

Does the Curricula of Tourism Studies in Higher Education Meet the Educational and Occupational Needs of the Tourism Labour Market?

Bassam Samir Al-Romeedy*

Tourism Studies Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, University of Sadat City, Sadat City, Egypt, Email, Bassam.samir@fth.usc.edu.eg

Sanyo Moosa

Salalah College of Applied Sciences, University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Oman, Email, sanyo.sal@cas.edu.om

Ahmed Mohamed Elbaz

Tourism Studies Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, University of Sadat City, Egypt & Salalah College of Applied Sciences, University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Oman, Email, ahmed.elbaz@fth.usc.edu.eg

**Corresponding Author*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to address the following questions:(1) Is there a gap between the curricula taught in tourism and hotels faculties and the knowledge and skills required in the tourism labour market?, and (2)Do the students' knowledge and skills acquired during their study in a tourism and hotels faculties qualify them to join the tourism labour market. A qualitative approach is employed in the current study to answer the research questions. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were used in the present research. The study findings revealed the existence of a gap between the curricula that have been taught in tourism faculties and the tourism labour market requirements. Furthermore, the curricula have not met the requirements of the tourism labour market and graduates' needs. Some managerial implications were provided in this research so that tourism education in Egypt can use them as a guide when developing the curricula of educational tourism to meet the requirements of the tourism labour market. The research contributes to the existing knowledge by employing an approach to in-depth examine to what extent there is a gap between the curricula taught in the tourism educational faculties and the knowledge and skills required in the tourism labour market.

Keywords:Tourism education, labour market requirements, skills, knowledge, Egypt.

Introduction

The human capital is considered one of the most important keys to the success of any company and the achievement of competitive advantage in the labour market by adding value to the product (Cooper & Shepherd, 1997). With intense competition, the labour market requirements go up not only with regard to the production process but also the performance level and skills of employees. Therefore, companies are always seeking for skilled employees who are able to satisfy the requirements of the labour market with their academic knowledge as well as their applied skills (Alzu'be, 2012). Generally, the Egyptian labour market has specific features which include: the high unemployment rate among university graduates, a low skilled level among a large number of employees, low education turn-out, moving away from the government sector to a private one, low productivity, and intense competition. Moreover, the

Egyptian labour market policy is weak and unproductive in creating new opportunities for job seekers, particularly for new graduates (Amin, 2014).

Tourism, like any other industry in the 21st century, has witnessed several developments in the fields of information and communication technology, and the type of knowledge and skills required (Tichaawa, Mhlanga & Sicwebu, 2017; Fisher, Erasmus & Viljoen, 2020) . It has also seen some changes in lifestyle, modes of consumption and customer's needs and wishes (Warschauer, 2000). All of these necessitate providing skilled workforce capable of working in an intensely competitive environment, and meeting customers' ever-changing needs (Wang & Ryan 2007), and also improving the quality of the consumer service (Wang, Ayres & Huyton, 2010). This goes in line with what Adedeji (2012) stated: employers always seek employees who can do tasks efficiently, and this is due to the fierce competition between companies and high training costs. Furthermore, the recent developments in higher education have led to an increase in the number of graduates, and emphasis on quality education measures and the necessity of a balance between curricula and the job market needs (Deen & Tichaawa, 2016). These developments are directed especially with regard to students' acquisition of the necessary skills and knowledge that are a prerequisite in the tourism labour market as one of the educational goals of the higher education faculties (Collet, Hine & du Plessis, 2015).

Consequently, tourism education has greatly developed (Sarkodie & Adom, 2015) and has also continued to upgrade and improve students' skills, knowledge and qualify them for the labour market (Wattanacharoensil, 2014; Wakelin-Theron, Ukpere & Spowart, 2019). According to Walt, Hattingh and Moolman (2016), Wang et al. (2010) and Whitelaw et al. (2009), tourism curricula should comply with tourism industry requirements. So, graduates have to develop their management skills, foreign languages, get acquainted with different cultures, and acquire marketing and selling skills. Hence, it has become an urgent need for new graduates to work on developing their skills, knowledge, and training experience, which qualify them to pull alongside with the labour market. This may help them to avoid standing in a queue of the unemployed. For instance, if graduates are unqualified for joining the labour market in the tourism industry, this will create what is called "skills gap" (Klosters, 2014). The American Society for Training and Learning describes the "skills gap" as an important gap between the existing capacities of an organisation, and the expertise it requires to attain its objectives. A company cannot continue to expand or complete because it cannot fill vital positions with workers with the right experience, expertise and skills (Mahasneh & Thabet, 2015). Arandarenko and Bartlett (2012) stated that there are several reasons causing this gap in the tourism labour market. For example, outdated knowledge and skills of employees or students, poor investment in training and developing employees' skills in addition to not developing and upgrading curricula of tourism education faculties (Sarkodie & Adom, 2015). Here, a question could be asked: "Do the curricula of tourism studies in higher education meet the educational and occupational needs of the global tourism industry?"

A qualitative approach is employed in the current study to answer the research questions. The present study adopts an in-depth, semi-structured interview style, so the researchers can obtain ample knowledge to deal with core issues such as when, where, what, and how? (Werlang & Botega, 2003). Therefore, the first part of this study, curriculum, and tourism education: curricula – skills – labour market – the skills gap, and the development of the research conceptual framework are discussed. In the second part, the study methodology is introduced, followed in the third section, by outlining the presentation of the results and analysis, together with consideration of the study's implications. Overall, this paper aims to make a theoretical contribution with practical value. Theoretically, it seeks to indicate the value of applying curriculum theory to the research by exploring the gap between the skills, knowledge and experience needed in the tourist labour market and those the students obtain

during their study in tourism education faculties. Moreover, employing curriculum theory helps the study to answer the following questions: “Is there a gap between the curricula taught in tourism educational faculties and the knowledge and skills required in the tourism labour market?” “Do the students' knowledge and skills acquired during their study in tourism educational faculties qualify them to join the tourism labour market?” “To what extent are graduates of tourism faculties satisfied with curricula that have been studied?”

Literature review

Curriculum theory

The curriculum is the most important part of the educational system (Albashiry, Voogt & Pieters, 2015). Portelli (1987) indicated that there are more than 120 definitions of the term “curriculum” in the professional literature. Some of these definitions can provide insights about certain characteristics within the general idea of a curriculum (Wang et al., 2010). The actual term was used to describe the classics taught in schools during the classical period of Greek civilization. Nowadays, the term has broadened to include more subjects (Marsh & Willis, 2007). It sometimes refers to a discipline, a specific area of knowledge and academic study (Heroitt, 2006). Today, with the massive developments in technology and social thought, it is extremely important for any definition of the curriculum to consider the nature of learners and practical social needs (Wang et al., 2010). For example, Willis (2007: 11) defined curriculum as “the totality of learning experiences provided for students so that they can attain general skills and knowledge at a variety of learning sites”. Albashiry et al. (2015) provided the reasons behind curriculum; he argued that “curriculum is an educational response to the needs of the society and the individual, and requires that the learner construct knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills through a complex interplay of mind, materials, and social interactions”.

Furthermore, Kelly (2004); Merwe and Septoe (2015) added that the aim of the curriculum is to develop and respond appropriately to all changes in an industry as well as understanding the educational process. In more detail, curriculum refers to “a set of courses with an organized instructional outline, course of study, syllabus or teaching guide showing specific objectives, subject matter and teaching methods of the courses. This is a common body of knowledge for preparation in tourism and hotels degree studies” (Williams, 2003). To understand the nature of a curriculum, it is required to study their various purposes of teaching and learning. Thus, according to Pawson (2002), the main aim of the curriculum is the basis for both the content as well as the methodology. Moreover, Calasgow (1997) listed some of the aims of the curriculum as follows: To transfer knowledge, techniques, and skills to learners.

- To provide opportunities for learners to practice and apply knowledge, techniques, and skills.
- To create an orderly learning structure with reasonable sequencing of learning content.
- To create a learning environment in which learners can explore, fine-tune, and test their unique abilities and learning styles.
- To provide educators with classroom management tools in order to assist teaching that would facilitate learning.
- To facilitate the development of learners’ skills to be able to investigate and structure problem- solving pathways and to facilitate the development of self-assessment tools.
- To create confidence in problem – solving situations.

Tourism education: curricula – skills – labour market – the gap

Owing to the expansion of higher education, there has been more focusing on the skills that students learn as well as the knowledge and academic and occupational ones they acquire during their university education (Mason, Williams & Cranmer, 2006; Atfield & Purcell, 2010).

Theeb (2015) listed a number of factors that determine the requirements for the qualification of university graduates. These include the following:

- Moving from local work to global work. This necessitates the development of curricula, the teaching strategies, coping with different cultures, the link between educational curricula and the labour market.
- Expanding markets. In order to remove the obstacles to entering and integrating into the global market, the content of curricula should be reviewed and amended in a way that goes in line with the needs of the world market.
- More attention to quality means making sure about the quality of everything. So, curricula quality educational system.
- The impact of the continuous technological developments on the development of the educational system and learning modes.
- The impact of the expansion of the private sector on the necessity to develop and increase the effectiveness of higher education.

Hence, educational programmes have emerged as a response to the requirements and needs of human resources development in an extremely competitive work environment. These requirements include harmony between the tourist industry and the latest technological developments, always providing skilled labour, enhancing the image of tourist jobs, improving customer service, upgrading recruitment laws, minimizing foreign labour, and, dealing with the growing demand for customer service (Amoah & Baum, 1997). Thus, educational faculties should pay attention to preparing students for the job market. This will help them to face the global challenges of the tourism industry, contend with the changing requirements of the world labour market instead of focusing on the present tourist demand. Also qualifying students for the foreign tourist market instead of the local one alone (Barron, 2006). In addition, this will help fit students to perform special job - related tasks in the field of tourism industry instead of the traditional ones (Zagonari, 2009).

The tourist labour market analysis is a pivotal question in view of the great diversity in the tourism industry (Ladkin, 2005). This diversity impacts the types of jobs and the number of people engaged in this industry (Wang et al., 2010). It is recognized that the tourism industry is labour-intensive as it absorbs a large amount of workforce (direct and indirect), according to the tourist activity level (Ladkin, 2011). Wang et al. (2010) stated that the tourist sector includes tourist transportation companies, travel and tourist agencies, tour operators, conferences, and special events organizers. Hence, according to Zagonari (2009), human resources have several requirements which help to determine the qualified employees for tourism industry such as the availability of skilled labour, the rate of employees' rotation, work condition, occupational alienation, working hours, employment impediments, low training and educational level, bonuses and privileges. Dwesini (2017) and Mössenlechner and Zehrer (2008) indicated that the tourism industry and the higher education system have encountered new challenges as a result of the fast changes in the labour market, increased global competition, rapid technological developments, changing needs and desires of clients. According to Raybould and Wilkins (2005) and Ionescu (2012), the last few years have witnessed considerable interest in the change in the tourism industry requirements, especially when compared with the output of the tourist educational system. Consequently, there must be corresponding change and development in tourist education to meet the tourism industry requirements. It is also necessary for curricula to satisfy the needs of students as well as those of the labour market with regard to knowledge and skills. It should be noted that tourism education, like any other vocational education, should develop and support students and graduates by enabling them to acquire up-to-date knowledge, skills and attitudes. Accordingly, it should focus on the practical side connected with the tourism labour market (Riley, Ladkin & Szivas, 2002).



It is argued that the tourism industry depends, to a great extent, on the employees' ability and efficiency in upgrading the tourist product quality. Hence, tourism education plays an important role in qualifying students and providing them with the necessary skills needed for their success in the tourism industry (Wang et al., 2010; Riley et al., 2002). As Pitan and Adedeji (2012) stated, besides the skills and academic knowledge, there are several skills needed for the tourism labour market. Some of them are analysis, critical thinking, communication, decision making, dealing with modern technology, self-management, problem-solving and computing skills. However, Pitan and Adedeji (2012) stressed that there is a gap between what is taught in tourism faculties and the tourism-related labour requirements, which is called "skills gap ". As a result, university graduates are commonly viewed as “half-baked” (Pitan & Adedeji, 2012). For example, previous researchers have criticized educationalists for not giving proper attention to the qualification and preparation of students for work in the field of tourism. Moreover, what is taught to students does not keep pace with the current trends in the tourism industry, nor is it related to the practical state of affairs. This negatively affects the availability of jobs for graduates (Asirifi, Doku, Morrison & Sackey, 2013; Sarkodie & Adom, 2015).

Based on Pitan and Adedeji (2012), the skills gap have a negative influence on different educational institutions because the graduates' inadequate and meagre skills can negatively affect productivity, quality and the competitive capacity in the labour market since these skills do not meet the job requirements. This lack of skills leads to a rise in the cost of attracting skilled labour and a similar increase in the investment in training present employees. Overall, this may lead, in the long run, to the possibility of a rise in costs in general, hence making a loss and elimination from the labour market. According to Raybould and Wilkins (2005) in order for tourism education programmes to integrate with trends of education and tourism industry, curricula should be reviewed regularly and kept up with the latest developments in the tourism industry. It should also relate to the practical tourist labour market. This makes it easy to answer the following question: What are the skills, knowledge, and abilities that students and graduates require to get through in the tourist labour market? If the content of the curricula in the tourism education faculties answers this question, this will mean bridging the gap between what is taught to students and the tourist labour market requirements, which is termed as "skills gap " (Zagonari, 2009).

Methods

Sample and selection of participants

The main aim of the study is to explore the gap between the skills development, knowledge and experience required in the tourist labour market and those the students obtain during their study in tourism education faculties. In this study, a total of 23 participants were selected purposely. These were students from the tourism department who graduated from one of the eight governmental tourism and hotel faculties in Egypt and were deemed capable of answering questions about the study (only two faculties of them were excluded). Interviews were performed face to face with 14 people in their offices. Between June and October 2016, the researchers kept these interviews.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics participants in the qualitative study

University and Faculty's Name	Work Location	No. of Interviewees/positions
Helwan University-Faculty of tourism and hotel management		3= Reservation 1= Tour Leader Total=4

Fayoum University-Faculty of tourism and hotels	Travel Agencies at Cairo	2= Tourism Transportation 2= Reservation 1= Tour Operator Total=5
Alexandria University-Faculty of tourism and hotels		3= Customer Service 1= Transferman Total= 4
University of Sadat City-Faculty of tourism and hospitality		2= Transferman 1= Reservation 1= Reservation- Religion Tourism Total= 4
Suze Canal University-Faculty of tourism and hotels		2= Tourism Marketing 1= Reservation Total= 3
Menia University-Faculty of tourism and hotels		1= Tour Leader 2= Reservation Total= 3
Total= 23 Participants		

Data collection process

Bloom and Crabtree (2006) stated that semi-structured interviews are mostly used to gather information from individuals/groups as the only tool for qualitative research projects. In this study, individual semi-structured interviews were used to answer questions including “Is there a gap between the curricula taught in tourism educational faculties and the knowledge and skills required in the tourist labour market?” Do the student's knowledge and skills acquired during his/her study in tourism educational faculties qualify them for the tourism labour market? Semi-structured, in-depth interviews with smaller samples are appropriate and beneficial to evaluate circumstances, as is the case with this research (Laforest et al., 2009). Barter and Cormack (1996) indicated that the researchers were able to collect more information about their own opinions on the topic under study from participants. A variety of semi-structured questions have been explicitly adapted to the research goals to gather the data necessary for achieving those goals.

A few days before the interviews, the researchers called all participants to discuss the essence and intent of the research and to decide the best time to perform a personal interview. They sought clearance to make interviewing digital audio recordings. Between 25 and 45 minutes, each interview was recorded. The interview protocol was tested through four participants, who felt they had the skills, experience, and capacity to answer questions of the study. Based on the tested interviews, the researchers significantly changed the order of questions and introduced a few extra questions.

Interview protocol development

The key aim of the interview protocol development was to explore and answer in more detail the research questions. There were five key open-ended questions in the interview protocol. The first question was asked about the connections among the studied curricula in tourism and hotels faculties and about their advantages of entering the labour market. The second question asked to what extent curricula studied at faculties of tourism and hospitality contribute to acquiring the skills required to join the labour market. The third question asked the participants what the skills are they learned from studying at the tourism and hotels faculties. Question four asked to what extent the skills gained from studying at the tourism and hotels faculties affected your entering in the work in the travel agencies. The fifth question asked about the extent of the participant's satisfaction with the role of tourism and hotels faculties in Egypt. In the final interviews, all respondents were told that no personal information would be used in the data reports transcribed. The names of the respondents are substituted by codes.

Result and discussion

Curriculums-joining tourism labour market linkage

This section deals with the first aim of the study which is the participants' views on the relationships between curricula studied in tourism and hotels faculties and their benefits to joining the labour market. The goal here is to get a better understanding of the roles of educational faculties of tourism and hotels in qualifying graduates to join the tourism labour market through studying different specialist curricula. The findings reveal that the views of the participants were divided into two contradictory points of view: (1) The first point of view is held by participants from the tourism and hotels faculties, Helwan University and Fayoum University. Participants believe that some of those curricula effectively contributed to joining the tourism labour market. One of the participants, from faculty of tourism and hotels, Helwan University stated:

Some courses at the tourism and hotels faculty (Helwan University), for example, have a good advantage in the rehabilitation of the labour market special curriculum-related travel agencies' activities and aviation companies.

Another representative of the Fayoum university, faculty of tourism and hotels added that:

Curriculum studied at the college has a strong relationship to the labour market and its requirements. Curriculum helped me to work at travel agencies without the need for training course.

In sharp contrast to the previous point of view, participants of the other Universities (Sadat City, Suez Canal, Menia and Alexandria).believe that the curricula that have been studied at these faculties did not contribute to the satisfaction of their graduates. Hence, the graduates had to rely on training courses (e.g. Amadeus training courses) to qualify them to join the tourism labour market of travel agencies and airline companies. One of the study participants, who represent the other point of view, believes in the futility of those curricula studied at the faculties of tourism and hotels. He argued:

Through my study, I need to attend several training courses both in a foreign language and booking programs so I can join the tourism labour market.....I did not rely on the faculty's curriculum in getting a job in travel agencies or aviation companies, but I relied on educating myself by attending English language courses and human resources development as well as some training courses organized by the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism.

These results are consistent with those of Wang et al. (2010) and Pitan and Adedeji (2012) who found that there is a gap between what is taught in tourism faculties and the tourism-related labour market requirements, which is called "skills gap". As a result, according to Pitan and Adedeji (2012) University graduates are commonly viewed as "half-baked".

One of the participants, who represents the tourism and hotels faculty, Alexandria University, attributed the cause of the futility of the curriculum to the lack of timeliness and keeping pace with the modern developments. He stated:

Many of the courses studied are not useful in the preparation for the tourism labour market, in addition to that, important curricula such as "Business of Travel Agencies",

in spite of the study of this curriculum at our faculties of tourism and hotels, it has not been linked and updated to what is actually done in travel agencies in Egypt.

These findings are consistent with Arandarenko and Bartlett (2012) and Sarkodie and Adom (2015), who found that there is a gap between the curriculum and tourism labour market. They also stated that there are several factors causing this gap in the tourism labour market. For example, outdated knowledge and skills of employees or students, poor investment in training and developing employees' skills in addition to not developing and upgrading curricula of tourism education faculties. Overall, the above findings reveal that the majority of participants in this study believe that the curricula studied in faculties of tourism and hotels in Egypt are not satisfactory for their graduates in terms of (1) the curriculum does not keep up with modern developments, (2) the curriculum has been taught in a theoretical way, (3) the same curriculum has been taught for many years without updating, (4) the lack of linkage between the curriculum and the needs and requirements of the tourism labour market, and (5) the severe shortage of rehabilitative training programs in tourism and hotels faculties in Egypt.

The Relationship between Curriculum and Skills Development

This section deals with the second and third objectives, which was to analyze to what extent the curriculum studied at faculties of tourism and hospitalities contribute to acquiring the skills development required to join the labour market. Also, it discusses the skills he/she learned from studying at the tourism and hotels faculty. As stated in the previous section, the participants' point of view divided into two main points. Some of them believe that the curriculum studied at these faculties in the Egyptian universities provided them with some important skills. For example, an interviewee from tourism and hotel management faculty, Helwan, Fayoum and Alexandria Universities, contended "Yes, I have acquired some skills" Another participant added, "I gained a few skills". On the contrary, others believe that the curriculum did not provide them with skills that may help to join the tourism labour market except for some general skills. Furthermore, some of the interviewees (e.g. University of Sadat City) argued that the reason behind these is: "I did not take advantage of the curriculum studied at faculty of tourism and hospitality, University of Sadat City, and therefore I did not acquire skills to join the tourism labour market". These findings are in line with previous researchers (Asirifi et al., 2013; Sarkodie & Adom, 2015) who confirmed that there is a gap between tourism education and tourism labour market requirements and needs. For the reasons for this gap, they confirmed that educationalists are responsible for not giving proper attention to the qualification and preparation of students for work in the field of tourism. Moreover, what is taught to students does not keep pace with the current trends in the tourism industry, nor is it related to the practical situation. This negatively affects the availability of jobs for graduates.

In terms of skills acquired through the study at faculties of tourism and hotels, the study results showed that there are many skills that have been acquired and which have had a significant impact on the participants to join the labour tourism market. The findings also revealed that the participants' views varied as varied the types of skills acquired. There are many skills that can be summarized as follows 1) Communication skills (verbal-written), (2) Persuasibility, (3) Act in critical situations, (4) Customer service, (5) Negotiation, (6) Dealing with technology, (7) The ability to coordinate and distribute burdens, (8) Accounts and financial skills, (9) Motivation skills, (10) Cost estimation skills, (11) Marketing and selling skills, (12) Effective Presentation Skills, (13) Time management, (14) Work in a team, (15) Work under Stress, (16) Decision making, (17) Ability to solve problems, (18) Good listening, (19) Prediction skills, (20) Critical thinking, (21) Analysis skills, (22) Attention to details. This was reinforced

by the conclusions taken from the views of the participants and endorsed by an Alexandria University representative, who stated:

Although I think there is a gap between what is taught at the faculties of tourism and hotels and the tourism labour market.....However, I have gained the skills of teamwork and communicating with others and acting in difficult situations.

One participant who represents the tourism and hotel management faculty, Helwan University added:

I have gained some skills that help me prepare tourism itinerary and speak a foreign language...Furthermore, another participant representing Helwan University confirmed ...I have gained interpersonal skills, ticketing and customer service skills...A representative of one of the Fayoum University clarified,...I have gained teamwork, effective presentation and decision-making skills.

These results agree with Wattanacharoensil (2014) and Sarkodie and Adom (2015) who found that tourism education has greatly developed and has also continued to upgrade and improve student's skills, knowledge and qualify them for the labour market. However, the other point of view the participants have agreed with the previous views as they stated that they have not gained the skills that qualify them to join the tourism labour market. For example, an interviewee from University of Sadat City contended, "to some extent I did not take advantage of the curriculum, and thus have not gained the most important skills that qualify me directly to join the labour market". Overall, it can be concluded that the participants of the study believe that they have gained different types of skills. Few of them confirmed that skills have had great importance to join the tourism labour market. However, the others diminished the role of the curricula studied at tourism and hotels faculties in Egypt and skills that would be gained. These results are consistent with Amin (2014) who found that the Egyptian labour market policy is weak and unproductive in creating new opportunities for job seekers, particularly for new graduates. The researchers created Figure1 which summarizes the previous results and demonstrates the gap between curriculum and tourism labour market.

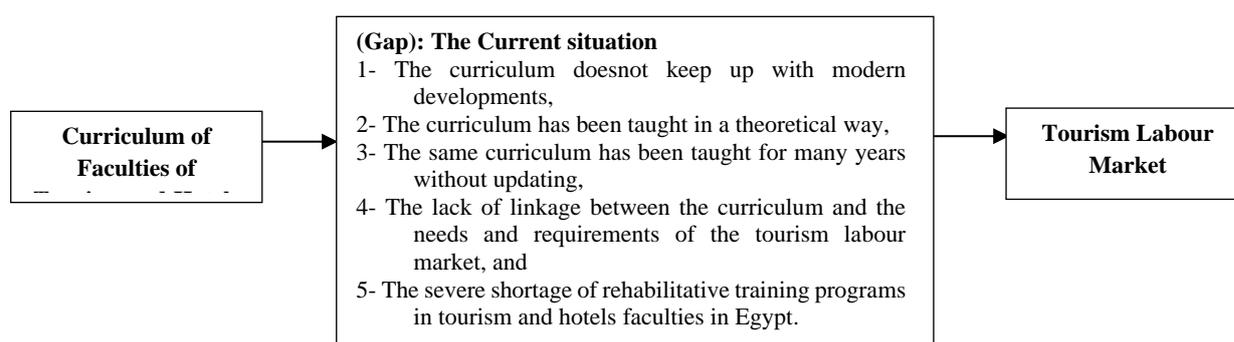


Figure 1. The gap between curriculum and tourism labour market

Conclusion

From what has been outlined above, it can be emphasized that the link is missing between the curriculum that has been taught at tourism and hotels faculties in Egypt and tourism labour market requirements in Egypt. In other words, the curriculum has not met the needs of graduates of tourism and hotels faculties in Egypt, and therefore has not met the requirements of the tourism labour market. As a result of the above, there is a degree of dissatisfaction with the graduates of the faculties of tourism and hotels due to lack of linkage between the curriculum and the tourism labour market. The study findings revealed the existence of a gap

between the curriculum that has been taught in tourism faculties and the tourism labour market requirements. The curriculum has not met the needs of graduates of faculties of tourism and hotels, and therefore has not met the requirements of the tourism labour market. Furthermore, there is a degree of dissatisfaction with the graduates of the faculties of tourism and hotels due to lack of linkage between the curriculum and the tourism labour market.

The research contributes to the existing knowledge by employing in-depth approach to examine to what extent there is a gap between the curricula taught in the tourism educational faculties and the knowledge and skills required in the tourism labour market. It also explores to what extent the student's knowledge and skills acquired during his/her study in tourism educational faculties qualify them to join the tourism labour market. The research practically identifies to what extent graduates of tourism institutions are satisfied with the curricula that have been studied. Some managerial implications were provided in this research so that the tourism education in Egypt can use them as a guide when developing curricula of educational tourism to meet the requirements of the tourism labour market.

Despite this study's contribution to the field of tourism education, there are some limitations that need further discussion. This study was applied to the governmental faculties of tourism and hotels in Egypt. Thus, further studies are required to include private tourism education in Egypt. For example, and hence, multi-group analysis (including a comparative study between governmental and private sector of the higher tourism education) can help to investigate the different graduates' views about the importance and perception of studied curriculum. In this study, qualitative approach is used, further research could employ quantitative approach with a big sample of graduates. This study examined graduates' points of view, while, for instance, the points of view of the owners of tourism companies are important and required.

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