

GRADUATES BETWEEN LEVEL OF THE TOURISM EDUCATION AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY WORK FIELD

Tarek Sayed Abdel Azim
Minia University

This research aims to follow up the career progress of graduates of the faculty of tourism and hotels, Minia University. In addition, it seeks to investigate if there is a gape between the tourism education and the work market according to the experience of graduates. A survey was conducted of a convenient sample of graduates from the three different departments (tourist studies, hotel studies and tour guidance) of the faculty of tourism, Minia University. The results revealed that 76% of graduates are employed in general, and the majority (78%) among them is employed in the hospitality and tourism sector. Although a great number of graduates join the sector shortly after graduation, half of them faced difficulties in work which are represented in the most cases in the incompetence of foreign languages followed by the shortage of experience. More males than females intend to leave their work in the tourism field.

Keywords: graduate, tourism, hotels, education, human resources, training, turnover

JEL Classification: L83, M1, O1

INTRODUCTION

According to Omran (2000) Egypt has always been one of the first countries which focuses on tourism education. It has introduced this branch of education since the beginning of sixties, and began to grow significantly in terms of number of tourism educational establishments.

One of these establishments is the faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Minia University. It was established based on the republican decree no. 419, issued in 27/12/1995. One of the main objectives of the faculty is to prepare graduates with high quality academic standards.



In the recent past, a large number of authors wrote articles about tourism management examining the issue of hospitality and tourism education (Christou, 1999).

Dolnicar (2001) stated that, few recommendations can be found on how a nation's education system could best possibly support the tourism industry.

A model proposed by Baume (1999) of tourism and hospitality education includes the following:

- The program should be capable of responding to industry needs at the same time as it produces graduates who can understand and manage the economic, social and cultural impacts of tourism on the residents of the host region.
- The program should balance the development of practical management skills with development of a more general understanding of various social science disciplines (Santich, 2004).

Atay and Yildirim (2010) asserted that, it is of great importance to train the students, who receive tourism education, in line with the needs of the industry.

This research is conducted to follow up the career progress of graduates of the faculty of tourism and hotels, Minia University by examining a number of issues like, employability; difficulties to get a job in the tourism and hospitality industry; their opinions about the academic courses; their motivations behind searching for a job in the hospitality and tourism field; the rate of turnover of graduates employed in the hospitality and tourism field. In addition, it seeks to investigate if there is a gape between the tourism education and the work market according to the experience of graduates.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Hospitality and Tourism Education

The main functions of the hospitality and tourism educational institutions

Stergiou *et al.* (2008) stated that education is not merely a matter of developing an optimum curriculum in some quasi-technical sense, but of the exercise of certain intellectual virtues.

Selvi and Demir (2007) found that there is a correlation between the education success level and career development of individuals,

individuals with high educational level makes progress within the organizational structure.

The benefit of tourism education and training is not only reluctant to graduate, but also to the industry itself (Omar *et al.*, 2006, Raj, 2008).

Any country competing in the international tourism market requires a well-developed tourism training and education strategy. The aim of such training strategy should provide an efficient and well-skilled workforce for the tourism industry (Mayaka and Akama, 2007, George, 2007).

Weak points in the tourism educational system and their application on the faculty of tourism and hotels, Minia University

Educational institutions are accused to provide tourism education and training being predominantly industry driven (or employability – driven) with narrow perspectives of either professionalism (i.e. responding to industry requirement for a skilled workforce) or service quality (i.e. meeting the tourists expectations) (Zagonari, 2008).

Being a graduate from the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, the experience that the student gained whilst studying did not prepare him for the working environment. (Kelley-Patterson, and George, 2001).

Dolnicar (2001) claimed that the tourism field is ill-prepared to be the world's number one industry because it has relatively few innovative thinkers.

Purcell and Quinn (1996) argued that a mismatch between the skills and expectations of potential and actual recruits to the industry and trainee management opportunities offered is one of the key reasons of relatively poor retention rates of graduates in the industry.

Mayaka and Akama, (2007) argued that education in tourism is limited or lacking altogether in most of educational institutions.

1) Lack of practical training

Baum and Esichaikual (1998) stated that there is an awareness of the need for tourism education, there is a major problem represented in the lack of trained staff which is caused by the rapid expansion in the size of the tourism industry at a time when education and training are not sufficiently developed to satisfy the demand.

Zahran and Abdul Qader (2006) referred that institutional tourism education in most world countries doesn't provide the labour market with qualified graduates.

As for the points of weakness related to training in our case study, one could observe that there are many problems which are summarized in the following points:

- There is no system to follow-up the students during the summer training period (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2007 / 2008c). Therefore; the graduates generally lack the basic skills qualifying them to work in the field of tourism and hotels (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit a, 2008a).
- The educational tourism office which was established for the goal of training students in the tourism studies department on computer reservations systems is closed and not equipped; in addition, there is not qualified staff to manage it (Source: Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2008a).
- Although there are languages laboratories which are well-equipped, they are not exploited at all (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2008).
- The size of the Kitchen is not compatible with the number of students and therefore (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2007 / 2008).

2) The problem of tourism educators

Christou, (1999) explained that the responsibility of the hospitality educators is to combine industry priorities with student needs and significant contributions to research into socially responsive programmes of study.

Analoui (1995) argued that recently established teaching and learning development units in universities should adopt more realistic approach to promote high teaching standards. Since teaching constitutes only one aspect of teachers', lecturers' and trainers' activities to manage learning situations (Weheba, and Abd El Kader, 2007).

Mayaka and Akama (2007) stated that a good proportion of tourism educators are often not specialists, but are usually attracted from other fields of study which are perceived to be linked to tourism such as geography and sociology.

According to Karp and Yoels (1976), educational system is the biggest culprit for making students to think that instructors are uncrowned experts and that the student is listened passively (George, 2007).

As for the points of weakness related to educators in our case study, one can observe that there are many problems which are summarized in the following points:

- There is no system or program for the development of scientific skills of the staff members of the faculty.
- The performance of the lecturers who come from other different faculties and who are not specialized in the tourism and hospitality education is of poor quality.
- The numbers of faculty's staff members are not compatible with the numbers of students (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2008a).
- Many of the lecturers belong to other different disciplines not related to tourism and hospitality.
- The performance of lecturers of foreign language coming from the faculty of Alsun is very bad as they rarely come to give their lectures and in most cases they send their assistants to do their mission (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2007d).
- The lack of fund for scientific research carried out by staff members of the faculty, neither by the University nor by external institutions (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2008a).

3) Tourism academic courses

Raj (2008) stated that tourism-related degree programmes have been slow to acquire recognition as a truly academic discipline. This is particularly the case in countries, including developing countries.

Hospitality research indicates that students who participate in experiential education are better prepared for employment. Recruiters, too, view the experiential component as a valuable tool for students to preview the industry and gain leadership (Dickerson, 2009).

In terms of the actual content of tourism courses, there is a continued debate about what should be taught and which disciplines should underpin the content of tourism studies (Riley et al., 2002).

The quality of curricula can be further enhanced by what Umbreit (1992) described as six (major contents areas): leadership, human resources management, services marketing, financial analysis, total quality management, and communication skills (Christou, 1999).

Mayaka and Akama (2007) claimed that tourism studies are often tagged to unrelated departments and unconnected courses, and are housed in different fields including geography, sociology.

Regarding the points of weakness related to tourism academic courses in our case study, one could observe that there are many problems which are summarized in the following points:

- Some of the curricula do not cover the needs of the labour market.
- There are no clear academic standards, according to which the different programmes at the faculty are developed.
- Some of the contents of the curricula do not comply with their titles (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2008a).
- There are similarities in the contents of some curriculum, such as the management of tourist establishments, the principles of the management, management and organizational behaviour in tourism and human resource management in tourism) (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2007 / 2008c).
- The large size of some of the curricula, compared to the limited time and number of lectures per term (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2007d).
- Some curricula do not serve the program and must be cancelled (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2007e).
- There is no a committee to measure or evaluate ILOS (Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, 2008 a).

Level of tourist graduates and work market

In tourism enterprises, quality of service is directly related to employees' performance. In its turn, employees' performance is a function of their skills and motivation. Therefore, successful tourism cannot be developed without the availability of qualified and motivated employees (Pizam, 1999).

Christou (1999) indicated that the starting point to increase the breadth and quality of hospitality management programs, curricula can be based on the pursuit of the continuous development of students' skills.

Raj (2008) asserted on the need for higher academic skills and increasing technological know-how to respond to the demands of this increasingly technology-driven world. There is also a need for more broad-based training, which helps develop a variety of skills.

According to Swarbrooke and Horner (2001) there are clearly two sets of skills that will become increasingly important (i.e., the ability to speak foreign languages and technology skills).

The central issue is one of matching the skills abilities and expectations of the graduate with the demands, requirements and expectations of first destination employer (Lee-Ross, 1999).

According to Richardson (2008) the tourism and hospitality industry worldwide has been confronted with the problem of attracting and retaining quality employees which has led to a shortage of skilled personnel to staff the ever-growing number of tourism and hospitality business.

According to Raj (2008) tourism education has to establish closer links with the industry in order to forecast the demand for specialized labour force and to develop special programmes based on these forecasts.

Dolnicar (2001) confirmed on the absolute necessity to strengthen the co-operation between tourism industry and educational organizations.

Problem of turnover of employees

Turnover is a seemingly age-of characteristic challenge of the hospitality industry (Dickerson, 2009).

Lundberg et al., (2009) revealed that one major characteristic of employment in the hospitality and tourism is its seasonal and part-time nature, which can result in seasonal employment.

Richardson (2008) Stated that there are many different reasons which could lead to this behaviour are low job satisfaction, poor employment conditions and absence of motivating factors resulting in high staff turnover and wastage of trained and experienced personnel.

Job satisfaction is employee's general attitude toward their jobs. A number of studies have shown that new employees' expectations of the job itself, whether met or unmet, influence their subsequent job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is found to be a significant predictor or organizational commitment and an important factor for turnover intentions among employees (Lam et al., 2002).

The image of tourism and hospitality is one that has two sides. On one side, the industry is seen as glamorous one; while on the other it is deemed as being one of low skill, low status and low pay. So, leads to dissatisfaction and lack of motivation and reduce workforce efficiency (Richardson, 2008; Lundberg et al, 2009; Selvi and Demir, 2007).

Previous studies have shown that certain personal job-related factors have crucial impacts on employee turnover and organizational commitment and that the social factor or subjective norm influences one's behavioural intentions (Lam et al, 2002; Richardson, 2008; Selvi and Demir, 2007).

Long working hours, shift duties and handling demanding and difficult customers in hotels has become taken for granted phenomenon in the hospitality industry. This stress creates a demand on an individual to

make a decision on the balance between work and family (Wong and Ko, 2009).

When employees leave an organization, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the impact can be substantial. Turnover has been directly linked to ever rising labour costs, which include not only the actual salary paid to new competent employees but also the costs of attracting and retaining them (Cho et al., 2008).

Stalcup and Pearson, (2001) clarified that high turnover can lead to serious service problems that can adversely affect the reputation and competitive position of service-oriented businesses such as hotels.

METHODOLOGY

This research is conducted to follow up the career progress of graduates of the faculty of tourism and hotel belonging to the three departments: tourist studies, hotel studies, tour guidance. In addition, it seeks to investigate if there is a gap between the tourism education and the work market according to the experience of graduates.

A survey was conducted of a convenient sample of graduates from the three different departments. The Sample was obtained from the data available in the office of graduates' affaires. All investigated graduates had at least very good notes.

Letters were sent to graduates according to their addresses obtained from the office of graduates' affaires, besides the direct interviews with graduates who frequented the faculty during the period (March, August, 2008). The percent of returned questionnaire of the total letters send was about 25 percent. Among 134 received questionnaires, only 121 questionnaires were valid and complete. Data extracted have been tabulated and analyzed using SPSS 11.0 statistical package. Correlation tests of the package were applied.

Questions of study

- 1) Does the faculty of tourism and hotels, Minia University prepare well its graduates to work in the tourism and hospitality field?
- 2) What are the difficulties facing graduates to work in the hospitality and tourism sector?
- 3) What are the main reasons leading to get a job easily in the hospitality and the tourism field?
- 4) What are the most important motivations to work in the hospitality and tourism sector?

- 5) What is the level of academic courses according to the professional experience of graduates?
- 6) What is the perception of graduates of their professional efficiency?
- 7) What are the main reasons leading to the turnover of employees in the hospitality and tourism field?

Hypothesizes

1. There is no statistically significant correlation between the three departments (tourist studies, hotel studies and tour guidance) and the field of work in the hospitality and tourism sector.
2. There is no statistically significant correlation between the different fields of work in the tourism and hospitality industry and the probability to leave work.
3. There is no statistically significant correlation between employees according to sex and the probability to leave work in the hospitality and tourism field.

RESULTS

The results revealed that more males (58%) than females (42%) have answered the questionnaire. Regarding age, 64% graduates are between 22-24 years old. Regarding to the academic departments, 43% of them belong to the tour guidance department, followed by 35% from the tourist studies department and 22% from the hotel studies department. It is revealed that 76% of graduates are employed in general, and the majority (78%) among them is employed in the hospitality in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Tables 1 Respondents according to Job Situation

Job Situation		
Employed	92	76
Unemployed	29	24
Total	121	
Numbers of Graduates who work actually in the field of tourism	72	78 from all employees

It is revealed that only 20 of the graduates work in another field rather than the hospitality and tourism field. These are distributed between salesmen, teachers, and coordinators in societies and in the information technology.

Table 2 Respondents according to Field of work

	Number	Percent
Number of graduates who work in other fields	20	
Field of work		
Teacher	3	15
salesman	6	30
Employee in governmental sector	5	25
Co-coordinator in a society	4	20
Superior studies student	1	5
In a cyber net	1	5
Total	20	100

Regarding their perception of the usefulness of academic courses to their non-tourist work, it was found that academic courses are useful to some extent and useful in the most cases. In fact, this result sheds light on the courses of business administration, marketing, sales promotion, and computer sciences which could be one of the main reasons for working in other fields rather than the tourism field.

Table 3 Respondents according to their perception of the usefulness of academic courses

How academic courses are useful Regarding their actual work		
Very not useful at all	3	15
Very not useful	3	15
useful to some extent	8	40
Useful	5	25
Very Useful	1	5
Total	20	100

As for investigating their intentions to try to search for a job in the hospitality and tourism sector, it seems that the majority (61%) of them (graduates either not working in the tourist sector or unemployed) who

answered the concerned question applied for jobs in the hospitality and tourism field.

Table 4 Respondents according to Job applications in the tourism and hospitality field

Job application for graduates either working in the non-tourist sector or unemployed		
Yes	30	61
No	19	39
Total	49	100
Number of times of tourist Job application		
Once	10	33
Twice	9	30
Three times	3	10
Four times	1	3
More than four times	7	23
Total	30	100
Reasons for the refusal of tourist and hospitality Employers		
Shortage of Experience	13	
Weak performance during the interview	3	
Weakness of academic results	-	
Incompetence in foreign languages skills	13	
Incompetence in Information technologies	3	
Other reasons	18	

Regarding the reasons for the refusal of hospitality and tourism employers of the applications of the unlucky graduates, the result revealed that other reasons not declared from the graduates came on the top of the list of reasons of refusal followed by the problems concerning to the incompetence in foreign languages.

According to tables 5, 6, 7 below nearly 86 percent got a job in the hospitality and tourism industry in the period between less than six months and one year.

Regarding the field of work, it seems that the results are very real as working in the hospitality industry came first with a percent of 40% of the total answers followed by working in others sectors with 30%.

Although a great number of graduates join the sector shortly after graduation, half of them faced difficulties in work which are represented in the most cases in the incompetence of foreign languages followed by the shortage of experience.

Tables 5.6.7 Descriptive statistics of respondents who obtained a job in the Tourism and hospitality industry

Table 5 Respondents according to the period taken from the graduation till Work and the field of work

	Number	Percent
The period taken from the graduation till getting work		
Less than six months	30	42
From six to one year	32	44
From one year to one year and half	3	4
From one year and half to two years	3	4
More than two years	4	6
Total	72	100
Field of Work		
Hotel	29	40
Travel agency	8	11
Tourist guidance	14	19
Other (Bazaar, Tourist organization , ETC)	21	30
Total	72	100

Tables 6 Respondents according to Job description

Job description	
Tour guide	14
Tour-Leader	7
Tourist programs organizer	1
Receptionist	21
Waiter, Captain and chef	6
Housekeeping	1
Steward	1
Salesman in a bazaar	7
Employee at the Egyptian general authority for promoting tourism	6
A public relation employee at a company of tourist development	1

Employee at the public administration of Tourism, at Minia	1
Demonstrator at the faculty of tourism and hotels	5
Teacher in hotel school	1
Total	72

Tables 7 Respondents according to difficulties to get a job in the tourism and hospitality field

Difficulties in obtaining a job in the tourism and hospitality field		
Yes	36	50
No	36	50
Total	72	100
Nature of the difficulties		
Mediation	11	
Lack of experience	21	
Incompetence in foreign languages	25	
Financial costs to prepare myself after graduation (private courses in foreign languages, information technologies)	1	
Appearance	1	
Courtesy	1	
Problem of contracts with employers in the reason of new laws	1	
Discrimination between graduates in terms of faculties	1	
Difficulty to enter in certain tourist zones for security reasons	1	
Inexistence of confidence in recent graduates	2	

The table below shows the main reasons for getting a job in the hospitality and tourism industry. The Punctuality was perceived as the most important skill required to join the tourist work market, followed by speaking more than one foreign language. Academic results were

perceived as the most not very important to get a job in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Table 8 The main reasons for getting a job in the tourism and hospitality industry according to employees in the hospitality and tourism field

Reasons	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Important to what extent	Important	Very important
Academic results	10	11	23	18	9
The ability to persuade	1	1	4	19	47
The spirit of initiative	2	4	12	24	30
Enthusiasm	-	2	18	27	25
Desire to learn	-	4	13	28	27
Performance during the interview	2		14	24	32
Speaking many foreign languages	-	1	10	12	49
Communication skills	-	1	4	20	47
Punctuality	-	-	6	14	52
Awareness of the nature of work in the tourism field	1	3	12	19	37
Competence in information technologies	-	5	14	28	25

As shown, the table below reveals that value for money is perceived as the most important reason for working in the hospitality and tourism fields.

Concerning the opinions of tourist graduates about academic courses regarding their professional experience. It is revealed that 50% of the graduates interviewed perceive them as compatible with the tourism work market to some extent, followed by 17% who perceive them as not compatible with the tourism work market. Only (10%) sees them as very compatible with the tourism work market.

Regarding the perception of tourist graduates of the level of their professional and practical efficiency after graduation directly. It seems

that the majority of them perceive their level as medium (58%) followed by (25%) who perceived their level as high.

It is revealed that more males (28) than females (2) intend to leave their work in the tourism field.

It seems that half of employees in the hospitality industry tend to leave the sector.

Table 9 The main motivations for working in the tourism or hospitality field

	Very not important	Not important	Important to what extent	Important	Very important
Value for money	2	2	5	23	40
One of the family members works in the tourism field	16	27	12	8	9
One of my friends works in the tourism field	8	18	23	14	9
I think that I will get a good position in this field in the future	2	12	12	27	19
There are no other jobs which are suitable to my abilities	16	19	13	12	8
The reputation of the travel agency or the hotel	3	5	6	27	31
A chance to recognize other people belonging to different nationalities	4	6	18	20	24
Just like to work in the tourism field	6	8	12	15	32

Regarding the main reasons for the turnover of employees in the hospitality and tourism field, the results revealed that the vulnerability of the tourism activity to crises (35.5%), followed by other reasons (33.5%) (Religious and moral reasons which could make them to search for other jobs in other fields, the desire to travel abroad and the unbalance between home and work life); the seasonality of tourism activity (24%) and the difficulty of work conditions (7%).

Regarding graduates working in the field of tour guidance, it seems that they are satisfied with their job as the majority of them tend to keep them.

Hypothesis no. 1: There is no statistically significant correlation between the three Departments and field of work in the hospitality and tourism sector

The table below shows the there is a weak correlation (.401) between department and field of work in the tourism sector. As one commented before that about half of the graduates work in the hospitality sector either they belong to the hotel studies department or to the departments of: tour guidance and tourist studies.

One could say that there a need to join the tourist studies department to the hotel studies department in a one mixed department in order to face to requirements of the tourism work market which tends to reduce the role of travel agencies. So, a section for tourist studies at our faculty is not practical from the professional viewpoint.

Table 10 The correlation between the three departments department and field of work in the hospitality and tourism sector

	Field of work
Department (Pearson correlation)	.401

Correlation is significant at the 0.01

Hypothesis no. 2: There is no statistically significant correlation between the different fields of work in the tourism and hospitality industry and the turnover rate.

The table below shows the there is a good correlation (.704) between the field of work and the turnover rate. As it was observed that about half of graduated interviewed working in the hospitality sector industry tends to leave their work.

Table 11 The correlation between field of work industry and the turnover rate in the hospitality and tourism field

	The probability to leave work
Field of work (Pearson correlation)	.704

Correlation is significant at the 0.01

Hypothesis no. 3: There is no statistically significant correlation between employees according to sex the probability to leave work in the hospitality and tourism field

It seems that there is no significant correlation (-, 359) between males and females and the turnover rate. It is revealed that more males than females intend to leave their work in the tourism and hospitality field.

Table 12 The correlation between employees according to sex and the probability to leave work in the hospitality and tourism field

	Turnover of Employees in the hospitality and tourism sector
Sex (Pearson correlation)	-,359

Correlation is significant at the 0. 01

DISCUSSION

Incompetence in foreign languages represents one of the main obstacles which could face the graduate to work in the hospitality and tourism field. In fact, the administration of the faculty has to revise the curricula of foreign languages and the performance of lecturers who are perceived as they don't do their work well.

Thus, designing courses to teach foreign languages not only the familiar ones like, English, French, German, but also teaching the other needed ones like, the Russian, Japanese and others with moderate prices, became an urgent necessity for the existence of its graduates in the work market. One is not surprised that the academic courses were perceived as null. Really, this reflects that the professional skills are considered as more important than the theoretical study which in the most cases is not compatible with the work market.

Lack of experience represents a great problem for our graduates. one could say that, it seems that there is a problem in practical training courses which are given in most cases particularly by staff that don't have a professional background and this problem is clear in the tourist studies department which doesn't have an educational tourism office.

The majority of graduates interviewed got jobs in the hospitality and tourism field quickly. This is considered as a good sign that our graduates join the work market strongly. This result matches with the results of

precedent studies which indicate that graduates in this sector of the economy get their jobs as quickly as possible.

Working in a travel agency came in the back of the list of fields of work. This is due to the problems to which travel agencies are exposed as a results of the growing tendency to reduce the role of the intermediary between the suppliers and consumers because of the use of internet, meaning that the direct contact between them is in progress in addition to the reduction of the value of the commission which represents one of the most important sources of income of the travel agencies.

Previous research has demonstrated that trying to segment the tourism industry in terms of employment sector and occupations is not an easy task (Airey & Nightingale, 1981).

According to Riley et al. (2002) the division of education into tourism and hospitality crudely represents the two major categories of jobs in the industry but it is not, and cannot be comprehensive.

McKercher et al. (1999) explained that tourism is an amorphous industry that is an amalgam of a diverse array of organizations. An almost limitless number of job opportunities exist for graduates. Providers of tourism management programs must be aware of that their students will scatter in all directions upon graduation

The punctuality was perceived as the most important skill required to join the tourist work market, followed by speaking more than one foreign language. Academic results were perceived as the most not very important to get a job in the hospitality and tourism industry.

As with previous recruitment issues in the sector, particularly surrounding students and young people, there is a large degree of confusion about what employees says they want, what they set out to recruit and who they actually end up employing (Mansfield and luck, not found)

Firms are to be intrinsically inclined to choose non-graduated employees, in particular the industry seeks personal skills such as communication, adaptability, and leadership and foreign language ability, as well as they accuse educational institutions of providing broad-based, generic knowledge linked with the learning of other disciplines (e.g., business studies and economics) and moulding tourism graduates with wrong qualifications (Zagonari, 2008).

Value for money is perceived as the most important reason for working in the hospitality and tourism fields.

Concerning the opinions of tourist graduates about academic courses with regard to their professional experience. It is revealed that 50% of the graduates interviewed perceive them as compatible with the tourism work

market to some extent, followed by 17% who perceive them as not compatible with the tourism work market. Only (10%) sees them as very compatible with the tourism work market.

Regarding the perception of tourist graduates about the level of their professional and practical efficiency after graduation directly. It seems that the majority of them perceive their level as medium followed by who perceived their level as high. In fact this result is good for the administration of the faculty and reveals that there is an effort exerted but needs to continue in order to have a very good graduate in the near future not only according to academic results but also according to the practical and professional experience. In fact, this comes through the effectiveness of practical training which needs to be reconsidered.

It is revealed that more males than females intend to leave their work in the tourism field.

In fact, this result could make us think that females are more motivated than males, although the difficult work conditions in the hospitality and tourism sector. One could say that females may obtain their jobs in the field with difficulty. So keeping their jobs is logical. Regarding males, one could say that they tend to search more for change.

It is revealed that a large percent of graduates working in the tourism and hospitality industry think not to continue in that field. This result conforms to the precedent researches that the hospitality sector is characterized by a high rate of turnover. In fact, this comes in most cases because of the work conditions which are perceived to be difficult, as employees work for long hours, inflexible times.

Guest and Conway (1998) suggest that graduates in HT sectors may experience difficulties with developing positive psychological contracts. In that many are likely to work for organizations which require employees to work relatively long hours, at times which make it difficult to find a good balance between home and work life and where pay may be lower than in other sectors (Kelly - Patterson and George, 2001).

Regarding graduates working in the field of tour guidance, it seems that they are satisfied with their job as the majority of them tend to keep them. One could say that tour guidance is a more specialized work which requires certain conditions like the competence of foreign language, communication skills. In general, regarding Egypt, in order to practise the tour guidance, there are strict procedures to get the license from the Egyptian ministry of tourism.

It seems that there is a weak correlation between the three departments (tourist studies, hotel studies and tourist guidance) and the fields of work in the tourism sector. About half of the graduates work in

the hospitality sector either they belong to the hotel studies department or to the departments of: tour guidance and tourist studies.

There is significant correlation between fields of work and turnover rate of employees. As it was observed that about half of graduated interviewed working in the hospitality sector industry tends to leave their work.

It seems that there is no significant correlation between employees according to sex and the turnover rate in the hospitality and tourism industry. It is revealed that more males than females intend to leave their work in the tourism and hospitality field.

Finally, one could say that there are a number of weaknesses, in the tourism education represented in our case study. So, one deduce that there is a gape between it and the work market.

There is an absolute necessity to strengthen the cooperation between tourism industry and educational organizations and the permanent effort to provide a well qualified graduate compatible with the work market. To sum it up: the tourism education system has to be monitored permanently in order to stay up to date and both motivate and enable young people to cope with tomorrows challenges of the tourism industry.

Although this research focused on the faculty of tourism and hotels, other tourism educational establishments could learn from its point of weakness.

REFERENCES

- Atay, L. & Haci, H.M. (2010). Determining the factors that affect the satisfaction of students having undergraduate tourism education with the department by means of the method of classification tree. *Tourismos an international multidisciplinary journal of tourism*, Vol. 5, No.1, pp.73-87.
- Baum, T & Esichaikual, R. (1998). The case for government involvement in human resource development: A study of the Thai hotel industry. *Tourism management*, Vol. 19, No.4, pp.359-370.
- Cho, S., Johanson, M. & Guchait, P. (2008). Employees' intent to leave: A comparison of determinants of intent to leave versus intent to stay. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 28, Issue 3, September 2009, pp.374–381.
- Christou, E.S. (1999). Hospitality management education in Greece: An exploratory study. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 20, Issue 6, pp.683-691.
- Dickerson, J.P. (2009). The realistic preview may not yield career satisfaction. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 28, Issue 2, pp.297–299.

- Dolnicar, S. (2001). Challenges for tomorrow's tourism education. The case of Austria. Proceedings of the conference of the Asian Pacific Association 'APTA', Philippines, July 4-7, pp.175-177.
- Experian Business Strategies and MORI. Future Skills Wales (2003). Generic Skills Survey Summary Report. [Http://www.careerswales.com/documents/20041020_FSW2003fullreporte.pdf](http://www.careerswales.com/documents/20041020_FSW2003fullreporte.pdf). Accessed the 27th of February 2008, at 15:20.
- George, B.P. (2007). Should your reward more those teachers who participate more? A study in the context of in service tourism teacher training programs. *Tourismos an international multidisciplinary*, Vol. 2, No.2, pp.11-24.
- Kelley-Patterson, D. & George, C. (2001). Securing graduate commitment: an exploration of the comparative expectations of placement students, graduate recruits and human resource managers within the hospitality, leisure and tourism industries. *Journal of Hospitality management*, Vol. 20, Issue 4, pp.311-323.
- Lam, T., Lo, A. & Chan, J. (2002). New employees' turnover intentions and organizational commitment in the Hong King Hotel industry. *Journal of hospitality and tourism research*, Vol. 26, No.3, pp.217-34.
- Lee-Ross, D. (1999). *HRM in tourism and hospitality international perspectives on small to Medium sized enterprises*. Cassell, London
- Lundberg, C. et al (2009). Hertzberg's Two-Factor Theory of work motivation tested empirically on seasonal workers in hospitality and tourism. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 30, Issue 6, pp.890-899.
- Mansfield, S. & Luck, R. Migrant workers in the hospitality sector: new faces, some old issues.
- Mayaka, M. & Akama, J.S. (2007). Systems approach to tourism training and education: the Kenyan case study. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 28, Issue 1, pp.298-306.
- McKercher, B., Williams, A. & Coghlan, I. (1999). *Tourism management*, Vol. 16, No.7, pp.541-549.
- Omar, A., Abu Alam, W. & Elias, W. (2007). On the development of higher education in Egypt, Faculty of Tourism & Hotels, Helwan University, a case study, Vol. 6, No.1.
- Pizam, A. (1999). The state of travel and tourism human reassures in Latin America. *Tourism management*, Vol. 20, pp.575-586.
- Purcell, K. & Quinn, J. (1996). Exploring the education- employment equation in hospitality management: a comparison of graduates and HNDS. *International management*, Vol. 15, No.1, pp.51-68.
- Quality Assurance and accreditation Unit, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Minia University,
a- *Report of the field visit of committee of follow-up and assessment in March 2008*
b - *Hotel Studies Program Report 2007 / 2008.*
c- *Tourism Studies Program Report 2007 /*

- d- Results of the survey related to opinion of the students of the hotel studies department about lecturers and the academic courses, (2007)
- e- Results of the survey related to opinion of the students of the tourist guidance department about lecturers and the academic courses, (2007).
- Rajan, A., Chapple, K. & Battersby, I. (1998). *Graduates in Growing Companies: The Rhetoric of Core Skills and Reality of Globalization*, Centre for research in Employment and Technology in Europe, Tunbridge Wells.
- Raj, A. (2008). Human capital needs and challenges for the tourism sector. *South Asian journal of tourism and heritage*, Vol. 1, No.1 pp.39-45.
- Richardson, S. (2008). Undergraduates' perceptions of tourism and hospitality as a career choice. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 28, No.3, pp.382-388.
- Riley, M., Ladkin, A. & Szivas, E. (2002). *Tourism Employment: Analysis and Planning*. United Kingdom, Channel View Books.
- Santich, B. (2004). The study of gastronomy and its relevance to hospitality education and training. *Hospitality Management*, Vol. 23, Issue 1, pp.15-24.
- Selvi, M.S. & Demir, C. (2007). Relationship Among Branding, Career Development. And Tourism Education: Implication from Turkey. *Ege Akademik Bakış / Ege Academic Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp.389-408.
- Stalcup, D.L. & Pearson, T.A. (2001). A model of the causes of management turnover in hotels. *Journal of hospitality, tourism research*, Vol. 25, No.1.
- Stergiou, D. et al. (2008). Making sense of tourism teaching. *Annals of tourism research*, Vol. 35, Issue 3, pp.631-649.
- Swarbrooke, J. & Horner, S. (2001). *Business travel and tourism*. Oxford, Butterworth Heinemann.
- Weheba, D.M. & Maher Abd El Kader, M. (2007). The impact of communication in teaching: A two-way communication approach. *Tourismos an international multidisciplinary journal of tourism*, Vol. 2, No.1, pp.127-143.
- Wong, S.C.-K. & A. Ko, A. (2009). Exploratory study of understanding hotel employees' perception on work-life balance issues International. *Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 28, pp.195-203.
- Zagonari, F. (2008). Balancing tourism education and training. *International journal of hospitality management*, Vol. 28, Issue 1, pp.2-9.
- Zahrn, A.S. & Abdul Qader, A.R. (2006). Egyptian tourism education between the quality and quantity. *Faculty of tourism and hotels magazines*, Vol. 1.
- Mansour, O.S. (2000). The gradual shift in the preparation of curricula for undergraduate students of Tourism Studies, *Egyptian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Sciences*, Vol. 3, No.1, (In Arabic).

SUBMITTED: OCT 2011

REVISION SUBMITTED: MAR 2012

ACCEPTED: APR 2012

REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY

Tarek Sayed Abdel Azim (tarekazimh@yahoo) Lecturer at Minia University, Faculty of tourism and hotels, tourist studies department, Egypt. .