Perceptions of Full-time Final Year Hospitality Students Towards Working in the Hospitality Industry

Melikaya Mqwebedu
Department of Hospitality Management, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa, Email, melikayamqwebedu@yahoo.co.za

Joseph Robert Roberson
Department of Hospitality Management, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa, Email, robersonjr@tut.ac.za, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6679-4251

Carina Kleynhans
Department of Hospitality Management, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa, Email, kleynhansic@tut.ac.za, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6167-5608

***Corresponding Author*

Abstract

After completing their studies, it is assumed that hospitality students should seek employment in the hospitality industry. However, not all graduates end up working in the hospitality industry as their decision to do so or not is influenced by a number of factors, which either pull towards or push students away from working in the hospitality industry. To improve the understanding of the push and pull factors, this study was aimed at exploring the perceptions, feelings and attitudes of hospitality students towards working in the hospitality industry as these feelings contribute to mentioned factors. A qualitative research approach was followed. Twenty-seven full-time final year hospitality management students at a university in South Africa were interviewed to collect data. The researcher did the coding and identified themes that emerged during analysis. The themes revealed that the students had mixed feelings about having careers in the hospitality industry. Both positive and negative feelings and attitudes were expressed by the students towards working in the hospitality industry and these were influenced by factors termed motivators or de-motivators for having careers in the hospitality industry. The motivators and de-motivators stemmed from the students' past work experience during their internships. Finally, recommendations were made to various stakeholders in the hospitality industry to make them aware of factors that could demotivate prospective employees.

Keywords: feelings, attitudes, careers, hospitality industry

Introduction

Alumni of institutions of higher learning are often anxious about their potential employment (Yasar & Turgut, 2020). They spent a lot of money on their education at higher learning institutions and therefore expect to have decent long-term employment (Ezeuduji et al., 2017). This is also true for hospitality management students, who seek decent long-term employment after graduation (Ho & Law, 2020). Unfortunately, the hospitality industry is characterised by poor employment conditions that contribute to a reluctance by hospitality graduates to work in the industry (Ariza-Montes et al., 2019). The knock-on effect of this is that the hospitality industry then fails to recruit and retain an adequate number of hospitality graduates, impacting negatively on the image of the industry (Baum, 2019). Another consequence stemming from the poor employment conditions is high labour turnover numbers in the hospitality industry

and, according to Dwesini (2019), the potential growth of the industry is impeded by the high labour turnover it experiences.

The hospitality industry is experiencing difficulties in getting and keeping quality employees (Pitso, 2018) and, according to Olowoyo et al. (2020), it has caused a skills shortage in this growing industry. Olowoyo et al. (2020) also mentions that the hospitality industry needs employees who are skilled, well trained, and educated in order to succeed. Regrettably, the hospitality industry faces high levels of labour turnover and those who are educated and skilled enough to work in this industry often dislike working in the industry and are actively considering finding employment in other industries (Santhanam et al., 2021). This creates many risks and challenges because the hospitality industry ends up failing to employ employees who are both skilled and educated. Hospitality managers can create better working conditions and implement strategies to curb high labour turnover numbers once they have a better understanding of the prospective employees' feelings and attitudes towards working in the industry. This study is therefore of significance as it endeavours to explore the feelings and attitudes of potential graduates towards having a career in the hospitality industry to assist in the identification of push and pull factors or motivators and de-motivators towards working in the hospitality industry. The contribution of this research is that it provides an understanding of the perceptions, feelings and attitudes of students towards a career in hospitality by focusing on final year hospitality students at a university in South Africa and the identification of employment motivators and de-motivators.

Research studies on the perceptions and attitudes of students taking a career in hospitality have been conducted in the past by Tuzukan (2018), Turanligil and Altinas (2018), Roysidi (2021), and Amissah et al. (2020). Nevertheless, this research is distinctive from these studies because the literature on the feelings and attitudes of hospitality students concerning working in the hospitality industry is very sparse. In addition, no similar studies have been conducted in South Africa in order to develop an understanding of the feelings and attitudes of hospitality students on working in the hospitality industry. Therefore, this research bridges the gap in the literature.

Literature review

There are various motivating and de-motivating factors that impact on hospitality students' desire to work in the hospitality industry (Ruslan et al., 2021). These factors are influenced by the perceptions, feelings and attitudes of hospitality students towards working in the hospitality industry. According to Qu et al. (2021), these factors are key drivers that trigger the perceptions, feelings and attitudes of students towards working in the hospitality industry. These factors can be categorised in different ways and in this research project, the determinants are classified as motivators and de-motivators. The motivators entice students to follow careers in the hospitality industry. The de-motivators are the challenges faced in the hospitality industry and tend to push students away from working in the hospitality industry.

Previous studies have revealed de-motivators as the various challenges, problems and difficulties faced by students and workers in the hospitality industry (Makumbirofa & Saayman, 2018). Students and employees working in the hospitality industry face the following challenges; working long hours (Seqhobane & Kokt, 2021), stressful and unstable jobs due to seasonality of the jobs; low-paying jobs with insufficient benefits; low social status of jobs in the hospitality industry; unqualified managers and co-workers; negative attitudes of managers and co-workers; and poor working conditions (Mukwevho et al., 2020). According to Soffi and Mohamad (2021), students conducting their internships in the hospitality industry are also subjected to these challenges. Mooney and Jameson (2018) further mention that exposure of

students in the hospitality industry to these challenges results in them developing negative perceptions and attitudes towards careers in the hospitality industry.

Ghosh (2022) reported that working undesirable long hours leads to stress, fatigue, and may result in a lack of job concentration. Grobelna (2021) concurs that employees that work long hours under a lot of pressure experience work related stress. On this note, Kautish et al. (2021) further argue that stress in respect to hospitality employment is also associated with tension, trauma, and anxiety. The stress and tension that hospitality employees are subjected to are often exacerbated by a lack of job security (Altinay et al., 2019). The hospitality industries are known for insecure employment because of factors like, "seasonality, fluctuations in demand and high number of part-time and temporary jobs" (Amissah et al., 2020: 4; El-Houshy, 2018: 803; Ezeuduji et al., 2017: 3).

The de-motivators and the associated poor employment conditions in the hospitality industry can be partially attributed to the effects of poor leadership in the industry (Turanligil & Altinas, 2018). These managers of hospitality organisations are often not qualified for the positions they occupy (Pitso, 2018) and therefore they cannot efficiently and effectively motivate employees (Sandstrom & Reynolds, 2020). Negative attitudes of co-workers are a de-motivator that results in employees having negative perceptions towards working in the hospitality industry (Mouro et al., 2021). The hospitality students conducting their internships are exposed to employees with negative attitudes and behaviours (Tuzukan, 2018). This exposure can demotivate and negatively influence students' perceptions and attitudes towards working in the hospitality industry.

Besides the de-motivators that negatively influence students' perceptions and attitudes towards careers in the hospitality industry, there are also motivators, which encourage hospitality students to work in the industry. These motivators oppose the de-motivators, since they pull students to seek careers in the hospitality industry. In the hospitality industry, these motivators act as enticers that attract students to have a career in the industry (Goh & Lee, 2018). Motivators have the ability to positively influence the feelings and attitudes of hospitality students to work in the industry. Rosyidi (2021) found that the factors which influence students' perceptions and attitudes of working in the hospitality industry are job opportunities in the hospitality industry; training and development opportunities in the hospitality industry; high levels of remuneration; effective and efficient leadership in the industry; long-term decent employment prospects; and unavailability of alternative career options. According to Sahoo and Mishra (2018), motivators such as training and development are essential for any business, and in respect to tourism and hospitality the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) (2015) highlights that education and training investments are essential to ensure that the specific type of skills required in the industry are provided. Ohunakin et al. (2020) mention that opportunities for training and development attract probable employees within the hospitality industry. It has been shown that the hospitality industry pays reasonable salaries and Xia et al. (2020) argue that knowledge of good remuneration within the hospitality industry assists in creating positive perceptions and attitudes of hospitality employees hence inspiring and motivating graduated students to seek employment in the industry. Farrukh et al. (2019) states that apart from better wages, sound leadership also entices students to work in the hospitality industry. Leaders who are effective know how to motivate employees (Pitso, 2018) and this positively impacts the attitudes and perceptions of hospitality students towards working in the industry.

Hospitality students tend to form opinions, perceptions, and attitudes about working in the industry, based on their experience of motivating and de-motivating factors when exposed to the industry (Lin & Anantharajah, 2019). These perceptions, feelings and attitudes are mainly influenced by the positive and negative experiences of the students during their

internships. De-motivators are caused by the negative work experiences and motivators are caused by positive work experiences. Various studies have been done to link the perceptions and attitudes of students towards working in the industry. Table 1 provides a summary of the studies done in different countries on the perceptions and attitudes of students towards working in the hospitality industry.

Table 1: Empirical studies and their findings

Author	Year	Methodology	Location	Key findings
Bamford	2012	Mixed method approach	New Zealand	Students believed that the industry provides low wages, fair work environment, requires long working hours, good co-workers, and does not require certain degrees.
Richardson and Butler	2012	Quantitative	Malaysia	Students did not consider the industry as an attractive career path.
El-Houshy	2018	Quantitative	Egypt	Majority of respondents have a strong intention to enter the hospitality industry after graduation.
Sibanyoni, Kleynhans and Vibetti	2015	Quantitative	South Africa	Factors that influence negative attitudes towards careers in tourism are long working hours; lack of employee benefits; low remuneration; limited career advancement; lack of promotion opportunities; staff that is not qualified.
Robinson, Ruhanen and Breaky	2016	Qualitative	Australia	Students change career choice to work in the hospitality sector following their work experience.
Ezeuduji, Chibe and Nyathela	2017	Quantitative	South Africa	Most students stated they wanted to remain in the hospitality industry.
Turanligil and Altintaş	2018	Quantitative	Turkey	Students have negative perceptions of the industry due to insufficient human resource practices and negative attitudes against the internships.
Wen, Li and Kwon	2019	Mixed-method	China	Students had positive attitudes towards pursuing a career in the hotel industry. Factors, such as compensation, benefits, and promotion opportunities significantly influenced their intention to work in the hospitality industry after graduation.
Amissah, Mensah, Mensah and Gamor	2020	Quantitative	Ghana	Students felt that careers in the hospitality and tourism industry could allow them to take care of others, build their private businesses, gain transferable skills, and have the opportunity to pursue higher education/training.
Rosyidi	2021	Quantitative	Indonesia	Career advancement and salaries are factors that influence the perceptions of students pursuing a career in the industry.

From Table 1, it can be noted that various researchers reported that students have had mixed reactions towards working in the industry. These mixed reactions are influenced by many factors, which motivate and demotivate students in hospitality from working in the industry. Most of the literature has focused on the perceptions of hospitality students towards working in the hospitality industry and literature on the feelings and attitude of hospitality students towards working in the industry is very scant.

Research method

The study was conducted to explore the feelings and attitudes that contribute to final year hospitality students' decision to follow a career in the hospitality industry. A qualitative research approach was used for this study and data was collected by conducting in-depth interviews. The qualitative method used to gain an insight on the feelings and attitudes of students towards having a career in the hospitality industry was the phenomenology method. According to Haradhan (2018), the advantages of phenomenology are that the findings of the research consistently have more validity and less artificiality as the process of observing phenomena in natural, real-life settings often allows researchers to develop a more accurate understanding of those phenomena. The phenomenology approach allowed for the investigation and realisation of the feelings and attitudes of students towards having careers in hospitality.

The target population for the research were full-time final year students in hospitality management who had done their internships in the hospitality industry. A list of the students was obtained from the faculty officer at the university. During the time data were collected, a total of 32 students were registered as final-year diploma students in hospitality. A non-probability sampling technique was employed and a purposive convenience sampling technique was used. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), the focal objective of purposive sampling is to concentrate on specific characteristics in a population that are appropriate to answer research questions and the research employed purposive sampling because the students doing their diploma were final-year students and had done their work assignments and met the defined conditions required for the research. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), convenience sampling is where the research investigator selects research participants that are readily available to take part in the research and, for this research, convenience sampling was used to select participants that were easy to access and appropriate. The specific university and students were selected for the study as they had the desired characteristics and resided in close proximity to the researcher. The researcher conducted interviews as a method of data collection. Data collection interviews were conducted with final-year diploma students in hospitality at the participating university. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to direct the interview process. Semi-structured interviews permitted for openness and allow participants to bring new ideas forward. In order for research participants to provide spontaneous responses, the researcher constructed open-ended interview questions. Data were collected by conducting 27 face-to-face interviews. Participation was voluntary and 87% of the students who were asked to participate accepted the invitation and sat for interviews. Audio recordings of the interviews were done with the consent of the research participants and the interview lasted for just over 30 minutes each.

At the start of the interview, the researcher introduced himself and the study to the participants and explained why the research was being conducted so the participant could understand the context of the interview. The participants were also given an explanation of what would happen to the study data. Participants were assured of their anonymity in reporting the data and results. The section of demographics then followed where questions were asked to confirm gender, age, and study level of the participants. This section helped guarantee that only members of the selected population were participating in this study. Research questions that were designed in accordance with the study objectives followed. Finally, the interview concluded by thanking the participants for taking part in the study.

For the qualitative study, data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), thematic analysis creates recognisable important patterns and singles out implicit and explicit opinions in the dataset. Themes are revealed and identified from the coding of the transcribed interviews when thematic analysis is applied

(Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, statements and words were assessed in order to express the participants' ideas. Through listening to the recorded interviews, data was organised, sorted, and compared with numerous codes. A codebook recorded all the codes that were ascertained as laid out by the thematic process. For this research study, coding was done manually by the researcher. All the interview transcripts were read through a few times and differences and similarities in the data were highlighted. Data resemblances were allocated codes and categorised into themes. The codes and frequencies were entered onto an Excel sheet, allowing the researcher to present the codes in bar chart images, as this assists in the analysis process and helps to reveal themes. Here, the coded data was organised into various themes.

Results and discussion
Table 2 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. There were a total of twenty-seven students that participated in this study. The age groups of the study participants from 18 to 25 years comprised of 11 participants, the 26 to 30 years age group was made up of eight participants, the 31 to 35 years age group comprised six participants, while the 36 to 40 and 41 to 45 years age groups both comprised a single participant each.

Table 2: Demographic

Variables	Values	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	18-25	11	41%
	26-30	8	30%
	31-35	6	22%
	36-40	1	4%
	41-45	1	4%
Gender	Male	12	44%
	Female	15	56%
Internship sector	Hotels	10	37%
	Bed and breakfast	7	26%
	Motels	2	7%
	Inns	3	11%
	Travel and tour agents	5	19%

Females constituted 56% of the interviewees, whereas 44% were males. The interviewees were full-time students in the diploma of hospitality management programme at the selected university who have completed their six-month internships as part of their final year curriculum. Of these interviewees, 37% had their internships in hotels, 26% conducted their internship in bed-and-breakfast facilities, 7% did their internships in motels, 11% had theirs in inns, and 19% mentioned that they conducted their internships with travel and tour agents. The interviewees stated they conducted various duties and responsibilities in their respective places of internships. The demographics show that the participants represent a broad demographic.

The participants' responses to the question: *"How was your internship experience?"* revealed both positive and negative themes. The positive and negative themes were derived from 10 codes. The positive responses revealed the following: 11% of the interviewees classified their experiences as good, 15% enjoyed their internship, 4% mentioned that they liked the internship, 7% expressed that their internship was exciting, and 11% stated that it was wholesome. The findings concur with those of Tuzukan (2018), which found South Korean students had conveyed positive feelings towards the hospitality industry due to their experiences as interns. According to the study, the students felt the jobs in hospitality were both interesting and enjoyable.

Five codes that were seen as evidence of negative feelings found in the responses of the interviewees were as follows: 15% of the interviewees mentioned that they had bad experiences during their internship, 7% had disappointing ones, 7% stated that it was not good, 4% pointed out that the internship was unwholesome, and 19% disliked their internship experiences. These findings agree with those of Tuzukan (2018), which revealed that interns had negative internship experiences and expressed that they did not feel good when they were working in the industry.

The analysis of question three: *"What were the highlights of your internship?"* revealed five codes, and these highlights were motivators for students to seek a career in the hospitality industry. The codes contributed to the positive feelings and attitudes of students in having a career in the hospitality industry. The codes termed motivators enticed the students to follow a career path in the hospitality industry, since they were major sources that influenced the students' choices of working in the industry.

Study question four addressed the negative aspects interns had during their internship: *"What were the negative aspects of your internship?"* Four themes and 23 codes were discovered on the negative aspects of the students' internship. The four themes are: leadership of hospitality management, hospitality staff, nature of work, and working hours. Under the leadership theme, it reflected that managers in the hospitality industry have poor leadership skills, are not qualified, and have poor attitudes. The theme of hospitality staff showed that staff in the hospitality industry was demotivated, had bad attitudes, negative influence, were unqualified, and also conflicted during work.

The participants' answers to question five: *"What are the reasons why you would or would not follow a career in the hospitality industry?"* revealed that 51% of the interviewees stated they would return and work in the hospitality industry and 49% stated that they will not return and work in hospitality. Two themes and 16 codes on the reasons for and against following a career in the hospitality industry were identified. The interviewees were attracted to further careers in hospitality by opportunities in the industry, salary, leaders, long-term employment, working conditions, and prestige that come with the jobs in hospitality. On against taking careers in hospitality, the interviewees noted the following factors as motivation for this decision: stressful jobs; long working hours in the hospitality sector; tiring jobs; deprivation of family time; unstable jobs; low social status associated with working in the hospitality industry; demotivation associated with the hospitality industry; and low remuneration.

The negative findings here concur with previous studies on the negative perceptions students have of having careers in hospitality. Studies by Yirbekyaa et al. (2021) found that low wages, in particular, result in negative attitudes of students in working in hospitality. Bahaudin et al. (2021) also agreed that low social status and poor job security discourage prospective employees from applying for hospitality vacancies.

Findings and discussion

The positive and negative feelings and attitudes of students towards having a career in hospitality were evident in various themes and codes, which emerged from the study. The two themes that emerged were the motivators and de-motivators for students towards having a career in hospitality. The motivator theme arose from the positive codes, which were job opportunities, decent salary, inspirational leaders, employee investment, and stable long-term employment. De-motivator themes emerged from the negative codes that were uncovered. These themes were lack of family time, poor pay, tiring jobs, working long hours, stressful jobs, poor working conditions, attitude of management, and unqualified managers. A detailed discussion of these themes and codes that emerged is as follows:

Motivators

Under this theme, the participants expressed positive feelings and attitudes towards having a career in the hospitality industry and these were caused by the working encounters they had as interns. It can therefore be concluded that the internship experience of the students in the hospitality industry stimulated their desire to have a career in hospitality. The sentiments aired by the participants, which made them develop both positive feelings and attitudes towards a career in hospitality, are:

> My experience at the hotel was wonderful. I learnt a lot about hospitality and my former workmates were very professional. I had the opportunity to associate with different people and the money I received form my internship was decent. I feel that if I get the chance to go and work at my former workplace, I would definitely do that. And this helped transform me a lot and feel that I need to follow a career in hospitality". "I enjoyed executing my internship in the hotel industry and I had a nice time. Everything was just perfect, including the delicious free meals we got.

Two participants stated that they encountered positive work experiences during their internships and mentioned motivators that made them feel taking careers in the hospitality industry. These motivators positively influenced the feelings and attitudes of the students towards working in the hospitality industry. The results concur with those of Turanligil (2018) and Rosyidi (2021) who found that motivators significantly influenced hospitality students towards careers in the hospitality industry. One of the participants further mentioned he got the chance to associate and interact with various people, and this influenced the participant's decision to follow a career in hospitality. This finding is similar to that of Le et al. (2018) who found that associating and interacting with tourists influenced the attitude of an individual to select a career in tourism.

Another motivator that influenced the feelings and attitudes to work in the hospitality industry was that of decent remuneration. On this motivator, the participants said:

> Knowing that there are high levels of remuneration in the hospitality jobs was the highlight of my internship. I noticed that the industry generates a lot of money that is adequate to ensure better remuneration". "I noticed the existence of high-paying jobs within the hospitality. For this reason, I will follow a career in the hospitality industry. I know that my future will be secure.

Two participants revealed that the remuneration in the hospitality industry was good further mentions that this was the reason for selecting a career in hospitality. Therefore, a good salary clearly influences a student's choice of working in the hospitality industry. The findings agree with those of Broadbridge and Swanson (2006), who established that the hospitality industry pays a decent and reasonable wage. However, in contrast to these findings, research by Lusby (2017) found that one of the less desirable characteristics of working in hospitality was that of low pay.

Leadership in the hospitality industry also influenced students' decision about taking up careers in the industry and had a definite impact on their feeling and attitudes towards the industry. The participants made the following statements on management and leadership in the hospitality industry:

> Working with effective and efficient managers within the hospitality industry led me to the decision of following a career in that industry". "I emulate the high quality of leaders in the hospitality industry and would like to follow a career in the hospitality industry. Maybe one day I will end up like one of those effective leaders.

Two participants mentioned that the hospitality industry had good and effective leaders, and one of the two participants considered working in hospitality due to the leadership qualities in the industry. These sentiments agree with the study of Lei et al. (2021) which found that leadership that is effective and efficient in the hospitality industry had an influence on students in taking up careers in the hospitality industry. The participants noted that the hospitality industry had opportunities for training and development. This allows for the employees in the industry to enhance their skills. Comments from the participants included the following:

> The highlight in my internship was being exposed to the training and development opportunities in the hospitality industry. These programmes really benefited me a lot as I gained an insight into a lot of things and enhanced my skills and knowledge". "My highlight was recognising that hospitality staff were motivated by getting funds from their employers to further their education related to the hospitality sector.

The participants state their internship highlights were the training and development they received and that this boosted their knowledge and skills. Hora et al. (2020) support these findings as their study established that training programmes enhanced the skills and knowledge of staff. Ognjanović, (2021) study support these findings and postulated that opportunities for training and development in the hospitality industry attract potential employees into the industry.

De-motivators

Poor leadership and job attributes were the themes derived from the negative experience codes. The codes are labelled de-motivators and are the challenges encountered in the hospitality industry that negatively influence the feelings and attitudes of students towards working in the industry. Fourteen codes emerged on the de-motivators. Wakelin-Theron et al. (2019), who found that problems faced during internships by students influenced them to have negative perceptions of working in the hospitality industry leading to de-motivation. Similar studies by Hinkin and Tracey (2010) found that poor leadership in the tourism industry results in students having negative perceptions of working in the hospitality industry. Unstable jobs are a contributing factor to the negative feelings and attitudes of hospitality students about working in the industry. Employees are not comfortable with being employed in industries characterised by unstable jobs and this normally triggers anxiety and uncertainty on the issue of job security. According to Kotulovski and Laleta (2021), some employers in the hospitality industry offers seasonal, unstable, and temporary employment. Two participants had this to say with regards to seasonal employment:

> I did not like the fact that there are many seasonal jobs within the hospitality sector. This basically means that during the year, one is in and out of jobs, since they are peaks and troughs in hospitality employment". "Temporary or unstable jobs were a turn-off for me, I noticed the seasonal nature of hospitality employment and I just had this feeling that I will not work in an industry which does not offer long-term employment.

The two participants experienced that the hospitality industry offers temporary employment due to seasonality. The seasonal nature of their internship led the students to conclude that there is job in-security in the hospitality industry and has resulted in students not seeking careers within the hospitality industry. These findings agree with those of Lusby's (2017) study, which found that the hospitality students have negative attitudes toward working in the hospitality industry because of unstable jobs. Students conducting hospitality studies are disheartened towards working in the industry because of low wages. One of the main challenges confronting the hospitality industry is that of poor remuneration. The participants revealed their frustrations on the issue of low remuneration:

> There is underpayment of many workers within the hospitality industry. How can I be expected to follow a career in that industry under such conditions?" "The benefits received by workers within the hospitality industry were inadequate. Such kind of benefits fail to attract me into the hospitality industry.

Participants mentioned that the hospitality industry underpays its workers. Many students were underpaid for the work they have done:

> Also, my salary was not sufficient to cater for my internship and this depressed me at times since I had bills to settle and also needed money for transport". "To add to that, the salary I received was little and I had to work for long hours for small salary.

These findings agree with those of Pitso (2018), and Lusby (2017) who found that the undesirable attributes of working in the hospitality industry was that of lesser payment. In contradiction some of the study participants agreed on the statement that, "one can make good money by working in tourism". However one must remember that "good money" is a relative concept depending on the opinion of the participant.

A stressful work environment was connected with the negative perception of the graduates towards a career in the hospitality industry. Jobs within the hospitality industry cause stress for the employees. Among the negative aspects of the internship, stressful jobs were cited by the hospitality students who had the following to say:

"Stressful work was the negative aspect of my internship... I often got stressed due to the nature of work in the hospitality industry. I did not like being stressed by the job". The findings here are the same as Akgunduz and Gürel (2019) who noted that the nature of the hospitality and tourism industry is acknowledged as stressful, and this stress is normally caused by work overload or tensions coming from the association with co-workers or customers.

Employees within the hospitality industry work odd and long hours; they work during public holidays and at night. The hospitality students pointed out that their choice of not wanting to work within the hospitality industry is partly due to long working hours. The participants highlighted that jobs within the hospitality industry are tiring and stressful. This was linked to the negative feelings and attitudes of the hospitality students towards working in the hospitality industry. The responses of the participants on long working hours and its effects are mentioned below:

> I felt exhausted every day I worked in the hospitality sector... this fact on its own may contribute towards me opting for another industry instead of the hospitality industry. The working hours within the hospitality sector are too long. I would get home tired every day and I wonder if I would be able to tolerate this if I follow a career within the industry.

Participants mentioned that they worked for long hours, and this led to tiredness and exhaustion. In support of this, a participant said the following: "The working hours were too long and this always left me exhausted".

These opinions simply acknowledge that the hospitality industry is a tiring industry to work in, as employee exhaustion is quite common. Studies by Sibanyoni et al. (2015) and Makumbirofa and Saayman (2017) agree that employees in the hospitality industry work for long hours. Piso (2021) also found that working long hours was now a norm in the hospitality industry. Long working hours deprived students of family time. Families of hospitality industry employees become dysfunctional due to the limited time the hospitality employees spend with their families. The nature of work within the hospitality industry clearly disrupts the normal family life and contributes towards dysfunctional families. The hospitality students were concerned that jobs within the hospitality industry occupied most of the time of the employees to such an extent that their normal family life is disrupted, and they mentioned the following in relation to this:

> I did not have time for my family because of the odd working hours in the hospitality industry". "I felt exhausted every day I worked in the hospitality sector. My family missed me during the entire duration of my internship; I did not have time for them.

Participants mentioned the sentiments of the hospitality students regarding the deprivation of their family time because of the hospitality industry workload. This indicates working in the hospitality industry keeps employees away from their families and, in the end, this affects family relations, hence why some students developed negative attitudes of seeking employment in the hospitality industry. Makumbirkufa and Saayman (2017) agree with this and state that due to long working hours, hospitality employees end up with less time with their families and lose family bonds at the expense of the work they do.

Low social status is linked to the negative feelings and attitudes of hospitality students towards work following a career in the hospitality industry. Many jobs within the hospitality industry are looked down upon by the society. It is revealed from the collected data that the hospitality students were discouraged from following a career within the industry by the low social status of many jobs within the hospitality industry. The replies of the participants on the low social status of jobs are as follows:

> I did not like the way people who work within the hospitality industry are looked down upon in the society. It is quite obvious that this discourages me from following a career in the hospitality industry.

These findings on low social status agree with those of Nigatu (2019) who stated that the jobs in the hospitality industry were considered of low social status. Also, the findings of Roney and Öztin (2007) agree with this, as they found that the overall view of employment in tourism is that of a poor image and the jobs are not respected. Similarly, Lusby (2017) concluded that, due to the low status of the jobs in the industry, many prospective employees were unwilling to enter the hospitality industry.

Conclusion and recommendations
The study explored the feelings and attitudes of full-time final year hospitality students regarding practical work experience towards working in the hospitality industry. Through this qualitative study, various findings emerged. The results from this study indicate that the feelings and attitudes of students towards working in the hospitality are greatly influenced by

their work experience gained through their internships. During their internships, hospitality students are exposed to the realities of the hospitality industry, and this exposure plays a critical role in determining whether the students will choose careers in the hospitality industry.

The factors which influence students' feelings and attitudes towards working in the hospitality industry in this study were named as de-motivators or motivators. De-motivators push students away from following careers in the industry and motivators pull students towards careers in the industry by influencing their feelings and attitudes. Based on these factors, students expressed both negative and positive feelings and attitudes towards working in the industry, thereby coming to a conclusion that students showed mixed reactions to having careers in the hospitality industry. Due to the de-motivators, 49% of students that participated in the study mentioned that they will not seek careers in the industry. In contrast, 51% of the students that participated in the study stated that due to the positive influence of the motivators mentioned after completion of their studies, they will follow careers in the industry.

A shortcoming of the study is that the results cannot be generalised on the feelings and attitudes of any other hospitality students who were not participants of this study towards working in the hospitality industry. This is because the sample size was small and it was limited to final year hospitality students at the selected university. Future studies should incorporate more academic institutions across South Africa, and must include both lecturers and employers in the hospitality industry. Another area which needs to be researched, is the influence of leadership on students' feelings and attitudes of working in the hospitality industry.

The study recommends that hospitality establishments should work hand in hand with academic institutions and government institutions responsible for tourism and hospitality. This could assist in finding solutions to the current challenges facing the hospitality industry and will help develop academic curriculums suitable for the hospitality industry.

References

Akgunduz, Y. & Gürel, D. A. (2019). Role stress and turnover intention in hotels: the mediating role of organizational enthusiasm and unstimulating work. *Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal*, 67 (3), 222-238.

Altinay, L., Dai, Y. D., Chang, J., Lee, C. H., Zhuang, W. L. & Liu, Y. C. (2019). How to facilitate hotel employees' work engagement: The roles of leader-member exchange, role overload and job security. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 31 (3), 1525-1542.

Amissah, E. F., Mensah, A. O., Mensah, I. & Gamor, E. (2020). Students' perceptions of careers in Ghana's hospitality and tourism industry. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, 32 (1), 1–13.

Ariza-Montes, A., Hernández-Perlines, F., Han, H. & Law, R. (2019). Human dimension of the hospitality industry: Working conditions and psychological well-being among European servers. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 41 (1), 138-147.

Bahaudin, K. A. N., Samuri, M. I. H., Ismail, S. & Abd Aziz, M. A. (2021). *Identifying motivation factors of students choosing tourism and hospitality programs in University Malaysia Kelantan* (Doctoral dissertation, University Malaysia Kelantan).

Bamford, K. (2012). *Undergraduate student perceptions of a career in the tourism and hospitality industry in New Zealand*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Otago).

Baum, T. (2019). Does the hospitality industry need or deserve talent? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 31 (10), 3823-3837.

Creswell, J. W. & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Fifth edition. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Broadbridge, A. & Swanson, V. (2006). Managing two roles: A theoretical study of students' employment whilst at university. *Community, Work & Family*, 9 (2), 159-179.

Dwesini, N. F. (2019). Causes and prevention of high employee turnover within the hospitality industry: A literature review. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 8 (3), 1-15.

El-Houshy, S. (2018). Hospitality students' perceptions towards working in hotels: A case study of the faculty of tourism and hotels in Alexandria University. *arXiv preprint arXiv:1807.09660.*

Ezeuduji, I. O., Chibe, M. E. & Nyathela, T. (2017). Hospitality management study programme and students' perceptions: universities in South Africa. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 17 (4), 313-324.

Farrukh, M., Kalimuthuan, R. & Farrukh, S. (2019). Impact of job satisfaction and mutual trust on employee loyalty in Saudi hospitality industry: A mediating analysis of leader support. *International Journal of Business and Psychology*, 1 (2), 30-52.

Ghosh, K. (2022). When and how employees cross the line for the job in hospitality firms. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 103187.

Goh, E. & Lee, C. (2018). A workforce to be reckoned with: The emerging pivotal Generation Z hospitality workforce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 73 (1), 20-28.

Grobelna, A. (2021). Emotional exhaustion and its consequences for hotel service quality: the critical role of workload and supervisor support. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 30 (4), 395-418.

Haradhan, M. (2018). Qualitative research methodology in social sciences and related studies. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, 7 (1), 23-48.

Hinkin, T. R. & Tacey, J. B. (2010). What makes it so great? An analysis of human resources practices among Fortune's best companies to work for. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 51 (2), 158-170.

Ho, G. K. & Law, R. (2020). Marketing strategies in the decision-making process for undergraduate choice in pursuit of hospitality and tourism higher education: The case of Hong Kong. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 9 (1), 1-13.

Hora, M. T., Parrott, E. & Her, P. (2020). How do students conceptualise the college internship experience? Towards a student-centred approach to designing and implementing internships. *Journal of Education and Work*, 33 (1), 48-66.

Kautish, P., Walia, S. & Kour, P. (2021). The moderating influence of social support on career anxiety and career commitment: an empirical investigation from India. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 38 (8), 782-801.

Kotulovski, K. & Laleta, S. (2021). The abuse and exploitation of foreign seasonal workers: Did the Coronavirus emergency worsen already precarious working conditions in the agricultural sector? *EU and comparative law issues and challenges series (ECLIC)*, 5 (1), 326-358.

Le, A. H., Klieve, H. & McDonald, C. V. (2018). Tertiary students' perceptions of hospitality careers in Vietnam. *Empirical Research in Vocational Education and Training*, 10 (1), 1-25.

Lei, C., Hossain, M. S., Mostafiz, M. I. & Khalifa, G. S. (2021). Factors determining employee career success in the Chinese hotel industry: A perspective of Job-Demand Resources theory. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 48 (1), 301-311.

Lin, C. Y. & Anantharajah, S. (2019). Perceived expectations of internships: Case study of a private university in Malaysia. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Innovation in Hospitality Tourism*, 8 (1), 1-16.

Lusby, C. (2017). American and Macau student perceptions towards working in the tourism and hospitality industry. *International Interdisciplinary Business-Economics Advancement Journal*, 2 (1), 54-64.

Makumbirofa , S. & Saayman, A. (2018). Forecasting Demand for qualified labour in the South African hotel Industry. *Journal of Economic and Financial Sciences*, 11 (1), 1-11.

Mooney, S. & Jameson, S. (2018). The career constructions of hospitality students: A rocky road. *Hospitality & Society*, 8 (1), 45–67.

Mouro, C., Lomba, V. & Duarte, A. P. (2021). Pro-Environmental Behaviours at Work: The Interactive Role of Norms and Attitudinal Ambivalence. *Sustainability*, 13 (21), 1-15.

Mukwevho, H., Nesamvuni, A. E. & Roberson, J. R. (2020). Factors Impacting Employee Absenteeism and the Managers' Perception of its Causes in the Hotel Industry. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism, and Leisure*, 9 (5), 1161-1177.

Nigatu, T. F. (2019). Assessing working environment of employees in the hospitality industry: The case of hotels in Dessie and Kobolecha towns. *Journal of Hospitality Management and Tourism,* 10 (1), 1-8.

Ognjanović, J. (2021). Preferred attributes of employer brand attractiveness among potential employees in the hotel industry. *The European Journal of Applied Economics*, 18 (2), 146-160.

Ohunakin, F., Adeniji, A. A., Ogunlusi, G., Igbadumhe, F. & Sodeinde, A. G. (2020). Talent retention strategies and employees' behavioural outcomes: empirical evidence from hospitality industry. *Business: Theory and Practice*, 21 (1), 192-199.

Olowoyo, M. M., Ramaila, S. & Mavuru, L. (2020). Levels of Readiness and Preparedness of Selected South African TVET Colleges in Meeting the Requirements of the Hospitality Industry. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19 (11), 53-70.

Piso, A. (2021). Controlling the clock: Working hours in the UK hotel sector. *Research in Hospitality Management*, 1 (1), 1-11.

Pitso, A. R. M. (2018). *Assessing the effects of inadequate human capital affecting brand image of the hospitality and tourism industry* (Doctoral dissertation, Durban University of Technology).

Qu, H., Leung, X. Y., Huang, S. S. & He, J. (2021). Factors affecting hotel interns' satisfaction with internship experience and career intention in China. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 100311.

Richardson, S. & Butler, G. (2012). Attitudes of Malaysian tourism and hospitality students towards a career in the industry. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 17 (3), 262–276.

Robinson, R. N. S., Ruhanen, L. & Breakey, N. M. (2016). Tourism and hospitality internship: Influences on student career aspirations. *Issues Current in Tourism*, 19 (6), 513-527.

Roney, S. & Öztin, P. (2007). Career perceptions of undergraduate tourism students: A case study in Turkey. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, 6 (1), 4-17.

Rosyidi, M. I. (2021). Undergraduate students' perceptions and attitudes towards a career in tourism industry: The case of Indonesia. *Jurnal Manajemen dan Kewirausahaan*, 23 (1), 40-51.

Ruslan, S., Mohamad, S. F., Juhari, N. H. & Karim, M. S. A. (2021). Article Review: Internship Satisfaction Determinants Among Undergraduates in the Service Industry. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 11 (1), 7084-7084.

Sahoo, M. & Mishra, S. (2018). Effects of trainee characteristics, training attitudes and training need analysis on motivation to transfer training. *Management Research Review,* 42 (2), 215-238.

Sandstrom, J. K. & Reynolds, D. E. (2020). Leading a successful hotel: A look at the general manager's ability to utilize multiple leadership styles. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 102399.

Santhanam, N., Kumar, J. R., Kumar, V. & Saha, R. (2021). Employee turnover intention in the milieu of human resource management practices: moderating role of work-life balance. *International Journal of Business Innovation and Research*, 24 (1), 57-75.

Seqhobane, M. & Kokt, D. (2021). How do job characteristics influence the motivation of millennial hospitality employees? *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19 (1), 1-9.

Sibanyoni, J. J., Kleynhans, I. C. & Vibetti, S. P. (2015). South African hospitality graduates' perceptions of employment in the hospitality industry. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 4 (1), 1-16.

Soffi, M. N. E. & Mohamad, S. F. (2021). Strategizing Hospitality Internship for Effective Implementation: Perspectives of Internship Coordinators. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11 (4), 1469–1480.

Turanligil, F., G. & Altinas, V. (2018). Analysis of industry perceptions and expectations of tourism students: A case study in Turkey. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 21 (1), 266–281.

Wakelin-Theron, N., Ukpere, W. I. & Spowart, J. (2019). Attributes of Tourism Graduates: Comparison Between Employers' Evaluation and Graduates' Perceptions. *Tourism Review International*, 23 (1-2), 55-69.

Wen, H., Li, X. & Kwon, J. (2019). Undergraduate students' attitudes toward and perceptions of hospitality careers in Mainland China. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 31 (3), 159-172.

Yasar, O. M. & Turgut, M. (2020). Unemployment anxiety of last year college students. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, 15 (1), 56-64.

Yirbekyaa, E. K., Kuuder, C. W. & Mohammed, I. (2021). Undergraduate Students' Perceptions of Tourism and Hospitality Career Education in Ghana. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, 8 (10). 175-188.