

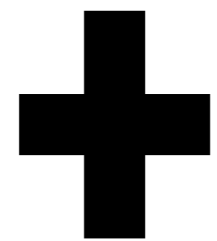
Can a Senior Living Management Course Positively Change Students' Perspectives of Older Adults and Working in Senior Living?

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Introduction

- Older adults commanding ↑ percentage of customer base for traditional hospitality services (i.e., restaurants, hotels, travel/tourism, etc.)



- Senior Living (SL) characterized as the intersection of hospitality & healthcare (Figure 1)



- Need to understand hospitality student perspectives about older adults and SL careers

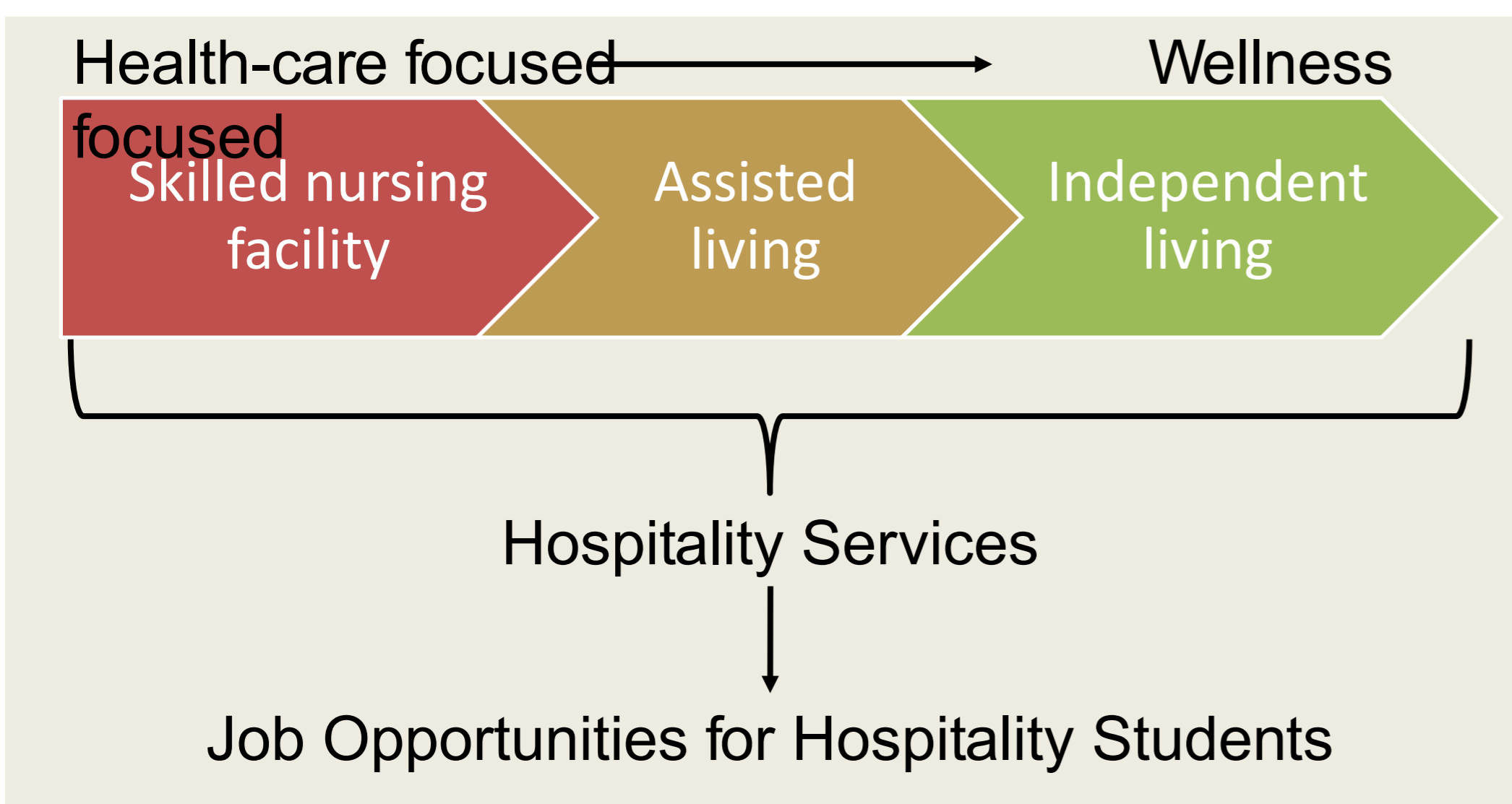


Figure 1: U.S. Residential Senior Living Continuum

Research Questions

RQ1:

- Do hospitality students have positive attitudes toward older adults?
- Do these attitudes change after taking a hospitality-centric SL course?

RQ2:

- How do hospitality students' expectations of working in SL compare to traditional hospitality sectors?
- Do these perceptions change after taking a hospitality-centric SL course?



Figure 2: Students in Hospitality-Centric SL Course

Methods

- Pilot study
- Students enrolled in hospitality-centric SL course, Fall 2022 (n = 11) (Figure 2)
- Pre- and post survey (first & last week of semester)
- Survey sections
 - Older adult allophilia (like/love of others) scale
 - Affection (4 items), engagement (4 items), enthusiasm (3 items), kinship (3 items), comfort (3 items)
 - Job expectations scale (19 items)
 - For SL hospitality sector
 - For traditional hospitality sector
 - Socio-demographics
- Paired t-test comparing first & last week of semester to determine effect of hospitality-centric SL course

Results

Pre vs. post:

- Allophilia: significant ↑ in 4 of 5 subscales
 affection, engagement, enthusiasm, kinship
- Job expectations in SL: significant ↑ in 7 of 19 items

enjoyable job, good colleagues, can use my university degree, reasonable workload, high quality resources and equipment, can care for others, opportunities for further training

Perceptions of working in SL vs. traditional hospitality not significantly different pre- or post.

Discussion and Implications

- Hospitality-centric SL was transformative
 - Student attitudes about older adults and expectations related to working in SL
- Hospitality programs should consider adding such a course to their curriculum
 - Improve student attitudes about older adults – important for traditional hospitality sectors
 - Prepare students for job opportunities in SL hospitality sector

Limitations

- Small sample size
- One hospitality program
- Potential + bias towards older adults among participants

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