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Student Motivation and Preference of Studying Hospitality and Tourism Management Programmes in Polytechnics: A Study of Hospitality and Tourism Management Students-Ho Polytechnic

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Abstract
The main purpose of the study was to find out the motives and preference of students studying Hospitality and Tourism Management programmes in Ho Polytechnic.
Questionnaires were administered to 113 Higher National Diploma (HND) students pursuing Hospitality and Tourism Management (HTM) programme to solicit their views on the choice of this programme in Ho Polytechnic. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 16.
The results of the study revealed that, there were four motivational factors influencing the choice of HTM programmes as follows: job opportunities at the government sector, parental influences and other factors such as ease of studying the programme. The implication is that if these students are not educated on the choice of selecting programmes in tertiary institution before completing Senior High Schools, parental influences and other factors may enable them to opt for programmes that they may not be interested in. They may thus end up not being in the right profession eventually. The aggregate effect is that considering the rate at which the tourism industry is advancing, there exists the possibility of shortfall of skills in the tourism industry in the near future.
Keywords: *Preference, Hospitality& Tourism (HTM), Motivation, Programme, Ghana Tourist Board (GTB).*

Introduction

One of the fastest growing sectors in Ghana is the service sector of which the tourism and hospitality is part (Ghana Tourist Board, 2008). According to (GTB, 2008), tourism has been the third largest source of income for the country Ghana after Cocoa and Gold. The number of tourists' arrivals and hotel rooms available has grown since the 1980s. The tourism sector in Ghana experienced sustainable steady increases in tourist arrivals from 145,780 in 1990 to 399,000 in 2000 and projected to be around 698,069 in 2008. The World Travel and Tourism Council argued that, the tourism sector contributes 9% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2011. It is further expected that, in the next ten years the industry is expected to grow by an average of 4% annually, taking it to10% of global GDP or US$10 trillion. In addition, by 2022, it is anticipated that tourism will account for 328 million jobs. The influx of international tourists has been on the increase and it is expected that the growth will continue. As the tourism and hospitality industry continues to grow, there is an urgent need for government to provide the needed infrastructure and human resources to commensurate with the growth rate. In an effort to address this challenging issue, the Ghana Tourist Authority in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism has set criteria for standardization and provision of hospitality and tourism services to enhance service quality. All these policies set by the Ghana Tourism Authority may therefore be meaningless unless it is linked up with appropriate educational provision for the development of the human resources to take up the challenging jobs in the tourism sector.

The government of Ghana having realised the immense contribution that tourism makes to the economic development of the country has redefined its tourism education policy at tertiary level in all the ten regions of Ghana, to produce quality human resources needed for the fast growing tourism and hospitality sector. The Polytechnics started hospitality and tourism education as a Higher National Diploma (HND) programme in 1993 to date. In Ghana the National Curriculum and course specification (the National Syllabus for HND in Hospitality and Tourism Management) was prepared at the request of then Ministry of Higher Education. It became necessary because of global changes, technology and the demand for qualified skilled personnel. There are ten Polytechnics spread across

each of the ten regions of Ghana which are offering the three years Higher National Diploma (HND) in Hospitality and Tourism programmes and other disciplines. Some of the Polytechnics also run top up degree programmes thus, Bachelor of Technology Programmes (B,Tech) in Tourism and Hospitality management. Other tertiary institutions for instance the universities also offer BSc and MPhil degree Programmes in Hospitality and Tourism Management and other related disciplines. From 1993 to 2005 enrolment statistics of students on HTM programmes for instance in Ho Polytechnic shows that, few students enrolled on the programme. It is clear that there has been a dramatic change in students' enrolment level on HTM programmes from 2006 to date as depicted in the table below:

ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM STUDENTS FROM 2006 TO DATE IN HO POLYTECHNIC

Year	Number of Students	Annual Growth Rate %
2006/07	56	-
2007/08	93	66
2008/09	78	16
2009/10	64	17.95
2010/11	108	68.75
2011/12	150	38.89
2012/13	110	26.67
Total	659	16.07

This situation is not different from other Polytechnics. Meanwhile, the issue of HTM study motivation has attracted attention from some researchers (Kim et al; 2007, Hjalager, 2003). According to them, there has been little research on students' motivations and preference for studying HTM programmes. It has therefore become imperative for one to conduct a research of this sort. The purpose of this study is to investigate students' motives and preference for studying hospitality and tourism management programmes in polytechnics: using second year HTM students in Ho Polytechnic.
The specific objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To find out the factors that motivate students in studying Hospitality and Tourism Management programme in Ghana specifically (Ho Polytechnic).
2. To compare the motivational factors of male and female HTM students
3. To draw conclusion and policy implications of studying HTM programmes in Polytechnics.

Hospitality and Tourism Management study motivation and Preference

Motivation was, and will still be the subject of many theoretically studies. Process theories (Adams; Vroom, Porter-Lawler, 1964) assumed the differences in people's needs and focus on the cognitive processes that create these differences. The content theories (Maslow, 1954; Hertzberg, 1959; McGregor, 1960; McClelland, 1961; Alderfer, 1972; Mumfor, 1976) suggest that people have the same needs. As the composition of the age group changes rapidly, what motivates people are not easy questions. However, motivation is different from preference. Motivation implies a drive towards a result while preference could be conceived as an individual's attitude towards a set of objects, typically reflected in an explicit decision-making (Lichtenstein and Slovic, 2006). According to Lichtenstein and Slovic, the choice of behaviour is an emotional-rational individual option and for each generation, there are particular experiences that mould specific preference, expectations and beliefs (O'Malley, 2006).
However, several studies investigate students motives and preference for opting for college majors in other disciplines (Kim et al., 2006, Wong, Orengu & Liu, 2007) and identified motives for choice of programmes. Although, the issue of Hospitality and Tourism management study motivation and preference is important to hospitality and tourism academia and industry alike yet, research into why students study HTM is rather limited. Meanwhile (O'Mahoney, et al., 2001) studies revealed that, Australian students choose HTM studies because of their interest in the hospitality and tourism industry and the influence of their parents and career counsellors. In addition,

Zhao (1991) conducted a study and the result demonstrated that Chinese students prefer to enrol on HTM courses because they believe that HTM degrees may lead to respectable careers. Other related studies also revealed that students have various motives in selecting HTM programmes. Five motivational factors were selected for these studies as self-actualisation, job opportunity, field of attractiveness, ease of study and academic achievement.

Research Methods

In order to achieve the objectives of the studies, the researcher used second year students who are currently enrolled on Higher National Diploma programmes (HND) in HTM in Ho Polytechnic to investigate their motives and preference for studying these programmes. The researcher selected this group of students because it was convenient and second year students studying HTM programme best represents the largest number of students in the department of Hospitality and Tourism Management in Ho Polytechnic with a class size of 150 students.

Structured questions using 5- point likert scale was administered to the selected group of students. Out of the 150 questionnaires administered 113 were retrieved.

The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data analysis was presented in two parts including descriptive analysis (presented in the form of tables) and exploratory analysis (using factor analysis and t-test: paired two sample means for making inferences and drawing conclusions of the study). These tests were carried out to find out the major motivational factors and preference for studying HTM programmes and to compare motivational factors of male and female HTM students.

Results and Discussion

The studies investigated student motivation and preference of studying hospitality and tourism management programmes in Ho Polytechnic. Five motivational factors were identified with 22 motivational statements. One hundred and thirteen (113) respondents were selected for the study in the age group of 20 – 29 years being females with the modal class of 79.65% while 30 years and above recorded the least number of respondents who participated in the research.

The qualification of respondents who participated in the study ranges from Senior Secondary and West Africa Senior High Certificate in home economics and cookery Part one and two representing 53 (46.9%) and 48 (42.5%) respectively. This shows that, majority of the respondents have relevant background and therefore have provided reliable information on the topic under discussion.

In examining students' motivation and preference using descriptive statistics, the results revealed that (V22, V20 and V19) thus (excellent scholar, job opportunities, expert in both practical and theory) recorded high mean values for some indicator variables. The standard deviations around 0.5 shows that there are no wide variations between the original factors. Another set of variables in the outputs are V16 and V17. They are very conspicuous and have the lowest mean values and approximately the same standard deviations. Their mean value around 2 implies that these factors might have recorded a lot of 'neutral' responses by the students.

Secondly, the results from the KMO value of 0.84 shows that the test is meritoriously adequate and hence factor analysis can be used to select the salient variables (motivational factors). This suggests that, correlation matrix is appropriate for factoring. The Bartlett's test of sphericity is also highly significant with a P – value of 0.00 at a large chi-square value of 1200. In addition, results also revealed that out of the 22 original indicator variables, only two have eigen values significantly greater than one. Four of the eigen values though less than one are significant. The screen plot diagram also confirms the significance of the first component in explaining the differences that exists among the motivational factors and preference of enrolling on HTM Programmes between men and women. The elbow occurs at the 6^{th} component. This means that the number of factors to be considered cannot exceed six.

Moreover, on the issue of job opportunities, the results revealed that the unrotated factor matrix gives clues to the interpretability of the underlying factors that seek to explain the motivation and preference of HTM Programmes among students of Ho Polytechnic. At a cut-off value of 0.5, it can be seen that the first factor is highly loaded on V5, V6, V7, V9 and V10. This suggests that, job opportunity is the first factor that described a dominant trend in relation to motivation and preference among the respondents. The second and third factor is distinctively loaded highly on V16 and V17. This factor is related to studying the nature of the HTM Programme.

Furthermore, results also revealed that after rotation, it was observed that factor one now loads highly on V10. A closer look at the mean of this factor showed a value 2.53 which indicated that most of the respondents were undecided (neutral). Hence the first factor reflects the job opportunity behaviour of the students .

On the issue of self-actualization the results revealed that the factor has high significant loadings on V2, V3, and V4. From the descriptive statistics table V2, V3 and V4 have high mean values of 2.71, 2.66, and 2.52 respectively. These depict the high level of importance attached to them by the respondents with their respective standard deviations of 0.59, 0.65 and 0.74. Factor three loads highly on V14. On the contrary this factor does not necessarily motivate students towards HTM Programmes. The next factor also loads high on V6. This has a mean value of 2.25 suggesting that most of the respondents disagreed or the response was neutral.
Furthermore, on the issue of ease of study, the results revealed an overwhelming high loading on V17 and V16 respectively. These suggest that, the factors are specifically based on the high level of importance attached to them. They recorded the lowest mean values of 1.84 and 1.88 with their respective standard deviations of 0.91 and 0.95,
Finally, to show the comparison between male and female factors hypothesis was formulated below:
H_0: The mean motivational factors of female are the same as the mean motivational factors and preference of male.
H_1: The mean motivational factors and preference of females and males differ.

The output results revealed that, the test is one-tailed with a test statistic of – 6.10 which is less than the critical value of – 1.72 and so might call for the rejection of the null hypothesis. The P – value for one – tail is 2.31 which falls into the rejection region and so the test is quite significant and supports the rejection of the null hypothesis. Therefore, the argument is that 95% of the time, there is enough evidence to infer that the motivational factors and preference of females are always different from that of their male counterparts.

Conclusion

Hospitality and tourism education is very dear to the country Ghana because of the immense contribution of the tourism sector to the economic development of the country. The results of the study revealed that, job opportunity is the first most important rated by students as motivational factor, followed by parental influence, other factors, self actualization, scholastic achievement, field attractiveness and ease of study. This trend of affairs is worrying because students do not understand the concept of Polytechnic education which is training of highly skilled and competent manpower imbued with entrepreneurial skills to push them to be job creators but not white collar job seekers. The implication is that if these students are not educated on the choice of selecting programmes in tertiary institutions before completing Senior High Schools, parental influences and other factors may enable them to opt for programmes that they may not be interested in. They may end up not being in the right profession and secondly, educational policies will only remain on paper. Considering the rate at which the hospitality and tourism sector is advancing there will be a possibility of shortfall of skills in the hospitality and tourism sector in the near future.
The results of the study will provide constructive information for policy makers of hospitality and tourism education in Ghana. Secondly, job and counselling units should be strengthened in Senior High Schools and Polytechnics. Finally, the measurement items used for this study could be adopted to examine a study motivation and preference in other major disciplines in Polytechnics in Ghana. It may be useful to replicate the study in other Polytechnics or tourism related institutions in Ghana.

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Notes

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis

Age and Gender distribution of respondents

Age	Gender			Percentage
Age	Male	Female	Total	(%)
<20 yrs	4	9	13	11.50
20-29 yrs	15	75	90	79.65
30 yrs & above	1	9	10	8.85
Total	20	93	113	
Percent (%)	17.70	82.30		100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 2: Qualification of Respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SSCE/WASSCE	53	46.9
Cookery Part 2	48	42.5
Diploma Certificate	10	8.8
GCE O' Level/Teacher training certificate	2	1.8
Total	113	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Original Variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
V1	2.73	.583
V2	2.71	.593
V3	2.66	.649
V4	2.52	.745
V5	2.65	.729
V6	2.25	.871
V7	2.54	.756
V8	2.73	.586
V9	2.63	.710
V10	2.53	.791
V11	2.68	.616
V12	2.67	.604
V13	2.66	.676
V14	2.34	.797
V15	2.61	.687
V16	1.84	.912
V17	1.88	.946
V18	2.66	.689
V19	2.80	.569
V20	2.80	.537
V21	2.76	.571
V22	2.81	.492

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.842
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1.200E3
	df	231
	Sig.	.000

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 5: Total Variance Explained

	Initial Eigen values		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.631	33.944	33.944
2	1.167	10.911	44.855
3	0.774	7.24	52.095
4	0.636	5.949	58.044
5	0.619	5.782	63.826
6	0.525	4.909	68.735

Source: Field Survey, 2012

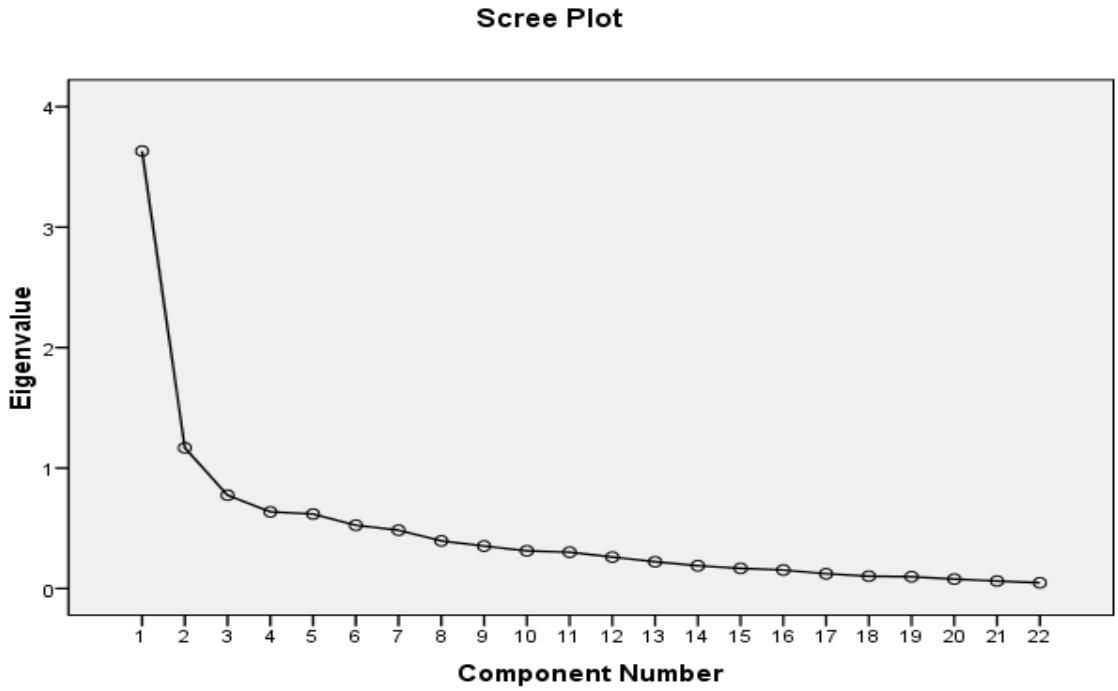

Table 7: Rotated Factor Matrix

	Component					
Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
V10	**0.603**	0.136	-0.029	0.037	-0.001	-0.128
V22	0.337	0.037	0.09	0.03	-0.069	-0.05
V20	0.344	0.16	0.087	0.119	0.002	-0.027
V19	0.361	0.01	0.129	0.114	-0.025	0.079
V21	0.355	0.169	0.049	0.006	0.01	0.045
V7	0.437	0.24	0.081	0.356	0.017	-0.015
V5	0.405	0.395	0.147	0.297	-0.06	-0.112
V18	0.379	-0.036	0.309	0.209	-0.022	-0.067
V11	0.29	0.091	0.109	0.14	-0.119	0.211

V8	0.252	0.141	0.115	0.22	0.092	0.052
V2	0.012	**0.448**	0.06	0.1	-0.095	0.072
V3	0.298	**0.445**	-0.058	0.045	-0.013	-0.034
V4	0.082	**0.454**	0.306	0.119	-0.018	-0.08
V1	0.203	0.343	0.164	-0.008	-0.044	-0.106
V14	-0.014	0.231	**0.65**	0.057	0.104	0.04
V15	0.231	0.053	0.417	0.173	-0.108	0.044
V13	0.31	0.012	0.336	-0.048	-0.266	0.014
V12	0.193	0.103	0.232	0.147	-0.026	0.035
V6	0.103	0.099	0.139	0.8	-0.067	0.009
V9	0.327	0.27	0.112	0.328	-0.006	-0.046
V17	-0.027	-0.169	-0.012	-0.055	**0.901**	0.143
V16	-0.077	-0.092	0.034	-0.027	0.155	**0.872**

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 8: Unrotated Factor Matrix

	Components					
Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
V5	**.649**	-.047	.082	-.073	-.025	.095
V7	**.579**	.082	.140	.008	-.140	.037
V9	**.527**	.039	.071	-.066	-.106	.051
V20	.385	.029	.113	.062	.023	.006
V18	.447	.082	.013	.068	.001	-.279
V1	.367	-.087	.014	-.076	.200	.108
V3	.404	-.071	.159	-.010	.089	.304

V15	.420	.103	-.207	.032	.066	-.195
V22	.299	-.034	.090	.152	.053	-.083
V10	**.473**	-.067	.346	.220	.063	-.021
V8	.350	.162	.067	-.023	-.052	.008
V4	.441	-.014	-.132	-.254	.183	.133
V19	.335	.111	.050	.180	-.008	-.084
V21	.327	.054	.127	.140	.096	.070
V11	.333	.125	-.083	.210	-.051	.050
V12	.326	.091	-.077	.001	.027	-.065
V13	.354	-.069	-.182	.234	.181	-.177
V14	.349	.243	-.323	-.274	.332	-.145
V16	-.190	**.703**	-.291	.334	-.050	.268
V17	-.274	**.691**	.467	-.258	.128	-.101
V6	**.518**	.130	-.148	-.234	-.561	-.082
V2	.290	-.031	-.134	-.127	.049	.327

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 9: t-Test Paired Two Sample Mean

	Men's mean	Women's mean
Mean	2.567	2.650
Variance	0.072	0.100
Observations	22	22
Pearson Correlation	0.990	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	21	
t Stat	-6.110	
P(T<=t) one-tail	2.3E-06	
t Critical one-tail	1.721	
P(T<=t) two-tail	4.61E-06	
t Critical two-tail	2.080	

Source: Field Survey, 2012

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