

Hospitality Industry Development via Scientific Research: SWOT analysis

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Abstract

Hospitality industry is a part of a larger industry known as travel and tourism industry. Developing of this industry needs updating of knowledge continuously by creating mutual links with research institutions. This research aims at highlighting the factors that influence hospitality industry development via scientific research from both scientific researchers and hotels policy makers' perspectives. Two questionnaires were designed to collect practical data, the first was directed to hotel managers, and the second was directed to hospitality scientific researchers. The collected data was analyzed statistically. The research developed a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis for the factors influencing hospitality industry development via scientific research. The research recommends enhancing the role of scientific research in developing this industry by ensuring the mutual links under the supervision of the national governmental agenda

Keywords: Hospitality Industry - Scientific Research – SWOT analysis.

Introduction

Scientific research (SR) is defined as a systematic and controlled investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among observed phenomena, and helps to create scientific knowledge. This means that the main role of SR is to develop studies that address current and actual problems and to focus on recommending solutions to be applied nationally (Molteberg et al., 2000). In service industries, despite of the importance of scientific researches, little researches are translated into actions, even when they are on issues in scope. Mostly, it returns to two major problems: Transmitting the researches' results to the industry policy makers and the trust of the policy makers in the researches' results (Coe et al 2002).

Literature Review

Before 1970s, it was highly assumed that most scientific researches' results are widely used by policy makers for decision making. Till 1979 Caplan observed that policy makers became rarely using knowledge gained through scientific researches, hence, he developed his theory "two communities" which emphasizes that there is a cultural gap between scientific researchers and policy makers, each of them has his own worldviews that made him create a separate community away from the other (Caplan, 1979). Afterwards, in 1993 Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith clarified that policy makers have direct and indirect links to utilize scientific researches' results, as they may not use scientific researches' results in the nearby time "directly", but they use them to develop a gradual shift in their conceptual thinking over time "indirectly" (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993).

In the hospitality industry, although there are several other stakeholders who can affect or be affected by the industry's policies (creditors, owners, employees, governmental agencies, unions and suppliers), still hotel managers are the most important sector who puts and controls the organization's strategies, as they are responsible for determining the organizations' policies, actions and objectives. Thereby, they can effectively control the width of SR deployment gap in hotels (Yilmaz and Gunel, 2008).

The importance of the SR selected study comes mainly from its importance to the society. Based on that, the term "policy impact" or "policy influence" was found to express the systematic and corporate understanding of the research success, limitations and factors that facilitate or inhibit its influence on policy. Discussing the SR policy impact is based on examining several questions such as: in what way and to what degree the research has influenced public policy, what conditions and Factors have inhibited or facilitated the public policy potential influence of research projects (Neilson, 2001).

Various factors that affect both direct and indirect mutual links between scientific researchers and policy makers were discussed by several researchers, some of these factors were related to the industry policy makers, and are considered from the industry's perspective as "internal factors", and others were related to scientific researchers themselves, and are considered as "external factors" also from the same perspective (Carden, 2004). In addition, there are other factors related to both industry policy makers and scientific researchers such as mutual communication, interaction between them, relevance of scientific researches to the industry and determination of researches topics (Sumner and Harpham 2008)

Although there are several elements depending on the industry policy makers, still the acceptance of scientific research results and recommendations to be trustfully applied by them is the element that can enhance the role of SR in the industry (Coe et al 2002), and this element can be controlled effectively by involving policy makers in the research process to focus on the intrinsic research studies and avoid useless topics (Ryan and Garrett 2003). Moreover, in order to effectively match theoretical studies with practical deployment, SR selected topics must be based on both institutional and industrial receptiveness; as Institutional receptiveness seeks for logic topics and scientifically built on standard sequences; on the other hand and industrial receptiveness seeks for topics that express real issues and produce effective solutions with low costs (Sumner and Harpham, 2007).

Also, SR funding is an important factor that can direct the scientific researchers to choose particular issues, but the funding agencies always have their SR agenda that contains issues that serve the agencies' objectives. these issues may be cheap, easy in data collection and governmentally encouraged, but on the other hand, it may lack value for the SR society (Coe et al 2002). This means that when the policy makers share in SR funding, they may highlight definite topics that help the industry actual policy impact (sumner and Harpham, 2007).

SR timing is another important factor for both researchers and policy makers, as SR must be aligned with the industry policy needs (Hovland, 2005). Moreover, the research time limitations and durations highly affect the policy impact, especially when SR works on urgent issues affect the industry's short-term development (Ryan and Garrett, 2003).

It is essential for the SR to be monitored and controlled by governmental legalities to connect the national SR agenda to the social interests, facilitate the interaction between researchers and industry policy makers, enhance the utilization of SR recommendations and protect the researchers intellectual property rights (Hovland, 2005).

SR is primarily built on managing the flow of data easily and effectively to develop logic results. So, "Data Management" term refers to all the procedures and elements related to handling the research factual information within SR, data management includes data ownership, data collection, data storage, data protection, data retention, data analysis, data sharing and data reporting (Steneck, 2004). Thus, effective data management helps SR to lead this factual information correctively and accurately.

The quality of SR still the major element that affects the reliability and validity of obtained results, quality of research refers to the scientific process that includes all aspects of study design; in particular, the match between the methodologies, research questions, selection of sample, measurement of outcomes, and protection against systematic/nonsystematic bias and inferential error (Steneck, 2004). Hence, gaining the industry policy makers trust in the developed recommendations. Moreover, enhancing quality dimensions in SR avoids the potential SR misconducts such as: fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism which can cause misuse of funds, and undermines the trust of policy makers in SR.

Research Objective

Highlighting the factors that influence hospitality industry development via scientific research from both scientific researchers and hotels policy makers' perspectives

Research Methodology

Two questionnaires were designed by researchers to collect practical data; Questionnaire A: was directed to 51 five star hotels general and assistant general managers as a sample of hospitality markets' decision makers in Greater Cairo, Sharm El-Shiekh and Hurghada, " the biggest three hotel communities all over Egypt", and questionnaire B: was directed to 119 hotel researchers. Both samples were chosen randomly by simple random sampling method, and both questionnaires used a five point Likert-type scale ranging from "1=strongly disagree" to "5= strongly agree" to score the responses of the two samples. Questionnaire A consisted of three dimensions; hotels managers' demographic data, internal and External Factors affecting the role of scientific research in developing hospitality industry, questionnaire B consisted of two dimensions; demographic profile of hospitality researchers, the reality of hospitality scientific research which consisted of 4 sub-dimensions; administrative aspects and incentives policy, the quality of scientific research, data obtaining and research publication and implementation. The obtained data was analyzed statistically by Statistical package for social sciences program "SPSS" volume 17 to obtain Descriptive analysis and to calculate reliability and validity analysis and Spearman correlation analysis.

Reliability and validity analysis

Cronbach's Alpha was used to calculate reliability of the questionnaire. Validity also is required to validate the instrument constructs. Both coefficient alpha and validity of the two instruments constructs' are presented as follow:

Questionnaire A:

Table (1) indicated that the coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha for the constructs of the hospitality industry had high alpha coefficient scores (95%). The overall validity coefficient of hospitality industry instrument constructs was 97%. According to DeVellis (2012), alpha coefficient should be .7 or higher. So, it can be assured that all items included in the survey are valid to measure what is supposed to measure.

Table 1: Coefficient of reliability and validity for the hospitality industry instrument

No.	Constructs	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Validity
1	Internal factors	5	.94	.969
2	External factors	6	.92	.960
Overall Total Scale		11	.95	.974

Questionnaire B:

Reliability and validity analysis

Table (2) illustrates that the overall total scale of the questionnaire (B) being(93%) is accepted by Cronbach's Alpha. In addition, the overall validity coefficient of all constructs of the questionnaire is (96%). Since the constructs of the questionnaire had an accepted reliability and validity coefficient, it can be assured that the used items included in the questionnaire are valid to measure what it intended to measure.

Table 2: Coefficient of reliability and validity of the researcher instrument

No.	Constructs	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Validity
1	Administrative aspects and incentives policy	6	.85	.922
2	The quality of scientific research	5	.90	.948
3	Data obtaining	5	.89	.943
4	Research publication and implementation	5	.87	.932
Overall Total Scale		21	.93	.964

Results and Discussion

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Questionnaire A: Descriptive Statistics

The demographic data of the hotel managers/ assistant managers in the selected sample were tabulated by using frequencies and percentages. Also, mean scores and standard deviations are calculated to discuss factors affecting the role of scientific research in developing hospitality industry.

Demographic data of hotel managers

Table (3) presents the demographic profile of hotels managers/ assistant managers. According to the data obtained, 48 of the respondents (94.1%) are males and 3 (5.9%) are females. In terms of age, 13 of the respondents (25.5%) are below 40 years, 20 of them (39.2%) are between the 40-50 years of age and the remaining 18 respondents (35.3%) are above 50 years of age. Among these respondents, 45 respondents (88.2%) are college graduates, while only 6 of respondents (11.8%) hold post graduate degree. In terms of position, 23 of the respondents (45.1%) occupied general manager position and 28 of them (54.9%) were assistant general manager. Finally, According to the pattern of management in the hotels of the study, (56.9%) of hotels are chain managed and (43.1%) of them are independently managed hotels.

Table 3: The demographic profile of hotels managers

Demographics	Characteristics and Classification	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	48	94.1
	Female	3	5.9
Age	Below 40 years old	13	25.5
	40- 50 years old	20	39.2
	Above 50 years old	18	35.3
Educational background	College	45	88.2
	Postgraduate	6	11.8
Position	General manager	23	45.1
	Ass. General manager	28	54.9
Type of management	Owner-management	29	56.9
	Chain	22	43.1

Factors affecting the role of scientific research in developing hospitality industry

The mean scores and standard deviations are calculated to discuss both internal and external factors affecting the role of scientific research in developing hospitality industry.

Internal factors

Table (4) illustrates the mean scores and standard deviations of hospitality industry respondents concerning the internal factors. It is noted that some internal factors negatively affect the role of scientific research in developing hospitality industry. The mean score of the interaction with research institutions to know the latest developments in the hospitality research was (2.38). Also, the problems that the hotels face are displayed on research institutions to discuss and provide solutions to them (2.14). These findings reflect the lack of coordination and communication between hospitality establishments and relevant SR institutions which is considered a weaknesses point of the hospitality industry. On the other hand, managements of hospitality establishments relatively trust research findings and recommendations provided by the local research institutions with a score of (3.53). This means that the recommendations of scientific researches are not used when formulating future strategies (2.21). Moreover, findings showed that, the financial and moral support from the industry to scientific research have a score of (2.24), which reflects a lack of supports from hospitality industry.

Table 4: mean scores and standard deviations of hospitality industry respondents about the internal factors.

No.	Statement	Mean	Std. deviation
1	The hotels' interaction with SR institutions to know the latest developments in the hospitality research.	2.38	1.190
2	The problems that hotels face are displayed on SR institutions to be discussed.	2.14	1.134
3	Trust in the SR findings and recommendations provided by the local SR institutions.	3.53	1.053
4	The recommendations of SR are used when formulating future strategies.	2.21	1.128
5	There are mechanism and means from the industry to support SR financially and morally.	2.24	.813

External factors

Table (5) presents the mean scores and standard deviations of hospitality industry respondents concerning the external factors. The mean score of the interaction of SR institutions to know the latest developments in the hospitality field was (1.97), which assures the previous finding "the lack of coordination and communication between hospitality establishments and hospitality SR institutions". Moreover, SR institutions do not use hospitality stakeholders' suggestions in developing their research plans (1.88). This finding is compatible with the previous one "managements of hospitality establishments do not use the recommendations of scientific researches when formulating future strategies". The respondents also assured that researches ideas are not always compatible with the hospitality industry current needs (2.04), and SR ideas are not always applicable (2.17). These findings represent threats for the hospitality industry. On the other hand, the respondents agree that "researchers are qualified enough to conduct SR " (3.55) which represents an opportunity for the development the industry through SR. Finally, findings and recommendations of researches can't be easily obtained (2.30).

Table 5: presents mean scores and standard deviations of hospitality industry respondents concerning the external factors.

No.	Statement	Mean	Std. deviation
1	There is an interaction from SR institutions to know the latest developments in the hospitality field.	1.97	1.006
2	SR institutions use hospitality stakeholders' suggestions in developing their research plans.	1.88	.953
3	SR ideas compatible with the current needs of hospitality industry.	2.04	.956
4	SR ideas are always applicable.	2.17	1.053
5	Researchers are qualified enough to conduct SR.	3.55	1.088
6	Hotels obtain researches results and recommendations easily.	2.30	.880

Questionnaire B:**Descriptive statistics**

Descriptive statistics were used to classify respondents' gender, age, Educational degree and the current job. Also, mean scores and standard deviations are calculated to discuss the reality of hospitality scientific research.

Demographic profile of hospitality researchers

Table (6) presents the demographic profile of the hospitality researchers shows that 89 of respondents (74.8%) are males and 30 (25.2%) are females. As for age, 30 respondents (25.2%) are below than 30 years, 65 respondents (54.6%) are of 30-45 years and 24 respondents (20.2%) are above 45 years of age. According to educational level, 39 of respondents (32.8%) hold master degree, 44 of them (37%) hold PhD degree and the remaining 36 (30.2%) were after PhD. Approximately 74% of the sample (88 respondents) are academic staff members. While 19.3% (23 respondents) are hospitality industry staff members and only 6.7% (8 respondents) are others.

Table 6: The demographic profile of hospitality researchers

Demographics	Characteristics and Classification	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	89	74.8
	Female	30	25.2
Age	Below 30 years old	30	25.5
	30- 45 years old	65	54.6
	Above 45 years old	24	20.2
Educational background	Master degree	39	32.8
	PhD degree	44	37
	After PhD	36	30.2
Position	Academic staff member	88	74
	Hospitality staff member	23	19.3
	Other	8	6.7

The reality of hospitality scientific research

Mean scores and standard deviations are presented to clarify the reality of hospitality scientific research from the researchers' point of view.

Administrative aspects and incentives policy

The mean scores of administrative aspects and incentives policy that can affect the hospitality scientific research are listed in table (7).

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Table (7) showed that the overall mean of administrative aspects and incentives policy of hospitality scientific research was 1.95 (SD= .748) meaning that the researchers in hospitality field are not satisfied with the current administrative procedures and financial policies. In other words, the researchers do not agree that "Current administrative procedures help the success of research institutions" (2.34), "Research institutions have motivating policies for attending conferences and seminars" (2.18), "Financial allocations always cover transportation and accommodation expenditures for attending conferences" (1.65), "Financial support for researchers is unlimited and covers all research requirements" (1.72), "Research sponsoring and supporting currently helps to innovation and development" (1.8) and "There is an official and serious interest with scientific research" (1.97). Previous results indicated that researchers are suffering from the current administrative procedures and thus represent a real threat to the hospitality industry.

Table 7: Administrative aspects and incentives policy

No.	Statement	Mean	Std. deviation
1	Current administrative procedures help the success of research institutions.	2.34	1.153
2	SR institutions have motivating policies for attending conferences and seminars.	2.18	1.156
3	Financial allocations always cover transportation and accommodation expenditures for attending conferences.	1.65	.879
4	Financial support for researchers is unlimited and covers all research requirements.	1.72	.910
5	Research sponsoring and supporting currently helps to innovation and development.	1.80	.816
6	There is an official and serious interest with scientific research.	1.97	.951
Overall Mean		1.95	.748

Note: Scale range from "1=strongly disagree" to "5=strongly agree"

The quality of scientific research

Table (8) cleared that the researchers in the hospitality field relatively accepted the quality of scientific research (M=3.22, SD=.945). In more detail, it is agreed that "Research ideas are innovative and linked to hospitality industry" (3.32), "There are adequate numbers of researchers in the hospitality field" (3.98) and "Researchers are qualified enough to conduct scientific research as it should" (4.00). While they were not satisfied enough with the level of coordination with the hospitality establishments when setting research plan (2.22) and "Researches that are made to handle real problems in the industry" (2.60). In general, these findings represent an opportunity to the hospitality industry.

Table 8: The quality of scientific research

No.	Statement	Mean	Std. deviation
1	Research ideas are innovative and linked to hospitality industry.	3.32	1.126
2	There is coordination with the hospitality establishments when setting research plan.	2.22	1.045
3	Researches that are made to handle real problems in the industry.	2.60	1.277
4	There are adequate numbers of researchers in the hospitality field.	3.98	.956
5	Researchers are qualified enough to conduct scientific research as it should.	4.00	1.160
Overall Mean		3.22	.945

Note: Scale range from "1=strongly disagree" to "5=strongly agree"

Data obtaining

The mean scores and standard deviations of the process of data obtaining to conduct scientific research in the hospitality field are presented in table (9).

Table (9), there is a difficulty in the process of data obtaining to conduct scientific research from the hospitality researchers' point of view (M= 1.95, SD= .834). In other words, they do not agreed that "Hospitality community has a positive outlook for scientific research" (2.31), "There are institutional entities that provide reliable and updated data" (1.88), "It is easy to get the necessary and reliable data from the hotels to conduct research" (1.95), "There is a culture of data sharing to support scientific research" (1.77) and "Hospitality organizations provide an opportunity for researchers to use their existing potentials to facilitate the research procedures" (1.87). These findings represent a threat to the hospitality industry.

Table 9: Data obtaining

No.	Statement	Mean	Std. deviation
1	Hospitality community has a positive outlook for scientific research.	2.31	1.185
2	There are institutional entities that provide reliable and updated data.	1.88	.749
3	It is easy to get the necessary and reliable data from the hotels to conduct research.	1.95	1.052
4	There is a culture of data sharing to support scientific research.	1.77	1.077
5	Hospitality organizations provide an opportunity for researchers to use their existing potentials to facilitate the research procedures.	1.87	.916
Overall Mean		1.95	.834

Note: Scale range from "1=strongly disagree" to "5=strongly agree"

Research publication and implementation

Table (10) clarifies that the respondents are not satisfied with the current situation of research publication and implementation ($M= 1.78$, $SD= .727$). They do not agree that "Hospitality stakeholders support the role of scientific research in the industry development" (2.08), "Research publishing is a simplified and flexible process" (1.85), "There is an interest to inform the media what is being done of scientific research" (1.51), "Research results and recommendations are used in developing hospitality industry" (1.79) and "Decision-makers use research recommendations when formulating their future strategies" (1.67). According to these findings, research publication and implementation represent a threat facing the development of the hospitality industry.

Table 10: Research publication and implementation

No.	Statement	Mean	Std. deviation
1	Hospitality stakeholders support the role of scientific research in the industry development.	2.08	1.029
2	Research publishing is a simplified and flexible process.	1.85	.866
3	There is an interest to inform the media what is being done of scientific research.	1.51	.594
4	Research results and recommendations are used in developing hospitality industry.	1.79	.970
5	Decision-makers use research recommendations when formulating their future strategies.	1.67	.975
Overall Mean		1.78	.727

Note: Scale range from "1=strongly disagree" to "5=strongly agree"

Correlation analysis

The Spearman correlation was used to calculate the correlation between the Quality of scientific research as a dimension and Administrative aspects, data obtaining and Research publication as three separate dimensions. Table (11) indicates that Spearman correlation was (0.550), (0.682), (0.464) was obtained between the Quality of scientific research as a dimension and Administrative aspects, data obtaining and research publication. This result is highly significant at (0.01) level. In addition, the correlation was relatively high and positive. This means that the quality of SR in hospitality industry is highly depending on the administrative aspects, data obtaining and research publication

Table (11) The relationship between Quality of scientific research as a dimension and Administrative aspects, Data obtaining and Research publication as three separate dimensions.

			Administrative aspects	Data obtaining	Research publication
Spearman'srho	Quality of scientific research	Correlation	.550**	.682**	.464**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
		N	119	119	119
** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

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Conclusion and recommendations

This study was conducted to discuss the factors affecting the role of scientific research in developing hospitality industry and to analyze the current status of scientific research. According to the findings, there are some factors can affect the role of scientific research in developing the hospitality industry. Figure (1) illustrates a SWOT analysis for the current status of hospitality scientific research and its role in developing hospitality industry.

		Helpful	Harmful
		Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trust in local research institutions. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of coordination and communication with hospitality institutions. - Do not use the recommendations of scientific research when formulating strategies. Lack of support for scientific research financially and morally.
		Opportunities	Threats
External factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Researchers are qualified enough to conduct scientific research as desired. - The quality of scientific research. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of coordination and communication from research institutions. - Researches ideas not compatible with the needs of hospitality industry. - Findings and recommendations of researches can't be easily obtained. - Administrative aspects and incentives policy. - Difficulty of data obtaining to conduct scientific research. - Research publication and implementation.

Figure (1) indicated the four elements of SWOT analysis as follows:

1. Strengths:

- Trust in local research institutions.

2. Weaknesses:

- Lack of coordination and communication with hospitality institutions.
- Do not use the recommendations of scientific research when formulating strategies.
- Lack of support for scientific research financially and morally.

3. Opportunities:

- Researchers are qualified enough to conduct scientific research as desired.
- The quality of scientific research.

4. Threats:

- Lack of coordination and communication from research institutions.
- Researches ideas not compatible with the needs of hospitality industry.
- Findings and recommendations of researches can't be easily obtained.
- Administrative aspects and incentives policy.
- Difficulty of data obtaining to conduct scientific research.
- Research publication and implementation.

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الملخص العربي

تطوير صناعة الضيافة من خلال البحث العلمي: نموذج تحليلي لنقاط القوة والضعف والفرص والتهديدات

يهدف البحث إلى إلقاء الضوء على أهم العوامل التي تؤثر في تطوير صناعة الضيافة عن طريق البحث العلمي من منظور كل من الباحثين وصانعي القرار في الفنادق. تم إجراء الدراسة الميدانية باستمارتي استقصاء، وجهت الأولى إلى عينة من مدراء الفنادق الخمس نجوم، والثانية إلى عينة من الباحثين العاملين بمجال صناعة الضيافة.. وقد تم تحليل البيانات المتحصل عليها إحصائياً. خلص البحث إلى وضع نموذج تحليلي لنقاط القوة والضعف والفرص والتهديدات التي تواجه تطوير صناعة الضيافة عن طريق البحث العلمي. ويوصي البحث بتفعيل دور البحث العلمي في تطوير صناعة الفنادق والتأكيد على أهمية قنوات التواصل المشتركة بين كلا الطرفين بدعم ورعاية من الجهات الحكومية المنظمة.