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Editors

Embracing Well-Being in Diverse African Contexts: Research Perspectives

 Springer

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Chapter 5

Conceptualising and Measuring Hospitality in Relation to Wellbeing in Kenya: Is Hospitality a Character Strength?



Sahaya G. Selvam, Joyce Wanjiru Kiige, and Jeketule Soko

Abstract Hospitality is recognised as a salient value across most cultures, including in Africa. Yet, empirical research is narrowly focused on the hospitality industry. Psychological studies on hospitality are lacking. Therefore, the present research, consisting of three studies, explored hospitality within the theoretical framework of character strengths and wellbeing. Study 1 examined the perception of hospitality among several ethnic groups in Kenya and identified dimensions that define hospitality: spending time with guests, enjoying their presence, having long conversations, not being disturbed when guests arrive unannounced, welcoming them in one's residence, providing good food, making sacrifices to make them feel at home, and providing comfortable accommodation. Based on the qualitative data, in Study 2, a 9-item scale of hospitality was developed and validated. Factor analysis identified two factors: logistical and dispositional hospitality. The scale showed high internal consistency reliability and satisfied criteria of validity. Study 3 tested the association between hospitality and wellbeing using the Tangaza Hospitality Scale and the Mental Health Continuum-Short Form. Findings showed that dispositional hospitality predicts mental health: $R = .428$, $R^2 = .183$, $p < .01$. It is hoped that hospitality will gain more currency within positive psychology, and eventually be listed as a character strength.

Keywords Hospitality · African hospitality · Hospitality and wellbeing · Africa and positive psychology · Tangaza Hospitality Scale

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5.1 Introduction

Hospitality is recognised as a salient value across most cultures, even if expressions of it could take different forms. Most religious traditions require their adherents to offer hospitality even to strangers (Sharpley, 2009). From the story of Abraham welcoming three strangers in the middle of the day found in the Hebrew Scriptures to Paul thanking the churches for their hospitality in the Christian scriptures, the Judeo-Christian tradition is awash with hospitality (Bolin, 2004). Offering hospitality, even to strangers, is also at the heart of the Hindu culture. Even today, the distribution of food and goods to strangers is literally practised even in modern city streets by adherents of Hinduism and Sikhism (George, 2009). Islam has enshrined within itself the Arabic desert dwellers' virtue of hospitality and generosity (*karam*, Sobh et al., 2013). Heal (1990) points out that in ancient Rome as well as in early modern England, hospitality was considered a value among good citizens; this included not only hosting friends and relatives for dinners but also welcoming strangers.

Literature in cultural anthropology highlights the important role of hospitality in the social life of the peoples of Africa. African homesteads are open spaces, ever ready to welcome familiar and unfamiliar guests. In urban Africa, it might have mutated itself to a different form, but the value of hospitality with food and fun is never lost. Healey (1981), a Christian missionary, appreciates the hospitality of the people of Africa as a concrete expression of openness and presence. According to Moila (2002), African hospitality is simply a practical expression of African cultural and moral value. Hospitality is a way of life. It is an extension of the unconditional African generosity (Echema, 1995). According to Odera Oruka, a Kenyan philosopher, in his African sagacity, happiness itself is defined as being open to all people (Oruka, 1990).

Despite these traditions—global and African—contemporary research on hospitality tends to narrowly focus on hotel and tourism industries. The main difference between “hospitality as a cultural value” and “hospitality as an industry” is that in the latter, the relationship between the host and guest lasts only as long as the guest can pay (Ashness & Lashley, 1995). Lashley (2015) further makes a distinction between “hospitality” which is related to welcoming and hosting of tourists with direct monetary benefits, and “hospitableness” which refers to altruistic hospitality that is carried out as an end in itself. Hospitableness is “offered merely for the pleasure of giving other people pleasure” (Lashley, 2015, p. 1). Research on hospitality needs to further explore its cultural and private aspects and its association with collective and individual affective and cognitive dimensions. Insights gained from studies on hospitableness would, without doubt, enhance research in the hospitality industry as well. Despite this distinction, in this chapter the term “hospitality” is used to connote the cultural value and individual trait-like disposition of hospitableness.

In the editorial of the launching issue of the journal *Hospitality and Society*, Lynch et al. (2011) point out several other factors currently affecting research around hospitality. One of these is the lack of interdisciplinarity in the field. Therefore, they advocate for an “intellectual hospitality” in which different academic disciplines can

enrich each other on the understanding of hospitality. Inspired by this clarion call, the scope of the present research project was to provide some insights on hospitality from the perspective of positive psychology.

Thus far, studies on hospitality from a psychology perspective, particularly examining the association between hospitality and wellbeing, are meagre. Selvam and Collicutt (2013), while examining the ubiquity of character strengths within the African traditional religions and cultures, realised that hospitality emerged spontaneously in their data as a possible entrant into the catalogue of character strengths, Values in Action (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). This is justifiable given that Peterson (2006) agrees that the list of character strengths is still a work in progress. Selvam and Collicutt recommended further exploration of this. The current research was undertaken in response to that recommendation. Even as this research project was underway, Biswas-Diener et al. (2019) attempted to conceptualise and measure hospitality within the framework of positive psychology by developing the Brief Hospitality Scale. The scale, which has 4 items, is shown to have very robust psychometric properties. They have also examined the association among hospitality, wellbeing, and the dimensions of the Big Five model of personality. A few years prior to the work of Biswas-Diener and colleagues, Blain and Lashley (2014) had developed a flexible questionnaire that measures three dimensions of what they termed “hospitalableness”: (a) Desire to put guests before yourself—4 items; (b) Desire to make guests happy—5 items; (c) Desire to make guests feel special—4 items. Thus, the questionnaire had 13 items in all.

While the questionnaire of Blain and Lashley (2014) was developed in British and European contexts, the Brief Hospitality Scale (Biswas-Diener et al., 2019) was initially conceptualised in the American context and later validated across 12 nations. None of these countries are from the African continent. Therefore, the need still remains for exploring hospitality as a character strength within the African context, by conceptualising and developing an instrument to measure the construct. Therefore, this research project aimed at contributing to the study of hospitality by conceptualising and measuring hospitality in the Kenyan/African context from the perspective of positive psychology focusing on character strengths and wellbeing. In so doing, the study aims to examine the possibility for hospitality being considered a character strength.

5.2 The Current Research

The current research consisted of three studies in fulfilling the above aim:

Study 1: A qualitative study aimed to identify the dimensions of hospitality by examining the perception and experience of hospitality among several ethnic groups in Kenya. The envisaged output of this study was a list of dimensions that conceptualise hospitality in the African context, and the outcome was a scale that could be used to measure hospitality.

Study 2: Based on the emerging themes of the qualitative data, the second study aimed to validate a 9-item scale of hospitality—the Tangaza Hospitality Scale.

Study 3: The final study aimed to test the association between hospitality and wellbeing using the Tangaza Hospitality Scale and Mental Health Continuum Scale—Short Form (Keyes, 2009). This phase of the project also aimed to verify which of the dimensions of hospitality (dispositional or logistical) had a stronger association with wellbeing. Taken together, if hospitality as a construct is distinctly measurable and correlates positively to different dimensions of wellbeing, then this study would contribute to the discussion on considering hospitality as a candidate character strength (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Ethical clearance for the project was granted by the Kenya National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) after it was locally cleared by the Tangaza University College. Data was collected in all phases of the project with due respect to the norms of research ethics, including informed consent from the participants. This was ensured through signed forms from the participants. Data collection was partly led by the second author as part of her dissertation work. The rest of the data was collected with the help of research assistants who were post-graduate students, after due training that included a call to cultural sensitivity. The whole process was designed and overseen by the first author. The third author was involved in data analysis. Participation in the study was voluntary and participants did not receive incentives.

5.3 Study 1: Qualitative Study on Perceived Concept of Hospitality

5.3.1 Purpose

Brotherton (1999) provides a detailed account of the difficulty experienced in hospitality research in defining hospitality itself. According to him, hospitality as a product, a process, and an experience are often confused. If we want to measure hospitality to ascertain its correlation to wellbeing, we first need to define it. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how people conceptualise hospitality in their ordinary lives.

For this purpose, a qualitative method of data collection and analysis was considered most suitable. Besides, it was envisaged that the emerging themes from this study could form the basis of items for the development of a scale to measure hospitality in the African context. It is a common practice to use qualitative studies to inform development of scales (Rowan & Wulff, 2007). Besides, qualitative research designs demonstrate a sensitivity to linguistic and sociocultural contexts (Yardley, 2017). Therefore, qualitative studies are ideal to be used in positive psychology in scale development, particularly when cultural content is explored (Delle Fave & Bassi, 2009). Moreover, as Robbins (2008, p. 96) argues: “Eudaimonic happiness

cannot be purely value-free, nor can it be completely studied without using both nomothetic and idiographic (i.e., quantitative and qualitative) methods in addressing problems of value". Therefore, a qualitative research design served the purpose of Study 1 in the current 3-phase research project which used a sequential mixed-method design.

5.3.2 Method

With the help of 12 research assistants who were postgraduate students of counselling psychology, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted in English and Swahili. All interviews were transcribed and those in Swahili were also translated by a person who was not a research assistant. The authenticity of the translations was verified by the first two authors together. This phase of the study included 148 participants across Kenya. Of these, 53% were male. The mean age of participants was 41.1 years ($SD = 17.2$), the youngest being 18 and the oldest being 73 years old. The participants represented 12 ethnic communities of Kenya; there were also about 20 participants from other countries of Africa who were living in Kenya at the time of the study. The following questions served as the tentative set of key questions for the in-depth interviews; other probing questions were added in response to the emerging conversation:

1. What are the best experiences of hospitality that you have had when you have visited other people or families?
2. Could you describe how you generally welcome guests at your home?
3. What are the components of the ideal expression of hospitality in your culture?
4. What words, phrases, and sayings are used to describe African hospitality in your culture?
5. What changes do you see in the way hospitality is practised nowadays as compared to olden days?

The interviews lasted an average of 25–30 min and were audio-recorded, transcribed, translated, and coded for thematic analysis. "Thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Themes are more than just phrases and expressions found in the data; hence, thematic analysis implies a certain level of interpretation of the mind of the participants (Boyatzis, 1998), and to give voice to them. The coding process was carried out by the first two authors, initially independently. In the second stage, the coders compared their themes and if differences arose between them, a dialogue was carried out between the two coders. Finally, the themes reported below were selected from the transcribed text on the basis of frequency and distribution among participants.

As described above, the reliability of the study was ensured by more than one person carrying out the coding of the data, and by maintaining a paper trail. The validity of the findings was ensured by a triangulation process among the data,

identified themes, and existing literature (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009). The themes reported here are corroborated by the literature in the discussion section that follows the findings.

5.3.3 Findings

5.3.3.1 Hospitality Is Welcoming Guests

Almost all participants acknowledged that hospitality is considered a virtue across African cultures. If one is not hospitable then one is frowned upon by society. Guests are a blessing, as one 20-year-old male participant from the Nandi ethnic group in Kenya put it, “In our culture, we like a guest as a blessing from God. We need to honour him and make him happy.”¹

Most of the participants understood hospitality as an act of welcoming visitors, and sometimes even strangers. Some of the participants were more specific and described hospitality as being kind to, paying attention to, and taking time with others to make them feel at home. For instance, a 39-year-old female participant said, “It is an art of welcoming somebody and making somebody feel at home, free and relaxed.” This was also echoed by a male participant aged 24, who said hospitality “is an act of welcoming anybody any time to enable him/her feel at home without necessarily looking at their financial status.”

Some participants acknowledged that there is a difference between welcoming guests casually at home and for family functions such as weddings and funerals—these tend to be formal and entail a lot of prior preparation and could take place outside the actual home of the host. For the sake of handling a large number of guests at a family function, the event could be held at a common hall or a hotel. On these occasions, there may not be personal interaction with everyone. These formal functions are now on the increase. However, if the visit is casual and routine-like, then the guest is hosted at home. Sometimes the visitor might just walk in unannounced. The way they are welcomed is informal with a lot of personal attention.

Welcoming guests has its set of rituals. It always begins with a greeting, and enquiry about the situation of where they come from (about the family, animals, and other aspects). This is followed by offering a drink. A female participant said, “When the person arrives, first of all, you offer him or her a seat, then you give them water to drink. . . Then later on, you greet the person and tell the person: ‘Feel at home’.” In the Kenyan context, the drink could be alcoholic, or non-alcoholic, or tea, or a type of milk. For example, the members of the Kalenjin ethnic group in Kenya frequently spoke of *amursik*—a type of sour milk that is offered to guests.

¹The sexist language is part of the verbatim data from interviews. The authors do not subscribe to such language. However, this is maintained here to demonstrate authenticity.

5.3.3.2 Being with and Spending Time with Guests

In the Kenyan context and, by extension, in Africa, when a guest is at home the hosts make sure that someone is sitting with the guest all the time, engaging them in conversation. The guest is not to be left alone. Usually, as some members of the family engage in such conversations, others would busy themselves preparing the meal. The meal becomes urgent especially when the guest is in a hurry and is not planning to spend the night with the hosts.

There is an expression of “being with” the guest. In the African context, when the arrival of the guest is known in advance, they are waited for and received as far from the home as possible and accompanied to the home of the host. Similarly, the guest is accompanied as they bid farewell as far as the host can physically go. “To be escorted” is a common expression in Eastern Africa. There is a nuance to the accompanying, as a 55-year-old male participant states, “usually visitors are escorted with gifts especially if a visitor comes with some gifts, which is usually in the form of foodstuff. The time that visitor will be leaving there is a need to give them something in return. Sometimes some visitors are escorted with songs especially if they are in-laws. They are treated in a very special way.” In most of the East African cultures, the basket or the bag that the guest brought their gift in is never returned empty. The guests’ gifts are thus reciprocated with gifts from the host.

5.3.3.3 Having Savouring Conversation

Speaking “nicely” to a visitor is as important as offering food to the guest to make them comfortable. A 49-year-old participant reiterated this as she said, “Hospitality is of two types: there is hospitality of receiving someone. . . And you make them feel at home just by your conversation, and there is no need for even a big meal, and another way of being hospitable is you occupy yourself by preparing for the guest something to eat. But this depends on how they come.” Another participant seconded this opinion, saying, “although food is important, speaking nicely to a person is more important. The way you will receive them they will be very comfortable and feel at home. And they would like to visit you another day. Yes, so hospitality is not just about food.” The same participant also acknowledged that nice conversation can occur at least after the meal, especially if the host was busy preparing the meal.

One way of beginning a conversation and engaging in a conversation with the guest, especially if the guest is only a friend and not a relative, is to start showing the family photo albums. The photos give good background information about the host to the guest and further tighten the ties between the two. Another way of keeping the guest busy is to take them around the village or the field for a walk. In any case, the guest should not feel bored at the home of the guest. They must feel good.

5.3.3.4 Preparing and Providing Good Food and Drinks

Food and drinks are part of hospitality. If the guest is really in a hurry, they should at least drink some water at the home of the guest. Especially female participants in the interviews invariably alluded to the aspect of food in hospitality. For instance, one middle-aged woman said rather excitedly, “for me cooking food and serving others makes me feel good. I feel proud of the food I have cooked especially when they eat well. Remember, this includes cooking special meals and showing to the guests I am overjoyed about their presence when you serve them by interacting with the guests makes me feel happy. I feel satisfied that I have shown them good hospitality.”

Food and drinks are important aspects of welcoming guests because we do not know what they have endured during the journey. Most guests are too shy to request for a drink or something to eat; therefore, it is the duty of the host to offer it to them even if they do not request it. The people of the Kikuyu ethnic group say, “Hunger is not to be interrogated. You just give food.” A 63-year-old member of the Kalenjin ethnic community said, “If you know in advance that the guest is arriving, you prepare in advance. You prepare special dishes, such as *amursik*—fermented milk; and *red ugali*—a stiff porridge made from millet. Sometimes even a goat is slaughtered in honour of the guest.”

5.3.3.5 Preparation of Place and Accommodation

One way of showing a spirit of welcome to the guest is to have prepared the physical environment: by cleaning the environment, arranging the furniture in order, and changing covers and decorations. Usually, the whole family helps with the preparations. While speaking about their understanding of hospitality, most of the participants described hospitality as creating room/space for others. Some went ahead to explain that a room prepared with a lot of attention would make the guest feel cared for and respected. For instance, a 20-year-old male participant expressed his understanding of hospitality purely in terms of the accommodation: “For me, it is so important to put up a guest in a comfortable place, because they are coming to an unfamiliar environment.” This was echoed by a female participant, aged 30, who said: “hospitality has to do with accommodating people and being generous and kind-hearted.”

Other participants acknowledged that sometimes this entails a certain degree of self-sacrifice, not only in terms of the time spent and extra work done, but also giving up one’s own comfort for the sake of the guest. This implies sometimes giving up your cosy bed for the guest and sleeping on the couch for the night. The presence of the guest may intrude on your privacy, but you are ready for this in order to express genuine hospitality.

5.3.3.6 No Problem Even If They Came Unannounced

Many participants acknowledged that guests, especially those who come from far, usually send a message about their coming, sometimes weeks before their travel. Nowadays, people might give short notice through mobile phones. Even though it is preferred that guests inform the host before they visit, they cannot be sent away if they just turned up. In rural areas, they are likely to find someone around the homestead; however, in urban settings, the host family members could be away, leaving the guest stranded. Participants acknowledged this range of dynamics in welcoming guests who come uninvited and unannounced. However, everyone who delved into this topic acknowledged that it is important to be polite to guests. This might entail changing one's own programme to welcome guests, or sharing the food that is already prepared with the guests, or enduring extra work and fatigue to express hospitality.

5.3.4 Discussion

Study 1 set out to explore how ordinary Kenyans conceptualise hospitality. The findings of this study informed the items for the development of a hospitality scale. From the above findings, the following dimensions of hospitality could be identified: generally, Africans welcome guests at home; hospitality is expressed by being with and spending time with guests; being with the guests is accompanied by having savouring conversations; true hospitality implies not being upset even if guests turned up unannounced; hospitality also includes providing good food, drinks, and accommodation.

In this brief discussion section, two tasks are aimed at. First, the reported themes are corroborated with existing literature (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009). Second, the themes are further discussed in reference to the two existing scales of hospitality (Biswas-Diener et al., 2019; Blain & Lashley, 2014).

There is ample literature on hospitality in Africa. Most of this literature discusses hospitality from anthropological, philosophical, and theological perspectives. These types of sources have provided the content for previous discussions on character strengths (Dahlsgaard et al., 2005). What emerges from the literature regarding hospitality in Africa largely corresponds to the emerging themes of the present study. To begin with, hospitality to strangers and unannounced guests is something that stands out in the literature as typical of African hospitality (Magesa, 1998; Mugambi, 1989). Welcoming guests into the homes and even offering a readymade space for them to stay is further highlighted in the literature (Kiaziku, 2007, 2009). Kiaziku (2007, p. 139) points out that "Africans consider it right and important that each house has some rooms for guests." Furthermore, the spirit of hospitality consists of sharing what a family has (Kiaziku, 2007). It is expressed by not only offering food and drinks, but also in availing one's time and presence to the guests

(Mulandi, 2003). In general, guests are considered to be a blessing because they bring gifts, information, and news from far, and they provide a reason for a good meal that will be enjoyed by everyone (Healey & Sybertz, 1996). These selected authors provide support for what this study concluded as findings from the interviews with the participants.

These dimensions are also similar to those included in the questionnaire developed by Blain and Lashley (2014). Their instrument measures three dimensions of hospitableness: (a) desire to put guests before yourself; (b) desire to make guests happy; (c) desire to make guests feel special. These dimensions are further divided into 13 items, which include statements such as: "I put guests' enjoyment before my own"; "The comfort of guests is most important to me"; "I get a natural high when I make my guests feel special"; and "When hosting I try to feel at one with the guests". These items are similar to those concepts expressed by the African participants. Again, what these participants have expressed resonates well with the items in the Brief Hospitality Scale (Biswas-Diener et al., 2019): "I enjoy hosting others"; "When I host others, I feel good about myself"; "Being hospitable is something that comes easily to me"; "I am a very hospitable person". Interestingly, these two measures remain more at the affective level, and do not integrate the logistical aspects of hospitality, such as preparing food and accommodation. Therefore, there is a need for a scale that would capture the specificities of the African expression of hospitality and that would capture the inner processes as well as the external expressions.

5.4 Study 2: Validation of the Tangaza Hospitality Scale

5.4.1 Purpose

The purpose of the second study was to validate the Tangaza Hospitality Scale which was developed with the items drawn from the emerging themes of Study 1. This phase of the project aimed at testing the psychometric properties of the scale by means of inter-item correlation and factor analyses, among other statistical tests. It also attempted to validate the scale by measuring the association of the dimensions of hospitality against constructs such as subjective happiness and extraversion.

5.4.2 Method

5.4.2.1 Participants

In an attempt to verify the psychometric properties of the scale and to validate it, Study 2 included 216 participants (52.3% male) in Nairobi, conveniently sampled. Their mean age was 36.3 ($SD = 12.0$), the youngest being 18 and the oldest being

74 years old. The participants represented a range of religious, educational, and economic backgrounds.

5.4.2.2 Instruments

Tangaza Hospitality Scale Initially, a 10-item scale was created from the emerging themes of Study 1. The items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (*very much unlike me*) to 5 (*very much like me*). The participants were asked to indicate the degree to which each statement was true of them personally. One of the reversed items did not consistently correlate with the rest of the items and hence was excluded from the rest of the analysis. The item reads: “I expect my guests to accept whatever I offer them, and I do not work hard to offer them what they prefer.” See Appendix for the 9-item scale.

Subjective Happiness Scale This scale, developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999), consists of 4 items that measure global subjective happiness on a 7-point Likert scale. One of the items is reversed. By 1999, it was validated in 14 studies with a total of 2732 participants. As of now, it has been used in over 3000 other studies (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999).

Measure of Extraversion Hospitality entails a certain level of sociability; hence, it was hypothesised in the present study that there would be a positive correlation between levels of hospitality and the personality trait of extraversion. Therefore, only the 8 items measuring extraversion from the 44-item Big Five Inventory (BFI-44; John & Srivastava, 1999) were used. Items of extraversion measure different facets including gregariousness, assertiveness, energy, excitement-seeking, enthusiasm, and warmth. A meta-analysis of studies conducted over 24 years (1991–2014) that used the BFI-44 showed Cronbach’s coefficient alpha of each dimension to be nearly 0.8 (Li et al., 2015).

5.4.3 Findings

Descriptive statistics of the individual items of the Tangaza Hospitality Scale (Table 5.1) showed that among the studied population, “welcoming guests in the residence” attained the highest mean score, suggesting that the sample often welcomes their guests at home and does not meet up with them at a common place. Preparing better food and drinks than usual for the guests may not be a concern as suggested by the relatively low mean score of item 9. Nonetheless, on all items the sample scored well above the scale midpoint of 3.

There was no significant effect of demographic variables on levels of hospitality: gender, age, education, and religious backgrounds. Comparing the level of hospitality on the basis of gender, the mean of the total scores of hospitality suggested that women are likely to be more hospitable than men (Male = 31.79, *SD* = 6.6;

Table 5.1 Mean score of items

	Mean	SD
1. Welcoming guests in the residence	3.95	1.04
2. Enjoying spending time with guests	3.92	0.99
3. Not disturbed when they come unannounced	3.71	1.23
4. Having long conversations with guests	3.58	1.15
5. Alright when a family member brings guests (R)	3.34	1.20
6. Effort in preparing good food	3.75	1.16
7. Ensuring that guests have a good place to sleep	3.59	1.28
8. Enjoying being with guests (R)	3.50	1.16
9. Better food and drinks than usual	3.33	1.30

$N = 216$; Range: 1 to 5

Female = 33.46, $SD = 6.2$); however, this fell short of statistical significance, $t(210) = -1.877$, $p = .062$.

Initially, a correlation analysis was carried out among all 10 items, using Pearson's r . As said earlier, one of the items was not correlating consistently with the rest of the items; therefore, it was eliminated from the rest of the analysis. The correlation between other items was significant, except for item 9 which did not correlate significantly with 2 items, namely "Having long conversation with guests" and "Enjoying being with guests" (see Table 5.2). This result, however, must be considered together with that of the factor analysis.

Factor analysis, using principal component analysis with varimax rotation, suggested the emergence of a two-factor model (Table 5.3). The factors have been named: Dispositional Hospitality (with 6 items) that explains 38.6% of the variance (Eigenvalue = 3.483), and Logistical Hospitality (with 3 items) explaining 13.44% of the variance (Eigenvalue = 1.999). The correlation between the scores of Dispositional Hospitality and Logistical Hospitality was significant, but not too high, suggesting that they are indeed distinct but related constructs, $r = .460$, $p < .01$.

The internal consistency reliability test using Cronbach's α for the grouping of items into two subscales yielded levels that are generally good (see Table 5.4). Therefore, the scale was considered reliable to be used among the Kenyan population.

In order to test the construct validity of the Tangaza Hospitality Scale, a correlational analysis was carried out among the three variables of the study (Hospitality, Subjective Happiness, and Extraversion) and the two dimensions of hospitality, using Pearson's r (Table 5.5). There was a significant correlation among almost all the variables. It is interesting to note that Dispositional Hospitality and Logistical Hospitality correlate quite differently with other variables. Dispositional Hospitality has a stronger correlation than the latter with other variables. For instance, Logistical Hospitality did not significantly correlate with Extraversion. Although the correlation between Hospitality Total and Extraversion was rather weak, it was significant; it also correlated strongly with Subjective Happiness (Pearson's $r = .304$, $p < .01$).

Table 5.2 Correlation between items of the Tangaza Hospitality Scale

	Item1	Item2	Item3	Item4	Item5	Item6	Item7	Item8	Item9
1. Welcoming guests in the residence	1								
2. Enjoying spending time with guests	.572**	1							
3. Not disturbed when they come unannounced	.451**	.403**	1						
4. Having long conversations with guests	.307**	.423**	.321**	1					
5. Alright when a family member brings guests	.263**	.308**	.391**	.228**	1				
6. Effort in preparing good food	.314**	.302**	.312**	.298**	.223**	1			
7. Ensuring that guests have a good place to sleep	.304**	.353**	.397**	.260**	.301**	.333**	1		
8. Enjoying being with guests	.341**	.462**	.237**	.316**	.393**	.170*	.232**	1	
9. Better food and drinks than usual	.206**	.268**	.158*	.121	.144*	.354**	.447**	.060	1

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 5.3 Results of factor analysis on Tangaza Hospitality Scale

	Dispositional Hospitality	Logistical Hospitality
1. Welcoming guests in the residence	.661	.278
2. Enjoying spending time with guests	.726	.282
3. Not disturbed when they come unannounced	.596	.317
4. Having long conversations with guests	.599	.156
5. Alright when a family member brings guests (R)	.603	.137
8. Enjoying being with guests (R)	.747	-.081
6. Effort in preparing good food	.255	.647
7. Ensuring that guests have a good place to sleep	.306	.694
9. Better food and drinks than usual	-.020	.848

Bold indicates the loading of items to the respective factors

Table 5.4 Results of Reliability Test

Dimensions	No. of items	Possible score range	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α
Dispositional Hospitality	6	6 to 30	21.96	4.61	.765
Logistical Hospitality	3	3 to 15	10.64	2.84	.646
Hospitality Scale	9	9 to 45	41.969	6.47	.791

Table 5.5 Correlation between hospitality and subjective happiness & extraversion

	Dispositional Hospitality	Logistical Hospitality	Hospitality total	Subjective happiness	Extraversion
Dispositional Hospitality	1				
Logistical Hospitality	.460**	1			
Hospitality Total	.919**	.773**	1		
Subjective Happiness	.347**	.135*	.304**	1	
Extraversion	.268**	.005	.190**	.164*	1

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

5.4.4 Discussion

In the factor-analysis, the 9-item scale yielded a two-factor model. The two factors are named Dispositional Hospitality and Logistical Hospitality. Dispositional Hospitality includes items that delve into an individual's attitudes and preferences as regards hospitality. These items could build up to one's character trait. On the other hand, logistical hospitality would include items that refer to how an individual goes about expressing their dispositional hospitality in terms of preparing the environment, including food and sleep, to make the guest comfortable. Dispositional

hospitality could be considered similar to “hospitableness”, and logistical hospitality to “hospitality” (Lashley, 2015). Biswas-Diener et al. (2019) make no such distinctions in their Brief Hospitality Scale, which has items with a single factor. Their items focus on the positive affective states of hospitality. Therefore, the Tangaza Hospitality Scale, due to its inclusion of the logistical aspects of hospitality, could be a good alternative to the Brief Hospitality Scale.

The mean scores of all the items were above average. The overall mean score of hospitality was negatively skewed (-727), suggesting that participants are generally optimistic about themselves. Demographic variables did not show any significant association with the scores of hospitality. However, in the study by Biswas-Diener et al. (2019), women scored significantly higher in hospitality as compared to men. In the present study, the results were tending towards such a situation, but it fell short of statistical significance. The patterns in correlations (Table 5.5) suggest that hospitality is inherently a positive variable, supporting one of the characteristics of character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Moreover, it is significantly correlated to subjective wellbeing. These are useful arguments for the inclusion of hospitality in the catalogue of character strengths. We will revisit them in the general conclusion to this chapter.

5.5 Study 3: Hospitality and Mental Health

5.5.1 Purpose

The third study had two major objectives: (1) to further verify the psychometric properties of the Tangaza Hospitality Scale; (2) to test the correlation between hospitality and mental health.

5.5.2 Method

5.5.2.1 Participants

The present study included 283 young adults (45.2% male), aged between 18 and 35, from four locations in Kenya. They represented a great variety, including those from rural and urban areas, married and unmarried, and employed and unemployed.

5.5.2.2 Instruments

Study 3 had two main variables: hospitality and mental health. Hospitality was measured using the Tangaza Hospitality Scale as evolved from Study 2 above. The second variable was measured using the Mental Health Continuum Scale—

Short Form (Keyes, 2009). Keyes' scale comprehensively measures the degree of positive mental health, understood as flourishing (Keyes, 2002). Laid out in a 6-point Likert scale, the 14 items represent three dimensions of flourishing: 3 items for emotional (hedonic) wellbeing, 5 items for social wellbeing, and 6 items for psychological wellbeing. Social wellbeing and psychological wellbeing add up to eudemonic wellbeing. The scale is recognised as having excellent psychometric properties (Lamers et al., 2011), and has been previously validated among the African population (Keyes et al., 2008).

5.5.3 Findings

As for the first objective of Study 3, in verifying the psychometric properties of the Tangaza Hospitality Scale, the results were very similar to those of Study 2. Factor analysis again yielded two factors: Dispositional Hospitality, with 6 items explaining 30.33% of the total variation (Eigenvalue = 2.73); and Logistical Hospitality, with 3 items explaining 15.03% of the total variation (Eigenvalue = 1.353). Cronbach's α for the two sub-dimensions and the overall hospitality scale was above .60.

The second objective was to test the correlation between hospitality and mental health as understood as human flourishing. Pearson's correlation was employed, and the results are summarised in Table 5.6. The data shows a significant positive correlation between the overall hospitality score and scores on the Mental Health Continuum—Short Form ($r = .417, p < .01$). The data also reveals that hospitality had a significant correlation with the threedimensions of human flourishing. Interestingly, Dispositional Hospitality had higher levels of correlation with all the dimensions of Mental Health, as compared with Logistical Hospitality.

Table 5.7 presents the outcome of the hierarchical multiple regression testing two models, using mental health as measured by the Mental Health Continuum—Short Form as the dependent variable. Model 1, with Dispositional Hospitality as the single predictor, yielded a significant result, $R = .428, R^2 = .183, p < .01$. However,

Table 5.6 Correlation between hospitality and mental health

	HT	DH	LH	MHC	EWB	SWB	PWB
Hospitality Total (HT)	1						
Dispositional Hospitality (DH)	.919**	1					
Logistical Hospitality (LH)	.785**	.476**	1				
Mental Health Continuum (MHC)	.417**	.428**	.258**	1			
Emotional Wellbeing (EWB)	.417**	.422**	.266**	.750**	1		
Social Wellbeing (SWB)	.278**	.307**	.137*	.809**	.531**	1	
Psychological Wellbeing (PWB)	.341**	.334**	.284**	.838**	.447**	.439**	1

Note: N = 283; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 5.7 Model summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error	Change statistics				
					R ²	F	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.428 ^a	.183	.180	.84675662	.183	62.895	1	281	.000
2	.432 ^b	.187	.181	.84629481	.004	1.307	1	280	.254

^a Predictors: (constant), dispositional hospitality

^b Predictors: (constant), dispositional hospitality, logistical hospitality

when Logistical Hospitality was introduced as a second predictor in model 2, the relationship of the variables increased minimally, but not significantly, $R = .432$, $R^2 = .187$, $p = .254$. This means that Dispositional Hospitality contributes 18.3% while Logistical Hospitality contributes only .4% to the model. Furthermore, while the effect of Dispositional Hospitality is significant, that of Logistical Hospitality is not significant at p -value .05.

5.5.4 Discussion

The general finding of Study 3 is that there is a significant positive correlation between hospitality and human flourishing ($r = .417$, $p < .01$). This implies that variation in hospitality was accompanied by variation in human flourishing among this sample of young African adults in Kenya. These findings are consistent with those of the study by Biswas-Diener et al. (2019) which showed that hospitality was significantly correlated with life satisfaction, positive affect, optimism, and flourishing, as measured by the New Well-being Measures of Diener et al. (2010).

Overall, the findings of this study support the premise that character strengths are significantly associated with dimensions of wellbeing (Table 5.6). However, as Table 5.7 suggests, not all dimensions of character strengths have equal predictive value on happiness and life satisfaction (Peterson et al., 2007). It would also be interesting to verify the predictive value of hospitality on wellbeing as compared to other character strengths.

5.6 General Discussion

Study 1, as per its aim, explored the perception of the African/Kenyan population on hospitality. This provided a viable framework for the development of the Tangaza Hospitality Scale in Study 2. In Study 3, the correlations between hospitality and well-being was explored.

In Study 2 and Study 3, hospitality was found to be positively correlated to wellbeing. More specifically, Study 2 focused on subjective happiness as measured by the Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), and Study 3 on

mental health as measured by the Mental Health Continuum—Short Form, which considers the dimensions of emotional wellbeing, social wellbeing, and psychological wellbeing. This suggests that hospitality as a practice has a significant association with individual and collective wellbeing. This is consistent with the claim of Peterson and Park (2006) that character strengths have a robust association with wellbeing at the individual and collective levels, even though sometimes the link to the collective level may be more robust than to the individual level.

One of the major contributions of the present research was the identification of Dispositional and Logistical Hospitality as distinct constructs which are measurable as such. Moreover, the data indicated that Dispositional Hospitality has higher levels of correlation with all the dimensions of mental health, as compared with Logistical Hospitality. This might suggest that “disposition”, which is more closely related to character strengths, may have a stronger association with wellbeing, and the logistical aspects of hospitality that are extraneous to the individual may be less associated with wellbeing. In a similar vein, it emerged in Study 2 that Dispositional Hospitality rather than Logistical Hospitality was more strongly correlated with extraversion which is a personality trait. This once again suggests that Dispositional Hospitality could be considered to be trait-like. Relating this to literature, we might consider dispositional hospitality being close to what Lashley (2015) has called “hospitalableness”, which is a cultural value, and logistical hospitality being related to “hospitality”, which often is the focus of the hospitality industry. After all, the aim of the hospitality industry is mainly to provide efficiently the three logistical aspects: food, drinks, and accommodation. Lashley contrasts this with the cultural domains of hospitality which include the social values and contexts in which hospitality takes place. The present study has shed further light on the cultural domains of hospitality which are related to individual disposition.

5.7 Conclusion

The present research project set out to contribute to the study of hospitality within the framework of positive psychology focusing on character strengths and wellbeing, specifically by conceptualising and measuring hospitality in the African context. This large aim was realised through a three-tier project. It was our hope that the evidence emerging from these studies could be used to make a tentative case for considering hospitality to be a character strength.

The project commenced with a qualitative study (Study 1) which explored the experience and perception of hospitality among participants drawn from Kenya. Out of this study, the following themes were identified as dimensions that define hospitality in the Kenyan or, by extension, the African sociocultural context: Africans welcome guests at home; hospitality is expressed in being with and spending time with guests; being with the guests is carried out together with savouring conversations; true hospitality implies not being upset even if guests turned up unannounced; and hospitality also includes providing good food, drinks, and

accommodation. Thus, Study 1 fulfilled the first clause of the aim of the present research project, namely, to conceptualise hospitality within the African context.

The list of dimensions that emerged from Study 1 informed the items for the development of a scale of hospitality. In the quantitative study that followed (Study 2), the psychometric properties of the proposed scale were evaluated. Factor analysis identified dispositional and logistical hospitality as two dimensions of hospitality. While the internal consistency reliability indices of the two sub-scales were at acceptable levels, Cronbach's alpha for the whole scale was .791. In a test for construct validity, the scores of hospitality and its sub-dimensions positively correlated with subjective wellbeing and extraversion. In this way, Study 2 satisfied the second clause of the general aim of the research project; that is, to measure hospitality in the African context. The Tangaza Hospitality Scale is a contribution of the present project to the study of hospitality within the framework of positive psychology.

Finally, Study 3 considered the relationship between hospitality and wellbeing employing the Tangaza Hospitality Scale and Mental Health Continuum Scale—Short Form (Keyes, 2009). The findings and their implications have been discussed above. Taken together, the three mentioned studies have unpacked the focus of investigating hospitality from a positive psychology perspective in a logical manner.

As for its methodology, in line with the suggestion of Ong and van Dulman (2007), this study integrated qualitative and quantitative approaches in a sequential mixed method design. However, one of the limitations of this study could be that since the study was carried out in Kenya, most of the participants were Kenyans. We want to maintain that since the understanding of hospitality among Kenyans corroborates well with the literature from elsewhere in Africa (Echema, 1995; Healey, 1981; Moila, 2002), the dimensions of hospitality identified in this research may be extended well beyond Kenya. In future research, the Tangaza Hospitality Scale should be validated across cultures within Africa and elsewhere. Moreover, in the studies reported above, test-retest reliability was not verified; this too remains one of the tasks ahead. The two-factor model and the internal consistency reliability need to be further ascertained across cultures. In general, hospitality research must be explored within the framework of positive psychology, using the scales now available, stretching it outside the confines of the hospitality industry.

Based on the findings emerging from the above studies, could the desire of Selvam and Collicutt (2013) be fulfilled? Would hospitality qualify to be a candidate character strength? Peterson and Seligman (2004) in their catalogue of character strengths and virtues furnish ten criteria that a new entrant should satisfy. Since all these criteria were not directly tested in the present study, we suggest a future project specifically examining hospitality within the framework of the ten criteria.

Nonetheless, the present project has added some evidence for hospitality to be considered as a character strength. For instance, the present study provided preliminary support for the notion that hospitality contributes to various fulfilments that constitute good life, for oneself and for others, as measured in terms of subjective wellbeing and mental health. Remarkably, similar outcomes have also been furnished by Biswas-Diener et al. (2019), even though they used different sets of

scales to measure life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1985) and positive affect (Diener et al., 2010). Secondly, it has also emerged in the present research and other studies (Biswas-Diener et al., 2019; Blain & Lashley, 2014) that hospitality is measurable. These scales have measured hospitality in terms of thoughts (desire to provide the best for the guest), feeling (enjoying hosting guests), and behaviour (preparing food and accommodation).

Finally, as Biswas-Diener et al. (2019) have discussed in detail, hospitality seems distinct from other prosocial strengths. Hospitality carries with it the following characteristics: empathy, cordiality, warmth, congeniality, sociability, and generosity. While empathy and generosity are closely related to kindness, and warmth and congeniality are related to love (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), hospitality is a unique prosocial behaviour and attitude that entails a transaction between the guest and host in which the former shares personal time and other resources just because they enjoy doing so. Moreover, kindness and love may not have a dimension of welcome. “Purchasing a theatre ticket for a friend who forgot her wallet, for instance, is generous but not—by definition—hospitable” (Biswas-Diener et al., 2019, p. 15). Hospitality is more nuanced than love and kindness, and, therefore, can be considered a distinct construct.

Based on these indications, together with Biswas-Diener et al. (2019), we tentatively suggest that hospitality deserves the status of a character strength within the framework of positive psychology. Future studies, we hope, will strengthen this proposal.

Appendix: Tangaza Hospitality Scale

To what degree are the following statements true of you personally. Answer bluntly as you know you are at the present, and not what you wish to be. Circle the number applicable.

1.	I like to welcome guests at my residence.	1 Very much unlike me	2 Unlike me	3 Neither like me nor unlike me	4 Like me	5 Very much like me
2.	I enjoy spending ample time with my guests.	1 Very much unlike me	2 Unlike me	3 Neither like me nor unlike me	4 Like me	5 Very much like me
3.	Even if guests come unannounced, I can welcome them without a sour face.	1 Very much unlike me	2 Unlike me	3 Neither like me nor unlike me	4 Like me	5 Very much like me

(continued)

4.	Having taken care of the logistics, I sit and have long conversations with my guests.	1 Very much unlike me	2 Unlike me	3 Neither like me nor unlike me	4 Like me	5 Very much like me
5.	I get disturbed when a family/community member walks in with a guest for a meal.	1 Very much unlike me	2 Unlike me	3 Neither like me nor unlike me	4 Like me	5 Very much like me
6.	I go out of my way to prepare good food and drinks for guests.	1 Very much unlike me	2 Unlike me	3 Neither like me nor unlike me	4 Like me	5 Very much like me
7.	Even if I sleep on a couch, I make sure that my guests have a good place to sleep in.	1 Very much unlike me	2 Unlike me	3 Neither like me nor unlike me	4 Like me	5 Very much like me
8.	I just welcome guests out of politeness, not because I enjoy being with them.	1 Very much unlike me	2 Unlike me	3 Neither like me nor unlike me	4 Like me	5 Very much like me
9.	I make sure that my guests have better food and drinks than I would normally have.	1 Very much unlike me	2 Unlike me	3 Neither like me nor unlike me	4 Like me	5 Very much like me

Note:

The following items are reversed: 5 & 8

Logistical Hospitality = 6, 7, 9

Dispositional Hospitality = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8

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