



MOTIVATION OF STUDENTS TO STUDY TOURISM HOSPITALITY PROGRAMS

Bashar Aref Alhaj Mohammad[†]

Assistant professor, Institute of Public Administration, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Hamam Talal Alsaleh

Programs Design and Development Department, Institute of Public Administration, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

ABSTRACT

Many private and public institutions in the world have offered programs teaching tourism industry and hospitality. The subject of tourism management is one of the modern majors. The purpose of this study is to identify why students want to major in tourism. A questionnaire is used to gather the data from students who are studying Tourism Hospitality (TH). Factor analysis is used to identify the main reasons that drive students to study Tourism Hospitality. The results show that Social status", "Job opportunities were important factors influencing students to study tourism. More detailed information is given in this study.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Many universities in the world strive to increase the number of hospitality and tourism programs (Kim *et al.*, 2008). The reasons behind this interest are related to the growth of the tourism sector. In general, education is very important for the hospitality and tourism industry because it provides support for undergraduates to be more knowledgeable and more experienced in the field (Cho and Kang, 2005; Kang *et al.*, 2005). Most of those undergraduate students are working with famous foundations in different sections in the world such as travel agency, tour-operator, hotels (Charles and McCleary, 1997). Evaluating tourism and hospitality program from various countries is useful because it assists to understand tourism and hospitality programs from different countries (Barclay, 1990). The investigation of tourism and hospitality program will affect the strategies and policies of students (Barron, 2002a). Logically, most of the universities in the world that provide tourism and hospitality program have an interest to increase the number of local and international students (Barron, 2002b). Although, most of the international universities,

[†] Corresponding author

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establishments, governments, and tourism industries are interested to get more information about students studying tourism hospitality (Hsu, 1996; Ryan, 2005). Furthermore, studying tourism and hospitality is interesting for both local and international students, and stakeholders, researchers and universities are asking questions related to those students' motivations, their main reasons that drive them to study Tourism Hospitality (Kim *et al.*, 2008). The number of students who are studying this major increased. For example, the number of students who are enrolled in hospitality tourism program at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas (UNLV) was around 1929 students in 2004 (Kim *et al.*, 2008) cited from (Theriault, 2004). Another example from the UK: the total number of students who are studying hospitality tourism at the University of Surrey was around 1237 students in 2005 (Kim *et al.*, 2007) cited from (Williamson, 2005). The importance of the tourism sector in general and in Jordan specifically enhances the universities and institutions to offer hospitality and tourism programs to provide the labor market with human resources trained and qualified. Jordan is a suitable country for studying hospitality and tourism and it has many students who like to study hospitality and tourism.

1.1. Objectives of the Study

Studies related to the field of hospitality and tourism and student's motivation to specialize in it are very limited in Jordan such studied have been very scanty. Furthermore, this study investigates the most important reason that drives students to study hospitality and tourism. The objectives of this study were as follows: First, it investigates the motivations of students to major in hospitality and tourism. Second, this study attempts to examine statistically the differences between genders who are studying hospitality and tourism program.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Very few studies related to the motivations of students to study hospitality tourism program (Kim *et al.*, 2007). This issue is very important in the hospitality tourism program and it has direct impact for managers and management (Airey and wFrontistis, 1997; Bushell *et al.*, 2001; Hjalager, 2003). According to Cho and Kang (2005) hospitality and tourism management learning has been developed in Korea since 1967. O'Mahony *et al.* (2001) studied the motivations that lead Australian students to study hospitality and tourism management. The results showed interest in the hospitality industry, the influence of their parents, career counselors and knowledge were more significant factors to study hospitality tourism program. Hjalager (2003) conducted motivations of hospitality tourism management student in Sweden. The results indicated that three motives were: 1) work experience 2) the value of programs in tourism industries and 3) preference to work people. Moreover, the student desires to study hospitality tourism management because they believe that they can find a respectable job in this field Zhao (1991). Furthermore, from the demand perspective, there are many reasons that lead students to study tourism hospitality, because they will be able to be to get more knowledge, and increase their chances to get job opportunities by learning international languages and new cultures. (Kim *et al.*, 2008). According to Schmidt (2002) there were some factors that influence the decision to study in a hospitality tourism. These four factors were personal factors, demographic factors (e.g. sex, nationality, age), psychological factors (motives, perceptions, attitudes), and social factors (culture, level of family, reference group).

Studying tourism hospitality depends on ethnicity or nationality (Cothran and Combrink, 1999). Australian students prefer to study tourism hospitality management because of their desire to learn more about this major and influence their family to get a suitable career in the future (O'Mahony *et al.*, 2001). The increase in hospitality tourism programs in China has been due to the growth of the tourism sector (Huyton, 1997).

A Comparative study between Greek and UK students has been done by Airey and wFrontistis (1997). The results indicated that Greek students had more positive views in majoring tourism hospitality management than UK students. Motivation to study Tourism hospitality management is different between culture and genders (Aitchison, 2003). This difference should be taken to support the development. Some studies agreed that students' motivation to study tourism hospitality management is vocational rather than academic (Purcell and Quinn, 1996; Airey and wFrontistis, 1997).

From a marketing perspective, there is a good relationship between demand and supply in major hospitality tourism program (Kim *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, from the perspective of demand, Barron (2002b) discussed the factors that affect students to study tourism hospitality program in Asian countries. The results found economic, political or organizational influences in Asian countries. Zhao (1991) stated that Chinese students wish to study this major because they like to be higher experience in this quality tertiary educated. Adams and Chapman (1998) demonstrated the main reason that leads Asian students to study for example physical facilities faculty staff comparing with their home country. Diaz and Krauss (1996) reported that poor quality of programs, faculty and facilities are the main reasons that make Asian students believe in studying in reputable universities even overseas. Also, Du (2003) noted that demand and supply in the tourism hospitality program are limited and poor faculty, facilities, and career motivations limit the number of students in this field. Studying in Western universities provides satisfaction for students and makes them friendly (Robertson *et al.*, 2000). Thus, studying in Asian institutions is considered to possess a large number of classes, same method in teaching environment, and insufficient facilities (Pearson and Beasley., 1996; Biggs, 1998). Asian students prefer to study in Australia and major in tourism hospitality program. There are many reasons suggested by (Lawley and BlighT, 1997; Barron, 2002b): First, there are some social connections between Australia and Asian countries. Second, the distance is short with Asian countries. Third, the tertiary educational cost is not too much when compared with the UK or the USA Universities. The climate and personal security in Australia is very high compared with other countries. Thus, Asian students studying abroad are possible to get more experiences from local people (Malfroy and Daruwalla, 2000).

In addition, the findings of these studies indicated the Asian students who study in Australian universities demonstrated better motivation than Australian students for learning this subject (Niles, 1995). In addition, students prefer to study abroad because they are sure to get employed in their countries (Robertson *et al.*, 2000). Formica (1996) majority of students prefer to study abroad in the US and European universities. He stated the need for development of individuals with previous experience. Jenkins (2001) studied the preferred countries for getting a first degree in the hospitality program using samples from UK students. The results indicated that most of the students preferred to study at US universities, UK universities ranked second.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1. Measurement

In order to accomplish research objectives, a research instrument was developed to be more suitable and accurate for data collection. 25 motivational items were selected to identify the main motive that drives students to study tourism hospitality program. The motivation items which were selected are related to job opportunities and other benefits which are expected from studying tourism hospitality program. These items are selected from previous studies (e.g. (Airey and wFrontistis, 1997; Bushell *et al.*, 2001; O'Mahony *et al.*, 2001; Hjalager, 2003; Tribe and Lewis, 2003; Kim *et al.*, 2007; Kim *et al.*, 2008). All items were measured by a Likert scale from 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = not agree, and 1= strongly not agree.

3.2. Data Collection

The respondents of this research consisted of undergraduate students in Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP) because there are no postgraduate programs offered currently. Data were collected from the Jordan Applied University College of Hospitality and Tourism in Jordan (Ammon College). It has a high reputation in the country for the Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP) which helps to attract a magnificent number of students every year.

The University has also a secondary school specialized in tourism and hotel education and it possesses a 4-star hotel for practical training for its students during the study period. In the data collection process, the University has two academic programs which are Bachelor and Diploma in Tourism Management, Hotel Management.

The respondents are randomly selected from each education level (Bachelor and Diploma). Out of 235 questionnaires distributed, a total of 175 usable questionnaires for analysis. A survey form was administrated and collected by HTP members in the university.

3.3. Data Analysis

For data analysis, the researchers used four techniques: descriptive analysis for describing the respondents, frequencies analysis to identify the percentage of survey's statement, and in order to identify the underlying dimensions of HTP study motivations, factor analysis was applied. According to (Kaiser, 1974) and Lee *et al.* (2008) opinion, factor analysis with an eigenvalue greater than 1 were accepted and only statements with factor loading greater than 0.4 in the final structure of analysis.

The last analysis technique was independent sample t-test to identify the statistically significant differences between male and female toward studying Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP).

4. RESULTLS

4.1. Demographic Characteristics

The results of student's characteristics revealed that 81.7% of students were male and the remainders were female. The highest percentage of educational level was for Bachelor 58.7%. The majority of students were from Jordan studying Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP), and the majority of them have fellowship 24.4%, while the remainder were self supporting. The results also

indicated that 68.6% of the students will advise their friends and relatives to study Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP).

Table-1. Students Demographic Profile

Variables	Percentage
Gender	
Male	81.7%
female	18.3%
Education level	
Diploma	41.3%
Bachelor	58.7%
Nationality	
Jordanian	95.9%
Foreigner	4.1%
Do you recommend your collogues for studying HTP?	
Yes	68.6%
No	31.4%
Do you have fellowship?	
Yes	24.4%
No	75.6%

4.2. Factor Analysis of Student Motivations

One of the research objectives was to identify the underlying dimensions of student motivations to study Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP). For this reason, the principal component factor analysis was selected to identify the main motivation that drives student to study this major. The results of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) show that 0.83 which is considered acceptable value for run factor analysis.

Many researchers stated that factor loading above 0.4 and eaginvalue greater than 1 was used to include in interpretation of a factor analysis (Kim *et al.*, 2007; Kim *et al.*, 2008; Mohammad and Mat Som, 2010).

Table 2 reports the results of factor analysis of 24 motivation of student to study Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP). The results of the analysis was grouped in seven factors with total of 63.61% variance. The factors groupings were "Social status", "Job opportunities", "Modern major", "Special interest", "Attractive major", "Ease in studying", and " Fulfill dreams". based on the results, "Social status" was the most important factor that drives students to study Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP). It explained 29.20% of variance, with scored eigenvalue 7.30.

This dimension consists eight statements were " I like to make relationship with foreign friends", "I like to add more knowledge in this field compared to others", "I like to know more about different cultures", "This program more interested than others", "I believe that this major practical", "I believe that I have a chance to go on trips overseas", "This field is growing very fast", and "I want to show my social status".

The second factor was "Job opportunities", it obtained 1.89 eigenvalue, and it explained 7.56% of the variance. This dimension had four items were" I believe that getting job is very easy after graduation", "The salary expected after graduated is high", " Variety of job opportunities", and "Jobs in this sector look attractive".

However, the lowest important factor for students to study Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP) was "Fulfill dreams", it obtained 1.06 eigenvalue, and 4.24% of variance. This factor had two items: "I prefer to be an excellent lecturer", and "The fee is cheap compared with Europe an countries".

Table 2. Factor Analysis of Student's Motivation to Study (HTP)

Factors	Loading	Comm- unality	Eigen value	Mean	Variance
Factor 1: Social status			7.30		29.20
I like to make relationship with foreign friends	0.81	0.71		4.19	
I like to get more knowledge in this field compared to others	0.74	0.64		4.21	
I like to know more about different cultures	0.67	0.60		4.36	
This program more interested than others	0.59	0.61		4.09	
I believe that this major is practical	0.54	0.48		4.33	
I believe that I have a chance to go trips overseas	0.51	0.52		4.28	
This field is growing very fast	0.51	0.56		4.28	
I want show my social status	0.48	0.57		4.31	
Factor 2: Job opportunities			1.89		7.56
I believe that getting job is very easy after graduated	0.74	0.61		4.09	
The salary expected after graduated is high	0.70	0.60		3.31	
Variety of job opportunities	0.65	0.59		4.12	
Jobs in this sector are looking attractive	0.49	0.66		4.02	
Factor 3: Modern Major			1.62		6.50
The quality of courses is updated	0.77	0.67		3.95	
I would like to study this major in the English language	0.70	0.71		4.16	
The staff are vary qualified	0.67	0.60		3.88	
Factor 4: Special interest			1.49		5.99
This majoring is my interest	0.72	0.75		4.09	
This field suitable for my self	0.66	0.61		4.07	
Factor 5: Attractive major			1.32		5.31
My friends and colleagues recommend this field	0.82	0.74		3.59	
This field is wonted in my country	0.52	0.61		4.13	
This sector more aptitude	0.51	0.67			
Factor 6: Ease in studying			1.19	3.94	4.78
This field not available in my country	0.73	0.64		2.69	
This field is ease to study compared with others	0.64	0.65		3.66	

Studying abroad is highly regarded my country	0.55	0.62	3.85
Factor 7: fulfill dreams			1.06 4.24
I prefer to be an excellent lecturer	0.71	0.73	3.50
The fee is more reasonable compared with Europe countries	0.64	0.64	4.03
Total Variance Explained			63.61
Total Scale Reliability	0.88		

4.3. Gender Differences in Motivational Factors

To determine if there are any statistically significant differences between male and female Hospitality Tourism Program a students in seven motivational factors. For this objective, an independent sample t-test was conducted.

The results showed in table 3. It illustrates that there were statistically significant related to three factors were "Job opportunities", "Modern major" toward female p-value 0.00, and "ease in studying" toward the male p-value 0.03.

Table-3. Independent Sample t-test of Motivational factors vs Gender

Variables	Male students	Female students	t-value	p- Value
Social status	4.23	4.35	0.33	0.50
Job opportunities	3.82	3.95	0.35	0.00
Modern major	4.05	4.07	0.89	0.00
Special interest	4.03	4.03	0.98	0.92
Attractive major	3.77	3.46	0.10	0.68
Ease in studying	3.45	3.33	0.48	0.03
Fulfill dreams	3.85	3.73	0.60	0.33

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study has been conducted in Jordan, a small country in the Middle East. It is considered one of the richest countries in touristic sites (MOTA, 2013). The current study investigated the students' motivation to study Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP) in Jordan.

The purpose of this study was to identify the man motivational factors that drive students to study Hospitality Tourism Program, and to examine statistically the differences between genders studying (HTP).

Seven motivational factors presented in table 2 were " Social status", "Job opportunities", "Modern major", "Special interest", " Attractive major", " Ease in studying", " Fulfillment of dreams".

Out of the seven motivational factors, students chose "Social status" as the most important factor to study Hospitality Tourism Program (HTP). Based on the results, students in a natural way like to grip the chance to obtain job in any tourism organization such as classified hotel, hand craft shops, or tourist guide.

To examine if there any statistically differences between male and female students in seven motivational factors, an independent sample t-test was conducted. The results showed in table 3 which illustrates that there was statistically significant between two factors for female which were "

Job opportunities", and " Modern major", This means that female students are more motivated to study HTP than male students. While the results showed that one significant factor toward a male student which was "Ease in studying".

This results showed that male students were strongly agreed on ease of studying this major compare with female students. The findings of this study agreed with previous literatures (Airey and wFrontistis, 1997; Cothran and Combrink, 1999) which showed that different motivations to study HTP depend on the nationality and ethnicity of students.

Also, Kim *et al.* (2003) found that different motivation to study HTP among Chinese, Taiwanese and Korean student. However, some of previous studies indicated that students are motivated to study HTP because they have limited knowledge in the field (Litvin, 2000; Jenkins, 2001; Fraser, 2003).

The results of this study provide vital information to promote Hospitality Tourism Program and support education policy in the country. Based on this study, the results, it summarized as follows: First, this study provides a necessary information for understanding Jordan students motivations in studying Tourism Hospitality Program (HTP).

Second, the results of this study will be helpful for colleges and universities in Jordan to offer and facilitate essential elements for better understanding students' motivation in future. Finally, the results of this study will help Ministry of Higher Education to attract foreign students to study HTP in Jordan. Based on the literature review, a future research is needed to identify perception and expectation of student majoring in HTP. A comparison should be made between national and foreign students majoring in HTP.

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