The Disparity between the Tourism Education/Training and the Needs of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry Manpower Needs

Dr. Stephen Nhuta¹, Makuyana Tawanda², Makoni Regina³ and Chauke Abednigo⁴

¹Midlands State University, P.Bag 9055 Senga Gweru Zimbabwe
nhutas@msu.ac.zw
²Harare Polytechnic Hotel School
makuanatawanda@gmail.com
³Old Mutual Life Assurance
⁴School of Hospitality and Tourism-Bulawayo

Abstract
Generally tourism and hospitality courses/qualifications equip the holder with skills and knowledge for the tourism and hospitality industry in a holistic approach. However, the current literature evaluation on the hospitality and tourism education and training denotes a number of differences from the tourism and hospitality manpower needs. This bolsters the industrialists’ outcry that the tourism and hospitality programmes/courses are not addressing the needs of both the tourism sector and the hospitality sector within the Tourism and Hospitality industry, especially in Zimbabwe. This paper probes the misunderstanding of the current situation concerning tourism and hospitality graduates, hospitality skills, travel/tourism skills and both areas’ competencies and career development within the combined discipline. Literature points out that for the implementation of curricula there is a need to connect with industries and make the best use of the social resources which will contribute to students’ career development and the evaluation of curricula bolsters partnership between the tourism industry and academic institutions thus leading to a systems approach. The findings show that our tourism operators know what they want, and it is only a matter of communicating that to the educational institutions so we can churn out more highly trained and skilled waiters, chefs and front desk managers, to name a few. The tourism industry in the region believes that courses offered by regional institutions are not tailored to meet the vast needs of the industry. In conclusion the challenge is that the curricula content does not reconcile with human capital skills and competences needed by the hospitality and tourism industrialists. It is therefore recommended that the hospitality and tourism curricula development should incorporate all relevant stakeholders within the tourism and hospitality industry in order to bridge theory and practice.

Keywords: Travel, Tourism, Hospitality, career, skills and competencies

Background
The tourism curriculum training institutions produce graduates who should be recruited by the Zimbabwean tourism sector. However, there is a gap between the tourism curriculum and tourism and hospitality industry’s manpower needs which has resulted in the production of large numbers of graduates from the tourism curriculum training institutions, who are failing to secure employment. The National Manpower Advisory Council in Zimbabwe (NAMACO) observed the variances in volumes of tourism graduates being produced by tourism curriculum training institutions against
volumes that the tourism industry is recruiting, thus an estimate of 1 out of 20 tourism graduates have managed to secure job placement within the tourism sector, (NAMACO, 2013). The ones who may be recruited are not necessarily recruited into the management levels as they are fresh from the training institutions, whereas the tourism curriculum is set to empower graduates with tourism and hospitality management knowledge and competencies that address the tourism and hospitality industry’s manpower needs. According to NAMACO (2013), this discrepancy has contributed to the migration of tourism curriculum graduates from Zimbabwe to neighboring countries like South Africa, while others have been employed in other industries which do acknowledge tourism qualifications.

It is difficult to precisely define the skills and competencies a tourism curriculum graduate should exhibit as proof of achievement of learning outcomes of tourism curriculum (Gamble and Messenger, 1990). However, the issue of how to design optional programs stayed unsolved since the 1970s, with tourism trade experts criticizing hotel and catering programs as being out of touch with the needs of industry (Casado, 1992). A four-year hospitality and tourism curriculum began to respond to the demand for increased professional skills within the hospitality and tourism industry (Goodman and Sprague, 1991). This was motioned by Lewis (1993) who examined the need to readdress the tourism curriculum to consider the changing tourism managerial and social needs.

The general tourism curriculum objective is to produce competent graduates in tourism and hospitality skills and knowledge “fit” for the tourism and hospitality organisations. However, the objective is partially met because the graduates are deemed not to be all encompassing especially in the hotel, travel, airline sectors and other tourism service providers. In addition, Peters (2006) cited in Munar and Montaño (2009) suggests that there are four stages of tourism curriculum learning outcomes which are as follows: functional competence (in the understanding of finance, accounting, marketing, strategy, information technology, economics, operations, and human resources management), understanding the context and strategy and how tourism organizational processes interrelate, ability to influence people (based on a broad understanding of people and motivations) and reflective skills (to set priorities for work efforts and life goals). This is incorporated within the tourism curriculum.

Prinianaki (2001) cited in Wang (2008) carried out a study to examine and assess the relevance of hospitality management programs to the current and future industry needs in Greece from an industry perspective. Two single session focus groups discussions were conducted and the focus groups consisted of hotel general managers. The hotel general managers highlighted the need for hospitality management programs to address industry current and future requirements. The findings suggested the need for a tourism curriculum training institution industry cooperation as there was a perceived gap between the tourism curriculum and industry’s current and future manpower needs.

This study will borrow from Chimutingiza et al., (2012) who conducted a research study on Zimbabwean tourism business stakeholders’ perception on competence developed in tourism and hospitality technical degree. Chimutingiza et al., (2012) aimed to address the perceived imbalance of tourism curriculum content and competences developed for the graduates’ employability within the tourism industry. He used a generic skills model to analyze the perceptions of stakeholders on tourism curriculum’s competence in comparison to the industrial practice. The findings noted a perceived gap between the industrialist, students, lecturers and the tourism graduates in line with the employability of tourism curriculum graduates. In addition to above discussion, Wang (2008), carried out a study in Australia with the aim to ascertain whether a gap exists between what tourism institutions provide in their undergraduate curriculum competence (tourism knowledge and skill sets), and the knowledge and skill sets required by the tourism industry. Wang (2008) study findings noted a considerable variance between the views of industry professionals and academic professionals in Australia. The views vary firstly on the relative value of tertiary degrees for tourism professionals; secondly, on the relative merits of skills and abilities needed to work in the tourism sector; and thirdly, on the relative merits of various subjects taught at university. The findings established the existence of a perceived gap between the Australian tourism curriculum at university level, and the manpower needs of the...
tourism industry. The current study determines to ascertain the existence of the tourism curriculum key competence gap against the tourism industry’s manpower needs in Zimbabwe.

Problem Statement
The Zimbabwean tourism curriculum training institutions produce graduates who are being reluctantly employed or recruited on the basis that the tourism curriculum is not in alignment with the tourism industry’s manpower needs. The gravity of the argument is evidenced by the formulation of an 18 to 24 months informal graduate management training programme for the tourism curriculum graduates within the corporate tourism firms in Zimbabwe. This is a deviation of resources that would have been invested in other tourism business operations and poses challenges in off job training manpower development.

Objectives of study

- To ascertain the gap between the tourism curriculum and the tourism industry’s manpower needs in Zimbabwe.
- To establish the causes of the disjuncture between the tourism curriculum competence and the tourism industry’s manpower needs in Zimbabwe.
- To evaluate the tourism human capital development in Zimbabwe.
- To determine the tourism industry’s labour market in Zimbabwe.
- To determine the challenges militating tourism curriculum from producing capable tourism management competent graduates

Research Questions

The following constitute the research questions for the study:

- What is the gap between the tourism curriculum and the tourism industry’s manpower needs in Zimbabwe?
- What are the causes of the disjuncture between the tourism curriculum and the industry’s manpower needs in Zimbabwe?
- What has been the development of human capital in tourism in Zimbabwe?
- What is the tourism industry’s labour market in Zimbabwe?
- What are the challenges militating tourism curriculum from producing capable tourism management competent graduates

Significance of the Study

- The results of this research may facilitate the reconciliation of changes in the tourism curriculum through a continuous industrial research and update
- The current study may facilitate tourism curriculum training institutions to tailor make programs in a continuous dialogue with the tourism industry in order to improve the tourism graduates’ competence and relevance to the industry
- The study may raise the level of awareness among the readership on the value of the tourism qualifications in line with the performance of the tourism sector in Zimbabwe
- The study may help improve the quality of service provided by tourism curriculum training institutions and tourism business organisation in Zimbabwe.

Study delimitation

The research study was delimited to tourism curriculum training institutions in Zimbabwe and excluded the Tourism Vocation Education and Training offered by Higher Examination Council (HEXCO) and other tourism qualifications offered by other international examination boards in order to streamline the study and make the research study feasible towards the research objectives. The research study population is delimited to the following tourism curriculum training institutions- the Chinhoyi University of Technology, the University of Zimbabwe and the Midlands State University, the tourism industry players, the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality, the Ministry of Higher and
Tertiary Education-manpower development department, Zimbabwe Council for Tourism, Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, Hospitality Association of Zimbabwe, corporate tourism and hospitality organisation and National Manpower Advisory Council. This is set in order to align the study towards the population that would provide relevant data without duplication. The period of the study is from January 2007 to June 2014.

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined according to the research study:

**Tourism Curriculum**- The study defines tourism curriculum as a set of tourism generic and managerial knowledge (content) and skills (competences) that are to be imparted to a tourism learner by the qualified lecturer, using systematic approach in deliberation of knowledge and skills; using facilities that bolsters the goal of producing a graduate that can manage and operationalize the tourism business into foreseeable future, with a sustainable competitive advantage through the investment in the human capital that cannot be counterfeited.

**Tourism curriculum graduate**- is person who would have obtained the first degree that is offered by the university and this is inclusive of Bachelor of commerce (Hons) in Tourism and Hospitality Management, Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Tourism and Hospitality Management and Bachelor of Technology (Hons) in Tourism and Hospitality Management.

**Tourism curriculum training institution**- this the training carried out in classroom setup and lectures/lessons are delivered by a tutor/lecturer who has been engaged by a university for that purpose and is qualified to train students.

**Government Agencies**-These agencies include the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary education-manpower development department, National Manpower Advisory Council (NAMACO) and Zimbabwe Tourism Authority.

**Tourism Professional Organisation and owners of tourism organisation representatives**-these are boards like Hospitality Association of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe Council of Tourism which is made up of private players and tourism professional unions.

**Corporate tourism organisation**-these are tourism and hospitality organizations that have number of branches and head office in different locations, whether in towns or resorts within and outside Zimbabwe. These are Rainbow Tourism Group, Africansun (Pvt) Ltd, Cresta Hospitality and United Touring Company.

**Literature Review**

Tourism industry is people oriented; hence development of a human resource management aimed at streamlining and promoting quality of service at “the moment of truth” within the tourism sector is vital (Tanner, and Tanner, 2007). This is set within human resource development and training (on job and off job). The emergence of tourism curriculum training was an advancement of tourism vocational training which was brought by the need for the professional tourism management. The tourism curriculum training came along with debates on the curriculum’s relevance to the industrial practice.

**Tourism Curriculum**

Tribe (2006) cited that a training curriculum is the total package of learning activities designed to attain objectives of a formal training program within a competency based system. The learner must acquire specific professional perspective, attitudes, knowledge and skills (competencies) for the job. Raybould and Wilkins (2005) argue that the contents within the curriculum are in sequential order which aligns to the amount of time available for the learning experience, the characteristics of the teaching institution, the characteristics of the learning experiences in the context of methods to be
used, the resources for learning and teaching materials, evaluation and teachers’ profiles. Curriculum is the core tool in meeting the intended learning outcomes.

On the other hand, the commonly recognized definition of curriculum is from the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) cited in Psarras (2006) as a regular course of study of training at a school or university, which means a set of programs and their contents. However, Chakpitak et al., (2012) cited two distinguished ideas about curriculum that were derived by John Dewey (1902) and John Bobbitt (1918), which are regarded as the representatives of “Children’s/students’ Interests” and “Educative Experience”. The former suggested that children’s/students’ interests should be embedded in formal courses when designing a curriculum; while the latter believed that curriculum are deeds and experiences that the children/students should learn for the success in adult society. The two genres brought about the major problem that curriculum planners must bear in mind, namely, to balance what the students want to learn and what the students should learn. However, one can say that this balance is sought from the tutors’ understanding on the student, leaving out the industrialists (employers) and other relevant stakeholders (community representatives and tourism manpower development department and graduates) who would make contributions to curriculum designers and tutors’ contributions on what must be learnt by the student within the curriculum.

From the above discussion, this study defines tourism curriculum as a set of tourism generic and managerial knowledge (content) and skills (competences) that are to be imparted to a tourism learner by the qualified lecturer, using systematic approaches and appropriate facilities when deliberating knowledge and skills in order to produce a graduate that can manage and operate the tourism business into foreseeable future, with a sustainable competitive advantage. Tourism curriculum is the key factor that can produce graduates who are the future knowledgeable labour. Thus, Ewell, (1999) noted that business management techniques have been incorporated in the tourism curriculum as the vehicles for universities to meet the challenges associated with the industry’s manpower needs dynamics. This implies that tourism curriculum should meet needs of student, industrialist and community within the current and future professional tourism business environment. In addition, Miller, (2012) argued that the curriculum content should be delivered by lecturer(s) using valid methods which are assessable, interactive in nature and objective.

The gap between the tourism curriculum and the industry’s manpower needs
As cited in Chakpitak et al., (2012, p57), Zuga (1989) categorized the approaches of curriculum design into five groups, which are academic curriculum design, technical curriculum design, intellectual process curriculum design, social curriculum design and personal curriculum design. This categorization was later developed by Kelly (1999) into four ways of implementing a curriculum: namely to transmit the knowledge (focuses on the body of knowledge), to achieve a certain goal (focuses on the final outputs), to explore a process (focuses on the process) and to develop a praxis model (focuses on situating the learning experience with the experience of learners). However, gaps always existed between the university and industry. This disconnection existed among curriculum designers, lecturers and students. One can say that there is insignificant involvement of the all relevant stakeholders into the whole process of the curriculum design and neither have their functions and roles been defined.

In addition, a research done by Chakpitak et al., (2012) in Thailand proposed a Knowledge Supply Chain (KSC) that considers the tourism training process at a tourism training institution and the way industry nurture the industry’s competencies within the business operations. This is relatively aligned to the complete process of curriculum design that involves the employers, government agencies, lecturers and community representation. This is based on the fact that the tourism curriculum that is designed by the tourism curriculum designers must be aimed to produce graduates who would be trained by the lecturers according to curriculum objectives and learning outcomes that are aligned to the manpower needs. When the tourism curriculum graduates are employed, they become the interface of the organisation in service encounters with guests from the community (local and global).
Furthermore, Supply Chain Management (SCM) is a philosophy and management process, which emerged in the 1980s from business practices of the time and subsequently gained academic focus during the 1990s (Svensson, 2003). While research has proved the feasibility of practicing the supply chain management tools and methods to tourism higher education (for instance Selen, 2001), the research has been mainly applied at executive and managerial levels in universities, without giving much attention on the analysis and evaluation of the extent of bridging the gap from the standpoint of how knowledge and skills to be imparted are created. In addition, Knowledge Management (KM), is a practice that enhance the competitiveness of businesses, through gaining a more comprehensive, integrative and reflexive understanding of the impact of information and skills on the tourism organizations (Lyman, 2000). Kidwell et al. (2000) showed that KM can enhance the quality of curriculum and learning programs by identifying best practice and improving the speed of curriculum revision and update.

**Origination of tourism curriculum gaps as compared to vocational training and occupational skills.**

Tourism training has gone through phases that emerged from informal training to formal training. However, tourism training has been dominated by vocational oriented courses. The vocational training played a crucial role in providing the necessary industrial occupational skills, (Baum, 2002). However, occupations like bar attendant, waitering, porter/bell person, housekeeper, amongst other perceive life skill related occupation, had no formal training except informal on the job training in Zimbabwe. A notable distinction between tourism curriculum and tourism vocational training emanates from Zais (1976) cited in Baum (2002), thus, he defined vocational training as, a technical model directed toward specific skill and behavioral changes, whilst tourism curriculum is directed toward expanding one’s awareness of human environment and how to cope with the environment. Therefore, the study can define tourism vocational training as tourism and hospitality technical concept infested with a hands on orientation set for grooming, mentoring and coaching a learner for a total behavioral change and approach towards the tourism business operations. Thus, Zimbabwean employers consider the one who has occupational skills (vocational tourism training) as better than a tourism curriculum graduate. This is a loophole in that, most employers have not gone through tourism curriculum training, thus they despise tourism curriculum without having adequate knowledge of the tourism curriculum training system.

Tourism vocational training is narrowed to only daily hands on operations and tourism occupational jobs which can be done through on the job training, whilst tourism curriculum is centered on managing and enhancing people, technological and non technological systems to work towards organizational goals through strategic positioning against competition (Baum, 2002). However, Tribe (2001) is of the idea that tourism curriculum that excludes vocational aspects bolsters probing of questions on meaning and purpose of the curriculum. The challenges faced by tourism curriculum trainers are further exacerbated by the fact that Zimbabwean tourism industry is comprised of small to medium operating units that are found in different geographical locations. Thus, the firms would prefer vocational trained graduates to tourism curriculum graduates hence the tourism industry has strong dependency on semi or unskilled labour supply. This is supported by Evans (2001), who points out on how employers do not consider a degree in tourism as a necessary requirement for employment, perhaps due to ignorance or confusion about what is offered by the program. This has been reiterated by Airey and Tribe, (2005), who while explaining the industry-academic relations in United Kingdom noted that there is anecdotal evidence pointing to the hospitality industry’s slowness in recruiting graduates of hospitality and tourism curriculum program. This is also noted by Chimutingiza *et al.* (2012) who studied on perception of stakeholders on Bachelor of technology in tourism offered at Chinhoyi University, in Zimbabwe. The findings noted that, generally the industrialists prefer a tourism and non tourism diploma and certificate holders to tourism and hospitality degree holders.

The tourism issues have in the past been researched extensively by focusing on aspects such as curriculum content and planning; stakeholder approaches to curriculum design and stakeholders
perceptions on tourism curriculum (Koh 1995; Tribe 2001; and Chimutingiza et al., 2012), enquiries into human resource development issues, strategies and policies (Singh 2000, Liu 2002; and Riley et al., 2002). This study is set to evaluate the actual existence and the extent of relevance of tourism and hospitality curriculum to the industry’s manpower needs in Zimbabwe.

The current tourism training is infested with academic qualified trainers without adequate industrial experience and hence, they do not properly assess the learners according to industrial standards. The teaching material is also too old and needs updating and training modules are too generic, (Chimutingiza et al., 2012). In addition, one can say that, the tourism curriculum’s student selection and recruitment is now centered on ‘profit making to the tourism curriculum training institutions. This emanates from the failure of the tourism industry and tourism curriculum institution to design appropriate selection criteria so that suitable people can be inducted, trained and graduate for the tourism industry.

**Evolution of tourism and hospitality training**

Busby, (2001) noted the shift in the tourism training focus from a rigorous vocational framework to a liberal reflective approach that aim to address the tourism industry’s manpower need to rediscover the humanistic values for the fulfillment of managerial competences. This idea was motioned by Churchward and Riley (2002) who examined the relevance of academic tourism curriculum to the tourism occupations in United Kingdom (UK) and revealed that the academic subjects are relevant to tourism industry’s manpower needs. Their study pointed that generic academic knowledge such as marketing, recreation, economics and business related subjects, can be applied to context specific tourism work. However, one can say, jobs in tourism are not necessarily similar. Tourism includes a variety of jobs that require the application of different types of academic knowledge and skill base. The tourism curriculum should constitute subjects/module as per the tourism multiple sub-sections that need unique expertise.

**The Tourism training prior to the 1980s and leading into the 1990s**

Tourism and hospitality training began as a development of technical/vocational schools in Europe in the 1960s to the 70s and the institutions emphasized training in core skills that are related to ‘transferable skills’, for hospitality and tourism occupations (Beckett, 2004). The tourism curriculum originated from technical training schools in Europe as a result of perceived need for trained tourism and hospitality workers for the industry’s management positions. The growth of tourism training programs into higher education has been driven by developments in the tourism industry. Therefore, the tourism trainers developed courses specifically to meet the needs and expectations of learner and industrial practitioners (Beeton and Graetz, 2001). The tourism curriculum programs seemed to meet actual generic skill needs in the industry as the training had a vocational orientation. In Zimbabwe, tourism training commenced at the Bulawayo Polytechnic in the 1980s as a department that offered Hotel and Catering; Bakery Studies and Professional Cookery and Travel and Tourism at National certificates and diplomas which were certified by the Higher Education Examination Council (HEXCO).

According to Sandwith (1993) the tourism training was aligned to competency domain model that has five elements namely; conceptual creative (which is known as the cognitive), leadership (that is the ability to turn ideas into productive action), interpersonal (those skills for elective interaction with others) administrative (regarding personnel and financial management of the business) and technical (concerning the knowledge and skills essential to producing the product or service). In addition, supervisory personnel claimed that they needed additional professional development training in human resource skills (Marsh and Willis, 2007). (McKercher, 2002) argues that hospitality students require a real and in depth understanding of the industry and human resources management issues within it from a theoretical and conceptual point of view before they are given operational and prescriptive models of how to operate within that environment. Moreover (Pearce, 2005) suggests for a stronger pedagogical basis to the learning experience with which students are confronted in the human resource management area of the hospitality-tourism curriculum.
The introduction of tourism and hospitality curriculum was infested with a plethora of debates especially on tourism curriculum training institutions (universities) training systems. The tourism curriculum is centered on the balance of vocational and academic focus with the goal of providing competent graduates that can fill in managerial posts as vocationally trained workforce could not suffice the needed expertise. Contrary, Tribe (2002) views all tourism courses in higher learning as vocational. This argument set by Tribe (2002) has given short shrift to the value and meaning of tourism curriculum in the eyes and expectations of most industrialists. However, on the tourism curriculum at university level, lecturers focus on producing skilled and knowledgeable managerial personnel for the industry. Tourism curriculum is a documented study of man (the tourist) away from his usual habitat, of the touristic designated facilities and networks which respond to the needs, of the ordinary (home based) and non ordinary (tourism-based) worlds and their dialectic relationship (Jafari, 1987) cited in (Munar, 2009). Tourism curriculum is co-constitutive of the tourism system formed by all study, teaching and other human interactions aimed to keep, develop, enhance and transfer tourism knowledge and skills to society and industry and this is done in tertiary institutions (Robertson, 1995) cited in (Munar, 2009).

The university tourism curriculum in Zimbabwe balances the vocational and liberal aspects of tourism training that is vital to producing a well rounded graduate ready for handling management responsibilities. Baum and Sigala (2003) advanced this notion, thus, the tourism curriculum students are broadly educated and knowledgeable about the tourism development as well as occupational functions in tourism. On the other hand, concentrating on the vocational training would render learners to be unable to take on managerial responsibilities. To this extent, the industry prefers to recruit diploma holders to degree holders (Baum, 2002). The industrialists perceive that tourism diploma graduates are ready to practice tourism in the industry upon graduation. (Chimutingiza et al., 2012). Inui, Wheeler and Lankford (2006) examined the tourism degree at the University of Plymouth. The findings revealed that tourism practitioners in the United Kingdom (UK) could exert implicit influence on curriculum content (knowledge) and skills. In addition, Busby, (2001) noted that, the UK degree modules were tailored to accommodate vocational as well as intellectual skills. This notion was upheld by three domains in tourism curriculum, thus; ‘generic degrees’ that provide broad understanding of the tourism and interdisciplinary skills; ‘functional degrees’ that focus on particular areas of tourism such as marketing, information systems, or planning; and ‘market/product based degrees’ that focus on the development of a particular product or market, requiring expertise in the area. All three programs claim to provide students with the body of knowledge and skills that enable them to function effectively in the tourism industry, (Busby, 2003).The study questions the notion’s applicability in Zimbabwe on the basis that Zimbabwian situation is different from United Kingdom in the economic, political, social, technological and environmental (natural and business) system.

In addition, Inui, Wheeler and Lankford (2006) noted that tourism lecturers and industry professionals are aware of the interconnectedness between tourism curriculum and the tourism industry. The study notes that industrial practices are rooted in application of researches on problem solving and opportunity identification. The preliminary research on the current study noted that students and not the curriculum, do not promote true learning and social justice as the students prepare themselves and learn for examinations and course work, afterwards they cannot exhibit the curriculum skills and knowledge package. This means that there is a discrepancy between the avowed purposes of a liberal tourism curriculum and the curriculum learning outcomes set onto the graduate. In addition, the lectures should set competences assessment that guarantees the exhibition of skills and knowledge within the industry after graduation. However, Busby, (2006) advocates for tourism organisations to cease making tourism courses a prerequisite for a job placement in the industry. This notion set by Busby, (2006) poses queries on the credibility of the tourism programs and the career path as it would appear as tourism occupation (job) and not as a profession. Thus, the study desire to ascertain the relevance of tourism curriculum to the tourism industry’s manpower needs.
The tourism curriculum’s role of enhancing employability, (Hjalager, 2003), is more than just providing students with a skill base; it is about educating them for appropriate attitudes and aspirations to guide their career trajectories and industry vision. Therefore, insisting on vocational skill drilling alone could be a disaster when it comes to the managerial roles within tourism industry. This does not mean that tourism curriculum should focus on academic subjects at the expense of internships or experiential learning. Tribe (2002) argues that it may be thought that the purpose of vocational training is self-evidently to equip graduates to operate in their chosen tourism career. Tribe (2002) further attempts to theoretically integrate the vocational and academic aspects of tourism curriculum in order to provide both liberal and vocational education, while developing students’ ability to reflect and act. Consequently, tourism curriculum should be designed to respond to the needs of the tourism industry to satisfy customers and to produce economic benefits. At the same time, the tourism curriculum should educate students to be reflective individuals who are capable of examining and questioning the social responsibilities of the industry. Beckett, (2004) suggests that tourism goes beyond vocational training as it states that there is a need for degree level tourism programs that enable students to think critically about the future of the industry, as well as to train them for required skills and knowledge. Students need to develop self-awareness and motivation, imagination and creativity. Tourism curriculum programs need retooling and redesigning. Skills and knowledge sets must be redefined, structured and assumptions need to be questioned and old ways of doing things must be transcended. Tourism employment in the coming decades will have a very different profile than it does today. For instance what is taught students today may be obsolete by the time they graduate? This implies for a continuous tourism curriculum review with the appropriate stakeholders.

Tourism curriculum must be flexible and adaptable to provide qualified industrial talent. However, there is lack of coordination between the industrial practice and the tourism training institutions in Zimbabwe. This resulted in failure by the industrialists to appreciate the efforts of tourism curriculum to fill in the managerial skills and knowledge gap, which could be set by the vocational and occupational training. Therefore one can say that vocational training lacks conformance to the dynamic global trends in line with the industrial practices which implies for a compromise in quality of curriculum design and delivery. While reviewing on tourism employer involvement in tourism curriculum, Cassells (1994) identified three levels of such involvement as arm’s length relationships, partnerships and strategic alliances. Tribe (2005) denoted that the Taiwan government has heavily prioritized tourism and hospitality curriculum. This is a contrast to the Zimbabwean approach on tourism, as Zimbabwean Financial System has no funds allocated for tourism and hospitality industry (bank representative explained during the Zimbabwean Sanganai/Hlanganani Expo forum in 2012). This could be a result of failure to comprehend tourism and hospitality business operations and the actual economic, social, political and technological contribution on the national scale. This conception has a spillover effect on the tourism curriculum training back up support set by the tourism industry to the tourism curriculum training institutions in Zimbabwe.

The relationship between the tourism curriculum and the tourism managerial skills and knowledge competences

Ladkin (2005) defined hospitality managers as entrepreneurial, hardworking and constantly distracted so that they do not have time to focus on long term strategic management, but also more assertive, autocratic, ambitious, pragmatic, optimistic, cheerful and extroverted than managers in other areas. This is further noted by Teare (1997) cited in Munar and Montaño, (2009) who stipulated that, core competencies as inter and intra personal and communication skills with staff and customers rather than higher and cognitive skills. Ley (1978 and 1980) cited in Riley et al., (2002) has a similar view that is based on an analysis of the determinants of a manager success; most successful managers tend to focus on entrepreneurship and work the longest hours. The study noted the intensity of global competition in the industry brought with it the need for administrative, leadership and higher cognitive (conceptual) skills in tourism and hospitality management, for the creation of strategic sustainable competitive advantages. This opposes Teare’s(1997) view cited in Munar and Montaño,
(2009) that denotes lack of in depth argument in line with the hospitality and tourism managers’ core competence.

On the other hand, Tas, LaBrecque and Clayton (1996) identified five main competencies in hotel management. These competencies are, in order of importance: interpersonal (skills for effective interaction with guests, subordinates, superiors and other stakeholders within the industry); leadership (the ability to turn ideas into productive action for the achievement of goals as a team); conceptual-creative (the cognitive skills needed for the job and strategic management); administrative (personnel and financial management of the business for sustainable investment in human resources and non-human resources); technical (the knowledge and skills essential to manage the production and delivery of the product and service). The tourism curriculum modules in Zimbabwe aim to produce a graduate that can suit the global tourism dynamic business environment at the same time creating a sustainable competitive advantage. Baum (2002), found that: tourism operational issues are opposed to tourism management issues, hence managerial competences are not operational oriented. Baum (2002) advocates that the guest host concept, is opposed to the profit concept, hence a manager is supposed to strike a balance on guest host relations and profit making through repeat purchase which is influenced with interactions between firms’ personnel and guests. Baum (2002) says that the hospitality apprenticeship, irrespective of educational background, is possible. Hence the ‘uniqueness’ of hospitality renders the industry to require unique managerial skills which are different from general management principles.

Furthermore, Baum (2002), focused on the characteristic of tourism and hospitality industry in line with managerial competences as the production and delivery are inseparable, which implies high pressure should be reconciled with the ability to exhibit managerial skills on the subordinates-manager interactions as well as with guest interactions. One can say that, tourism business is a 24/7 business, which makes personal social relationship difficult for employees. Therefore there is need for the manager to exhibit appropriate human resources aspects that bolster subordinates’ motivation to be high and ability to withstand work related and social pressure. The business operation involves ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of both guests and staff, which require high communication and interpersonal skills (Baum 2002), hence the need to be multi-cultural competent.

The tourism business involves discretionary expenditure, which implies fluctuations in demand (Raybould and Wilkins, 2005), hence, there is need to be able to make strategic plans for the balance between supply and demand for sustainable business operations. The industry has high fixed capital costs and highly volatile variable operating costs requiring diligence and prudence in the management (Harris et al., 2002). The industry has low barriers to entry for capital and labour (Harris et al., 2002), therefore, there is strong need to strategise and establish a sustainable unique competitive advantage. The aspects discussed above denote the need for higher cognitive knowledge and skills that tourism vocational training and in-house training could not offer. Ladkin (2005) argues that tourism curriculum is driven towards more generic, business and analytic orientation at a greater pace than the tourism industry’s manpower needs. On the contrary, there is a paradigm shift that can be explained by intense competition prevailing in the industry, which have led to the strong need for Food and Beverage managers who should possess strong operational as well as high strategic skills (Munar and Montaño, 2009). One can say that general business management should not be over emphasized at the expense of the operational skills which are fundamental for tourism business operations. The notion affects operational managers than the strategic managers. However, the importance of skills depends on the type of tourism and hospitality organization. The study goes along with the idea that today’s tourism business requires a contemporary approach that considers global business issues in management which implies for a more cognitive skill competences on managerial responsibilities than operational abilities.

Raybould and Wilkins (2005) explain that internationalization and push for more human resources management strategies require general managers and managers to understand the worldwide
ramification and the impacts it has on the tourism industry. Iles (1997) cited in Raybould and Wilkins, (2005) identifies key competences for the international hospitality manager: cultural awareness and understanding the difference for a noble business approach, communicative competence right across the different types of guests from different nations, cognitive (conceptual) competence that acknowledges stereotypes and work outside the stereotyping boundaries as each individual is treated as unique valuing difference and gaining business oriented synergy from difference. Christou, (2000) made an interesting contribution to the discussion by suggesting that all management jobs are similar at the highest conceptual level but differ at the operational level. The meta-competencies that are then of prime importance for managers are the ability to use and develop their competencies when any changes (different roles or different environment) occur.

**Labour market for the tourism industry**

Labour market is defined by the study as the area in which the industry gets it pool of skilled (qualified), semi-skilled and unskilled. This implies that different organization within the Zimbabwean tourism and hospitality industry can source labour from different area (geographical and non-geographical) depending on labour and manpower policy. The provision of hospitality employees can be sourced from: tourism training institutions; domestic labour agencies (private); international labour agencies; government labour agencies; the general curriculum vitae submission and internal promotions. The analysis of tourism labour markets is problematic, due to the diversity of the tourism industry (Ladkin, 2005). The diverse and fragmented nature of tourism significantly adds to the complexity of estimating the category of employment and number of people employed in the tourism industry. This poses difficulty in defining tourism employment (Riley et al., 2002). A comprehensive list of tourism sectors includes: transport, travel agencies and tour operators, conventions and events, retail, environment management, health and spa tourism, relevant government offices, NGOs, and educational establishments (Riley et al., 2002). Even when a sector is identified, there are considerable levels of organisational and job diversity. As Ayres (2006) states, not all those employed in these sectors can be classified as tourism employees because accountants, historians, educationalists and others also play vital roles within these sectors. Another challenge also arises due to the difficulties in distinguishing the nature of the business sectors involved in tourism related activities; those which totally depend on the tourist spending to support their operations, those that also serve the local residents and other markets and those who work outside the formal economic system (Liu, 2002). Most tourist facilities are shared between tourists and the locals.

Despite the diversity of tourism employment, a number of characteristics of jobs in the industry can be identified, including seasonal, part-time, female, expatriate/migrant, and existing in the informal economy (Andriotis and Vaughan, 2004). These job characteristics may give a negative perception of employment in tourism as the tourism sector suffers from a poor image and the rate of labour turnover in the tourism sector is significantly high (Ayres, 2006). However, one feature of tourism employment is that while some jobs directly related to tourism may suffer from the above characteristics, other jobs produced as a result of the indirect effects of tourism often do not suffer from the same characteristics (Ladkin, 2005). Tourism, as a labour-intensive industry, is both complimented and criticised for its impact on employment. Some give credit to the tourism industry for providing a mechanism for generating employment opportunities for both developing countries with surplus labour and for industrialised countries with high levels of unemployment (Cooper, 2002a). Others question the value and quality of tourism jobs, with a lack of higher-level jobs resulting in a lack of career development (Ladkin, 2005). The study desires to assess the labour market for the tourism sector in Zimbabwe because it gives a clue on the manpower required by the tourism industry.

**Human capital development in tourism industry**

Human capital refers to: the stock of knowledge and skill, embodied in an individual as a result of education, training, and experience, which makes him or her more productive; the stock of knowledge and skill embodied in the population of an economy (Deardorff, 2006). According to Wang, (2008) human capital refers to the costs individuals or organizations incur on activities and processes that
lead to the acquisition of competences, abilities, talents, possession of positive attitude and skills. Human capital creates added value to the productivity of a firm or organization or nation. In addition, Airey and Tribe, (2005) defined human capital as a stock of competences, knowledge and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform labour. This implies that, there are attributes gained by a worker through the training and experiences, so as to produce economic value. Preliminary study noted that human capital is similar to "physical means of production", like factories and machines: one can invest in human capital; it is not transferable like land, labor, or fixed capital; it is gained via education and training. With reference to the above definitions, one can deduce that human capital is an element of investment that hospitality and tourism can make use in creation of unique sustainable competitive advantage that is difficult to counterfeit. Thus, it contributes to the quality of product/service production and delivery within the tourism industry’s organizations.

The human capital is developed through on the job and off the job training with the aim of improving organizational performance. This is supported by the discussion set by Tribe (2002) who noted that human capital practices (training) increased profitability of hotels. Thus, one can say that human capital developmental issues have been advocated for, however, the industrialists took the concepts with reluctance as most tourism firms are small to medium enterprises. Watson and McCracken, (2002) asserted that training was critical in human capital development because it impacts positively on the bottom line, change in attitude, increase enthusiasm, lower absenteeism and staff turn-over. This view is further advanced by Busby (2003) who noted that education and training of persons were the major human capital strategies. The study is centered on the assessment of the human capital development within the tourism industry in Zimbabwe. Thus, the tourism curriculum has a provision for the tourism employees to have an off-the-job training through the block-release system at the tourism institutions.

Tourism training equips people to meet the labour needs of existing local employers as a means of promoting local growth. Busby (2003) linked human capital with solid comprehensive formal tourism program. This implies that tourism curriculum keeps human resources development in connection with future planned growth of the tourism industry and individual career pursuit. Koh (1995) cited in Busby (2003) agrees that productive investment is embodied in human beings, including skills, abilities, ideas, and mental and physically health. The study is centered on the argument that people element on the marketing mix is of exceptional value, hence a need to evaluate tourism curriculum as a determinant of guest satisfaction in co-production of products and services, their delivery and consumption. Thus, the research aims to establish the extent to which the tourism industry in Zimbabwe engages on the human capital.

Human resource within an enterprise is seen as the single biggest cost of most hospitality enterprises around the world, Powell, (1999) cited in Busby (2003). In contrast, human resource should be seen as an investment rather than cost because it aims at improving the efficiency within the hospitality industry to achieve economic development within the economy, Gonzalez, (2003). Gonzalez, (2004), argues that, the best practices of human resource management issues in the hospitality industry are employment and security, selective hiring, extensive training, performance appraisals, sharing and diffusion of information, incentives, which emphasizes on promotion and development.

Inui et al., (2006) emphasizes that, the valuable knowledge and function of employee forms the core of tourism business operation as people element is a critical dimension in the successful delivery of tourism services. Thus, one can say that human resources development in a country is crucial in achieving a comparative advantage within the highly volatile and intensely competitive global tourism industry. Turki et al., (2007) noted there was lack of consensus between the public and private sectors on the tourism training frameworks. This is perpetuated by the lack of well-established forums to facilitate academic and practical-oriented discussions between trainers and other interested parties like the tourism training institutions.
Study Methodology

Research design
The study adopted an explanatory research design because the aim of the study is to ascertain the existence of the gap between the tourism curriculum and the tourism industry’s manpower needs in Zimbabwe. Explanatory research design enables the study to draw in depth comprehension of tourism curriculum and the tourism industry without manipulating the study units. In addition, a causal relationship of the disjuncture between the Zimbabwean tourism manpower needs and tourism curriculum would be established after analyzing the responses from the sample units.

The study population
The research study population is constituted of 13 organizations i.e. the Chinhoyi University of Technology, the University of Zimbabwe and the Midlands State University, the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality, the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education-manpower development and training, Zimbabwe Council for Tourism, Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, Cresta Hospitality Group, Africansun Group of Hotels and Rainbow Tourism Group, National Manpower Advisory Council, United Touring Company and Hospitality Association of Zimbabwe. The population is constituted of chain organisations and authority firms that have the capacity to employ a holder of a tourism curriculum qualification. This would imply that they are In a position to provide sufficient data for the research topic in question. In addition, the universities are the apex boards that formulate the tourism curriculum, whilst the tourism authorities and tourism councils are the advisors to tourism policy formulators and the government agencies are the tourism policy formulators. The group tourism and hospitality organisations are the employers of the tourism curriculum graduate in line with manpower needs within the organisation. Therefore the study population is in a position to provide the relevant primary data for the study.

Sampling
The study used non-probability sampling which is purposive sampling. The purposive sampling involves the selection of the sample units from the population because the sampled units would provide sufficient, reliable and relevant primary data from the research study, (Xiao and Smith, 2006). The sample units have the knowledge on human resources development policies formulation and implementation in addition to the fact that they are representatives of the tourism organisations within tourism industry.

Sampling techniques
According to Heaton, (2004) sampling techniques provide a range of methods that enable the reduction on the amount of duplicated data to be collected considering a sub-group rather than the whole population. Non-probability sampling techniques were implemented in order to make representative samples for the population on study. This would allow the researchers to make accurate estimates on the reasons that would lead to the behaviour of the stakeholders within the tourism sector (industry and training institutions). The study further considered purposive sampling for the respondents because not everyone in the tourism sector has knowledge on the data that is required for the comparison analysis of the gap between the tourism curriculum and the tourism industry’s manpower needs.

Purposive sampling
Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that the researchers used in selecting 12 sample units from the 13 organisations within the tourism industry for sampling because the study requires critical position holders within the organisations in the study population as source of data for an overall assessment on the existence of tourism curriculum and the tourism industry’s manpower needs.

Sample Size
The study sample unit is made up of 12 persons who can provide the study with the relevant primary data without duplication and wastage of resources, as the overall boards can provide information that
represents individual tourism organisations. The sample size is composed of 2 university chairpersons (leaders of the lecturing team that forms part of the tourism curriculum design team), the Chief Executive Officers for the Zimbabwe Council for Tourism and Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (they are strategic persons that are the custodians and formulators of the human resources development policy and strategic plans for both public and private tourism organisations within the tourism industry), the Hospitality Association of Zimbabwe President (association represents all the hospitality organisations in Zimbabwe), NAMACO tourism sector representative (advisory board for the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality and the Ministry of Manpower development and training). Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality-human resources department, the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education-manpower development and training (government authorities), human resources managers for tourism and hospitality chain groups (Africansun Pvt Ltd, Rainbow Tourism Group, Cresta Hospitality Group and United Touring Company).

Data collection methods
The study considered only two types of data, which is the primary data and secondary data.

Primary data
Primary data is a first-hand (raw) data that is collected from the sample units selected from the study population, with the aim of analysing and evaluating it in line with the study objectives and research questions. The study adopted the triangulation of semi-structured questionnaire survey that would be complemented by face to face interview and mobile telephone interview as data collection instruments in order to collect primary data from the study sample units. The study used the semi-structured questionnaires that are constituted of questions with choices, for the respondent to choose the appropriate response. The research tool enabled the sample units to complete the questionnaires at their own time, allowing respondents to have ample time to think over questions so as to provide reliable data. However, questionnaires would not provide allowance for the respondents to seek clarity on questions that they would have not comprehended. During the collection time, the researchers asked the respondents if there were areas he/she did not comprehend. In addition, the study used face to face interviews in triangulation with questionnaire survey. Thus there was a verbal interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee in person (Kumar, 2011). The researchers had a face to face interview with 4 sample units. The researchers made appointments with the sample units prior the interviews.

Secondary data
Gray, (2004) defined secondary data as analysed information for other purposes rather the current aim. The secondary data includes tourism and hospitality text books, Zimtravel magazines and academic journal publications. The secondary data was reviewed by the researchers in order to position the current research study’s knowledge gap within the already established tourism curriculum researches. Secondary data have historic views that provide foundation for the current study even though the data would be questionable on accuracy, objectivity and validity in addressing the current study. The researchers relied on the academic journal publications for the secondary data as they provided credible information that have been subject to academic scrutiny prior publication.

Pilot study
The pilot test was done with the goal of pre-testing the research data collection instruments which were mainly questionnaires and the interview guides. The aim was to evaluate the data collection instruments’ ability to collect reliable and valid data through checking for errors in the questionnaires and the interview guides, Gray, (2004). The Pilot study was done using the Harare Polytechnic School of Hospitality and Tourism department. The researchers administered 3 questionnaires to the bakery studies lecturers, 3 questionnaires to the professional cookery and 4 to the tourism and hospitality management lecturers. They then interviewed the head of department and the 2 lecturers in charge for the tourism and hospitality department. The pilot results suggested that it was unnecessary to distribute self administered questionnaires to organisational operational front and back office staff.
because the study targets the strategic top management. In addition, there was need to put more questions on the research area than the demographic aspects of the respondents.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Response rate
The overall response rate was 100% as there was non-response error. This means that the researchers managed to collect primary data from the study sample units.

Demographic characteristics of the respondents
Survey responses were broadly split between gender, with females accounting for 30.77% and males accounting for 69.23%. This implied that the industry’s leadership is generally skewed towards males. However, this leadership gender ratio may not be a typical reflection of other sections within the tourism industry.

Findings and discussion

The existence of gap and the causes of the gap between the tourism curriculum and the tourism industry’s manpower needs in Zimbabwe.

The study findings noted that 92% of the respondents confirmed that the tourism curriculum has actual gaps against industry’s manpower needs in that it lacks adequate operational skills (hands-on approach) and knowledge like the culinary skills, confectionary skills, travel skills and food and beverage service skills (bar attending and waitering). Only 8% response disagreed with the above notion in that tourism curriculum is set to address managerial manpower needs and appreciation on the operational skills. This results in employers preferring to hire diploma graduates from Polytechnic Hotel Schools. Findings are similar to Chimutingiza et al., (2012) that noted the common aspect of employers’ behaviour of preferring diploma holders to degree holders. This confirms the notion that, the tourism sector considers and accepts traditional way hotel management approach. Thus a manager should come from operational background, negating the aspect that leadership and management for the sector can be trained for efficiency in both people management and operations while adopting appropriate delegation, motivation, negotiation, communication and problem-solving in order to establish a leadership style Busby, (2003).

The tourism human capital development in Zimbabwe

The findings were that there is no clear tourism industry human capital plan shared by all stakeholders. This implies that the tourism industry’s individual organisations have engaged in tailored human capital development. The human resources managers noted that the corporate firms have designed an on the job training on management, supervisor and operational skills and knowledge development as per tourism industrial trends, in order to upgrade skills of the already employed staff.

The findings were that the tourism corporate firms have designed informal management training for the tourism curriculum graduates to go through the informal on-the-job management training for 18months to 24months. The findings also noted that the labour developments needs in the tourism sector are as a result of skills flight to the diaspora. Thus, Zimbabwean tourism sector has lost over a third of skilled professionals which brought shortage of culinary skills and strong dependency on casuals that have very little training if any.

The challenges militating tourism curriculum from producing capable tourism managers

The findings were that the tourism training institutions are fund-driven. This has resulted in the recruitment of people who are not ‘fit’ for the industry as students are selected according to their passes and ability to pay fees negating one’s suitability to the industry through passion. These tourism curriculum graduates will be having the tourism qualifications; however, the job performance is done in a way that exhibit lack of passion. This implies that there was no dialogue between the tourism training institutions and the tourism industry. The findings noted that there are no statistics on the manpower in the tourism sector, thus the stakeholders are waiting for the manpower audit. The statistics would give a lead on the areas of manpower needs for the tourism industry. This poses a
plethora of problems related to the coordination on over-supply of tourism curriculum graduates and deficits of occupational skilled labour.

Conclusion
The findings generally denoted that the tourism curriculum is over focused on training managerial level persons forgoing the occupational skills. We conclude that there is no continuous dual dialogue between the tourism curriculum training institutions and the industrialists. The tourism curriculum is skewed towards hospitality and there is no balance in modules with the travel sector. We conclude that employers take tourism curriculum as a program that enhances semi-skilling neglecting other sub-sections within the sector like events management, restaurants and fast foods, tour guiding and safaris management. The findings noted that there is no clear human capital development plan that is shared by all stakeholders within the industry. We conclude that the tourism industry’s individual organisations have engaged in tailored human capital development. It was noted that tourism qualifications come to edify a person with a talent and passion for tourism. We therefore conclude that the industry is on a different dimension with the tourism curriculum training institutions on the skills and knowledge needs because the industry’s manpower needs are based on the “soft skills”. We also conclude that the majority of tourism organizations are small to medium enterprises that are family owned hence their dependency on informal training for unskilled and semi-skilled labourforce.

Recommendations

- Tourism lecturers to have sabbatical attachments that would make them have experiential learning in other countries for at least 6 months to about 2 years
- The government should engage into tourism industrial exchange programs with countries like United States of America, United Kingdom, Algeria, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, South Africa, India and Botswana.
- The tourism sector must facilitate a stakeholder network knowledge management matrix which can help to clarify who knows what, and make the best use of knowledge resources.
- The tourism institutions should create a systematic customer knowledge management which helps tourism institutions to adapt their curriculum to meet the demands of a changing industry.
- The study recommends the training institutions to engage into a departmental (all stakeholders-community, tourism students council, graduates, industrialists, lecturers, public and private tourism authorities and the professional associations) tourism curriculum reviews
- There should be university to university exchange programs at both domestic level and international level, supplemented by guest lecturing concept in order to be establish an industrial attested tourism education learning outcome and joint resources mobilization.
- Study recommends that specialization should be incorporated within the tourism curriculum in the following areas: culinary arts including all restaurants and fast foods, hospitality marketing and reservations, front office, travel and tourism including car rental services, safaris and tour guiding and confectionary.

Reference


Graduate attributes and employment skills, Charles Darwin University: http://www.cdu.edu.au/graduateattributes/employabilityskills.html,retrieved on 15/06/2013,14:00.


Wang Jing (2008), Is tourism education meeting the needs of the tourism industry? An Australian case study. *Dissertation, University of Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, Australia*

