



Practical Aspects of Hospitality Education in Alexandria: A SOWT Analysis Approach

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ABSTRACT

Education is considered one of the main requirements of human societies, which is why they developed educational establishments with different specializations. In this context, the study aims to identify the role played by the tourism educational establishments in Alexandria in the practical aspects i.e. practical sections/sessions. This study aims to analyze the current state of practical aspects of hospitality education based on SWOT approach among the higher tourism and hospitality institutions in Alexandria, Egypt. Based on the SWOT approach, this study adopted descriptive and evaluative case study methodology to evaluate the practical aspects of hospitality education in Alexandria, Egypt. In sequence, many sources of data were used, including questionnaire form, semi-structure interview, and observation checklist to collect the required primary data. The results exposed that the stakeholders of educational establishments pay much attention to the practical aspects and training during the scholar year or even during the summer holiday. Also, they provide their student with enough news, maintenance, cleaning stations, and simulations for practical aspects and sessions. The study recommends that all tourism education establishments should gather and form a union to pay more attention to training and practical issues. Moreover, further studies should take into account all tourism education especially if they facilitate conducting such studies

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1. Introduction

Education is considered one of the basic needs for all human societies nowadays. Therefore, these societies have been continuously working on developing educational institutions and curricula at all educational levels to meet the needs of the present and align with the stakeholders of the future. Education is no longer viewed as a service system with no return, but rather as a production system that is evaluated based on its cost and return. As an educational system, it must develop its goals, processes, and outcomes to align with the competitive changes that the world goes through from time to time (Yahya, 2007).

Tourism and hospitality education is an ever-evolving field that requires constant adaptation to stay relevant and competitive. One of the most crucial aspects of this type of education is practical training, which allows students to gain hands-on experience in the industry and prepare them for the real-world challenges they will face in their future careers. In this paper, we will conduct a SWOT analysis of practical classes in tourism and hospitality education. This analysis will help us identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of this type of education, and provide insights into how it can be improved to better meet the needs of students and

the industry. By examining the current state of practical classes in tourism and hospitality education, we can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this field, and develop strategies to improve the quality and effectiveness of practical training for future professionals in the industry.

The hospitality industry is dynamic and requires a unique blend of theoretical knowledge and practical skills. While hospitality education has traditionally focused on theoretical aspects, there is a growing concern that the practical dimension is not adequately addressed. This lack of emphasis on practical aspects in hospitality education may hinder graduates' preparedness for the real-world challenges of the industry.

Problem Statement: The existing curriculum of many hospitality education programs tends to be skewed towards theoretical knowledge, neglecting hands-on experiences that are crucial for success in the field. Theoretical understanding alone may not equip students with the necessary skills to navigate the fast-paced and multifaceted hospitality environment. This is so clear in the aspects of the educational process:

- **Limited Practical Exposure:** Students often lack opportunities for hands-on experiences in real-world hospitality settings. This limitation can impact their ability to seamlessly transition from an educational environment to a professional one.
- **Outdated Training Facilities:** Some educational institutions may have outdated or inadequate facilities, hindering the practical training of students. This includes obsolete kitchen equipment, simulated hotel environments, or insufficient resources to replicate realistic scenarios.
- **Insufficient Industry Collaboration:** Limited collaboration between educational institutions and the hospitality industry can result in a disconnect between what is taught in classrooms and the actual demands of employers. This gap may lead to unprepared graduates entering the workforce.

- **Underdeveloped Soft Skills:** The focus on theoretical content may overshadow the development of essential soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, and customer service, which are integral to success in the hospitality sector.

The study aim

This study aims to analyze the current state of practical aspects of hospitality education based on SWOT approach among the higher tourism and hospitality institutions in Alexandria, Egypt.

Significance of the Study: Addressing the gap in practical aspects of hospitality education is vital for producing graduates who are not only well-versed in theory but also possess the hands-on skills and competencies required by employers. This study aims to contribute insights that can inform curriculum development, foster industry partnerships, and enhance the overall quality of hospitality education.

2. Literature review

2.1 Training and practical aspects in hospitality

Hospitality education plays a pivotal role in preparing individuals for dynamic and multifaceted careers in the ever-evolving hospitality industry. A critical aspect of this preparation is practical training, which aims to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom and the real-world challenges and expectations of the industry. In this essay, we delve into the significance of practical training in hospitality education, exploring how it enhances students' skills, employability, and overall readiness for the demands of the hospitality sector.

Practical training immerses students in real-life scenarios, allowing them to apply theoretical concepts in a practical setting. Whether it involves working in a simulated hotel environment, participating in internships, or engaging in experiential learning activities, students gain valuable hands-on experience that reinforces their understanding of industry operations (Abou-Shouk et al., 2014; Airey, 2011). In addition, hospitality education aims to equip students with a diverse set of skills, ranging from customer

service and communication to problem-solving and teamwork. Practical training serves as a platform for honing these skills in a real-world context. For instance, students working in a hotel setting learn to navigate guest interactions, manage reservations, and handle unexpected challenges, thereby developing a comprehensive skill set that is essential for success in the hospitality field (Holden & Lynch, 2004; Abou-Shouk et al., 2014).

Exposure to the industry during practical training is invaluable for students. It provides them with insights into the day-to-day operations of hotels, restaurants, and other hospitality establishments. This exposure not only enhances their understanding of industry dynamics but also enables them to network with professionals and gain a firsthand understanding of the expectations and norms within the sector (Brookes & Altinay, 2016).

2.2 Types of Practical Training in Hospitality Education

1. Internship

Internships are a cornerstone of practical training in hospitality education. These structured, supervised work experiences allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in a real-world setting. Internships provide opportunities for students to explore different facets of the industry, discover their areas of interest, and establish valuable connections with industry professionals (Riley et al., 2002).

2. Simulation exercises

Simulations replicate real-world scenarios in a controlled environment, offering students a safe space to practice and refine their skills. Whether it's managing a hotel front desk, handling guest complaints, or overseeing event planning, simulation exercises enable students to experience the challenges and decision-making processes encountered in the hospitality industry (Dana, 2010).

3. Collaborations with Industry Partners

Establishing partnerships with industry players is a proactive approach to enhancing practical training. Collaborations can include guest

lectures, workshops, and joint projects that expose students to current industry trends, challenges, and best practices. This interaction fosters a sense of relevance and immediacy in their education (Abou-Shouk, et al., 2014; Murphy & Moscardo, 2014).

2.3 Benefits of Practical Training in Hospitality Education

1. Enhanced Employability

Practical training equips students with the skills and experiences that employer's value. Graduates who have undergone substantial practical training are often perceived as more employable, possessing the practical know-how needed to navigate the complexities of the hospitality industry (Buhalis & Law, 2008).

2. Confidence Building

Engaging in practical training builds confidence among students. The hands-on experiences enable them to develop a level of comfort and competence in handling real-world situations, contributing to a sense of self-assurance that is vital for success in the service-oriented hospitality sector (Holden & Lynch, 2004).

3. Alignment with Industry Expectations

Practical training ensures that students are aligned with current industry practices and expectations. This alignment is crucial for bridging any potential gaps between academic knowledge and the ever-changing realities of the hospitality field. It also enhances students' adaptability and readiness for the challenges of a dynamic industry (Brotherton & Wood, 2008).

4. Challenges and Considerations

While practical training in hospitality education offers numerous benefits, certain challenges and considerations must be addressed. These include the need for consistent industry collaboration, ensuring diversity in practical experiences, and incorporating technology to simulate real-world scenarios effectively. Moreover, the quality of supervision and mentorship during practical training is paramount to ensure that students receive constructive feedback and guidance (McCabe & Murphy, 2009).

Practical training is an indispensable component of hospitality education, providing students with the experiential learning needed to thrive in the dynamic and customer-centric hospitality industry. Through internships, simulations, and collaborations with industry partners, students not only acquire practical skills but also gain a profound understanding of industry expectations and norms. As the hospitality sector continues to evolve, institutions must remain committed to enhancing practical training opportunities to produce graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also well-prepared and adaptable to the ever-changing landscape of the hospitality industry.

2.3 SWOT analysis in hospitality education

A SWOT analysis assesses an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats. Through internal analysis, the focus is on recognizing the organization's resources, capabilities, core competencies, and competitive advantages. External analysis involves identifying market opportunities and threats by examining competitors' resources, the industry environment, and the overall environment (refer to Figure 1). The goal of a SWOT analysis is to leverage the insights gained about both internal and external environments to develop a strategic plan for the organization.

Figure (1). SWOT Analysis: Theory



Hospitality education plays a crucial role in preparing individuals for careers in the dynamic and competitive hospitality industry. A SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) is a strategic planning tool that can

provide valuable insights into the internal and external factors affecting the effectiveness of hospitality education programs. This essay explores the application of SWOT analysis in the context of hospitality education, examining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that influence the quality and relevance of educational programs.

One of the primary strengths of hospitality education lies in its ability to offer a diverse range of specialized programs. Institutions often collaborate with industry experts to design curriculum that aligns with the latest trends and demands. This adaptability ensures that students receive relevant and up-to-date knowledge, enhancing their employability upon graduation (Brotherton & Wood, 2008). Moreover, the emphasis on practical training, internships, and industry exposure provides students with hands-on experience, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

The global nature of the hospitality industry presents strength for hospitality education. Institutions can attract a culturally diverse student body, fostering a rich learning environment. Exposure to diverse perspectives and cultural nuances prepares students for the multicultural aspects of the industry, promoting a global mindset (Nepal & Poudel, 2018). Additionally, strong industry connections and partnerships enable hospitality education programs to facilitate internships, placements, and networking opportunities, enhancing students' professional development.

Despite its strengths, hospitality education faces certain weaknesses that can impact its effectiveness. One significant challenge is the rapid evolution of technology, which requires continuous updates to the curriculum. Outdated content may leave graduates ill-equipped to handle emerging technologies in the hospitality sector (McCabe & Murphy, 2009). Additionally, some programs may struggle with a lack of resources, hindering the provision of state-of-the-art facilities and technology required for effective learning. Another weakness lies in the potential gap between academic knowledge and industry

expectations. If educators are not actively engaged with industry trends, there may be a disconnect between what is taught in the classroom and the skills and knowledge demanded by employers. Bridging this gap is crucial for ensuring graduates are adequately prepared for the realities of the hospitality workplace (Hardy & Thompson, 2016).

Opportunities in Hospitality Education

Moreover, the hospitality education sector has several opportunities for growth and improvement. The increasing demand for skilled professionals in the expanding global hospitality industry presents a significant opportunity for institutions to expand their programs and attract a larger student base (Murphy & Moscardo, 2014). Collaborations with industry partners for curriculum development and internships can further enhance the practical relevance of educational programs; ensuring graduates are job-ready. The rise of online education is another opportunity for hospitality education. E-learning platforms can provide flexible and accessible learning options, catering to a broader audience, including working professionals and international students. Incorporating technology into the curriculum can also prepare students for the digital advancements prevalent in the hospitality sector (Buhalis & Law, 2008)

Several threats pose challenges to the effectiveness of hospitality education. Economic downturns, such as the global financial crisis or a pandemic, can lead to reduced funding for education, affecting the quality of programs and resources available (Ritchie, Jiang, & Agrusa, 2018). Political instability and changes in immigration policies may impact the diversity of the student population, limiting the international perspectives within hospitality education. Another threat is the increasing competition among institutions globally. Institutions must differentiate themselves to attract students, maintain industry relevance, and secure partnerships. Failure to do so may result in declining enrollments and a diminishing reputation within the industry (Brookes & Altinay, 2016).

In conclusion, conducting a SWOT analysis in the context of hospitality education reveals the intricate dynamics shaping the success of educational programs. Recognizing the strengths, addressing weaknesses, capitalizing on opportunities, and mitigating threats are essential for institutions aiming to provide high-quality and relevant hospitality education. Continuous adaptation to industry trends, technological advancements, and global shifts ensures that graduates are well-prepared for the challenges and opportunities in the ever-evolving hospitality sector.

3. Methodology

3.1. The study design

This study adopted the exploratory descriptive case study: This research employed an exploratory approach to comprehensively understand the current state of practical aspects in hospitality education in Alexandria, Egypt as a case study. The target population included students, faculty members, and administrators from hospitality education institutions in Alexandria, Egypt. A stratified random sampling method was used. Different hospitality education institutions were considered as strata, and a random sample will be selected from each.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

1. *Questionnaire*: Structured were distributed among 150 students to gather quantitative data regarding their perceptions of the practical aspects of hospitality education. Questions covered topics such as the adequacy of practical exposure, satisfaction with available facilities, and perceived gaps in the curriculum and the perceived benefits and obstacles toward practical aspects.

2. *Interviews*: In-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including faculty members, industry professionals, and education administrators. These interviews provided qualitative insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with practical training.

3. *Observation of the available facilities*: using a check list, the author conducted an observation of the available facilities at some tourism educational institutions in Alexandria (n=2)

3.3. Data analysis (SWOT Analysis)

SWOT matrices will be developed to visually represent the findings. The collected data was analyzed using the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) framework.

1. Strengths: Identify positive aspects of practical training, such as successful programs, strong industry connections, and effective teaching methodologies.
2. Weaknesses: Explore shortcomings, including gaps in facilities, outdated equipment, or curriculum limitations
3. Opportunities: Identify areas for improvement, potential collaborations with the industry, or innovative approaches to enhance practical education
4. Threats: Examine external factors that may hinder practical training, such as budget constraints, industry changes, or societal perceptions.

Quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical tools, while qualitative data will undergo thematic analysis to identify patterns and trends. Anonymity and confidentiality of participants will be maintained throughout the study.

Triangulation: Multiple data sources (surveys, interviews, observation) were used to enhance the validity of findings.

4. Results and discussions

Findings were interpreted in the context of the SWOT analysis and presented in a comprehensive report that includes recommendations for enhancing practical aspects of hospitality education in Alexandria, Egypt.

From the previous table, which illustrates the percentage agreement and disagreement regarding the advantages and importance of practical and training aspects in tourism and hotel education, the following can be observed

Through the analysis of the data in Table (2), it is evident that the overall average of the

respondents' agreement on the importance of practical applications and practical aspects in tourism education, especially in the studied institutions, is (1.67). This value falls between the values [Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2)], and it is relatively closer to the value (Agree), indicating the consensus of the respondents that these variables are crucial distinguishing features of practical and training aspects in tourism education in Alexandria

Referring back to Table (2), it is observed that the overall average value for all variables related to the advantages of practical aspects and their importance is (1.75) in the case of the Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotels "EGOTH." In comparison, the same variables' overall average in the Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotels and Computer Science "HIHTC" is (1.6). This reflects the absence of significant differences between the averages of the variables and their deviation from their mean, measured using the standard deviation

It is also noticeable from Table (2) that the highest average values in the case of EGOTH are found in the variable "The practical aspect helps the student pass and succeed in the course," with a value of (2.15). This explains and confirms the findings from the internal regulations examination that there are courses where students study practical aspects but are not examined in them. As regulations and their development may not concern students, especially at their current age, it is also observed that the same variable stands out with a relatively high average value of (1.90), making it the highest average within the variables of HIHTC

B. The Challenges Facing Practical Aspects in Current Tourism and Hotel Education

It is evident from the subsequent table, Table (3), which shows the overall averages for each variable individually and also the overall average for each of the two institutions, that the respondents' agreement and disagreement regarding a set of difficulties and challenges facing practical and training aspects in tourism and hotel education. The following can be noted

From the data analysis in Table (3), it is evident that the overall average for the respondents' agreement on the importance of difficulties and challenges facing practical and training aspects in tourism education, especially in the studied institutions, is (3.45). This value falls between the values [Neutral (3), Disagree (4)], and it is relatively closer to the value (Neutral). This indicates the scarcity of obstacles and difficulties facing training and practical aspects, as the institutions provide many material facilities, equipment, and devices that work to reduce the difficulties and challenges facing training and its various activities

Returning to Table (3), it is noted that the overall average value for all variables related to the challenges and obstacles of practical aspects and their importance is (3.46) in the case of the Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotels "EGOTH." In comparison, the same variables' overall average in the case of the Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotels and Computer Science "HIHTC" is (3.44). This also reflects the absence of significant differences between the averages of the variables and their deviation from their mean, measured using the standard deviation.

4.2. Results of Interviews with Teaching Staff

Ten interviews were conducted (3 in each institution) with the teaching staff responsible for teaching practical and training aspects in the courses at the study locations—specifically, Food and Beverage courses and Front Office courses. The interview topics revolved around the following points

The role of teaching staff in practical aspects and training: Teaching staff unanimously agreed that their primary role includes presenting practical aspects in the courses in terms of content, requirements, and skills required to maximize the benefits of practical aspects. They also emphasized providing advice and guidance on how to maximize the benefits of training and practical aspects, conducting training exams or practical course exams, organizing and preparing for practical lessons, and overseeing both the academic and field aspects of summer training.

Additionally, they play a role in solving problems that students may encounter during summer or practical training, all under the supervision of the course instructor.

Integration of theoretical and practical aspects of courses: When discussing the integration between theoretical and practical aspects of the same courses, all respondents confirmed that teaching practical and applied aspects is done according to what the course instructor deems appropriate. The course instructor, who teaches the theoretical part of the course, determines the topics and practical and applied activities based on the scientific content of the course, often specified in the internal regulations. However, it was noted that these aspects are not entirely fixed, and they can be relatively changed in form and content to serve the educational and training process and achieve the course's objectives in line with continuous development and updates.

Internal regulations, grade distribution, and their updates: Interviews revealed that the internal regulations governing work in higher institutes are uniform across the country and are developed by specialized professors under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education. Educational institutions do not have the authority to change their contents. Consequently, grade distribution for practical and training aspects is consistent in both institutions. However, it was found that 30 marks are allocated for practical application in the Food Service course (taught in the second semester of the second year – Hotel Studies Department), while there are no grades allocated for practical aspects in certain courses like Hotel Cooking Art (1) in the second year and Front Office and Hotel Economics in the third year, despite having two practical hours per week, as stated in the internal regulations.

Financial requirements and the availability of facilities and materials: One of the significant challenges facing tourism and hotel education is providing the necessary financial resources and facilities to complete training and equip its spaces with the required materials. However, interviews indicated that both institutions do not face any financial or material obstacles. They provide the

necessary facilities and equipment to facilitate the training process, emphasizing the activation and development of practical aspects. This was confirmed by the observation results, emphasizing the supportive facilities and resources as one of the essential aspects of the educational process.

Scientific application locations and training programs: The importance of allocating places for training and practical application aligned with the activities and skills required in the academic courses is well known in tourism education. Interviews confirmed the availability of all the necessary locations and facilities to complete the training and practical lessons. The respondents emphasized that the available means and facilities are used appropriately for holding summer training courses, which serve as an alternative and complement to training in hotels and restaurants, providing more assurance of monitoring students during training and verifying their performance. Despite the cost incurred by the institution to offer such summer courses without compensation, some students also carry out their summer training in hotels and restaurants, with follow-ups to ensure their completion of the training and address any issues they may face.

Students' preparedness and its impact on the effectiveness of practical aspects: As students are the expected product of educational institutions and a crucial element in the educational process, it is essential to consider the alignment between the conditions and skills required by students applying to tourism educational institutions and their requirements. The interviews confirmed that despite the availability of financial and technological resources, university textbooks, and training programs—both within and outside the institution—the students' level of effectiveness in performance and interest in practical aspects ranged from 70-40%. This percentage varies among students in different classes in both institutions. One of the faculty members commented on the students' level when asked about it in one of the institutions, stating: "Their level is like that of the Egyptian student...

They care about appearance rather than substance, about appearances rather than essence... with a general decline year after year." If we acknowledge a decline in academic performance in recent years, educational institutions must intensify training, as it is an effective method and, like a magic wand, elevates students' skills and competencies, enhancing their preparedness for the tourism job market. In this market, competition is based on continuous advancement, skill development, and capabilities of the human resources in the tourism sector.

In conclusion, the results obtained from personal interviews with teaching staff for practical courses and application aspects at the study locations were shared to describe and explain the current status, distinguishing strengths, and weaknesses, as will become clearer in the following sections.

4.3. Results of the Observation

According to the sections of Badr (1996), Atefah (2003), Finn et al. (2000), Veal (1997), Tayie (2003), Yin (2003), and others, observation can be participatory or non-participatory. Both types were utilized in this study. Participatory observation involved observing students during practical applications within designated committees without them being acquainted with the researcher. Subsequently, introduction occurred through a faculty member, followed by either direct observation or participation, making them aware of being observed.

Additionally, to assess the availability and quality of facilities, assets, and necessary resources for training and various applications, an Observation Checklist was used. Results were complemented with some photographic images captured in both study institutions. It's worth noting the presence of simulation models, such as a typical hotel room and restaurant, fully equipped kitchens, especially for the Hotel Studies Department, and a simulation model for a tourism company handling actual reservations for Tourism Studies students. Due to study limitations, the focus was mainly on the facilities and training models for the Hotel Studies Department in both institutions.

Table (2): The perceived benefits toward the practical aspects

S	ITEMS		
		Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The practical aspect helps the student to identify his points of excellence and weaknesses	1.20	.410
2	Practical lessons have a positive impact on the educational process	1.45	.510
3	Practical lessons and training give the student experience in how to face the requirements of the labor market	1.65	.587
4	The excellence of the educational institution in applied aspects gives it a competitive advantage among its peers	2.10	1.021
5	Students' efficiency in training aspects increases the chances of obtaining distinguished job opportunities	1.60	.821
6	Excellence in applied aspects and training helps in innovation and creativity	1.45	.510
7	The applied aspects increase the development of various skills among students, such as effective communication, constructive criticism, problem solving, etc	1.65	.813
8	The applied aspect helps the student pass and succeed in the curriculum	2.15	1.226
9	Excellence in applied aspects helps increase the institution's ability to contract with institutions in the labor market and hold effective employment forums	1.90	.788
10	Practical lessons and training are the main link in the academic aspect and the labor market and its developments.	2.20	.696
TOTAL		1.75	

Due to study limitations, the focus was mainly on the facilities and training models for the Hotel Studies Department in both institutions

1. Kitchen

The study noted the availability of various tools and equipment in the practical kitchens of both study institutions. Both kitchens are equipped with production lines for hot and cold foods. Hygiene and regular maintenance are satisfactory but require continuous effort, particularly concerning students' personal hygiene.

Restaurant

The restaurant in both institutions is relatively small, designed specifically for practical applications and lessons. Despite the limited size, both the kitchen and the restaurant are efficiently utilized.

Room Service

Both institutions have a model room simulating a hotel room for training students in various aspects of internal supervision. This includes the use of service and cleanliness trolleys and all activities related to internal supervision

Front Desks (Reception)

The reception simulation model is available in both institutions, providing practical training for students in tasks such as global timekeeping, room rates, accommodation styles, and different pricing rates. The simulation is more detailed at HITHC due to its larger space and superior design

Computer Labs

HITHC stands out in this aspect, featuring an accredited computer lab capable of hosting major courses for prominent companies like Microsoft. Students are trained on the Fidelio System for reservation tasks and guest accounting

Table (3): The perceived Obstacles and Challenges toward the practical aspects

S	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The numbers of teaching staff based on aspects and practical lessons are appropriate to the numbers of students	2.50	1.35
2	Faculty members are late for scheduled practical lessons	3.50	1.53
3	Mistreatment of some faculty members regarding practical aspects	3.05	1.63
4	Weakness of some faculty members in the scientific subject	3.15	1.38
5	Difficulty meeting faculty members outside practical lesson time	3.65	1.59
6	The number of students in the practical lesson is large, incompatible with the practical application of each student	3.25	1.44
7	The applied course does not have specific and declared objectives from the beginning of the academic year	3.25	1.48
8	The study plan for the course was not clearly explained by the applied side professors	3.15	1.53
9	The course did not include research and self-learning parts	2.90	1.74
10	The course did not add new knowledge and skills	3.70	1.55
11	Inadequate training and practical applications within the laboratory, kitchen, or restaurant	3.60	1.51
12	Lack of a specific curriculum for the applied aspects of some courses	3.75	1.29
13	Lack of familiarity with evaluation methods and the distribution of grades between the year's work and the end of the present year	2.90	1.51
14	Not announcing the grades for the year's work and the applied exam	3.25	1.44
15	The difficulty of applied exams and their lack of proportion to the time allotted for them	3.20	1.64
16	The exam does not cover the entire syllabus	3.70	1.45
17	The available equipment and tools are insufficient for the number of students during the practical lesson or training	3.40	1.69
18	Available equipment and tools are out of order and need maintenance	3.85	1.42
19	Available equipment and tools are not allowed for students to operate during the practical lesson	4.00	1.44
20	There is no interest from the administration in the practical aspects	3.85	1.49
21	Weak capabilities and financial capabilities required for the practical and applied aspects	3.90	1.33
22	Lack of raw materials or programs necessary for practical applications	4.05	1.54
Total		3.44	3.45

Laundry

HITHC has a laundry room where students are trained on various washing methods, the compatibility between washing methods and different fabrics, and the use of chemicals and detergents for cleaning and washing linens and guest clothing

General

Both institutions excel in organizing cleanliness tasks, periodic pest control workshops, and the presence of a first aid box. Fire extinguishers are regularly checked and signed off. Overall, the results confirm the study hypotheses, indicating a clear interest from educational institutions in developing practical aspects and the necessary facilities. The presence of training programs aligns with the ease of completing summer training. It is noteworthy that challenges and difficulties exist, requiring additional effort and organization.

5. Conclusions and future research

In conclusion, this study has provided valuable insights into the practical aspects of hospitality education in the studied institutions, in Alexandria, Egypt. The observations and analysis of facilities and equipment revealed a commendable commitment to practical training and a significant effort to create conducive learning environment. Both institutions demonstrated a focus on hygiene, maintenance, and the provision of essential tools for practical learning in areas such as kitchens, restaurants, room service, reception, computer labs, and laundry.

The study affirms the importance of practical training in preparing students for the challenges of the hospitality industry. The simulation models, such as hotel rooms, restaurants, and tourism company setups, contribute to a holistic learning experience. The presence of computer labs with advanced systems and software, particularly it reflects a commitment to keeping students updated with industry-relevant technology.

Despite these positive findings, the study also recognizes some challenges, including the need for continuous efforts in maintaining hygiene and addressing student personal cleanliness. The study suggests that there is room for improvement in these areas, emphasizing the importance of strict adherence to cleanliness standards.

6. Future Research:

As we look to the future, several avenues for further research present themselves: Firstly, conducting longitudinal studies to track the career trajectories of graduates from these institutions could provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of practical training in real-world employment scenarios. Secondly, extending the scope of the research to include a broader range of hospitality institutions within Alexandria or across different regions would allow for more comprehensive comparative analyses. In addition, investigating the impact of emerging technologies on hospitality education and training, especially in the context of reservations, guest services, and hotel management systems would be a good research topic. Gathering feedback from students regarding their experiences with practical training, identifying areas of satisfaction, and understanding challenges they face in applying theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios. Finally, exploring opportunities for increased collaboration between educational institutions and the hospitality industry. This could include internships, industry-sponsored projects, and joint initiatives to bridge the gap between academia and practice.

By pursuing these avenues of research, we can contribute to the ongoing enhancement of hospitality education, ensuring that institutions continue to evolve in response to industry needs and technological advancements. Additionally, understanding the long-term impact of education on graduates' careers will be crucial for refining educational strategies and preparing students for the dynamic and competitive hospitality sector.

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