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**Studying the Housing Needs of the International
Students in Egyptian Universities**

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Abstract:

As the number of international students across the country has grown over the past decade and continues to grow, it is more important than ever to understand their needs, particularly in terms of hospitality.

The purpose of the study was to determine international students' concerns, perceptions of housing needs while studying in Egypt.

Two research methods were used to achieve the objectives of the study. The first of which was a personal interviews conducted by the researchers with officials in some public universities to get acquainted with the reality of the housing services provided to international students, as well as the most significant challenges that officials face in providing housing services that contribute to international students' retention and satisfaction.

The second method was an online survey questionnaire that was distributed and shared to a random sample of international students enrolled in Egyptian public universities. The survey included an introduction to the researchers with a brief explanation of the purpose of the study, Demographic variables, and housing needs.

Through personal interviews conducted by the researchers with officials in the selected universities, it was found that the percentage of international students residing in the university housing is very low compared to the total number of these students enrolled in the university. It was also discovered that there were several problems and hurdles that contributed to this.

Also, with analysis of the data gathered online from respondents, the researchers gained a clearer understanding

of international students' concerns, perceptions regarding their housing needs.

The most notable findings were as follows: In general, International students determined high levels of the importance of housing needs employed in the study.

However, there were a significant differences in respondents' ratings of the perceived importance of the housing needs based on their gender and geographical region of origin. In contrast, differences were not significant among international students based on these demographic variables: marital status, age, and current degree program.

Based on the study findings, some recommendations were suggested to stakeholders in order to provide international students with their perceptions of the housing needs and thus increase the universities' abilities to retain those students. There was also some recommendations for further research.

Key words

(International students, Hospitality, Academic Hospitality, Educational tourism)

الملخص:

نظراً لأن عدد الطلاب الوافدين القادمين للدراسة في مصر قد نما على مدار العقد الأخير وما زال في نمو مستمر، فقد أصبح من الضروري أكثر من أي وقت مضى فهم احتياجات وتصورات هؤلاء الطلاب، لا سيما فيما يتعلق بإحتياجاتهم من الضيافة.

لذلك، كان الغرض من الدراسة هو التعرف على اهتمامات الطلاب الوافدين وتصوراتهم لاحتياجات الإقامة الخاصة بهم أثناء الدراسة في مصر.

لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة تم استخدام طريقتين بحثيتين، كانت أولاهما المقابلات الشخصية التي أجراها الباحث مع السادة مسؤولي شؤون الطلاب الوافدين ومسؤولي الإسكان الخاص بهم في بعض الجامعات الحكومية من أجل التعرف على واقع خدمات الإقامة المقدمة لهؤلاء الطلاب، وكذلك أهم التحديات التي يواجهها المسؤولون في سبيل تقديم خدمات الإقامة التي من شأنها أن تساهم في استبقاء الطلاب الوافدين ورضاهم.

أما الطريقة الثانية فكانت عبارة عن استبيان استقصائي عبر الإنترنت تم توزيعه ومشاركته على عينة عشوائية من الطلاب الوافدين المسجلين في الجامعات الحكومية المصرية. اشتمل الاستبيان على مقدمة للباحث مع شرح موجز للغرض من الدراسة، والمتغيرات الديموغرافية للمستجيبين، بالإضافة إلى احتياجات الإقامة المستخدمة.

تبين من خلال المقابلات الشخصية التي أجراها الباحث مع السادة المسؤولين في الجامعات المحددة أن نسبة الطلاب الوافدين المقيمين في السكن الجامعي هي نسبة ضئيلة للغاية مقارنة بإجمالي عدد هؤلاء الطلاب المسجلين في الجامعة، كما تم اكتشاف وجود العديد من المشاكل والعقبات التي ساهمت في ذلك.

أيضاً، من خلال تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها عبر الإنترنت من المستجيبين، اكتسب الباحث فهماً أوضح لاهتمامات الطلاب الوافدين والتصورات المتعلقة باحتياجاتهم من الإقامة ، وكانت أبرز النتائج كما يلي:

بشكل عام، حدد الطلاب الوافدين (المستجيبين) مستويات عالية من الأهمية لاحتياجات الإقامة المستخدمة في الدراسة. مع ذلك، كانت هناك اختلافات واضحة في تصنيفات المستجيبين للأهمية المتصورة لاحتياجات الإقامة على أساس الجنس والمنطقة الجغرافية الأصلية. في المقابل، لم تكن الفروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين الطلاب الوافدين بناءً على هذه المتغيرات الديموغرافية: الحالة الاجتماعية، العمر، وبرنامج الدراسة الحالي.

بناءً على النتائج المتحصل عليها من خلال الدراسة، تم اقتراح بعض التوصيات للسادة المسؤولين في الوزارات والجهات المعنية والجامعات من أجل تقديم احتياجات الإقامة المناسبة لاهتمامات الطلاب الوافدين وطبقاً لتصوراتهم، وبالتالي زيادة قدرة الجامعات والمجتمع الأكاديمي المصري ككل على جذب هؤلاء الطلاب والاحتفاظ بهم؛ كما كانت هناك أيضاً بعض التوصيات لمزيد من البحث، وللأبحاث المستقبلية في هذا الشأن.

Introduction

International students have many challenges to face when studying abroad. They have to be prepared to deal with cultural, academic, and social differences. When recruiting international students, Institutions need to be aware of these challenges. Institutions that are aware of the needs of international students can provide the appropriate programs and services and thus increase their abilities to retain those students (Parsons, 2000).

Ian Michael, et al (2003), in a study aimed to examine why international students opt for their chosen study destination as well as investigating their behavior as tourists while

studying, suggested that students chose the destination for study through word-of mouth from friends. Students are also more likely to find out about tourism destinations from other friends by word-of-mouth than from traditional travel sources. Therefore, great care must be taken to fulfill the needs of international students to the fullest, especially as word-of-mouth was identified as the strongest means of obtaining information for students.

According to the study "Service quality in higher education: The role of student expectations" conducted by **Voss et al (2007)**, attracting new students is substantially more expensive than retaining students who are currently enrolled at a higher education institution. This implies that in order to retain the number of international students studying at the institution, it is critical to meet, if not exceed, their expectations for their study experience. The study also indicated that student expectations are often unrealistic, so it is up to the staff working in higher education institution' departments to handle the creation of realistic expectations in advance in order to achieve customer satisfaction. If expectations are met and surpassed, it may result in a good outcome, such as an increase in the number of students kept in the higher education institution, as well as ensuring that there is a high level of favorable feedback from current students.

In a study conducted by **Hamed (2012)**, aimed to reveal the needs of international students at the Institute of Educational Studies at Cairo University and identify their problems, there were some social problems, including:

- Housing and accommodation.

- Lack of health insurance for international students.

According to **Marzouk (2017)**, attracting more international students to various higher education institutions is one of the most important available alternatives that can be employed to provide alternative funding sources for higher education in Egypt.

In this regard, **Marzouk** suggested some recommendations to attract more international students, including:

- Determining the problems and needs of international students, and the reasons and motivation for their enrollment in Egyptian universities.
- Providing academic, cultural and social support to these students to assist them in their studies.

As reported by **International Student Affairs (2021)**, the number of international students coming to Egypt to study has increased in the past decade. Over the past five years, Egypt has paid great attention to developing a system for attracting and Recruiting international students, with the aim of raising their number in different universities to 20,000 annually. In the 2019-20 academic year, Egypt saw an increase in international student enrollment of about 12,500 students. The number of International students in Egyptian universities reached 16,000 students in the academic year 2020/2021, an increase of 25% over the previous year.

International Student Affairs also indicated that international students pay as much as \$4,000 to \$8,000 in annual tuition fees for attending public universities in Egypt depending on the degree program. The highest tuition are

for those what the Ministry of Higher Education calls the ‘top colleges’ such as, Medical faculties, Engineering, and specific disciplines taught in the English language. Although, this is a considerable amount of money, probably unavailable to most of students from the region, Middle East and Africa, it is still far less than the average tuition of private universities in Egypt (\$15,000- \$38,000).

In this regard, the researchers believed that one of the most important factors for attracting more international students was to achieve a distinguished hospitality experience for those students during their stay in Egypt, as they are considered the first nominee for Egypt as an educational destination to other students in their home countries.

So, this study came to determine international students’ concerns, perceptions of housing needs. So that these needs can be fulfilled in a manner that achieves satisfaction for those students while also benefiting the Egyptian academic community and the Egyptian community as a whole.

Problem Statement

While the Egyptian state pays great attention to international students studying in Egypt, the researchers noted that the majority of international students attending Egyptian universities prefer to rent external housing rather than live on campus, they are frequently subjected to financial extortion from landlords and renters, which is detrimental to both students and the Egyptian academic community alike.

So, Egyptian universities must have a better awareness of international students' concerns and perceptions of hospitality needs, in order to help them seamlessly adapt to

life in Egypt and thus be successful in their transition to academic life.

Unfortunately, there has been little empirical research on overseas students' perceptions of non-academic services, particularly in terms of hospitality. This study fills that gap by determining international students' concerns, perceptions of housing needs at Egyptian universities using a customized questionnaire. The researchers will provide institutions and the Office of International Students Affairs with international students' perceived housing needs based on the findings of this study.

Purpose of the Study

International students may experience a significant deal of stress when they decide to attend college at an institution that is thousands of miles away from home and has a different language, culture, and educational system. It's critical that the university helps these students adjust to new life, and culture while also providing them with valuable experiences.

The purpose of this study was to determine international students' concerns, perceptions of their housing needs while studying in Egypt.

Study questions

The main question of this study was:

- What are international students' concerns and perceptions of their housing needs while studying in Egypt?

Secondary questions the study also investigated were:

- 1) What is the reality of the housing services provided to international students in Egyptian

- public universities, as reported by university officials?
- 2) How international students rated the importance of the housing needs utilized in the study?
 - 3) Do significant differences exist in international students' perceived housing needs based on these demographic variables: gender, geographical region of origin, marital status, age, and current degree program type?

Significance of the Study

With ever greater numbers of higher education students coming to Egypt to study, it is critical for colleges and universities to identify the preferences of international students in various areas of their lives during study abroad. However, few studies have been conducted regarding international students and academic hospitality. To fill this knowledge gap, this study made the first attempt to determine international students' perceptions, concerns of their housing needs.

Identifying the specific needs of international students from the hospitality perspective can help colleges and universities understand the preferences of international students and determine effective hospitality services improvement solutions and provides effective marketing strategies to administrators in higher education institutions that host such students.

Study limitations

Spatial and human limits

The study was limited to a public universities in Egypt with an enrollment of approximately 86,000 international student (Undergraduate and postgraduate) at the time of the study in the 2021/2022 academic year. Students represented nearly 80 different countries according to international student affairs.

Time limits

The field study was conducted during the academic year 2021/2022 AD.

Literature Review

Educational Tourism and choosing the educational destination

According to **Ritchie, Carr and Cooper (2003)**, educational tourism can be categorized into two groups: The first category includes persons who travel for the purpose of general education and recreation. The second category includes students who travel to an educational destination with the primary purpose of acquiring a certificate, with tourism and internal travel inside the host country serving as a secondary choice while fulfilling their primary goal of study and learning. The researchers in this study focus on the second group that is primarily motivated by education and learning but may be classified as tourists even if they are not perceived to be tourists or if tourism is not their primary motivation to come abroad.

Nugroho and Soeprihanto, (2016) delved more into the relationship between education and tourism. Educational

tourism is a three-dimensional commodity, according to them:

- 1) The educational experience at the tourism destination and the learning benefit that follows (primary product);
- 2) The tourist package that fits the needs of the tourists (actual product);
- 3) All components of the tourism experience, both tangible and intangible that are added to the primary service (additional product).

They also identified various formats of educational tourism:

- school tours (and possibly a follow-up visit with the children's parents);
- Studying in another country (intensive study sessions with full cultural and linguistic involvement);
- Seminar vacations/senior seminars/hands-on improved experience holidays (which are mostly geared toward adults and seniors));
- Vacations for skill enhancement (trips that include a variety of practical learning activities, such as 'how-to' learning or ecology-based activities);
- And cruises that are educational (which combine fun and specific-topic lectures).

Pitman et al., (2011) stated that university and tourism stakeholders should collaborate to develop tourism

programs and learning materials, and that the government should be involved in policy development, resource identification, and infrastructure management. In order for educational tourism to persist in the area, the community should play an active role in planning and should tell other actors about the local culture, engage local inhabitants in social commitment, and develop the human resources of its members. Universities may thus meet the demands of both the government and the tertiary sector, as well as address policy and market issues. Local activities also encourage the participation of young and adult learners in the community, as well as university students, resulting in a multi-stakeholder learning community that may address societal and ethical challenges. The development of educational tourism practices in a destination where the university always plays a coordinating role should be the outcome of a combination of the 3E principles in order to be sustainable:

- a) Environmental considerations: give tourists with factual information and teach them to respect the environment. Sustainable acts help to preserve biodiversity and raise awareness of cultural heritage;
- b) Involvement: tourists must actively participate in order to feel fully immersed in the context and to cultivate their specific interests;
- c) Exploration: Contribute to in-situ learning-by-doing practice to assist tourists have a more realistic experience of the region.

According to **Al-Houri, (2012)** Jordan has made significant progress in the tourism sector, as evidenced by an increase in the number of tourists and tourism revenue, as well as a steady increase in the number of international students, with an annual average increase of approximately 10%. From the standpoint of students, the following elements contribute to the activation of educational tourism in Jordan:

- a) Websites, as the most essential promotional campaigns, aid in the activation of Jordanian educational tourism.
- b) The desire of parents, as the most important social factor, leads to Jordan's educational tourism activation.
- c) The university reputation, the most important institutional aspect in the activation of educational tourism in Jordan is the university's reputation.
- d) The security stability, the most essential political aspect that contributes to the activation of educational tourism in Jordan is security stability.

Higher education institutions should be more concerned with the satisfaction of overseas students. International students bring new revenue, global variety, and unique skills to the table. Moreover, these same students will have more possibilities to enroll, resulting in increased competition in higher education (**Ongo, 2018**)

International students' motives for studying in Egypt, according to **Marei (2018)**, differed depending on the

student's region of origin, institution attended, and degree program. However, the main reasons for picking Egypt as a destination were:

- a) Egypt is an iconic and epic country because of its historical, social, and cultural significance;
- b) Egypt is a safe place to study, live, and travel in. When compared to other countries in the region, Egypt is safer.

The reality of international students in Egypt

According to a survey by **Hamid (2010)**, the majority of international students in Egyptian public universities came from nearby Arab nations, followed by Asian students, and then Sub-Saharan African students. The research also revealed that the number of students from Arab nations has decreased in recent years, while those from Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia has climbed, particularly those from Malaysia, Indonesia, India, and China. This might be due to increased cooperation and bilateral agreements between Egypt and those nations, notably in the disciplines of medicine, the humanities, and engineering.

As reported by **International Student Affairs (2021)**, most Egyptian universities have a percentage of international students. The number of International students in Egyptian public universities reached 16 thousand students in the academic year 2020/2021, an increase of 25% over the previous year, and this number increased in the second term by about 2% due to the opening of the door for applying for some programs in different colleges, from various Arab, Asian and African countries. The first country in the number of arrivals we have is "the State of Kuwait, 3,000

students, followed by Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Sudan, India, Malaysia, Guinea, Comoros, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Kazakhstan".

COVID-19 has been an unwelcome visitor since 2020, and it, like all unwelcome visitors, has stayed too long. Its disruption of international education has effectively halted international student mobility (Singh, 2021).

Many international students, Singh (2021), demonstrated, have been stranded in their home nations, unable to go and pursue international education in the places they desire. Or, as a result of the pandemic, they have experienced economic and social hardship in their host nations. Despite the pandemic, international student mobility remains popular. These students are primarily interested in studying abroad to improve their employability, get international experience, and develop personal and professional abilities.

On the other hands, despite the difficult circumstances imposed on the world by the Corona pandemic, Egypt's ministry of higher education was able to increase the number of international students by 25% during the previous period, highlighting Egypt's interest in providing a distinguished educational service while also establishing living conditions and good treatment for international students. Observing that the new student is acting as an ambassador for Egypt in his home nation (MoHE, 2020).

According to UNESCO statistics for 2021, the number of students leaving their home country for higher education is top 7.5 million worldwide. Recent statistics show that international student mobility is on the rise.

Academic Hospitality in Institutions of higher education

In his widely recognized article 'The Academy and Hospitality', **John B. Bennett (2000)**, invented the term 'academic hospitality.' Bennett defines academic hospitality as a "key virtue" inside the academy that entails "extending oneself to welcome the other by giving and receiving intellectual resources and insights." Expanding on the idea of 'intellectual' hospitality, He goes on to say that academic hospitality extends much beyond respectful and civic actions of welcoming and accommodation. Rather, academic hospitality involves openness and reciprocity towards others by way of giving and receiving, and by developing meaningful conversations with knowledge that are perceived as 'other' or opposite to one's own beliefs, ethics and values.

Academic hospitality has several forms, according to **Phipps and Barnett (2007)**, as follows:

- The 'give and gain' that occurs when academics travel (to conferences, on field trips, etc.) is a material type of academic hospitality;
- Academic hospitality in its epistemological form refers to the practice of being open to new ideas in academic scholarship;
- Physical and practical difficulties are addressed in the language form;
- The touristic form combines both the physical and symbolic aspects of academic travel. When academics travel, they are usually a part of conference programs or itineraries organized by their hosts, which may include tourist attractions that are often themed for relevance. Material

variables that have a significant impact on academic hospitality, such as travel arrangements and hotel accommodations, are included in touristic forms.

Yi Luo (2015), redefined academic hospitality from four viewpoints, including lodging, food and beverage, transportation, and recreational activities, by combining numerous important frameworks and components from the domains of hospitality and tourism. About lodging options, Yi Luo explained that international students have a variety of housing alternatives in higher education institutions and their surrounding locations. Students can live in on-campus accommodation, off-campus residences, or with local hosts, for example. Some students choose campus residence halls because they can be particularly accommodating to international students and people of different backgrounds, providing valuable chances for interaction and assistance from peers and staff.

As higher education environments become more characterized by new technologies and digitization, the concept of 'virtual hospitality' can be considered as particularly essential in light of international students' transition experiences, according to (**Ploner, 2018**). Also, in his study, all of the students interviewed came across as competent and knowledgeable users of virtual learning platforms, social media, and other technologies that helped them transfer, succeed, and grow in a foreign higher education context. Although some students see digital technology as a useful tool for solving problems on their own, it would be naive to believe that the mere availability and accessibility of online information can replace more

traditional forms of (academic) hospitality like face-to-face interactions and other corporeal gestures of welcome. During their transition, students stressed the value of human interaction and participation, such as being actively contacted by academic and support professionals, mingling with classmates, and appreciating the presence (and patience) of lecturers in resolving lingering concerns.

Methodology

The study was descriptive, employing two methods research, namely:

- a) Personal interviews with Officials in some public universities.
- b) Online questionnaire addressed to international students in Egyptian public universities.

Personal interviews

The researchers conducted a personal interviews with Officials in the following universities: (Cairo University, as the oldest Egyptian university with the largest proportion of international students – Mansoura University, As one of the greatest universities in attracting international students - Kafr El-Sheikh University, as one of the newest universities in the field of international students), and discussed with them the actual reality of the housing services provided to international students at their esteemed universities, as well as the most significant challenges that they face in providing housing services that contribute to international students' retention and satisfaction. The personal interviews were guided by the following questions:

- a) How many international students are enrolled in your esteemed university during the current academic year 2021/2022 AD?
- b) How many international students residing in the university housing out of the total number of international students enrolled in the university?
- c) Do you have any marketing efforts in place to help international students find and stay in the university housing?
- d) Do you conduct frequent evaluations to assess international students' opinions and satisfaction with the quality of the hospitality services provided to them?
- e) What, in your opinion, are the most relevant reasons for the modest proportion of international students residing in the university housing relative to their total number in the university?

What are the most significant challenges you face in providing hospitality services that contribute to international students' retention and satisfaction?

Survey Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed for undergraduate and graduate students, exploring the same topics concerned with housing needs. The researchers created an online two-

language survey form, in English for non-Arabic speaking foreign students and in Arabic for students from Arab countries.

The first part of the questionnaire included an introduction to the researchers and a brief explanation of the purpose of the study.

The demographic information of the participants was collected in the second section of the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to provide personal information regarding gender, age, current degree program, and country of origin...etc.

In the last section, Ten housing items were utilized to find out the importance of each item using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = very not important to 5= very important

- **Validity and internal consistency of the questionnaire.**

To ensure the survey's validity, it was presented to a panel of arbitrators consisted of faculty members who were asked to express their opinion about the tool's suitability for achieving the research's objectives, the clarity and comprehensiveness of its phrases, and the extent of belonging the phrases to its specified dimension. Based on their feedback, the survey was modified.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was verified by calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient between the score of each item and the total score for the dimension to which the item belongs, using (SPSS).

- **Reliability of the questionnaire.**

The stability of the survey means "reliability", meaning obtaining approximately the same results if it is re-applied to the same sample at different periods and in the same conditions. To calculate the stability of the questionnaire, it was applied to an exploratory sample of 30 individuals from the study population that was excluded from the total sample of the study, and the reliability coefficient was calculated by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, using (SPSS) program.

- Sampling Design

This study's target population includes all international students, both undergraduate and graduate, in Egyptian public universities. As reported by International Student Affairs, the overall population of international students in Egyptian universities is around 86,000 in the academic year 2021/2022AD, representing more than 80 different nationality studying in Egypt.

All of the participants in the study were international students enrolled at the Egyptian public universities in the 2021/2022 academic year. The participants included both undergraduate and graduate students.

The researchers used Steven K. Thompson equation to determine the sample size from the following formula:

$$n = \frac{N \times p(1 - p)}{[[N - 1 \times (d^2 \div z^2)] + p(1 - p)]}$$

Where **n** is the sample size, **N** is population size, **z** is determined by confidence level, which can be found in the standard table at 95% (1.96), **d** is error proportion (0.05),

and p refer to probability (parameter) and is set to (50%) (Thompson, 2012).

By substituting into the previous equation, if the community size is around 86,000, as reported by the Central Administration for International Student Affairs, then the sample size is “383”.

Results and analysis of data

Demographic Description of the Sample

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to provide a summary of the sample. The variables consisted of gender, age, marital status, home country, and Degree program. It could be explained as follows:

- a) Four hundred and three respondents provided usable data. Out of this number, (70.7%) were male and (29.3%) were female.
- b) The results show that more than half of the respondents (61.8%) were between the ages of 20 and 30 years old. Of the rest, (34.2%) were less than 20 years old, and (4.0%) were more than 30 years old.
- c) Of the 403 respondents who took part in the study, (96.5%) were single and (3.5%) were married.
- d) Respondents were enrolled at many Egyptian universities identified as public or private. A majority of the respondents (73.4%) indicated that they were attending public universities, and

- (26.6%) indicated that they were attending private universities.
- e) Concerning the degree program, (94.5%) of the respondents indicated that they were registered in bachelor's degree. Of the rest, (4.0%) were registered in master degree, and (1.5%) were registered in doctoral degree.
- f) Regarding the respondents' region of origin, 61.6% of the respondents were from Asia, distributed as follows: (11.7%) from Central and Southern Asia, and (49.9%) from Western Asia. While 38.4% came from Africa, distributed as follows: (13.6%) from North Africa, (9.9%) from East Africa, (9.7%) from West Africa, and (5.2%) from Central Africa.

Research Questions and Statistical Analyses:

The overarching research question addressed international students' concerns, perceptions of housing needs during their study in Egyptian universities. The results and analysis are organized in terms of the three numbered research questions.

Research Question 1

Research question 1 addressed the reality of the housing services provided to international students in Egyptian public universities, as reported by university officials.

According to the statistics of international students enrolled in the universities that the researchers visited and conducted personal interviews with their officials, the percentage of

international students residing in university housing is very small in comparison to the total percentage of international students enrolled in the university. It was also determined that a number of problems and obstacles contributed to this, as shown in table 1.

Table 1. The results obtained through personal interviews conducted by the researchers with officials.

Interview Questions	University Officials' responses	
Q1. How many international students are enrolled in your esteemed university during the current academic year 2021/2022 AD?	Cairo university	
	Undergraduate	14900
	Graduate	1550
	Total	16450
	Mansoura university	
	Undergraduate	7582
	Graduate	2579
	Total	10161
	Kafr el-sheikh university	
	Undergraduate	642
	Graduate	538
Total	1180	
Q2. How many international students residing in the university housing out of the total number of international students enrolled in the university?	Cairo university	
	Male	415
	Female	165
	Total	580
	Mansoura university	

	Male	44	
	Female	30	
	Total	74	
	Kafr el-sheikh university		
	Male	12	
	Female	22	
	Total	34	
Q3. Do you have any marketing efforts in place to help international students find and stay in the university housing?	Cairo university	Mansoura university	Kafr el-sheikh university
There was consensus among the officials of the three universities that there are no any marketing strategies that can be applied to help international students find and stay in university housing, except for what is published on the official websites of those universities. Unfortunately, the researchers believes that this is insufficient; he believes that more is required.			
Q4. Do you conduct frequent evaluations to assess international students' opinions and satisfaction with the quality of the hospitality services provided to them?	Cairo university	Mansoura university	Kafr el-sheikh university
There was unanimity among the officials of the three universities that there are no periodic systems to evaluate the opinions of international students and their satisfaction with the quality of the hospitality services			

	<p>provided to them, except for a verbal dialogue with the foreign student who decided to leave the university housing for his own reasons, but to no avail.</p>		
<p>Q5. What, in your opinion, are the most relevant reasons for the modest proportion of international students residing in the university housing relative to their total number in the university?</p>	<p>Cairo university</p>	<p>Mansoura university</p>	<p>Kafr el-sheikh university</p>
	<p>There was consensus that the international students themselves do not have the desire to live in university housing, and they attributed this to a number of reasons, the most important of which as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unwillingness to abide by the internal regulations and rules regulating residence in university housing , such as specific entry and exit dates, daily attendance confirmation, restriction of freedom as perceived by incoming students, the narrow perimeter of the room in general, and shared bathrooms. - Recruiting the new students and persuading them to live in an 		

	<p>external residence by word of mouth from old students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The desire of international students, particularly Arabs, to live in an autonomous, freer atmosphere free of rules and restrictions, also close to various restaurants, parks and shopping areas. 		
<p>Q6. What are the most important challenges you face in providing hospitality services that contribute to international students' retention and satisfaction?</p>	<p>Cairo university</p>	<p>Mansoura university</p>	<p>Kafr el-sheikh university</p>
	<p>There was consensus among the officials on some issues, the most important of which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International students' decision to leave the university housing occurs after only a very short period of residence. - Controversy sometimes rages between international students, especially Arabs, and staff over compliance 		

	<p>with regulations and laws regulating accommodation in the university housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The high expectations of international students sometimes leave them frustrated when they find routine and low standard of hospitality services offered to them.- The majority of international students, particularly Arabs, showed a desire to stay in air-conditioned or well-ventilated single rooms and have a private bathroom.
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Research Question 2

Research Question 2 addressed the importance ratings given by international students for the housing employed items. A descriptive statistical analysis of the ratings on a five-point Likert scale from very not important to very important was conducted using SPSS for the 10 survey items for each dimension.

The mean of the housing factor was (4.45). Indicating that the international students determined high level of importance for all of the selected housing needs.

The following is an analysis of perceived housing needs, ranked from highest to lowest:

- For the housing factor, shown in table 2, The “Availability of enough information about university housing and its various types on international students' electronic portals, such as the (Study in Egypt) platform” had the highest mean rating at 4.82 (SD=.386) followed by “Availability of a wide range of university accommodation options at varied costs to accommodate all financial levels for international students” at 4.66 (SD=.509). While “Staying in a deluxe room in the university housing, luxury furnished and equipped, with air conditioning and at a higher cost” had the lowest rating at 3.65(SD=.808).

Table 2. Respondents' perceptions of the importance of Housing needs.

Statements	5-Point Likert scale					Mean	SD	R	
	1	2	3	4	5				
Availability of enough information about university housing and its	Freq.	0	0	0	73	330	4.82	.386	1

various types on international students' electronic portals, such as the (Study in Egypt) platform.	%	0	0	0	18.1	81.9			
Availability of a wide range of university accommodation options at varied costs to accommodate all financial levels for international students.	Freq.	0	0	7	122	274	4.66	.509	2
	%	0	0	1.7	30.3	68.0			
Presence of culturally and linguistically qualified human cadres in university housing to deal with international students of various cultures.	Freq.	0	0	8	130	265	4.64	.521	4
	%	0	0	2.0	32.2	65.8			
Staying alone in a single room in the university housing.	Freq.	0	0	0	141	262	4.65	.478	3
	%	0	0	0	35.0	65.0			
Staying in a deluxe room in the university housing, luxury furnished and equipped, with air conditioning at a higher cost.	Freq.	0	0	228	90	85	3.65	.808	10
	%	0	0	56.6	22.3	21.1			
Providing Internet access (Wi-Fi) in university housing residential rooms.	Freq.	0	0	0	183	220	4.55	.499	6
	%	0	0	0	45.4	54.6			
Providing high-quality halls with internet service	Freq.	0	0	0	167	236	4.59	.493	5

for students to complete their academic work in the university housing.	%	0	0	0	41.4	58.6			
Providing laundry and ironing services in the university housing at an additional cost.	Freq.	0	0	120	160	123	4.01	.777	9
	%	0	0	29.8	39.7	30.5			
The proximity of the university residence to the campus and the ease of access to it.	Freq.	0	0	8	187	208	4.50	.539	7
	%	0	0	2.0	46.4	51.6			
Cleaning, disinfection, and sterilization of international students' residential rooms on a regular basis, with dates known to the students and in coordination with them.	Freq.	0	0	0	225	178	4.44	.497	8
	%	0	0	0	55.8	44.2			
General Housing Dimension							4.45	.297	

N.B: SD, "Standard Deviation", R, "Ranking", 5= "Very Important", 4="Important", 3="Somewhat Important", 2="Not Important", 1="Very Not Important"

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 sought to understand whether differences exist in international students' perceptions of housing needs on the basis of their (a) gender, (b) geographical region of origin, (c) marital status, (d) age, and (e) degree program.

"ANOVA" was conducted, to determine statistically significant differences on the basis of selected demographic variables as shown in table 3.

For the gender category, the main effects of it on the dependent variables revealed that differences were significant for perceptions of housing needs because its p-value $.042 < .05$. Indicating that female respondents rated the perceived importance of the housing items higher than males' ratings of those.

As for the geographical region category, the main effects of it on the dependent variables revealed that differences were strongly significant for housing perceptions because its p-value $< .001$. Indicating that western Asia' respondents gave the highest ratings of the perceived importance of the housing needs, followed by North Africa' respondents, while respondents from Central Africa ranked last.

About the marital status category, the main effects of it on the housing factor revealed that differences were not significant for housing, because the p-values for housing $(.991,)>.05$.

Regarding the age category, the main effects of it on the housing factor revealed that differences were not significant, because the p-values for housing $(.107,)>.05$.

Concerning the degree program category, the main effects of it on the housing factor revealed that differences were not significant for housing, because the p-values for housing $(.572,)>.05$.

Table 3. The statistically significant differences on the basis of selected demographic variables.

Demographic Variables	Housing			
	Mean	SD	P-value	Sig.

Demographic Variables		Housing			
Gender	Male	4.429	.285	.042	H. S
	Female	4.495	.318		
Region of origin	Central and South Asia	4.408	.232	.000	H. S
	West Asia	4.518	.316		
	North Africa	4.412	.293		
	East Africa	4.367	.237		
	West Africa	4.359	.280		
	Central Africa	4.295	.203		
Marital status	Single	4.449	.299	.991	N. S
	Married	4.450	.228		
Age	Less than 20	4.485	.303	.107	N. S
	From 20 to 30	4.424	.295		
	More than 30	4.512	.209		
Degree program	Bachelor's	4.445	.299	.572	N. S
	Master	4.525	.220		
	Doctoral	4.466	.280		

Significant at $P \leq 0.05$, N. S= Non Significant, H. S= High Significant.

Conclusion

With the continual growth in the number of international students studying at Egyptian universities in recent years, it has become more important than ever to understand these students' requirements and needs in order fulfill it in a manner that contributes to their satisfaction, retention, and to attract more of them.

So, this study was conducted in an attempt by the researchers to determine the most important housing needs of international students during their study in Egypt. To

achieve the objectives of the study, two research methods were used.

A personal interviews with Officials in some public universities were conducted by the researchers to get acquainted with the reality of the housing needs provided to international students, as well as the challenges that officials face in providing those needs, which contribute to international students' retention and satisfaction.

The study also utilized an online questionnaire model to determine international students' perceptions of the utilized housing needs, how the students ranked the importance of that needs, and differences in perceived importance of the housing needs based on the demographic variables of the respondents.

Through personal interviews conducted by the researchers with officials in some universities, it was found that the percentage of international students residing in the university housing is very low compared to the total number of these students enrolled in the university. It was also discovered that there were several problems and hurdles that contributed to this.

Based on the responses collected via the online questionnaire, we found that international students had high ratings of the perceived importance of housing employed items in the study. However, there are significant differences in respondents' ratings of the perceived importance of the housing needs based on their gender and geographical region of origin. In contrast, differences were not significant among international students based on these

demographic variables: marital status, age, and current degree program.

Also, based on the results obtained through the study, some recommendations have been proposed to the officials in the ministries, concerned authorities and universities in order to provide the housing needs that suit international students and according to their perceptions. And thus increase the ability of universities and the Egyptian academic community as a whole to retain these students and to attract more of them. There were also some recommendations for further research, and for future research in this regard.

Recommendations

From this study it is obvious that students form perceptions of the utilized housing needs. The results of these perceptions form the basis of my recommendations.

❖ Recommendations to stakeholders in the ministries and concerned authorities

These are the most crucial recommendations that the researchers make to the relevant authorities and ministries in order to strengthen the role of community participation in achieving foreign students' satisfaction with the housing services offered to them while studying in Egypt.

a) Central Administration for International Student Affairs

- Updating the electronic portals for international students, such as the “Study in Egypt” platform, by providing it with

sufficient information about university housing in Egyptian universities.

- Constant communication with international students, requesting their feedback on the quality of hospitality services provided to them at the universities where they are enrolled.

b) Ministry of housing

- Constructing distinctive and specially designed housing units near universities to provide international students with affordable housing under their direct supervision.
- Monitoring housing owners who rent out their housing units to international students and ensuring that there is a mutual legal and moral obligation between the two parties in order to achieve the public interest.
- Encouraging investors in ethnic restaurants to be concerned with the areas surrounding universities.

❖ Recommendations to stakeholders in Universities

The following recommendations are made concerning the perceived housing needs of the international students.

- Stakeholders in Egyptian universities should be concerned that university housing for international students is available in a

variety of alternatives at varying costs to suit students of all financial levels, and that it is close to and conveniently accessible from the campus. Also, single rooms with private bathroom should be more available than others for international students in the housing.

- Providing human cadres in the university housing with Courses in languages, computers, social psychology and psychological counseling in order to deal with international students from various cultures.
- Providing high-quality halls with internet service for international students to complete their academic work in the university housing, in addition to internet access (Wi-Fi) in the residential rooms.
- The necessity of cleaning, disinfection, and sterilization of international students' residential rooms on a regular basis, at specific times known to the students and in coordination with them.
- The possibility of providing laundry and ironing services in the university housing at an additional cost.

Limitations and Further Research

The present study has some primary limitations, as follows:

- First, the population of this study consisted of all international students at Egyptian public universities. This large study population limits the generalizability of the findings.
- Second, bias may exist in this study due to the prodigious percentage of Asian respondents (61.5%), although Asian international students currently comprise the vast majority of international students at nearly all Egyptian universities.
- Third, it should be noted that this study made the first attempt to understand the perceived housing needs of international students in Egyptian universities, which was coupled with the scarcity of previous local studies in this regard.
- Fourth, despite the researchers' filing of official requests, some officials at some involved authorities and institutions have been quite adamant in refusing to provide the researchers with the necessary information or statistics.

Finally, it is advised that further research be conducted to investigate this topic. These recommendations ought to drive further research:

- a) Examine the needs of international students from a specific region such as Africa as needs may be country specific. This study was based on the student responses from various regions.
- b) Choose between male and female students to focus on. Each one has specific individual needs because there are different factors influence their experiences.
- c) Concentrate on international students at one Egyptian university and investigate their satisfaction with the quality of life and hospitality services provided to them so that you can make a positive and beneficial contribution to the university, allowing it to fulfill its international students' needs.

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