Challenges to Academic Research and International publishing in the Discipline of Tourism and Hospitality Management in Egypt

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Abstract

Enriching the body of knowledge represents the main purpose of conducting academic research in any discipline. Such a purpose can be best achieved by sharing research through international platforms/outlets. This study aims to investigate the challenges of academic research and publishing papers in international periodicals within the discipline of tourism and hospitality management. A quantitative approach was adopted in this study using A questionnaire was used for gathering primary data. The sample of the study included 68 academic researchers from different tourism and hospitality faculties/institutes in Egypt. The results of the study showed that scholars at the field of tourism and hospitality management struggled against many obstacles during different stages of conducting research, such as lack of appropriate references; limited access to databases; absence of established research designs; biased and uncooperative participants. The results also revealed that publishing research in local periodicals was dominant in this discipline in Egypt due to many challenges, including long time and high costs associated with international publishing. The study has concluded some practices for handling challenges to academic research.

Keywords: Academic research, international publishing, tourism and hospitality discipline.

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1. Introduction

The main goals of both academics and higher education institutions are to deliver knowledge to students and to produce information that can contribute to enriching knowledge through conducting original research studies (Aithal & Aithal, 2016). Enriching knowledge cannot be achieved without conducting and publishing research in esteemed publishing outlets. However, despite the importance of doing and sharing research in international outlets, the process of conducting and publishing in international journals is considered a difficult task due the relatively large number of scholars in the higher education industry in Egypt (Barghouthi & AbuSamra, 2007). Rimawi and Kourd (2015) explained that conducting academic research is challenged by several obstacles, such as: lack of information resources; limited skills of scholars; short fund. Also, in order to publish a research paper in international outlets, many factors need to be considered, such as: where to publish; type of research; language; targeted audience (Uysal, 2012; Bardi, 2015).

A number of studies have considered conducting research and publishing internationally as scholarly activities need to be given top priority from scholars affiliated to academia (Nicholas et al., 2015a). Other studies emphasised that publishing in peer review journals is still the main method to build scholarly reputation and to measure scholar performance, in addition to the new emerging methods of evaluating scholars (Aithal and Aithal, 2016).

Conducting research and publishing it in international platforms represents a challenging mission for many academics in this discipline in Egypt (Barghouthi and AbuSamra, 2007). Therefore, a study needs to be conducted to investigate the challenges of conducting research and publishing in international outlets in this discipline.

In fact, Egyptian scholars are not mainly required to publish research papers in international journals to be promoted. Thus, publishing in local and Arabic journals was dominant among most scholars in Egypt, particularly scholars affiliated to tourism and hospitality faculties/institutes (Hanafi, 2011). However, recently, the higher education system in Egypt adopted a new approach to evaluate scholars' performance. Such an approach emphasised the importance of international publishing to promoting and awarding scholars. (Supreme Council of Egyptian Universities, 2016). This created a need to explore the perception of scholars affiliated to tourism and hospitality discipline about international publishing.

This paper explores the challenges that face scholars of tourism and hospitality discipline while conducting research. Issues and factors that reduce the scholars' ability to conduct sound research are investigated in order to provide a better understanding of the current scholarly research situation and to suggest what would help to improve research practices in this discipline. Additionally, this paper explores scholarly publishing in the tourism and hospitality field in Egypt with a focus on the obstacles facing scholars. Also it explores the scholars' opinions about international publishing and how their faculties/institutes can assist them to make their research available internationally.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Challenges facing academic research in the tourism and hospitality discipline

Conducting a research is a challenging task for many scholars in several disciplines as it requires skills, resources, and equipment that would facilitate the research process (Gray, 2013). The field of tourism and hospitality is no exception where scholars at this field, as other scholarly disciplines, are facing a number of obstacles that challenge them when conducting research (Altinay et al., 2015).

Barghouthi and AbuSamra (2007) discussed some challenges that face researchers while doing a research, such as: the difficulty of conducting practical research; the perceived importance of research; universities pressure on scholars to undertake teaching and administration duties rather than providing time or facilities to conduct research. Limited accessibility to information resources; obsolescence of resources; shortage of research fund; education quality, were also considered serious issues that face scholars at higher education institutions in Egypt (Yahia, 2013).

2.2. Publishing research internationally

Some studies have explored the benefits of international publishing and revealed that most researchers prefer international publishing over other types of information sharing practices as peer-reviewed publishing platforms represent the main way to measure their performance (Luukkonen, 1992). Furthermore, international publishing does not only benefit the researchers, but also it helps universities to achieve higher ranks as publishing is considered one of the essential standards that are used to measure the performance of universities (Abd-Elaziz, 2015). In addition, scholars tend to publish their work internationally for other different reasons, e.g.: visibility; building an academic profile; (Bardi, 2015).

Recent studies that investigated publishing in international context showed that despite the barriers that scholars face when publishing internationally, there was an increasing tendency towards international publishing as international outlets were perceived to be more accredited and of higher quality than national journals (Ge, 2015). Other studies revealed that scholars need to publish internationally as they think themselves to be bound the idea of "publish or perish". This means that their scientific performance is measured by the number of publications in the international outlets.

Another study by Nicholas et al. (2017) found that scholars seek publishing as many papers as they can in high ranked journals to increase their reputation. Publishing in open access journals was considered to be a good practice, but the participants expressed that they avoid open access (OA) at this stage as these journals mostly do not have a high impact factor.

Scholars of tourism and hospitality discipline, as other research fields, need to publish in highly rated journals. This allows them to share their research with other peers, receive incentives and give their work credibility by exposing their research to the peer-review process (Hall, 2011). However, exploring research in this discipline revealed that few studies focused on investigating publishing practices among scholars affiliated to this specific field, while more studies focused on publishing practices in social science disciplines in general (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2011).

2.3. The Concept of "publish or perish"

"Publish or perish" is a term that widely used in academic hallways which mainly refers to the importance of producing and sharing research with other peers through peer-reviewed outlets to survive in academia (Rawat and Meena, 2014; Carr and Hayes, 2017). This put scholar under pressure to produce high-quality papers and publish in high impact factor journals or they would lose their jobs in academia (Neill, 2008; Lee, 2014). However, despite the international emphasis on the concept of "publish or perish", the higher education system in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries is not similar. Scholars at these universities tend to publish locally more as local journals are more recognized by the promotion board. As a result, scholars believed that publishing internationally means that their effort will not be awarded properly (Hanafi, 2011).

Scholars at Egyptian universities are not worried of the "publish or perish" dilemma as their jobs are permanent and whether they published or not they will not lose their jobs as the system guarantees their being in the same position, even if they have not published. Hanafi (2011) confirmed that by conducting a study on five Middle Eastern countries. The study revealed that the system needs to be changed as scholars are not motivated to publish internationally and without a change in that system, "publish or perish" concept has no meaning. Similarly, Mostafa (2016) disputed that there are many factors that demotivate Arab scholars from publishing, such as the education system which does not encourage international publishing.

2.4. Challenges of international publishing

Early studies that investigated scholarly publishing in English for non-English speakers revealed that scholars face challenges such as choosing appropriate scientific terms in English and using the right structure (John, 1987). Also, studies that investigated reading and publishing behaviour of scholars at humanities and social science discipline revealed that many scholars have limited English language proficiency which affects

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their choice of papers they read and subsequently affect where they publish their research (Hamada, 1994). Another study conducted by Flowerdew (1999) listed a number of obstacles that face non-English speakers when publishing in English journals. These obstacles included: limited ability of using expressions; difficulty to make sensible claims in their research; lack of vocabulary diversity; difficulty of adopting qualitative approach as it require good command of English language; spending longer time to write in English as they are not accustomed to write in foreign languages; restriction to a simple style to avoid linguistic mistakes; difficulty of writing thorough introductions and discussions to scholarly articles.

Therefore, Gea-Valor et al. (2014) argued that there is a need to focus on training academics and qualifying them to publish in international outlets as many of scholars do not have the experience or the skills that would help them to share their work internationally.

3. Research methodology

A quantitative approach was adopted in this study using survey as a methodological strategy. Primary data collection involved using a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire form included four major sections. Section one involved seven multiple choice questions and aimed to gather basic information about the participants. Section two aimed to explore the challenges of academic research through three Likert scale questions and each question included a set of variables. Section three included five questions and aimed to identify the challenges and the advantages of international publishing. The fourth section aimed to explore the practices that can be undertaken to manage the challenges of academic research and publishing in international academic journals in the tourism and hospitality discipline. The survey was self-administrated and the forms were distributed by the researcher amongst the target sample. A Cronbach's Alpha test was performed to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire form. It scored 0.886 with a total of 72 items which, according to Pallant (2005), ensures the reliability of the questionnaire form.

The target ppopulation of this study involved all academic scholars in the discipline of the tourism and hospitality management in Egypt. A random sampling technique was adopted to select the target participants. The sample of this study (see Table 1) included 68 participants representing different institutions and faculties of tourism and hotel management in Egypt; as well as different research areas and research levels.

Table 1: Sample of the study

Affiliation	No.	%	Profession Level	No.	%
Minia University	22	32.4	Teaching assistant	28	41.2
South Valley University	21	30.9	Lecturer	26	38.2
EGOTH, Luxor	13	19.1	Associate professor	8	11.8
HITHM, Hurghada	5	7.4	Professor	6	8.8
Sadat City University	2	2.9	**Total**	**68**	**100**
Suez Canal University	2	2.9			
Helwan University	2	2.9			
Beni Suef University	1	1.5			
Total	**68**	**100**			

A total of 120 questionnaire forms were self-administrated and distributed among the target sample. Only 68 forms were returned and valid for analysis, with a response rate of 57%. The collected questionnaire forms were checked, coded and entered into SPSS version 16.0 for analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as: frequencies; percentage; mean; standard deviation; rank, were produced to provide a general sense of data. In addition, Chi-square test was performed to examine the association between participants' characteristics and the investigated variables.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Characteristics of the participants:

This section aimed to explore the characteristics of the participants, focusing mainly on three main characteristics: research level; area of research; number of accomplished research studies annually, in order to identify the impact of these characteristics on perceiving the influence of the investigated variables.

Table 2: characteristics of the sample participants

Conducted a research	F	%	Area of Research	F	%
Yes	63	92.6	Tourism management	32	47.1
No	5	7.4	Hospitality management	20	29.4
Total	**68**	**100**	Tourist guidance	16	23.5
Research level	**F**	**%**	**Total**	**63**	**100.0**
Pre-master level	0	0	**No. of produced papers**	**F**	**%**
Master level	21	33.3	One paper	32	50.8
PhD level	12	19	Two papers	22	34.9
Postdoctoral level	27	42.9	Three papers	2	3.2
Others	3	4.8	More than three papers	7	11.1
Total	**63**	**100**	**Total**	**63**	**100.0**

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First, the participants were asked whether they have conducted an academic research in the field of the tourism and hospitality management. The results, (Table 2) revealed that the majority of the participants (92.6%) have conducted academic research studies while only 7.4% of the survey participant did not conduct yet any academic research in the field of tourism and hospitality management. Second, the participants were asked about the level at which they have produced academic research. The results showed that a significant percentage of the participants (42.9%) have conducted research studies at the postdoctoral stage, while 33.3 % conducted academic research at the master level, 19% at PhD level and finally 4.8% at other research stages of their academic career. Third, the participants were asked about their area of research in the tourism and hospitality management. About 47.1% of the participants were interested in doing research in tourism management, 29.4% in hospitality management and 23.5 % in history and archaeology. Fourth, the participants were asked about the number of research studies they have accomplished so far. Approximately half of the participants have accomplished only one research paper, 34.9% two papers; 3.2% three research studies and only 11.1% of the respondents have accomplished more than three academic research studies.

4.2. Challenges to conducting academic research

This section discusses the challenges of conducting academic research in the field of tourism and hospitality management throughout the different stages of the research.

4.2.1. Challenges to developing the theoretical framework

The Participants were asked to state their opinion on a five-degree Likert scale, about a set of potential challenges that may face them during the stage of developing the theoretical study of his/her research. The results, as presented in Table 3, showed that "high costs of getting adequate references" was perceived to be the most influential challenge of preparing the theoretical part of a research and scored 3.82 as a mean of influence rate followed by "centralization of libraries in the major cities" with a mean score of 3.57. "Lack of reliable archival/historical data" came at the third rank with a mean score of 3.54 followed by "out-dated references" at the fourth rank scoring 3.11 , while "inaccessibility to proper databases" came at the fifth rank (with a mean of 3.10). "Difficulties related to quality of writing" was perceived to be at the sixth rank among these challenges and scored 3.07 followed by both "lack of appropriate references and resources" and "unsuitable language of available references" at the seventh and eighth rank; respectively.

Table 3: challenges to developing the theoretical framework of a research

Challenges to preparing the theoretical study	Mean *	SD	Rank
Lack of appropriate references and resources	2.89	1.14	7
Out-dated references	3.11	1.24	4
Unsuitable language of available references	2.85	1.20	8
Lack of reliable archival/historical data	3.54	1.25	3
High costs of getting adequate references	3.82	1.14	1
Centralization of libraries in the major cities	3.57	1.40	2
Inaccessibility to proper databases	3.10	1.33	5
Difficulties related to quality of writing (rephrasing, academic writing)	3.07	1.34	6
Other challenges: (Please specify) ……………………………	0	0	0

*Mean of perceived influence; where 1= completely non-influential; 2= non-influential; 3= neutral; 4= influential; 5= very influential

A Chi-square test was performed to explore any association between participants' characteristics (i.e. research level, area of research and number of produced studies annually) and challenges of preparing the theoretical study. The results (Table 4) showed a statistically-significant association between the research level and only two of these challenges; i.e. "lack of appropriate references and resources" where x^2 (16, N = 68) = 28.60, $p <$ 0.05 and "inaccessibility to proper databases" where x^2 (16, N = 68) = 29.86, $p < 0.05$. In other words, these challenges were highly associated with certain research levels than other. However, there was no significant association between participants' characteristics and any of the other investigated challenges of developing the theoretical framework of a research.

Table 4: Association between participants' characteristics and theoretical framework challenges

Challenges to preparing the theoretical study	Participants' characteristics					
	Research level		Area of research		No. of studies	
	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value
Lack of appropriate references and resources	28.60	0.027*	12.23	0.141	13.63	0.343
Out-dated references	13.68	0.622	5.73	0.667	9.85	0.629
Unsuitable language of available references	16.93	0.390	1.36	0.995	9.73	0.639
Lack of reliable archival/historical data	14.37	0.571	10.98	0.202	12.69	0.392
High costs of getting adequate references	21.88	0.147	8.81	0.358	13.79	0.314
Centralization of libraries in the major cities	30.79	0.058	14.9	0.135	11.93	0.684
Inaccessibility to proper databases	29.86	0.019*	10.50	0.231	18.40	0.104
Difficulties related to quality of writing (rephrasing, academic writing)	13.31	0.650	13.33	0.101	9.09	0.695

* Statistically-significant association where P-value < 0.05.

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High costs and lack of appropriate sources of secondary data seemed to be major challenges facing the participant researchers in Egypt when developing the theoretical framework of their research. These results are supported by; Yahia (2013); Rimawi and Kourd (2015). Although there were significant association between only two of these challenges and research level; other challenges were perceived to be equally significant by academics at different research level and research areas.

4.2.2. Challenges to developing the research methodology and tools

The Participants were also asked about the challenges of developing research methodology and tools. The results, as presented in Table 5, revealed that "lack of adopting established research schools in this discipline" was perceived to be the most influential challenge with a mean score of 3.79 followed by "limited accessibility of some research tools" (with a mean of 3.52) and "High costs of some research tools" at the third rank and scored 3.50 "Difficulties related to the validity and reliability issues" ranked fourth among these challenges and recorded a mean of 3.45 followed by "lack of cooperative referees to review research tools" with a mean score of 3.39, "inappropriateness of research tools to the targeted participants" come at the seventh rank and recoded 3.14 difficulty of grasping/using gathered data by some tools" come eighth with a mean of 2.19.

Table 5: challenges to developing research methodology and tools

Challenges	Mean *	SD	Rank
Inappropriateness of research tools to the targeted participants	3.14	1.13	7
Limited number of appropriate tools for gathering data	3.23	1.17	6
Limited accessibility of some research tools	3.52	1.05	2
Difficulty of grasping/using gathered data by some tools	2.91	1.26	8
High costs of some research tools	3.50	1.23	3
Lack of adopting established research schools in this discipline	3.79	1.28	1
Lack of cooperative referees to review research tools	3.39	1.14	5
Difficulties related to the validity and reliability issues	3.45	1.15	4
Other challenges: (Please specify) ……………………………	0	0	0

*Mean of perceived influence; where 1= completely non-influential; 2= non-influential; 3= neutral; 4= influential; 5= very influential

The results of the Chi square test (Table 6) showed that only three of the methodology challenges had a statistically-significant association with certain characteristics of the participants. "Inappropriateness of research tools to the targeted participants" recorded a significant association with the area of research, X^2 (8, N = 68) = 20.66, $p < 0.05$; "limited accessibility of some research tools" had a statistically-significant association with the number of produced studies, X^2 (12, N = 68) = 24.65, $p < 0.05$. Also, there was a significant association between "lack of adopting established research schools in this discipline" and both research level, X^2 (16, N = 68) = 28.14, $p < 0.05$ and number of produced studies, X^2 (12, N = 68) = 23.53, $p < 0.05$. The other remaining challenges did not record any significant association with participants' characteristics.

Table 6: Association between participants' characteristics and methodology challenges

Challenges to preparing the theoretical study	Participants' characteristics					
	Research Level		Area of research		No. of studies	
	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value
Inappropriateness of research tools to the targeted participants	21.28	0.168	20.66	0.008*	20.16	0.64
Limited number of appropriate tools for gathering data	13.21	0.657	14.82	0.063	14.25	0.285
Limited accessibility of some research tools	14.43	0.566	12.39	0.135	24.65	0.017*
Difficulty of grasping/using gathered data by some tools	19.86	0.227	9.32	0.316	15.85	0.198
High costs of some research tools	15.75	0.470	5.26	7.29	7.00	0. 857
Lack of adopting established research schools in this discipline	28.14	0.030*	14.97	0.060	23.53	0.023*
Lack of cooperative referees to review research tools	22.17	0.138	13.95	0.83	7.96	0.788
Difficulties related to the validity and reliability issues	25.66	0.059	13.28	0.102	14.33	0.280

* Statistically-significant association where P-value < 0.05.

Generally, absence of adopting clear research schools in this field (i.e. philosophies, approaches and methodologies) and obstacles related to research tools (e.g. limited accessibility, high costs, validity and reliability) were considered. The most challenging obstacles. This result agrees with Gray (2013). While there were other obstacles to developing research tools/methods, they were perceived to be less challenging (a score less than 3.50).

4.2.3. Challenges to conducting the empirical study

The Participants were also asked about the obstacles that face them while conducting the field study and gathering primary data. The results, (Table 7) revealed that "poor skills of researchers" was considered to be the most influential obstacle to gathering primary data (with a mean score of 4.08) followed by "insufficient awareness of the participants about the importance of academic research" with 4.05 as a mean of influence. "Uncooperative target participants" came third and scored 3.88 followed by "bias of some target participants" at

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the fourth rank with 3.79 and "high costs of conducting the field study" at the fifth rank and recorded 3.75 as a mean score. "Misleading/inaccurate data provided by participants" was perceived to be at the sixth rank (with a mean score of 3.55) followed by "difficulty of analysing some gathered data" at the seventh rank and scored a mean of 3.48. "Other challenges" at the last rank and involved some proposed challenges by the participants, i.e. difficulty of gathering certain type of data such data related to financial aspects.

Table 7: challenges to conducting empirical study

Challenges to conducting the empirical study	Mean *	SD	Rank
Uncooperative target participants (low response rate)	3.88	1.17	3
Misleading/inaccurate data provided by participants	3.55	1.07	6
Bias of some target participants	3.79	0.90	4
Difficulty of analysing some gathered data	3.48	1.12	7
High costs of conducting the field study	3.75	1.17	5
Poor skills of researchers	4.08	0.85	1
Insufficient awareness of the participants about the importance of academic research	4.05	1.15	2
Other challenges: (Please specify) ……………………………	3.50	1.02	8

*Mean of perceived influence; where 1= completely non-influential; 2= non-influential; 3= neutral; 4= influential; 5= very influential

A chi square test showed significant associations between participants profile and only two challenges to conducting the field study (see Table 8). "Misleading/inaccurate data provided by participants" was significantly associated with the annual number of produced studies, x^2 (8, N = 68) = 26.76, $p < 0.05$. Also, there was a significant association between "insufficient awareness of the participants about the importance of academic research" and the area of research, x^2 (12, N = 68) = 19.02, $p < 0.05$. Again there were no significant association between participant's characteristics and the other challenges.

Table 8: Association between participants' characteristics and field study challenges

Challenges to conducting the field study	Participants' characteristics					
	Research level		Area of research		No. of studies	
	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value
Uncooperative target participants (low response rate)	12.12	0.736	10.54	0.229	8.37	0.756
Misleading/inaccurate data provided by participants	11.46	0.780	11.76	0.162	26.76	0.009*
Bias of some target participants	11.66	0.767	14.77	0.064	14.59	0.264
Difficulty of analysing some gathered data	16.48	0.419	9.17	0.327	18.28	0.107
High costs of conducting the field study	20.90	0.182	4.64	0.795	10.49	0.572
Poor skills of researchers	19.78	0.071	6.71	0.348	7.02	0.635
Insufficient awareness of the participants about the importance of academic research	10.24	0.854	19.02	0.015*	19.33	0.081

* Statistically-significant association where P-value < 0.05.

Overall, researcher-related challenges, i.e. limited research, interaction and communication skills of researchers, were perceived as the most challenging obstacle to conducting the empirical study. This result agrees with the study of Halol (2011) who explored Iraqi universities scholarly publishing practices. In addition, a number of participants-related challenges, such as biased and uncooperative respondents, were also considered to be serious obstacles to gathering primary data. This is also supported by Barghouthi and AbuSamra (2007).

4.3. Challenges to publishing in international periodicals
This section explores the challenges to publishing an academic research in international periodicals in the discipline of tourism and hospitality management.

4.3.1. Publishing research internationally
The Participants were asked if they have published any academic research in international periodicals. The results (Table 9) showed that a significant proportion of the participants (52.9%) did not publish any articles in international journals and only 47.1% (32 participants) have published some studies in international academic journals.

The Participants were also asked about the number of research studies that they have published internationally. The results showed that 34.4% have published only two research papers in international periodicals while 28.1% published more than three papers internationally. Approximately 22% of the participants have internationally published only one paper and 15.6% have published three research papers.

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Table 9: International publication of academic studies

International publishing	F	%
Yes	32	47.1
No	36	52.9
Total	**68**	**100**
No. of published papers	**F**	**%**
One research paper	7	21.9
Two research paper	11	34.4
Three research paper	5	15.6
More than three papers	9	28.1
Total	**32**	**100.0**

The results of the Chi square test (Table 10) revealed some statistically-significant associations between the participants' characteristics and publishing papers internationally. "Publishing in international periodicals" was associated with the research level, x^2 (8, N = 68) = 29.70, $p < 0.05$, and with the number of papers produced annually, x^2 (6, N = 68) = 17.94, $p < 0.05$. Moreover, "number of papers published internationally" was associated with both the research level, x^2 (20, N = 68) = 33.14, $p < 0.05$, and with the number of papers produced annually, x^2 (15, N = 68) = 29.06, $p < 0.05$.

Table 10: Association between participants' characteristics and publishing papers internationally

Challenges to conducting the field study	Participants' characteristics					
	Research level		Area of research		No. of studies	
	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value
Publishing in international periodicals	29.70	0.01*	7.20	0.125	17.94	0.006*
Number of papers published internationally	33.14	0.032*	16.64	0.083	29.06	0.016*

* Statistically-significant association where *P*-value < 0.05.

It can be concluded form these results that the largest share of academic researchers did not publish any research papers in international journals and have only published papers in local academic journals. This result is in agreement with the study of Hanafi (2011). Interestingly, there were some significant association between participants' characteristics (namely research level and number of produced studies) and international publishing of research. In other words, publishing research internationally is highly associated with specific research levels and certain number of produced studies; as stated by Pho and Tran (2016).

4.3.2. Advantages of international publishing

The Participants were asked about the benefits or advantages they achieved from publishing their academic research papers in international periodicals. The results, as shown in Table 13, revealed that "enhancing the quality of published studies" was perceived to be the most important benefit with 4.38 as a mean score of importance followed by both "achieving self-satisfaction" and "advantages related to promotion or financial rewards" with a mean score of 4.27 each. "Exposing published papers to a wider audience of both academic and practioners" came at the third rank and scored 4.23 followed by "increasing the citation rate of published papers" recording 4.17 as a mean of importance.

Table 13: Advantages of international research internationally

Advantages of international publication	Mean *	SD	Rank
Increasing the citation rate of published papers	4.17	0.94	4
Enhancing the quality of published studies	4.38	0.82	1
Exposing published papers to a wider audience of both academic and practioners	4.23	0.77	3
Achieving self-satisfaction	4.27	0.80	2
Advantages related to promotion or financial rewards	4.27	0.84	2
Other advantages: (Please specify) ……………………………	0	0	0

*Mean of perceived influence; where 1= completely non-influential; 2= non-influential; 3= neutral; 4= influential; 5= very influential

The results of the chi square test (Table 14) showed that there was a significant association between area of research and only one of the advantages of publishing internationally, i.e. "Enhancing the quality of published studies" where x^2 (6, N = 68) = 14.24, $p < 0.05$. However, there were no significant associations between any of these advantages and the characteristics of the participants.

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Table 14: Association between participants' characteristics and international publishing

Item	Participants' characteristics					
	Research level		Area of research		No. of studies	
	X^2	*p*-value	X^2	*p*-value	X^2	*p*-value
Increasing the citation rate of published papers	13.54	0.632	14.65	0.066	12.56	0.402
Enhancing the quality of published studies	13.67	0.322	14.24	0.027*	6.78	0.660
Exposing published papers to a wider audience of both academic and practioners	14.57	0.266	4.79	0.570	11.56	0.239
Achieving self-satisfaction	13.94	0.304	12.30	0.56	8.90	0.446
Advantages related to promotion or financial rewards	5.82	0.925	7.02	0.318	7.04	0.633

* Statistically-significant association where *P*-value < 0.05.

According to these results, publishing research papers in international periodicals was perceived to be advantageous to many scholars. Benefits such as improving research quality; gaining self-satisfaction; reaching wider audience, were considered to be among the dominant advantages. This result compeletly agree with Bardi (2015); Ge (2015); Shehata et al. (2015a).

4.3.3. Challenges to international publishing

The Participants were asked about a set of potential obstacles facing publishing their academic research internationally, on a five-degree Likert scale. The results (see Table 11) showed that "international publishing is time-consuming" was perceived to be the most influential challenge with 4.14 as a mean of influence followed by "international periodicals only accept high quality research papers" with a mean of 3.98. "International periodicals adopt strict evaluation/reviewing policies" came third with a mean of 3.86 followed by "international publication requires adopting certain research methodologies and tools" at the fourth rank and scored 3.85 while "high costs and effort associated with international publication" came fifth (with a mean of 3.75). "Difficulties related to writing research in foreign language" was perceived to be at the sixth rank with a mean of 3.51 followed by "inaccessibility to international periodicals in my field" at the seventh (with a mean of 3.45). "International periodicals require some major amendments that cannot be done"; "international publication does not achieve any benefit"; "lack of international periodicals in my field" ;"no need or desire for publishing internationally", were perceived to be less as they scored a mean of influence below 3.00 and they came at the ninth, tenth and eleventh ranks; respectively.

Table 10: Challenges to publishing research in international periodicals

Challenges to publishing research in international periodicals	Mean *	SD	Rank
Inaccessibility to international periodicals in my field	3.45	1.43	7
International periodicals adopt strict evaluation/reviewing policies	3.86	1.02	3
International publication requires adopting certain research methodologies and tools	3.85	1.20	4
International periodicals require major amendments that cannot be done	2.94	1.24	8
International periodicals only accept high quality research papers	3.98	1.19	2
International publishing is time-consuming	4.14	0.83	1
Difficulties related to writing research in foreign language	3.51	1.45	6
High costs and effort associated with international publication	3.75	1.18	5
International publication does not achieve any benefit	2.66	1.58	9
Lack of international periodicals in my field	2.58	1.43	10
No need or desire to publish internationally	2.27	1.23	11
Other challenges: (Please specify) ……………………………	0	0	0

*Mean of perceived influence; where 1= completely non-influential; 2= non-influential; 3= neutral; 4= influential; 5= very influential

A Chi square test showed some statistically-significant associations between characteristics of the participants and challenges to publishing research papers in international periodicals (see Table 11). The Research level was found to be significantly associated with both: "some international periodicals require major amendments that cannot be done" where x^2 (16, N = 68) = 27.66, *p* < 0.05; and with "international publication is time-consuming" where x^2 (12, N = 68) = 27.97, *p* < 0.05. Also, there was a significant association between area of research and "difficulties related to writing research in foreign language" where x^2 (8, N = 68) = 20.80, *p* < 0.05; again, there was a significant association between number of produced studies and "inaccessibility to international periodicals in my field" where x^2 (12, N = 68) = 22.99, *p* < 0.05.

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Table 12: Association between participants' characteristics and challenges to international publishing

Challenges to conducting the field study	Participants' characteristics					
	Research level		Area of research		No. of studies	
	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value	X^2	p-value
No need or desire to publish internationally	18.57	0.291	11.52	0.174	8.90	0.709
Inaccessibility to international periodicals in my field	15.94	0.457	6.53	0.587	22.99	0.028*
International periodicals adopt strict evaluation policies	18.97	0.270	12.81	0.118	15.47	0.216
International publication requires adopting certain research methodologies and tools	18.38	0.302	8.08	0.426	11.95	0.449
Some international periodicals require major amendments that cannot be done	27.66	0.035*	11.47	0.176	10.25	0.594
International periodicals only accept high quality research papers	24.50	0.079	7.83	0.450	12.50	0.406
International publication is time-consuming	22.08	0.037*	5.93	0.430	12.16	0.204
Difficulties related to writing research in foreign language	25.72	0.058	20.80	0.008*	10.16	0.602
High costs and effort associated with International publication	27.97	0.032*	8.54	0.382	9.73	0.639
International publication does not achieve any benefit for me	15.98	0.454	14.98	0.059	14.47	0.272
Lack of international periodicals in my field	23.01	0.228	15.23	0.124	18.46	0.239

* Statistically-significant association where *P*-value < 0.05.

It can be noticed form these results that there were several obstacles to publishing research papers in international periodicals. Amongst these obstacles, issues related to: time; costs; quality of research; strict reviewing, were found to be the most challenging difficulties .These results concur with the conclusions of Halol (2011); Uysal (2012); Bardi (2015).

4.4. Handling challenges to academic research

The Participants were asked about the practices that can be undertaken in order to handle the challenges to conducing academic research in the discipline of tourism and hospitality management. "Providing Libraries of academic schools and institutions with appropriate and recent references" was perceived to be the most important practice (4.52 as a mean of importance) followed by "encouraging academic research using financial and moral incentives" (4.51), "Providing professional training courses on academic research in the field of tourism and hospitality" was considered to be at the third rank (4.48), followed by "conducting research to contribute to knowledge not only for promotion purposes" with a mean score of 4.47 and "developing a national strategy to bridge the gap between academic research and the industry/practice" at the fifth rank (4.39). At the sixth rank came "adopting established research schools in the field of tourism and hospitality" and scored 4.38 as a mean of importance, while "focusing on the scientific aspect of the research rather than other aspects" came seventh (4.36) and "improving targeted participants perception about academic research" was considered at the eighth rank (4.29) "Involving stakeholders and practioners in academic research" was classified at the ninth rank (with a mean score of 4.27) followed by "conducting group research projects rather than single-author papers" (4.13) while "supplying adequate references in various languages" came eleventh with a mean of 4.01. As usual, "Other practices" came at the last rank and involved some further practices proposed by the participants, including: "translation of the major references in the field of tourism and hospitality into Arabic"; "conducting joint research projects between academics and practitioners"

Table 15: suggested practice of handling academic research challenges

Suggested practices for overcoming research challenges	Mean *	SD	Rank
Improving targeted participants perception about academic research	4.29	0.79	8
Focusing on the scientific aspect of the research rather than other aspects	4.36	0.71	7
Developing a national strategy to bridge the gap between academic research and the industry/practice	4.39	0.84	5
Supplying adequate references in various languages	4.01	1.08	11
Conducting research to contribute to knowledge not only for promotion purposes	4.47	0.81	4
Providing professional training courses on academic research in the field of tourism and hospitality	4.48	0.70	3
Adopting established research schools in the field of tourism and hospitality	4.38	0.82	6
Encouraging academic research using financial and moral incentives	4.51	0.58	2
Providing Libraries of academic schools and institutions with appropriate and recent references	4.52	0.76	1
Conducting group research projects rather than single-author papers	4.13	1.04	10
Involving stakeholders and practioners in academic research	4.27	0.78	9
Other practices: (Please specify) ……………………………	3.49	1.82	12

*Mean of perceived influence; where 1= completely non-influential; 2= non-influential; 3= neutral; 4= influential; 5= very influential

In a broad sense, a number of practices can be undertaken to tackle the obstacles to conducting academic research. Such practices may be related to researchers or universities, including: supplying adequate references; offering financial support; training researchers; cooperating with practitioners; adopting established research designs. Other practices are more related to official bodies and public people, such as: improving public awareness; connecting academic research with the industry/practice. These results concur with the suggestions of Gea-Valor et al. (2014).

4.5. Handling challenges to international publishing

The Participants were asked about the practices that can be done to handle the challenges to publishing academic research in international periodicals in the field of tourism and hospitality management. "Founding international periodicals in the field of tourism and hospitality in Egypt" was considered as the most important practices to encourage international publishing and scored 4.48 as a mean of importance followed by "organizing international conferences in the field of tourism and hospitality on a regular basis" (4.44) "Setting up cooperation agreements between local research schools and institutions and international publishers" came third (4.41) followed by "cooperation between local research schools and institutions and overseas universities to conduct joint research" (4.39); "founding an advisory board in academic schools and institutions to help researcher publish internationally" came fifth (with a mean of 4.38); "providing professional training courses on international publishing in the field of tourism and hospitality" came at the sixth rank and recorded 4.29 as a mean of importance; "encouraging international publishing using financial and moral incentives", at the seventh rank with a mean of 3.51.

Table 16: suggested practice of handling international publishing challenges

Suggested practices for overcoming international publishing challenges	Mean *	SD	Rank
Encouraging international publishing using financial and moral incentives	3.51	1.95	7
Founding an advisory board in academic schools and institutions to help researcher publish internationally	4.38	0.84	5
Organizing international conferences in the field of tourism and hospitality on a regular basis	4.44	0.79	2
Founding international periodicals in the field of tourism and hospitality in Egypt	4.48	0.76	1
Cooperation between local research schools and institutions and overseas universities to conduct joint research	4.39	0.79	4
Providing professional training courses on international publishing in the field of tourism and hospitality	4.29	0.84	6
Setting up cooperation agreements between local research schools and institutions and international publishers	4.41	0.67	3
Other practices: (Please specify) ……………………………	0	0	0

*Mean of perceived influence; where 1= completely non-influential; 2= non-influential; 3= neutral; 4= influential; 5= very influential

It can be concluded from these results that providing appropriate outlets to international publishing. seemed to be a main practice for stimulating international publishing. Qualifying researcher for international publishing, through training and tutoring, and offering different incentives were also considered as essential procedures for boosting international publishing in the tourism and hospitality discipline. This result is supported by Hanafi (2011) and Gea-Valor et al. (2014).

4.6. Further comments and suggestions

Lastly, the participants were asked if they have any further comments or suggestions to add regarding academic research and international publishing. Through reviewing these comments, three main suggestions were concluded. First, 13.2% of the participants (9 respondents) suggested that there should be a reasonable budget in every academic institution for supporting research expenses. Second, 10.2% of the participants proposed a guide (in a form of booklet or brochure) for international periodicals. Third, 5.8% of the respondents (4 participants) argued that academic scholars should focus their research on the industry problems/issues to encourage the practitioners or target participant to be more cooperative.

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5. Conclusion

This study has concluded some insightful implications in relation to the challenges of academic research and international publishing of research papers in the discipline of the tourism and hospitality management.

Academic researchers in the discipline of tourism and hospitality management are challenged by many obstacles during different stages of the research, regardless of researcher characteristics, i.e. level and area of research or number of produced studies annually. For instance, during the theoretical study stage, scholars are faced by obstacles such as absence of adopting established research designs, lack of appropriate sources of secondary data and difficulties related to academic writing. When developing research methodology and tools, different challenges emerge, such as: absence of adopting established research designs (philosophies, approaches and methodologies); limitations linked to research tools commonly used in the field. Last but not least, when conducting the empirical study, researchers struggle against several obstructions, such as: poor social skills of many scholars; biased and uncooperative target participants. Such obstacles have a negative impact on the majority of scholars and academic research in the discipline of tourism and hospitality management.

Furthermore, academic research in the field of the tourism and hospitality management was mainly published locally; only a small percentage of researchers published their work in international journals due to a number of obstacles, including: long time and high costs high standards of international periodicals in relation to methodology and quality of writing; difficulties related to foreign language. Despite the domination of local publishing, international publishing was perceived to be beneficial as many researchers have achieved some advantages through international publishing, such as: improved quality of the published research paper; self-satisfaction and promotion chances.

This study has also concluded some practices to be undertaken in order to tackle the challenge to academic research, including: providing adequate resources of secondary data; supporting academic research technically and financially; adopting established research approaches and methodologies. It has also concluded some practices to be undertaken to handle the challenges to publishing research papers internationally, e.g. providing proper international outlets/platforms to international publishing (such as international conferences, international journals, association with international publishing); Qualifying researchers to publish their work internationally through holding training courses/programs or setting advisory board to assist researchers at the institution/faculty level.

6. Recommendations

1- Scholars at the discipline of tourism and hospitality management are highly advised to improve their research and social skills, including; languages skills, communication and observation skills, academic writing skills, in order to be able to produce high-quality research studies. Another important piece of advice for academics is to focus their research interests/topics on industry-related issues and problems to get the attention and cooperation/interest of practitioners and potential research participants; as well as to conduct realistic research studies that support the tourism and hospitality industry.

2- Faculties/institutions and research centres of tourism and hospitality management are advised to provide appropriate references/databases and to support their academic researchers in the technical and financial aspects. They are also urged to provide platforms and chances for researchers to publish their work internationally through approbation of protocols or agreements with international journals/publishers or through organizing regular international conferences in collaboration with each other and with stakeholders. Faculties/institutions and research centres are also advised to reach out and connect with industry enterprises (hotels, travel agents, airways companies, and sightseeing venues) to be informed about the realistic and operational problems and issues of the industry and conduct research to solve them.

3- Relevant official bodies, such as The Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Tourism, are highly advised to raise the awareness of public people about the importance of academic research through different outreach programs at the national level. They are also urged to work together and develop a strategy to fill the gap between academic research and the industry/practice.

Challenges to Academic Research and International publishing in the Discipline of Tourism and Hospitality Management in Egypt

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