important to note that while a norm or standard may be non-functional for a single organization of the system, this norm can persist across the macroculture (O'Neill *et al.*, 2004).

One of the defining characteristics of the hotel industry macroculture may be an emphasis on partying. Despite potential negative outcomes to individual organizations in the industry, putting in long hours at work and then partying with colleagues after work is a value that may be shared across multiple segments of the hotel industry. Mulvaney *et al.* (2007) note that long, irregular hours are commonplace in the hospitality industry, and that partying is pervasive, having a potentially deleterious effect on employees' ability to balance their work and family lives. Cullen and McLaughlin (2006) argue that such practices arise not out of necessity or mandate, but out of the culture of the hotel industry itself. As one employee put it, "[...] it's not demanded of people, but the culture dictates that it happens that way" (Cullen and McLaughlin, 2006). Cullen and McLaughlin (2006) suggest that such practices become internalized in hotel managers at an early stage through enculturation at work. Since organizational culture and macroculture have been extensively studied, and partying has not, the focus of this paper is not broadly on organizational culture/macroculture, but on an area where previous research suggests there to be a link between organizational culture and partying, namely in terms of how an organization's culture related to work and family issues affects partying by organizational members.

Hypotheses development

The subject empirical study applies Thompson *et al.*'s (1999) measure of work-family culture which identifies three dimensions of employee-level perceptions of supportive work-family culture, namely managerial support for work-family balance, perceived negative consequences regarding work-family benefit usage (career consequences), and organizational time expectations that require employees to sacrifice their family and/or personal lives. Managerial support for work-family balance is concerned with how much the hotel management cares regarding department managers' (DMs) personal or family matters and supports DMs to balance their work and personal lives. Career consequences associated with using work-family benefits is concerned with the organization's consideration of family and personal issues and the company's effort to disconnect use of work-family benefits from DMs' career progress. Finally, organizational time expectations that may interfere with family responsibilities represents organization culture that discourages DMs to take work home after work and/or on days off. Higher levels of managerial support and lower levels of the second

and third dimensions are associated with higher levels of work-family culture. This study posits that greater overall levels of such work-family culture will reduce pressure hotel managers feel to gather with hotel colleagues outside of work. Specifically:

- H1.* Higher levels of work-family culture will result in significantly lower levels of partying with hotel colleagues outside of work.

More specifically:

- H1a.* Higher levels of managerial support for work-family balance will result in significantly lower levels of partying with hotel colleagues outside of work.
- H1b.* Lower levels of career consequences associated with utilizing work-family benefits will result in significantly lower levels of partying with hotel colleagues outside of work.
- H1c.* Lower levels of organizational time expectations will result in significantly lower levels of partying with hotel colleagues outside of work.

While previous research suggests that partying may be influenced by the hotel industry's macroculture, it also suggests that culture may vary at the organizational or unit level based on differences inherent in specific organizations or locations due to differing organizational histories and social contexts (Hofstede *et al.*, 1990). Thus, it is posited that there also may be variances in partying in different hotel locations or in different hotel companies. Therefore, the present study applies hotel location categories used by Smith Travel Research (a leading hotel operational data research firm), and uses different hotel company names to make the following hypotheses:

- H2.* Partying will vary significantly based on different hotel location types.
- H3.* Partying will vary significantly based on different hotel companies.

Organizational climate, like organizational culture, can affect both the behavior of hotel managers and hotel manager work-family balance (O'Neill *et al.*, 2009). Organizational climate may be affected by and operationalized in terms of a number of organizational factors, including organization size. It is conceivable that in larger hotels, for example, it is more challenging for hotel managers to obtain visibility with senior managers, particularly when those larger hotels have relatively more employees. Thus, larger hotel properties, in terms of the number of employees, may be associated with higher levels of partying which managers may perceive as necessary to get ahead. Therefore, the following hypothesis is made:

- H4.* Managers employed in hotels with a greater number of employees will report significantly higher levels of partying.

The effect of manager age

As previously discussed, partying has been an understudied academic topic. Our understanding of the topic can be elucidated by reviewing related topics that have been more extensively studied. The construct of partying with work colleagues shares components with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and employee commitment. OCB includes individual behavior that goes beyond role requirements and contractually rewarded job achievements. Since partying involves employees

going beyond role requirements and contractually rewarded job achievements, partying and OCB could be considered to be related constructs.

While there is no evidence that previous research has evaluated the effects of such variables as age on the specific construct of socialization with professional colleagues outside of work, previous research has evaluated the effects of age on organizational citizenship behavior (Organ and Ryan, 1995). In an extensive review of extant literature regarding the antecedents, components, and correlates of OCB, it was found that generally speaking, demographic variables such as age are correlated with OCB or are antecedents to OCB, at least to some extent (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000). An extensive meta-analysis conducted by (Organ and Ryan, 1995) reported mixed results regarding whether age is correlated with OCB, with some studies reporting age to be positively correlated with OCB, but other studies showing no significant relationship between age and OCB (Organ and Ryan, 1995).

Age appears to be somewhat more highly correlated with organizational commitment, a construct closely related to OCB. Becker and Billings (1993) examined several correlates and antecedents to commitment. Results demonstrated that age of respondent was generally positively correlated with commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) conducted a meta-analysis examining the relationship between organizational commitment and a number of variables. Results suggested that age was positively related to commitment.

Given the disparate findings regarding the relationships between age and OCB/organizational commitment, it is plausible that older hospitality managers with greater tenure may feel relatively less pressure and have less need to participate in partying to exhibit their citizenship and commitment to the organization because their age has provided them with the time and seasoning to do so. Therefore, the following hypothesis is made:

H5. Older hotel managers will report significantly lower levels of partying.

Methodology

Sample

This study was funded by grants from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. Among other items, the grant funders paid for travel expenses. Participants for this study were recruited from 65 full-service hotels located across the USA and identified through initial contact with the President of the American Hotel and Lodging Association and representatives with municipal hotel associations in New York, Washington, DC, Atlanta, Orlando, Chicago, Saint Louis, Kansas City, Denver, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. We first interviewed in person hotel general managers, who were identified via these referrals, and then we obtained their support in contacting and surveying the other managers employed in their hotels, i.e. departmental managers in such areas as rooms, sales and marketing, engineering, accounting, and human resources.

Over the course of multiple weeks, we telephoned 825 randomly selected departmental managers. A total of 544 (65.9 percent) participants completed the survey. There were 126 departmental managers (15.3 percent) who we were unable to reach/did not call us back, 81 (9.8 percent) who we reached but refused to participate, 45 (5.5 percent) who we were unable to interview because they had left the hotel or was no longer a manager, 13 (1.6 percent) who we were unable to reach (no answer, no answering machine), 12 (1.5 percent) who we were unable to reach because we were

provided the wrong telephone number and we were unable to locate the correct number, 2 (0.2 percent) who we were unable to interview because they did not speak English, and 2 (0.2 percent) who partially completed the interview but with whom we were unable reconnect to complete the interview. Partial interviews were not included in the analyses.

Full-service hotels were the subject of this study because its focus was on hotel properties where numerous departmental managers were employed. Departmental managers ranged from hotel executive committee members (such as food and beverage directors) to hourly supervisors (such as front desk supervisors). The data regarding partying and work-family culture of 544 hotel department managers from the 65 hotels located across the USA were collected via telephone surveys. The telephone surveys were conducted by trained workers who were employed by a university survey research center. The grant funders paid these expenses. It should be noted that not all participants answered all survey questions.

Descriptive statistics

A summary of descriptive statistics of the respondents is provided in Table I. The departmental managers came from various departments, including food and beverage (27.9 percent), rooms, (19.2 percent), marketing (17.9 percent), general management (17.3 percent), accounting (7.4 percent), human resources (3.4 percent), recreation (2.5 percent), engineering (1.5 percent) and others (2.9 percent). The sample represents all US regions and several different hotel location types, including city (47.7 percent), suburb (15.2 percent), airport (15.2 percent), and resort (21.9 percent). Most major hotel companies, including Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, InterContinental, Starwood, Kimpton, Fairmont, as well as independent hotels were included in this study.

Measurement

Partying. In a pilot study of the subject project, we interviewed in person 30 hotel managers who were employed in urban or suburban hotels in several metropolitan areas in the northeastern USA, and several themes emerged through our interviewing hotel managers regarding the culture of the hotel industry. Particularly, when being asked about hotel culture, numerous participants indicated that the hotel industry was known for its “partying.” In addition, we interviewed spouses of hotel managers who expressed to us concern regarding partying. Based on the procedures of conducting a pilot study, reviewing existing literature, and conducting in-depth, in-person discussions with industry executives regarding partying and related constructs, two co-principal investigators of the subject project developed a three-item “partying” scale

	Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Minumum	Maximum
Managerial support	3.65	4.00	0.73	1.00	5.00
Career consequences	3.58	3.00	0.78	1.00	5.00
Organizational time expectations	3.11	3.00	1.08	1.00	5.00
Employees in hotel	472.54	405.00	251.67	105.00	1,000.00
Age	37.82	36.00	9.20	21.00	64.00
Partying	3.41	3.00	1.02	1.00	5.00

Table I.
Descriptive statistics

to explore perceptions that managers gather and “party” with colleagues from work outside of work. These three items include:

- (1) socializing with employees of this hotel outside work happens often;
- (2) drinking is a big part of socializing when people from this hotel get together;
and
- (3) partying goes with working in this hotel.

In the survey, the participants were requested to answer each question with a five-point scale (1: strongly disagree and 5: strongly agree). For this scale, Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was 0.72, indicating an acceptable level of reliability (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 1991). This scale served as the dependent variable in the subject study.

Work-family culture. Thompson *et al.* (1999, p. 394) define work-family culture as “the shared assumptions, beliefs and values regarding the extent to which an organization supports and values the integration of employee’s work and family lives.” Work and family culture was measured with 20 items by adapting Thompson *et al.*’s (1999) 25-item scale, using only items that were pertinent to the hotel industry. All items were rated by participants on a five-point Likert scale. Factor analysis was conducted and three dimensions of work and family culture were identified: managerial support for work-family balance (including such items as: “Your hotel encourages managers to set limits on where work stops and home life begins.”), career consequences associated with utilizing work–family benefits (including such items as: “Managers in your hotel are regularly expected to put their jobs before their families.”), and organizational time expectations that may interfere with family responsibilities (including such items as: “To get ahead in your hotel, managers are expected to work more than 50 hours a week, whether at the workplace or at home.”). Five items were deleted through the process due to cross-loadings and low factor loadings in order to maximize reliability. Conceptual descriptions of each of the three dimensions were provided in the Hypotheses Development section. Managerial support was positively coded while career consequences and organizational time expectations were negatively coded because higher levels of managerial support and lower levels of the second and third dimensions were associated with higher levels of work-family culture. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was 0.85 for managerial support, 0.70 for career consequences, and 0.81 for organizational time expectations, indicating an acceptable level of reliability (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 1991). This scale served as a dependent variable in the subject study.

In summary, the survey instrument completed by each of 544 participants included three items that queried partying, 20 items querying work-family culture, and demographic and contact information including the participant’s age. For each of the hotels, general managers provided us with the number of employees, location classification, and organization name, as well as contact information.

Correlation analysis

Correlations between the relevant variables are provided in Table II. While correlations were found among some variables, diagnostics did not reveal evidence of any significant violations of multicollinearity because, as shown in Table III, the highest variance inflation factor (VIF) was less than 5, which is well below the widely accepted cut-off value of 10 (Neter *et al.*, 1996; Ott and Longnecker, 2001). Signs were generally in the expected direction except that it had not been anticipated that managerial

support and partying would both have the same, positive sign, as previously discussed. These variables will be discussed further in the Results section.

Results

The effects of work and family culture on partying

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of the three work and family culture factors on department manager (DM) partying. As shown in Table III, the model was overall significant ($F[3,495] = 7.193, p < 0.001$). VIF values were less than 5 indicating that multicollinearity was not an issue. The results indicate that managerial support had a significantly positive effect on partying, while limited career consequences and organizational time expectations had a significantly negative effect on DM partying, as hypothesized. However, because the beta coefficients for only two of the three dimensions were in the hypothesized direction, *H1* was only partially supported. Specifically, only *H1b* and *H1c* were supported.

The effects of hotel classification on partying

An ANOVA was conducted to examine the effect of hotel classification on partying. Hotel classification was categorized as city, suburb, airport, and resort, based on Smith Travel Research classifications. The results, as summarized in Table IV, show that hotel

	a	b	c	d	e	f
a. Managerial support	1					
b. Career consequences	0.525**	1				
c. Organizational time expectations	0.715**	0.565**	1			
d. Employees in hotel	-0.058	-0.069	-0.123**	1		
e. Age	0.086*	0.116**	0.109**	-0.056	1	
f. Partying	0.047	-0.105*	-0.082*	0.134**	-0.294**	1

Notes: *Denotes $p < 0.05$; ** denotes $p < 0.01$

Table II.
Correlation matrix

Hypothesis	Independent variable	Beta	VIF
<i>H1a</i>	Managerial support	247***	2.176
<i>H1b</i>	Career consequences	-0.124*	1.533
<i>H1c</i>	Organizational time expectations	-0.205**	2.314

Notes: *Denotes $p < 0.05$; ** denotes $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; dependent variable: partying

Table III.
Regression results

Hotel classification	Mean	Standard deviation
Suburb	3.550 ^a	0.112
City	3.530 ^a	0.063
Resort	3.322 ^a	0.094
Airport	2.935 ^b	0.112

Note: Means with a different subscripts differ at $p < 0.05$

Table IV.
Mean scores of partying

classification had a significant effect on partying level ($F[3,522] = 7.939, p < 0.001$). *Post hoc* comparison of least significant difference (LSD) showed that DMs working at airport hotels had significantly lower partying levels than those working at city, suburb, or resort hotels. In other words, DMs working for airport hotels appear to be significantly less likely to party with their colleagues from work outside of work. Figure 1 graphically illustrates the extent to which partying varies based on hotel classification.

Since airport hotels represented the only hotel classification with significantly lower partying levels than other hotel classifications, subsequent analyses involved coding all cases with a binary variable (1 = airport, 0 = non airport). Regression analysis revealed there to be a significant difference in partying levels between airport and non airport hotels ($F[1,524] = 19.880, p < 0.001$).

Since the objective of *H2* was to analyze differences in partying levels based on hotel classification, subsequent analyses evaluated whether it was plausible that these differences between airport and non airport hotels may be attributed to differences in the sizes of those hotel operations. Since it was the specific objective of *H4* to analyze partying differences based on hotel size, hotel size was tested as a control variable in the present analysis. In addition, because it is possible that these differences between airport and non airport hotels in the present analysis may be attributed to differences in the hotel manager ages at the different hotels, manager age was also tested as a control variable. Regression analysis revealed both hotel size and manager age to be significant control variables ($p < 0.01$). After controlling for the effects of hotel size and manager age, there was a significant difference in partying levels between airport and non airport hotels (Beta Coefficient = $-0.459, p < 0.01$) indicating that these differences in partying between airport and non airport hotels is not based on differences in the sizes of those hotel operations or the ages of the hotel employees.

Although this exploratory study found some amount of partying to occur throughout the hotel industry, these analyses indicate that the level of partying varies significantly by hotel location type. Since hotels exhibiting lower levels of partying are located near airports, it is very likely that there are not many places where DMs can get together with their peers nearby, and furthermore, it is plausible that many employees of airport hotels may not live near the airport, and may not desire to socialize near the airport either. On the other hand, hotels located in cities or suburbs might have more options nearby for partying compared to airport hotels, and resort hotels may tend to be near food and

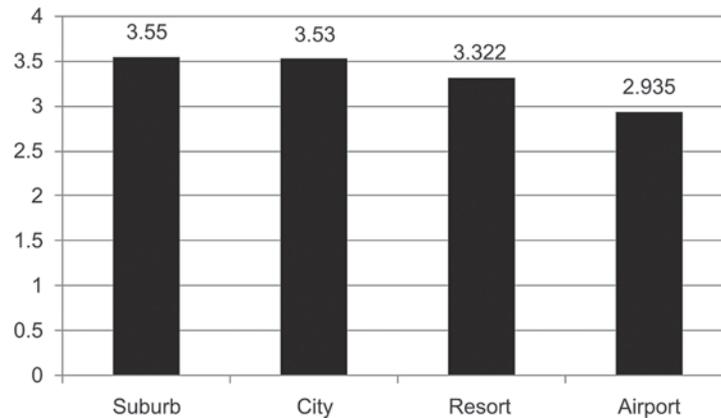


Figure 1.
Partying by hotel
classification

beverage operations that would be available for partying. Thus, due to the relationships between hotel location and levels of reported partying, *H2* was supported.

The effects of hotel organization on partying

An ANOVA was conducted to examine the effects of the hotel organization on partying. Table V shows the hotel organizations. The results indicate that the hotel organization is a significant predictor of partying ($F[7,518] = 2.683, p < 0.05$). In other words, partying significantly differed between hotel companies. Our agreements with the hotel companies would not allow us to reveal the individual hotel company names. The importance of this finding, however, is that this study sought to explore not only the extent to which partying exists in the hotel industry macroculture, but whether partying varies significantly by organizations, i.e. the culture of individual organizations. This finding suggests that such significant differences exist.

The results indicate that Brands B, D and E showed significantly higher DM partying levels than Brand C, Brand F and independent hotels. As previously discussed, the organizational culture within each hotel company may lead to such results. For example, senior executives at Brands B, D and E may promote partying of employees by culturally inducing such gatherings. Brand C and Brand F and independent hotels may not have such organizational culture as the other chain hotels of inducing such gatherings, resulting in relatively low levels of partying for DMs. In summary, *H3* was supported.

The effects of hotel size on partying

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of hotel size (number of employees) on partying. The model was significant ($F[1,456] = 8.380, p < 0.01$). The results indicated that number of employees was positively related to partying levels. These findings indicate that the larger the hotel, in terms of number of employees, the more time managers spend gathering and partying with their work colleagues outside of work. Therefore, *H4* was supported.

The effects of age on partying

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of DM age on partying. The model was significant ($F[1,544] = 55.299, p < 0.001$). The results indicated that age was negatively related to partying. These findings indicate that the older the managers are, the less time they spend gathering and partying with their work colleagues outside work.

Hotel organization	Mean	Standard deviation
Brand A	3.426 ^{bc}	0.138
Brand B	3.554 ^b	0.135
Brand C	3.090 ^c	0.128
Brand D	3.507 ^b	0.070
Brand E	3.556 ^b	0.134
Brand F	3.074 ^{abc}	0.337
Brand G	3.281 ^{abc}	0.179
Independent	3.008 ^{ac}	0.154

Notes: Means with a different subscripts differ at $p < 0.05$. In other words, the subscripts a, b and c are used to indicate which hotel companies are significantly different from others in terms of partying. For example, hotel companies with “a” are not significantly different from each other

Table V. Mean scores of partying

Since previously-presented analyses revealed that hotel location and size were significant predictors of partying levels, subsequent analyses examined whether it was plausible that the differences in partying levels based on DM age may be attributed to differences in the locations or sizes of those hotel operations. Thus, location and size were tested as control variables in the present analysis. Regression analysis revealed both hotel location and size to be significant control variables ($p < 0.05$). After controlling for the effects of hotel location and size, there was a significant difference in partying levels based on DM age (Beta Coefficient = -0.318 , $p < 0.01$) indicating that the differences in partying based on age were not the result of differences in the locations or sizes of those hotel operations. Thus, $H5$ was supported.

Discussion

Partying is a relatively new academic concept evolving from the same, ubiquitous term commonly used in the hospitality industry. The scale developed for partying displayed both acceptable reliability and positive correlation with organizational time expectations. Future academic research should explore the relationships between partying and other individual and organizational dependent variables of interest.

Practitioners should take note, particularly during challenging economic times, employees (particularly managerial employees) are likely to feel induced to be visible for the sake of job security and to be perceived by upper management as being a part of the hotel social system. In other words, partying may not be entirely voluntary, but rather social pressures to participate in group activities may be strong, particularly in certain organizations, where partying is a part of the socialization process. At the same time, such visibility may have negative and costly implications for both individuals and organizations, such as symptoms of emotional exhaustion like depersonalization and detachment. Further, since emotional exhaustion and turnover have been previously correlated in the academic literature, practitioners should be concerned that employees who feel manipulated into partying with work colleagues outside of work, but do not display emotional exhaustion in the workplace, are still susceptible to leaving the organization as soon as the economy improves and alternative opportunities present themselves – and these employees may be exactly the ones hospitality industry executives do not want to lose. Hospitality industry executives could, for example, include queries regarding social pressures in the organization in their employee surveys regarding satisfaction, commitment and engagement.

On the other hand, it is important to note that socialization processes such as partying may have positive, beneficial aspects to the participants involved, and it is entirely possible that there is self-selection involved, i.e. individuals who enjoy partying with work colleagues also have a propensity to become hotel managers.

Partying of hotel managers appears to be a function of work-family culture, in general, and partying varies by the specific hotel organization, as well. Specifically, while relatively low career consequences for using work-family benefits and low organizational time expectations were associated with reduced partying levels as expected, higher levels of managerial support were associated with greater amounts of partying. While this finding was not in the hypothesized direction, it is interesting because it infers the possible presence of the positive aspect of social gathering of being desirable and beneficial to hotel employees, and managerial support may in fact be demonstrated to employees through partying. Since organizational culture in the hospitality industry is often nurtured by high level organizational leaders (O'Gorman

and Gillespie, 2010), hotel executives wishing to increase organizational health by reducing employee partying outside work may consider proactively reducing career consequences for using work-family benefits and organizational time expectations through not only changing organizational policies, but also through changing culture, such as through storytelling. Such a program could also form an interesting future research study designed to evaluate the effects of such changes on employee physical health symptoms before and after the implementation of such a program.

Conclusions and limitations

The primary purpose of this study has been to explore the apparent norm of partying that persists in the hotel industry despite evidence suggesting it can negatively affect both employees and organizations. This study revealed that in hotels with organizational culture oriented towards work and family balance, managers displayed less partying behavior. It also found that such work and family culture may vary based on certain hotel corporate organizations, hotel location classifications, and hotel sizes, because partying behavior significantly varied based on such corporate, locational and size differences. The study also indicated that relatively older employees spend less time than younger employees partying with work colleagues outside work. This study suggests that a hotel workplace culture oriented towards work and family balance may yield less partying behavior, which based on the results of previous research, may have positive implications for reducing hotel organization turnover and health care costs.

As with any research, the results of this study should be interpreted with limitations. First, this study only includes employee self-reports regarding partying. Direct observation was not feasible, and furthermore, direct observation is prone to researcher bias. In addition, to recruit a sufficient number of employees from each hotel, employees of limited-service hotels were not included in this study. As limited-service hotels may have different demands, pressures, and climate than full-service hotels, the results of this study may not be generalizable to the limited service segment. Also, this study focused on managers because those employees are more expensive to recruit, orient, and train than hourly employees. This study does not assume that hourly employees do not gather socially with work colleagues, and of course, they may do so with managerial employees as well as other hourly employees, and this study may not be generalizable to hourly employees. In addition, the scale used for partying in this exploratory study contained only three items. Although more items would have been ideal, these three items included the prominent themes that emerged from the previously discussed preliminary, qualitative, pilot study of hotel managers, and given space limitations in this survey of busy hotel managers working long hours, the three items were all that could be included in the subject survey. Although the scale used in this study had an acceptable level of reliability, future studies regarding the new academic topic of partying could benefit from the development and validation of a more comprehensive measure of partying. Lastly, the subject study is limited to the USA. While it is beyond the scope of this study, future research regarding partying should include non-American culture and could compare the results in different cultural settings.

In conclusion, the variable of the hotel company appeared to have had a significant effect on partying levels. In short, some hotel companies had significantly different levels of partying. In other words, while all hotel companies exhibited some level of partying, i.e. macroculture, different hotel companies may have different organizational cultures, and those variances in culture may have positive, as well as

deleterious effects on their employees. Potential deleterious effects may be of particular concern not only in certain hotel companies, but in larger hotels, as well.

Older hotel managers reported engaging in significantly less partying, compared to their younger counterparts. Manager age may indicate more tenure and experience, and not only industry experience, but life experience, as well. Thus, older managers may understand that the quality of work is more important than the hours they spend at work or with work colleagues, feeling less pressure to gather with work colleagues outside work, perhaps because older and more tenured managers have established certain credibility to a greater extent than relatively younger and less experienced managers. Also, when managers get older, they may tend to settle down and have a family; thus, they might spend more time with their family members instead of gathering with their work peers after work. Furthermore, they may have more family-related responsibilities; thus, they may spend more time on family-related events than on socializing with their work peers. Hospitality organization leaders wishing to reduce levels of partying for the reasons stated herein could use relatively older employees for training exercise and as role models in such endeavors.

As O'Neill *et al.* (2004) pointed out, norms in a macroculture can persist despite the fact that they may not function well for individual organizational units. Such may be the situation with partying. Excessive partying can have a number of adverse consequences for employees. As Munck (2001) found, excessive time spent with work colleagues can lead to higher than desired levels of managerial turnover, as managers are forced to make decisions between family and work time. Furthermore, because partying has been linked with alcohol misuse in general (Campbell and Oei, 2010), and specifically with risky drinking behavior among 17-34 year olds (Lyvers *et al.*, 2010), hotel managers should be aware that a workplace culture that promotes and induces social gathering with work colleagues outside of work may be creating a situation that is likely to become costly for both the organization and the individual, particularly when such social gathering also promotes alcohol consumption. Some good news in this regard is that attention to this issue through intervention can have the effect of reducing the number of social binge drinkers (Jethwa, 2009) and that the outlook for people who abuse alcohol is moderately good (Ainsworth, 2009). Hospitality researchers should continue to study this important and evolving issue, and hospitality managers may wish to consider serving employee needs for social gathering by sponsoring voluntary, alcohol-free, recreational events.

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Further reading

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