The Impact of the Hairdressing Profession on Practising Hairdressers: a Gozitan Perspective

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Abstract: This study investigates the hairdressing service quality being enjoyed by clients in Gozo and the difference in the way clients are affected by a hairdresser who has a hairdressing warrant and a hairdresser who does not. When clients pay high prices to have a high-quality service at the salon, they expect truly professional service which rests on performance quality which in turn depends on tasks completion quality, interaction, and deliverables.

Hairdressers must use technological devices and time in an innovative way. The researcher aims to focus on how much hairdressers in Gozo can deliver high-quality hairdressing services based on the principles and good practices mentioned above, to what extent the possession of a warrant is affecting client’s satisfaction, and if hairdressers are educated in delivering hairdressing services or are just drilled in foundational skills. This study aims to explore what attention is being given to health and safety, electrical devices handling, environment sustainability, good postures, clear and intelligent consultations and advice, and if there is a leap in quality in hairdressing through recognized qualified courses and appropriate warrants.

Since qualitative in-depth information is needed about the hairdressing service in Gozo, the researcher held a focus group with the Federation of Hairdressing and the clients’ opinions will be collected quantitatively through a questionnaire. The primary information gathered was compared with that collected about hairdressing abroad through online interviews with foreign hairdressers and secondary information gleaned from related literature review. It was expected that the study would demonstrate beyond doubt the best people management practices which are the most important differentiating factor in a small services business-like hairdressing together with management training and formal communication with clients. The author also expected that these principles and practices are not being respected in Gozo as most hairdressers do not possess the necessary qualification that is the key for teaching the best practices.

Keywords: CPD, consultations, professionalism, qualified hairdressers, hairdressing diploma, client satisfaction, environment issues, health and safety, government hairdressers’ regulations and enforcement.

Today’s service providers like hairdressers need something more than occupational competency and skills (Smith 2003). They need an education and professional training. A more holistic and complex approach is needed for hairdressers to develop their skills than even before because clients expect a sophisticated service for the high price they pay. The emphasis has now shifted to learning, the quality of the learning process, and learning achievement because work-based learning standards have plummeted and need rebuilding.
The hairdresser sector is undergoing in-depth changes due to the introduction of testing for key skills and new standards of learning which are intended to increase learners’ expertise and enable them to meet more demanding and higher clients’ expectations. Work-based activity is too restricted to practise and more theory is needed to reinforce it and make it possible to put theory into practice. Service providers like hairdressers must enhance their learning and take an important step from foundation to advanced modern learning. The more they specialize in their vocation, the more they develop themselves and provide a high-quality service which should be continually refined until it becomes excellent service and be maintained at the top level.

Hairdressers must become experts in their work and learn more. Interpersonal relationships play a very important role. Even when not satisfied, clients stay loyal if interpersonal relationships are built on valid and friendly interactions which bind service providers to their clients. That bond and the delay in burning bridges because of interpersonal relationships brings time for hairdresser to observe and notice the air and behaviour of dissatisfaction of client, make the necessary effort to identify the cause, and take immediate and effective action to remedy it and save the clients (Wu 2011). Conversation is also instrumental, and hairdressers must be trained in communication skills because they make clients feel an intimate relationship with hairdressers and this leads to customization which is so much appreciated by clients (Kim & Steve 2004). Hairdressers must also be educated about sustainable development, so they must make the necessary changes and learn to make less intense use of resources not to deplete the environment. They must know about best practices like employee recruitment, employee remuneration, occupational health and safety, absenteeism, and employee training which make up superior performance diverse.

**How does hairdressing profession impact on practicing hairdressers?**

| See if hairdressers should be all qualified for the benefit of clients and the reputation of all salons and hairdressers | Consider what is being done elsewhere regarding regulatory control of hairdressers’ qualifications to compare or contrast these situations with that in our country | See if the attendance of hairdressers operating in our country for CPDs so they stay up to date with changing trends, practices and technology for deliverance of a better service |

*Figure 1: Research objectives leading to research question*

**Literature Review**

Lai and Tam (2010) investigated the effect of quality characteristic of a service encounter on the customers’ satisfaction and value which influence customer loyalty powerfully. Perceived service quality and client value lead to quality satisfaction (Lai-Ming Tam 2012). According to Zeithaml et al. (2005) clients judge service quality of service provider, and the way they perceive the service’s technical quality. This counts particularly for hairdressers. Hairdressers who empathize with clients understand their feelings, needs, and wishes better, forge a strong bond with them, and ensure their satisfaction and loyalty. The physical context helps clients feel comfortable and secure in the hairdresser’s quality.
Dagger et al. 2007 (Lai-Ming Tam 2012) describes a service's technical quality as the core service's performance based on the hairdresser's professionalism, competence, and expertise. Therefore, the hairdresser becomes the measure for quality for clients, particularly those who did not understand the technical aspect clearly. Clients will feel more satisfied the higher they perceive the service's value (ibid.) and their loyalty will, in turn, increase. Service satisfaction tends to make clients seek the same hairdresser and tell others about satisfaction.

Resource use is always going up despite the difficulties and challenges to be overcome to achieve sustainable development. For this reason, Baden & Prasad researched how various behaviour theories about behaviour-change strategies may be applied in specific contexts to address sustainable development problems effectively. They found that more awareness of the salon's environmental effect meant greater engagement by hairdressers in energy/water saving and other PEBs (Pro Environment Behaviours) (Baden & Prasad 2014). Therefore, hairdressers should be better educated in PEBs so PEB can increase. However, hairdressers have much more important roles to play, since the salons' impact is small when compared to the potential effect of domestic haircare practices' sustainable development. Clients' behaviour related to haircare tends to be routinized, culturally grounded and automatic. Therefore, hairdressers who largely determine such haircare behaviour with their clients should be role models to help clients change their attitudes towards the environment to increase their PEB. Hairdressers should also know the right information to be able to pass it on to clients. Hairdressers who help clients to understand PEB increase clients' satisfaction and are not too expensive. Examples are using dry shampoo to blow-dry less, less colouring and shampooing, and cutting less expenses. Therefore, it is lifestyles that hairdressers must learn to change. The research also found that, unless there are more regulations obliging hairdressers to learn, few hairdressers will find time to attend learning sessions related to hairdressing. However, as Ely et al. (2013) pointed out, there are also hairdressers ready to discuss practices and match environment issues with business needs. Hairdressers should also keep in mind that they are primarily service providers and should be ready to give information more than sell products. Instead of selling products, they should be well informed to persuade clients that better hair-care practices and more frequent ones may replace buying more products (Repke 2009).

Garzaniti et al. (2011) explored how conversation during hairdressing services helps to develop 'commercial friendships', as well as short-term and long-term clients. Services are different from goods because they are transitory and abstract and cannot be visualized. The intangible service's intangible elements, like skills, serve clients as a basis on which to determine the service's value. In services like hairdressing, there is also a high contact as hairdressers are physically close to the client while delivering the service. Hairdressing includes a continuous relationship and customization besides contact (Lovelock et al. 2007). These characteristics may promote intimacy and friendly conversation between clients and service providers. Indeed, this is something which is to be encouraged. This conversation may be related to the hairdressing task or non-task related. Jones et al. (2008) found that, when hairdressers identified clients' needs, it made clients feel important; when they remembered clients' name and offered advice, they appeared friendlier, more helpful, more respectful, and more committed in their clients' perspective. Lovelock et al. (2007) identified the consultation value of conversation and considered it as enhancing core competences. Task-related conversation will lead to solutions tailored to the client's needs and expectations. There is no doubt that conversation plays on an important role, even if it is mainly a gossip-exchange or discussion of life in a sympathetic way, because it leads to an enjoyable service and is a catalyst for a friendship based on intimacy, mutual
self-disclosure, and talking. The customer's service experience is directly influenced by interaction between service provider and client (Fird 2001). According to social psychology, proximity and interactions on a frequent level tend to lead to a relationship.

Hairdressing as a frontline job is a very demanding job; rapidity and efficiency are expected in carrying out tasks. Hairdressers are also expected to be helpful, friendly, and courteous with customers and strive for excellent service delivery. Therefore, human resources must be very well managed. Both the hairdresser who is leader of the team and the ones employed with him must be well-trained and highly committed and serve as role models. The way service is provided can well provide a differentiation factor and a competitive edge. Hairdressers are the most visible service element and service quality is determined by their behaviour. Hairdressers are the core part of their salon service while their employees have the same responsibility as they determine the value of service provided. Hairdressers have to anticipate situations, develop personalized relationships with clients, and customize the provision of the hairdressing service to attain customer loyalty (Lovelock 2011). High motivation among hairdressers at the core of excellence in service delivery. Hairdressers may find hairdressing and contact with customers too demanding and stressful, but they must go on looking calm and put on their best behaviour. This is emotional labour. They are expected to be compassionate and cheerful all the time and not to express negative feelings. They should be trained to cope with pressure and deal with emotional stress. Hairdressers must be careful in recruiting low-skilled individuals and give them light basic operational skills because there is the danger of entering a cycle of failure to which mediocrity often leads. Such low-skilled helpers will find customers' needs too much for them to address and tend to become frustrated and assume a negative attitude leading to an employee cycle of failure which paves the way for a customer cycle of failure as customers are dissatisfied. Low pay also leads to failure. On the other hand, training empowerment and broadened job designs and good wages of helpers lead to a cycle of success.

Methodology

Several articles and journals have been consulted to obtain information about hairdressing situations abroad and what experts say about the advantages to be gained and the improvements in services that can be achieved if hairdressers are given a deeper and wider education besides the foundational operational skills. This constitutes the secondary data collected for this paper. As regards primary data, qualitative research was used to explore clients' experiences and the opinions of qualified local and foreign hairdressers. Qualitative research suited the present purpose because it provided gain insights into the world of other hairdressers; this has widened and deepened the author's thinking and increase familiarity with various dimensions of the research question (Van der Zalm et al. 2000). Complex interpersonal research carried out through open-ended questions used in online interviews with foreign hairdressers and local focus group has led to understanding better the underlying reasons of the situation researched.

Gerrish and Lacey (2010) explained that the qualitative research is inductive as it collects data and theory is developed from data; it is descriptive since the experiences of hairdressers and clients are described in detail and interpretative since research must interact with the meaning of information gathered. Qualitative research helps the researcher look at the human experiences from diverse social contexts like hairdressers with a qualification, those without a qualification, local and foreign hairdressers, and clients. This enables research to construct an authentic meaning of the revealed stakeholders' experience (Addo et al. 2014).
On-line interviews enjoy several advantages on onsite interviews because they overcome the problems posed by financial constraints and time and physical mobility boundaries. Skype provides a synchronous face to face online, small focus groups or individual interviews. Technological changes have facilitated and refined synchronous approaches like instant messenger protocols, video conferencing, and text-based chat rooms (Steiger & Gortiz 2006). Skype, which has become very popular recently, is described as a free communication medium used to call, message, see, and share information with people far and wide (Anonymous 2013b). Skype can also be used for video and interviewing.

Sullivan (2012) has confirmed that interaction will be as similar and effective as that of outside interviews as far as social and nonverbal are concerned. Interviewed participants who find difficulties in taking part in face-to-face onsite interviews are encouraged by Skype thus facilitating the work of the researcher in finding participants. Researchers may find participants through social networking sites, emails, or face-to-face and agree with them the interviews’ appointment. This provides the above with independent recruitment. However, users of Skype must be familiar with online communication of interview and be digital literate. There are the same ethical issues and requirements in Skype interviews as in face to face ones as consent forms may be sent by researcher and received back through email, post or online (PE). After interviews are recorded by recorder software which is computer based or by separate recorder, data is transcribed (Cater 2011). Participants may withdraw by just clicking a button. Skype interviews are authentic since the impression management process’ visible part can be evaluated (Sullivan 2012).

The author has made use of grounded theory methodology because there no research has taken place on warranted hairdressers’ impact on the hairdressing profession in Gozo; grounded theory will therefore generate new knowledge as theory. The author was open to new concepts emerging from the data gathered and was theoretically sensitive as well as careful in striking a reasonable balance between new concepts and their theoretical significance. Care was also taken not to impose previous perceptions while ensuring that theories specific to the studied concept emerged and were firmly embedded in the data gained from the study. These were integrated and explained using comparative analysis, theoretical sampling and theoretical coding. Categories were formed following coding and a coding paradigm helped to link categories. Then they were broken down into small meanings of unit (Birks and Mills 2015).

Figure 2: Data collection, analysis and evaluation
Focus group interviews with six qualified local hairdressers were used so that these participants could reveal their feelings and attitudes built on their feelings, sensitive issues, insider experience, emotions, and experiences (Wisker 2008) in order to investigate relationship activities, materials, and situations presented from the respondents’ perspective. A focus group is an excellent tool to explain feelings, ideas, and attitudes while encouraging others to think about it. Participants influence each other as happens in real life. Triggers were used to stimulate participants in discussions and probe and prompt participants leading interactions on to relevant issues and then letting them voice what their feelings (Descombe 2007). The participants were six hairdressers from the Federation of Hairdressing who discussed the issue of hairdressers with or without warrant and their fears, thoughts, and wishes for salons that provide excellent service, their clients' opinions, the small number of qualified hairdressers and the large number of unqualified ones, and the effect of this on clients. In the focus group the author acted as a facilitator or mediator controlling participants who held the edge on the rest of the group and facilitating and prompting discussion on the peripheral of the group reluctant to speak (Hohenthal et al. 2015), thus achieving the purpose of eliciting complex personal experience, attitudes, beliefs, and underlying reasons (PG). The information gathered was recorded and transcribed and then evaluated and tested against data gathered from the online interviews to provide insight and depth. It was then contrasted with the secondary data gathered from articles and journals.

Analysis and Evaluation of Findings

The interviewees agreed that women today make more frequent visits to the hairdresser's salon but disagreed as to when this phenomenon commenced. Participant 1 said that women's love for hair is not all that new as they started taking particular care of their hair when they began working out of home in her country. That was a long time before women began working out of home in large numbers in Gozo. That, according to Participant 1, justified the difference in time. Participant 2 also saw this phenomenon as quite old because women started working out of home and earning their wages in Finland much earlier than in Gozo. Participants 1 and 2 also saw the start of the trend of women working out of home as the main reason for the frequent visits' women pay to hairdressers. Participant 2 combine working out of home with the wish to look attractive and the importance of hairstyles in the female attractiveness. Participant 3 also combined this phenomenon with the love for fashionable clothes. Participants 1 and 2 added the effect of browsing the Internet and of following mass media and social media and seeing celebrities with glamorous hairstyles.

Consensus was expressed on the need of consultation before starting the hairdressing. All referred to the need to discuss client's needs and wishes and the chosen hairstyle's suitability. However, consultation also serves as a socializing moment with Participant 2 referring to 'a short conversation about things that do not have to do with hairstyle' and Participant 1 referring to talking 'about various topics or their families'. Participant 1 mentions both the 'operative' and 'social' aspects of consultation. Participant 3 focuses on the technical aspect of consultation giving a brief description of the technical aspects discussed. Participant 1 also refers to another aspect related to consultation. She says that consultation inspires friendship and some loyalty in clients for their hairdresser and her salon. The resources used have now changed from pictures from magazines to Internet use. Internet provides with a very wide variety of styles and of pictures which clients find on their mobiles.
The respondents explained at length the importance of studying the relevant features of every client so an informed choice of the appropriate hairstyle can be made. Participant 3 adds the importance of explaining to the client what is going on in an ‘honest and understandable’ way because that helps clients realize that the hairdresser is ‘honest and expertly’ and can be trusted. Participant 2 refers to the need of communication and persuasive skills to make clients change their mind if they want a choice that does not suit them. Participant 1 even considers this definition of relevant features as the key difference between a professional hairdresser and an amateur one who has a ‘ghost certificate’. She also mentions the need of interpersonal skills. All respondents believe that, ultimately, they must carry out the client’s wish. Respondents firmly believe in the essential need of CPDs which Participant 2 called ‘inspirational and informative’ as they tell you about ‘new trends, new skills, new technologies, and what you have to stop doing’. She explained that CPDs are the tool to keep improving all the time. Being up to date is the best advertisement. It keeps clients and attracts new ones. Participant 1 confirms Participant 1’s high opinion of the role played by CPDs saying that ‘in a year a leading up-to-date high-quality hairdresser may become outdated in the techniques and technology used’. Participant 2 echoes Participant 1’s belief saying that a reputation is built slowly but is lost quickly unless CPDs are followed to keep hairdressers on ‘the right track’. Participant 3 completely agreed.

Participant 1 points to CPD as ‘the key to constant success’ and describes the short time it takes to fall from the top service to routine outdated service. Not following CPDs predicts ‘a decline in the salon’s fortunes’ and hairdressers will ‘face ruin’. Only those hairdressers who see short-term do not give CPDs their due importance. Participant 1 also speaks of the need of having a professional body which issues regulation, like the requirement of all hairdressers following a certain number of CPDs and seeing that attendances are documented. Participant 3 considers CPDs, especially abroad, as ‘an enriching experience’ whereas, according to her, hairdressers employed in a salon may consider CPDs as a waste of time or a boring experience because they are not so interested and proud of their work. Participant 1 was on the same wavelength saying that leading hairstylists are proud of their work and understand the importance of CPD.

Cleanliness, health, and safety featured prominently on each respondent’s agenda. Participants 1 and 2 spoke about ventilation, air conditioning, gloves and masks, and salon-temperature control. The health of hairdressers and clients was given due attention by all. Participants 1 and 3 added the aspect of reputation which rests partly on the cleanliness in the salon. Participant 2 observed that ‘clients notice and appreciate’; Participant 2 considered health and safety issues as a way of showing respect to both clients and employees. Participant 1 referred to openness to feedback and the need to ‘encourage client to draw our attention to any shortcomings’. She also referred to training all the employees and explaining to them the importance of health and safety.

Participant 2 referred to multiculturalism which brings in salon clients with new ideas and hairstyles, colour mixtures, hair thicknesses, and features different from local people. Therefore, she said, hairdressers must go for courses abroad. Participant 2 mentioned the same argument. Malta is fast becoming a densely multicultural island and hairdressers must be prepared for new challenges. Participant 3 came up with the idea of learning to address foreigners’ challenges by browsing the Internet for new knowledge. Participant 1 described how her salon helps hairdressers to find time to attend courses. Participant 1 also explained that her hairdressers attend courses individually not to leave salon heavily understaffed. Expenses are paid by the salon.
Respondents came up with various ways of keeping a competitive edge on freshly graduated hairdressers. Participant 1 emphasized the need of upholding quality by continuing to learn and by training employees and giving them ‘a good salary and good working conditions’ so they feel motivated to uphold the salon’s quality. Participant 2 referred to the need of experience in new hairdressers. Too much hurry from new ones may lead to failure. Participants 1 and 2 mentioned the same arguments. Focus group Participant 1 combined competitive edge with professionalism. A professional, in her opinion, is one who improves oneself consistently. Participant 2 said a professional is professional in every aspect of hairdressing. Participant 3 explained that a professional must also advise clients how to treat hair at home and which environmentally friendly creams and shampoos they should use. Participant 1 referred to the need of keeping a smile even when ‘angry, tired, or stressed’ and laughing at clients ‘shallow jokes’, even when very focused. This is professionalism for her.

Participant 1 referred to her younger years when she had been to non-professional hairdressers who produced hairstyles different from the photographs shown to them, who knew little about colour and shampoo, and who had no new ideas. Participant 1 continued to underline the difference between professional and non-professional stylists; professionals had ‘credibility, reputation, trust, and ability to satisfy clients’ while non-professionals had none of these qualities.

Participant 1 echoed the same feelings and passed the same judgement, being greatly disappointed by the unprofessional hairdressers frequented in his youth. Participant 3 reinforced Participant 1’s ideas that unqualified hairdressers were failures before they started, being ‘old fashioned’ and clumsy.

Participant 2 said that unqualified hairdressers will fail at some time or other before long even if they lower prices to attract people and cheat them. She also pointed out that the short amateur courses several unqualified hairdressers followed were a fraud and inadequate. No wonder they performed miserably. Participant 2 said that clients would soon know that a hairdresser is not good enough or outdated and stop attending. They will spread word that they are a fraud and their reputation is finished.

Participant 2 said that in Finland hairdressers need a diploma which is placed in a prominent place in the salon and this is controlled by the government. Participant 1 said that in UK anyone can open a salon as long as health and safety rules are abided with. Then clients would decide if hairdresser were good or not by frequenting the salon or not. Participant 1 and Participant 2 spoke about the local requirements for hairdressing. Participant 1 explained that one could open a salon, often completing Level 3 but then often employed unqualified hairdressers. There is no real enforcement of regulations about qualifications. Participant 2 said that only regulations about health and safety are checked and that once. Participant 3 referred to the need for hairdressers’ portfolio to be checked for Level 3 and frequent CPDs.
Evaluation and Discussion of Findings

The respondents’ answers threw a strong light on the position of hairdressers in Malta vis-à-vis qualifications. The research question grows in importance as the interviewees agreed that more and more women frequent salons, but an important point has emerged. While this phenomenon is old in the UK and Finland, it is relatively new in our islands and this is no wonder because Malta started building its new economy after discarding its old military and naval economy with independence in 1964 and becoming a republic in 1974. Women began working out of home en masse after this period and families’ incomes did not rise before then. There was also a massive improvement in education and women started looking after their image and sex appeal more than ever.

Most of the issues raised were agreed on by all interviewees but different interviewees added dimensions to each issue. It emerged as clear as crystal that certain issues are indispensable for excellent hairdressing services and it takes well-trained and highly qualified hairdressers to know about them and practise them properly. An experienced qualified hairdresser consults with clients to learn about the hairstyles that suit them, to win their trust, and to become friends with them. In this way clients are satisfied and become bound to hairdressers. This, in turn, demands communication skills, so qualified hairdresser must speak in a clear and understandable way, be persuasive, and be considered friendly and helpful. This also raises the need for interpersonal skills because hairdressers must make it clear they are listening and understanding clients and are empathizing with them. Two interviewees mentioned the need of both communicative and interpersonal skills to establish a very important close bond with clients and to satisfy their needs. If clients refuse to change, their wishes must be satisfied despite everything else. Clients’ satisfaction and loyalty towards hairdressers often depend on the service’s value (Hu et al. 2009) and this enhances retention.

The emphasis on consultation and its various benefits echoes Wu (2011)'s main comment that consultation is required to identify what is causing a client’s dissatisfaction and what she has in mind. Kim and Steve (2004) believe that consultation establishes an intimate bond between clients and hairdressers and leads to customisation. These comments are on the same wavelengths of Garzanti et al. (2011) Conversation develops commercial friendships.

Following CPDs regularly is another key difference between qualified hairdressers and non-qualified ones as the former go on improving their knowledge, skills, technological equipment, and ideas. If hairdressers do not consider their improvement and learning as ongoing process, they do not maintain a competitive edge. Hairdressers who are proud of their work continue to learn. Participant 2 said that another extremely important element is the motivation of employees to do excellent work and improve their learning constantly. Interviewees all believed in the need of giving hairdressers employed in their salon high wages and good work conditions, so they are retained and maintain the salon quality high. Having motivated employees starts and maintains a success cycle. Having unmotivated ones start a failure cycle. Participant 2 did extremely well to refer to the multiculturalism which has taken root in Malta and is increasing at a very fast pace. This brings along new hairstylists’ new products and colour mixtures and new features needing new hairstyles. Unless hairdressers do not attend CPDs they will not cope. This brings out another difference between qualified hairdressers proud of their work and unqualified ones who deliver a mediocre service and plan only short-term. Participant 1 reinforced this notion when he referred to the need for hairdressers to attend CPDs.
abroad to obtain new ideas and gain new knowledge to cope with the national challenge which is obviously affecting Malta too.

When talking about cleanliness and health and safety all interviewees spoke about their indispensability and their importance to attract clients and to show them respect. An interesting dimension was added by Participant 1 who said that the salon encouraged feedback on the whole service including cleanliness and health and safety aspects. Hairdressers must also use environmentally friendly products and advise clients to do the same and to adopt environmentally clean practices. These observations recall studies about the hairdresser’s efforts to save energy and water and to encourage and advise clients to do the same and the need of hairdressers to learn more about pro-environment behaviours (Baden and Prasad 2016). Clients appreciate their issues as they notice and appreciate (Participant 1). This is also part of being a professional as professionalism covers many areas: environmentally sustainable is one of them (Participant 2). This recalls Ely et al. (2013) who pointed out that several hairdressers are ready to learn and match business needs and environment issues to achieve environmental sustainability. These areas include improving oneself consistently (Participant 1) and remaining calm even when angry or stressed (Participant 1). To be professional, a salon must see that all employees are well-trained and are motivated by high wages to give excellent service, both operationally and socially. This is what is called emotional labour, looking cheerful and compassionate even when stressed, angry, and frustrated. Such professionalism leads to building and maintaining a competitive edge (Participant 2). Gaining a high level of professionalism takes time and the experience won through a long period of practice is enforced by new knowledge learned from CPDs (Participant 1).

Only in Finland has regulations about opening a salon based on qualifications. There are none in the UK and those in Malta are very limited. Both Participants 1 and 2 agreed that there is no need to have a government requiring a high qualification for hairdressers to open a salon or work in one because clients will soon who test them and will leave the salon, do not return, and tell others that the they are frauds. Even if they charge lower prices they will soon fail. However, Participants 1 and 2 would like stricter enforcements on regulations based on decent qualifications, as only qualified hairdressers are capable of satisfying clients’ needs and give an excellent service.
Figure 4: Conditional matrix
The author has used the conditional matrix because it was important to understand the phenomenon being investigated as much as possible as this phenomenon had never been investigated before and a theory needed to be built. Therefore, the phenomenon was located contextually, and the conditional matrix used to keep track of the analysis' different components and put all the different pieces together to present an overall picture.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The findings and the consequent discussions show that hairdressers must be highly qualified to give the excellent service to clients most of whom have high expectations and pay handsomely to see their expectation realized. The first conclusion should be that there should be a governing body which sees that no one can open a salon or join an existing salon without reaching level 3 at least, and that no one can open a salon without having worked with a qualified hairdresser for an established period of time to add experience to the theoretical knowledge gained during the study course.

Another conclusion is that hairdressers must be able to read English and to learn communication and interpersonal skills besides operative ones. Literacy is important so hairdressers can read about new trends, new products, new colour-mixing techniques, and new operational techniques because training is an ongoing process. Literacy is also important so that hairdressers may attend courses abroad or courses delivered by English-speaking experts and may also be able to participate actively in video conferencing.

Hairdressing courses should also include interpersonal skills and communication skills so that hairdressers can hold consultations with clients to understand better their needs and wishes and explain to them why a treatment suits them or not. Communication skills are useful for hairdressers to persuade clients to change their mind when the style they choose does not suit them and to ensure that this persuasion does not hurt the clients' feelings. On the contrary, such communication should increase trust and foster a sense of loyalty needed for retaining clients.

A governing body should see that all hairdressers attend several CPD courses annually to keep up-to-date with new ideas, trends, techniques, and styles. CPDs should present hairdressers with demonstrations of new hairstyles being introduced by foreigners settling here. These courses should also emphasize the importance of adapting practices aimed to maintain a sustainable environment and persuade clients to do the same at home.

Data management in a research rests on issues which were respected to the utmost. The first one is the ethical and truthful gathering of data which is reliable. It is obvious that each of the three components is important for the research's integrity and the author sought to gather the data needed in a way that did not harm anyone, being extremely careful about confidentiality and anonymity of all interviewees. When the interviews were completed, the data was not manipulated or changed in any way to influence results. Such ownership and responsibility of collected data is the second issue of data management. The author was responsible for the respondents’ safety and for seeing that all data was secured and stored safely so the data's privacy and integrity were safeguarded completely. Careful use of the information received from the interviewees was made and portrayed a truthful way. The third component is retaining information gained and sharing it with colleagues and public (Heberlein 2003). Sharing data reinforces scientific inquiry, promotes more research, encourages analysis diversity, and tests new hypotheses (ibid.).
References


