

## **Customer-Driven Management System as a tool for Total Quality Management Application in Hotel Higher Education Institutions in Egypt**

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### **Abstract**

The study aimed at providing a direction for establishing a customer-driven management system in Egyptian governmental faculties of tourism and hotels, especially the hotel management department, as it is the main resource for the qualified employees in the hospitality industry, also to analyze the important skills required for hotel management graduates as perceived by hotel managers (human resources), educators and graduates. Finally, the study identified quality indicators in hotel higher education faculties as perceived by educators. Finally, the study clarified a proposed model that reflects the customer requirements in hotel higher education institutions.

The results revealed that human resource managers perceived “the desire to learn” as the most important skills required for graduates, while educators perceived “Total Quality Management” as the most important skills, and the graduates perceived “Communication” as the most important skills. Also, managers, educators and graduates perceived that human resource, operating skills and personal skills are very important for the graduates. Conceptual skills have a medium level of importance as perceived by educators and graduates, but managers perceived that these skills are not important.

### **Introduction**

Organizations worldwide are faced with increased competition due to globalization and have attempted to gain competitive advantage by positioning themselves as "excellent" (Bank, 2000). Higher education institutions became confronted with many challenges, including the need to diversify their income streams while doing more, and different things with increasingly less reliance on focus; reconfigure their institutional missions and the ways in which they traditionally produced, packaged and disseminated their primary product-knowledge in order to meet the challenges of a diversifying student population and forge new kinds of relationships with other knowledge producers within and outside higher education (Cloete and others, 2002).

However, Williams, (2016) and Motwani and Kumar (1997) agreed that there is a consensus that the quality of education system is deteriorating. This deterioration is evidenced by declining test scores, graduates with inadequate basic skills, increasing dropout rates, and a widening gap between industry needs and student capabilities. Therefore, to overcome the education quality decline, many educational institutions are turning to total quality management (TQM).

In addition, Papanthymou & Darra (2017); Varnavas & Soteriou (2002) and Evans and Lindsay (2003) discussed the issue of customer of higher education institutions. They agreed that the customers are divided into different groups of actors that affect the education process. Customers are either external or internal. They assign the role of external customers to students, employers and the society as a whole. Any person next in line within the organization in reference who adds value to the educational service, i.e., educators and support staff is assigned the role of internal customers.

Moreover, Thi Pham & Nguyen (2020) and Motwani and Kumar (1997) pointed out that the customer needs is the focal point and the core concept of TQM and also this issue is stressed by most quality gurus. However, Willis and Taylor (1999) reported that the fundamental purpose of TQM is to serve the customer better as customer satisfaction is considered to be the central goal of TQM. Thus, within the TQM framework, it is of utmost importance to define the customer requirements in order to meet them and ultimately achieve the customer satisfaction (Twaissi & Al-Kilani , 2015).

Moreover, Varnavas and Soterious (2002) confirmed as well that one of the core principles of TQM is the customer focus which emphasizes the service relationship between him and an organization/ institution. They concluded after reviewing a number of quality models in higher education institutions (such as the TQM implementation model of Oregon state university, Harvard University, Babson College, and Wisconsin-Madison University) that the customer focus is the most important point which is highlighted. They also asserted that the satisfaction of the higher education customer can be achieved in terms of the needed skills and the quality indicators.

Needless to say, that the implementation of the TQM concept in the hotel higher education institutions in Egypt still remains a great challenge and there are a few attempts to implement this concept. There is also a lack of any completed formal approaches on how to implement this concept in both governmental and non-governmental faculties of tourism and hotels in Egypt.

Needless to say, that there is a strong need to identify the customer needs as this is a focal point of any TQM implementation model in any educational institution as mentioned in the previous TQM models. Therefore, this study presented an approach towards establishing a customer-driven management system at the governmental faculties of tourism and hotels in Egypt, specifically the hotel management department as it is the major supplier of specialized staff for the hospitality industry.

Moreover, this study examined the important skills required in hotel management graduates in the Egyptian governmental Faculties of Tourism and Hotels as perceived by the hotel managers (human resource managers), educators and graduates themselves. lastly, this study determined the quality indicators in hotel higher education institutions as perceived by educators and students.

## **Review of the Literature**

### ***The Role of Hospitality Management Education***

Hospitality management education is not only an applied discipline but also a professional discipline that offers skill-oriented training, general business principles, and the professional concepts to students in order to lead the industry rather than to follow it. Simply, hospitality management education is a field devoted to preparing students for management positions in the hospitality industry through qualified educators (Momunalieva et al., 2020; Tarí, & Dick, 2016).

Hospitality management education can be perceived as a mixture of academic, professional and craft knowledge and skills aimed at satisfying the needs of the hospitality industry. He concluded that the main role of the hospitality management education is to maintain the hospitality industry's competitiveness in both national and international arenas. A number of key outcomes are expected through hospitality education as the attainment of service quality; employee empowerment through well-educated staff at all levels; harmony and effective cooperation/teamwork within educational institutions; the improvement of language skills; and the upgrading of hospitality operating standards (Lucander & Christersson, 2020).

### ***Challenges and globalization of higher education***

The world has witnessed in the past few years a number of basic changes that touched the different aspects of present life in addition to all institutions, economic, social, political and cultural establishments and the information knowledge for any community whether owned, acquired, created or established is the power that would ensure its future. With all these changes, establishments and big companies all over the world realized that in the light of the competition where everything is available, whether information or raw material or technology, human power is the productive and creative and has the advantage of continuous competition. So, we surely need "information" and preparing a person capable of changing the past and making the future which cannot be done without "Education" (Refaat, 2005 ; Twaissi, & Al-Kilani, 2015).

Another note to the same effect, Refaat (2005) mentioned that there is an agreement that the lifting of the standard of the human power will not be achieved except by education that meets all the standards of total quality in all the levels and stages so the graduates become more able to enter the international market with its violent competition and international skills level.

According to Jenkins (2001), He concluded the challenges in graduates do not have advantages over other applicants; they lack a positive attitude towards service roles and do not want to work in the industry because they are unclear about their features and have opted for tourism and hotel management courses. Many students know little about tourism and hotel before they entered college, teaching materials are outdated, published by faculty members and translated from foreign language without considering the country culture, and most of the programmes are demonstrated by non-tourism related disciplines such as business administration, geography, social science and other humanities (Teeroovengadam et ai., 2016).

According to Coates (2005) Twaissi & Al-Kilani (2015) and Elmasry (2002) that University education in particular is one of the bases on which countries progress and its generations keep serious scientific research to achieve the society's goals and prove the abilities of its scientist to construct civilization struggle among different countries. He added that university is the last

stage in education since it contributes in knowledge production which would satisfy the job market needs from the different majors and prepare individuals who are armed with knowledge and skills and the ability to be creative and innovative. Therefore, it is necessary to take care of university education and ensure its quality.

Also, Papanthymou & Darra (2017) and Cloete and others (2002) pointed out that within few years, higher education institutions will be confronted with many challenges, including the need to diversify their income streams while doing more, and different, things with increasingly less reliance on focus; reconfigure their institutional missions and the way in which they traditionally produced, packaged and disseminated their primary product-knowledge in order to meet the challenges of a diversifying student population; and forge new kinds of relationships with other knowledge producers within and outside higher education .

Moreover, Wagner (2004) clarified that by assuming economic globalization affects higher education institutions, it will have an impact on the two "markets" in which universities operate. First, as regarded to their teaching function, universities may see themselves as operating a global higher education market and competing worldwide to capture a share of the demand for education. Second, with regard to research, rather than entertaining special relations to government offices and to firms based in their own national economy, universities may need to complete worldwide for business funding the research. They may be less able than before to count on public funds in support of national economic growth or other policy objectives. In cultural terms, globalization would mean that universities are catering to a multicultural studentship and may gradually abandon their old role of educating national elites and transmitting specific cultural values (Teeroovengadam et al.,2016).

It must be mentioned that Abdelmaboud and Al-Saiary (2005) concluded that hospitality education is growing rapidly with many challenges. Those challenges were and still barriers facing education and industry in term of designing appropriate programs that satisfy the industry. Most of hotel studies indicated that the prime challenge is the gap between the education providers and the industry's needs and expectations and this gap makes the employers recruit many tourism graduates because they do not have the right qualifications.

In addition to that, Steed and others (2005) pointed out that higher education is viewed by many as central to the creation of opportunities and prosperity in all modern economics. The pace of global change required a continued evolution of teaching, learning, and research - with the emergence of more responsive and focused activities to meet the demands of tomorrow's market place. They added that for that reason it is vital to continuously improve the education at institutions, moving further towards 'Excellence'.

Finally, Lien (2006) denoted a different challenge that faces the higher education institutions going to the abroad education instead of the existing domestic higher education institutions. He added that developing countries did not have their own graduate programs so that individuals had to go abroad.

### ***The importance of TQM in higher education***

The literature from the late 1980s onward suggests a continuing interest in the higher education sector in Total Quality Management (TQM) model, popular in industry, as a model for governance. However, extensive scrutiny of the attempts at adaptation of the model for

application to higher education has remained largely skeptical about its efficiency (Srikanthan and Dalrymple, 2005).

Therefore, many institutions are looking to industry for ideas and these institutions are turning to total quality management (TQM) to overcome this deterioration. Besides, Koch and Fisher (1998) asserted that those who advocate the use of total quality management (TQM) in higher education issue strong promises that it will unite campuses, increase employee satisfaction and improve nearly any process that it touches.

Furthermore, Papanthymou & Darra (2017) and Csizmadia (2003) clarified that for the higher education institutions to live up to the demands of various stakeholders, they have to introduce some quality mechanism. All higher education institutions and their leaders should be looking to establish procedures that will minimize the risk of failure as a way that would support the introduction of institutional excellence (Anyamele, 2005).

Finally, Ritter (2006) added that as an indication of the higher education's interest in TQM, in 1991 the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the main accrediting organization for business schools, gave TQM their "stamp of approval" by changing their accreditation standards to align more closely with the principles of TQM.

### ***Framework for quality indicators in higher education***

Higher education, like most businesses and organizations today, is increasingly concerned about the quality of its goods and services. There is increased competition for a shrinking pool of students and those students (customer) are becoming more sophisticated and demanding. He added that the higher education's product is largely intangible (Refaat ,2005; Papanthymou & Darra, 2017).

Another note to the same effect, Sallis (2002) identified several candidates for the source of quality in higher education. These factors or some combination of them should be paramount in the minds of educators: well-maintained buildings; outstanding teachers; high moral values, excellence examination results; specialization; the support of parents, business and the local community; plentiful resources; the application of latest technology; strong and purposeful leadership; the care and concern for pupils and students; and a well-balanced curriculum.

Moreover, Varnavas and Soteriou (2002) clarified some quality indicators that need to be improved for the perceptions of the employers, students and educators. They concluded these indicators as for employers were: staff competence; staff quality; building and educational facilities; participation of industry in curriculum development; and industrial placement service. As for students, the indicators were: improving the library; improving the communication between students and the institution management; building and educational facilities; building individualized attention to students' needs that is students' affairs system. As for educators, the indicators were: the need to communicate the mission of the institute to all members of staff; the need to modify the vision of the institution; and the organizational climate has to be improved, particularly in terms of communication, involvement, teamwork, and reward System.

Moreover, Refaat (2005) listed the quality indicators in higher education as follows: students (the policies of acceptance and choice); building and financial abilities; administrative framework; teaching staff members; curricula and study materials; the university book and

educational technology; library and information technology applications; methodology and learning; evaluation processes; and graduates.

Moreover, Maslak and others (2005) conducted a study to measure each country's quality indicators of higher education in order to improve it. The results showed that it is possible to represent each country's quality of higher education by a single measure. Also, in Attabi's study (2005) the most important factor for good quality was the lecturer as the lecturers must be knowledgeable and be able to relay their knowledge in a good way to the students. Other important factors mentioned were the people responsible for planning and organization of the program and a lot of scheduled lectures.

It is worth mentioning that, Assante (2005) revealed that there were 72 quality indicators in the hospitality education and all of them considered important. However, the five most important indicators in determining the quality of hospitality education were: (a) placement of graduates in the hospitality industry, (b) student internships, (c) industry relations, (d) experiential learning opportunities for student, and (e) student commitment to program and administration support. He explained the importance of the quality indicators as they can be used as well defined and measurable performance standards; quality indicators can provide benchmarks that allow all stakeholders to understand what constitutes a quality program; and they can be used to conduct a self-assessment.

**Finally, Hewady (2007) clarified the British model for evaluating the quality in the educational institutions. (Table 1)**

Items	Quality Aspects
Curriculum	1/1 Level of covering the basic topics 1/2 Compatibility with the students' acquisition in this stage 1/3 Relation to real life 1/4 Relation to other curricula 1/5 Knowledge of basic know ledges 1/6 Preparing the student to the age of globalization through learning a foreign language.
Reference	2/1 of evaluating the extent of educational level and authenticity 2/2 form and style of producing the scientific reference 2/3 Time of availability of scientific reference 2/4 Price of scientific reference 2/5 Level of making use of the scientific reference 2/6 Authenticity of scientific material 2/7 Kind of attitudes developed by the scientific reference
Teaching staff members	3/1 Educational standard and knowledge background 3/2 Recognizing the needs of the students 3/3 Regularity of the educational process 3/4 commitment to curriculum 3/5 Accepting feedback 3/6 working on developing competitive intellectual skills. 3/7 Level of personal interaction 3/8 Awareness of the role of the scientific ability and background
Evaluation style	4/1 Level of objectivity and compatibility 4/2 level of authenticity and comprehensibility 4/3 not focusing on spoon feeding 4/4 focusing on analytical ability 4/5 focusing on critical thinking
Management system	5/1 the information available for managing and operating the system 5/2 directing the market place 5/3 the good climate for the artistic and sports activities 5/4 efficiency of the management system

	5/5 handling the complaints
Financial Facilities	6/1 suitable with the nature of educational process 6/2 Developing and satisfying the artistic side

Source: Hewady (2007)

### ***2.12 Skills Needed from Industry Perspective***

The phenomenon of low level of entry into the hospitality sector by graduates was due to poor experiences in placements and lack of care within the industry as having a detrimental effect on the 'psychological contract' defined as a 'series of mutual expectations and needs arising from an organization – individual relationship (Jenkins, 2001). However, graduates need to be aware of employers' expectation, in order to judge for themselves whether they match-up to the desired 'profile' (Gibson, 2004).

It can be rightfully said that there is no general consensus about what skills are needed by industry and who possesses those skills (Willis and Taylor, 1999 and Bennett, 2002) .

Moreover, Papanthymou & Darra (2017) and Tan and Morgan (2001) revealed in their study that logical thinking competencies (analytical thinking, creative thinking, problem-solving and decision-making) and social interaction competencies (leadership, teamwork and approach to inquiries) to be important but communication in a foreign language is considered of relatively less importance. Furthermore, wood's study (2003) illustrated that the top ten skills that employers want graduates to have include: leadership, employee relations, problem resolution, staffing, employee training, guest service, managerial communications, operational controls, internship and food and beverage management.

Finally, Chan and Coleman (2004) mentioned that there were eighteen skills required for hospitality graduates for working in the hospitality industry as perceived by hotel employers' expectations. These skills required for example graduates to have a professional attitude, be honest, be able to communicate in foreign language, be able to work as a team, to accept responsibility, to help people, to be flexible, to have a good personal presentation, to possess effective writing skills and reading skills, to be creative and to solve problems .

It can be concluded that there is no unified scale for the needed skills by the hospitality graduates as perceived by the hospitality employers. Therefore, this study will focus on identifying the skills needed by hospitality graduates from the employers' perspective.

## **Methodology**

### ***The research design***

This study is concerned to be descriptive as the researcher aimed at identifying the higher education customers' needs and opinions toward the important skills which are required in hotel management graduates and the quality indicators required in the governmental Faculties of Tourism and Hotels.

Moreover, this study is concerned also to be an analytical one as it achieved the statistical analyses to the collected data to answer the study questions.

### ***The study population***

The population of this study consisted of four groups: (1) the first population was the 134 (5-star) hotels in Egypt (the Egyptian hotel guide, of this total, 104 hotels were selected to be the study population as these hotels are intensely busy in some areas. Therefore, the total hotel population was (104) hotels distributed among (7) areas in Egypt, (2) the second population was the total number of the (ten) specialists educators of hotel management department in Helwan and Alexandria Faculties of Tourism and Hotels, (3) the third population was the hotel management graduates who are working in the hospitality industry in Egypt .

### ***The study sampling techniques***

In this study, the stratified random sample was used for data collection from hotel population by taking a random sample from each stratum of the target population. The researcher has selected (50%) of the hotel population (104) for more accuracy and to make the sample more representative. Therefore, the researcher had a sample of (52) five-star hotels in Egypt from the (7) areas and each area will be proportionally represented.

In addition, from the approached (52) human resource managers, only (42) managers accepted to fill in the questionnaire forms hotels .

Moreover, the study involved the total population of educators due to the limited population. So, the educators' sample was ten divided equally on both selected faculties Moreover, from the approached (ten) educators, only (9) educators accepted to fill in the questionnaire and one educator from the Alexandria University refused to participate. The questionnaires were administered directly to these subjects (personally administered questionnaire) .

Also, the snow ball sample was used for hotel management graduates as there was no record available on the total number of hotel management graduates. Consequently, the researcher was able to collect (50) questionnaires from graduates.

### ***The survey instrument***

Data were collected through self-administrated questionnaires which allow respondents to answer questions in a pre-determined manner. Mailed questionnaires were also used to collect data from respondents in areas that are widely dispersed geographically.

In order to obtain data to reach the study results, four questionnaire forms were designed, the first was developed to subject the human resource managers of the five-star hotels in Egypt. The second one was directed to the graduates of Hotel Management department who work in the Hospitality Industry. The third one was directed to the educators with PHD degree of Hotel Management in governmental Faculties of Tourism and Hotels in Egypt.

## **Results & Discussion**

### ***The perception of the required skills and their obtained level in hotel management graduates by the human resource managers***

Table 2 showed the results of the required skills in graduates as perceived by managers. This table indicated the importance of each skill category by mean scores, percentage of the importance level, and the standard deviation. Then the obtained level was indicated as well (will be illustrated independently).

Firstly, by examining all the skill categories in respect of their importance; personal skills came first, human resource skills came second, hospitality operation skills came third, and conceptual skills came fourth because the total mean of each skill category was (4.63), (4.49), (4.47), and (2.69) respectively .

Secondly, by examining the importance of each skill category separately, the following was found: for the conceptual skills category, "total quality management" obtained the highest mean score of (4.62), and (71.4%) of respondents rated it as very high, regarding the hospitality operation skills, "lodging administration", "restaurant operational management", "food and beverage management", and "housekeeping operational management" obtained the same mean score of (4.81). Also, (83.3%) of respondents rated "housekeeping operational management" as very high. For the human resource skills, "conflict management skills" and "handling difficult people" were the most important skills in this category as they obtained a high mean score of (4.71) For the personal skills category, "willingness to learn" was the most important item, as it obtained a mean score of (4.98). Also, (97.6%) of respondents rated it as very high, then came "honesty/integrity" as the second important item in this category. It obtained a high mean score of (4.95), and the majority (95.2%) of respondents rated it as very high.

With regard to the obtained level, table 2 showed that managers believed that graduates had a very low obtained level in all the sub-skills under the conceptual skills as organizational structure and policies, hospitality law, and etc., Also, a low obtained level in the hospitality operation skills as marketing in Hospitality Industry, hospitality finance, front office management, etc. the graduates also had a low obtained level in most of the human resource skills such as leadership, communication, negotiation, and public relations, etc. However, the respondents indicated that graduates had a very high obtained level in some personal skills such as willingness to learn, honesty, and professional appearance. Furthermore, graduates had a moderate obtained level in the computer applications, and multilingual skills.

**Table (2) Skills required in hotel management graduates as perceived by human resource managers.**

Skills	Importance level							Obtained level	
	M.	S.D.	(%)					M.	S.D.
			1	2	3	4	5		
<b>A. conceptual skills</b>									
1. Organizational/Structure and Policies	4.02	0.90	2.4	0.0	23.8	40.5	33.3	1.88	0.74
2. Hospitality Laws and Regulations	3.14	0.68	2.4	4.8	73.8	14.3	4.8	1.48	0.55
3. Principles of Marketing	2.81	0.80	2.4	35.7	40.5	21.4	0.0	1.43	0.67
4. Finance and Accounting	2.40	0.80	4.8	64.3	16.7	14.3	0.0	1.33	0.53
5. Economics	2.02	0.68	16.7	69.0	9.5	4.8	0.0	1.21	0.42
6. Statistics	1.88	0.55	21.4	69.0	9.5	0.0	0.0	1.21	0.42
7. Interrelationships	3.62	0.73	0.0	7.1	31.0	54.8	7.1	1.95	0.70
8. Total Quality Management	4.62	0.70	0.0	2.4	4.8	21.4	71.4	1.36	0.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.69</b>	<b>0.73</b>						<b>1.48</b>	<b>0.57</b>
<b>B. Hospitality operation skills</b>									
1. Lodging Administration	4.81	0.40	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.0	81.0	2.69	0.64
2. Restaurant Operational Management	4.81	0.40	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.0	81.0	2.62	0.70
3. Food and Beverage Management	4.81	0.40	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.0	81.0	2.64	0.69
4. Hospitality Finance / Accounting	3.62	0.66	0.0	0.0	47.6	42.9	9.5	1.79	0.65
5. Marketing in Hospitality Industry	3.69	0.75	0.0	0.0	47.6	35.7	16.7	1.86	0.72
6. Front Office Operational management	4.76	0.53	0.0	0.0	4.8	14.3	81.0	2.40	0.73
7. Housekeeping Operational management	4.81	0.45	0.0	0.0	2.4	14.3	83.3	2.40	0.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.47</b>	<b>0.51</b>						<b>2.34</b>	<b>0.69</b>

<b>C. Human resource skills</b>									
1. Leadership	4.29	0.67	0.0	0.0	11.9	47.6	40.5	2.33	0.69
2. Communication	4.45	0.55	0.0	0.0	2.4	50.0	47.6	2.43	0.77
3. Teamwork	4.69	0.47	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.0	69.0	2.86	0.78
4. Negotiation	4.19	0.67	0.0	0.0	14.3	52.4	33.3	2.40	0.70
5. Harmonious Guest Relations	4.60	0.54	0.0	0.0	2.4	35.7	61.9	2.50	0.71
6. Conflict management skills	4.71	0.46	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.6	71.4	2.57	0.77
7. Handling Difficult People	4.71	0.46	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.6	71.4	2.48	0.80
8. Employees Relations	4.43	0.59	0.0	0.0	4.8	47.6	47.6	2.98	0.84
9. Public Relations	4.38	0.62	0.0	0.0	7.1	47.6	45.2	2.40	0.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.49</b>	<b>0.56</b>						<b>2.55</b>	<b>0.75</b>
<b>D. Personal skills</b>									
1. Willingness to Learn	4.98	0.15	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	97.6	4.17	0.70
2. Time Management Skill	4.45	0.59	0.0	0.0	4.8	45.2	50.0	2.79	0.95
3. Professional Appearance	4.93	0.26	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.1	92.9	4.31	0.87
4. Hands-on Experience	4.64	0.58	0.0	0.0	4.8	26.2	69.0	2.60	0.77
5. Computer Applications	4.45	0.63	0.0	0.0	7.1	40.5	52.4	3.21	0.90
6. Research Skills	3.45	0.89	0.0	14.3	38.1	35.7	11.9	2.14	0.81
7. Honesty / Integrity	4.95	0.22	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.8	95.2	4.60	0.63
8. Multilingual Skills	4.88	0.33	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.9	88.1	2.64	0.96
9. Creativity	3.62	0.73	0.0	0.0	52.4	33.3	14.3	1.83	0.82
10. Problem Solving Skill	4.67	0.53	0.0	0.0	2.4	28.6	69.0	2.57	0.94
11. Ability to Work without Supervision	4.67	0.53	0.0	0.0	2.4	28.6	69.0	2.40	0.86
12. Ability to Work as a Team Member	4.71	0.46	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.6	71.4	2.69	0.90
13. Decision Making Skill	4.40	0.66	0.0	0.0	7.1	47.6	42.9	2.05	0.76
14. Work Flexibility	4.50	0.51	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	2.40	0.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.63</b>	<b>0.43</b>						<b>2.65</b>	<b>0.83</b>

Note: Judgment of importance was made on 5-point likert scale (1=very low, 5=very high); M.=mean; S.D=standard deviation

### ***The perception of the important skills required in hotel management graduates by graduates***

This section will correspond to the overall perception, and respectively responding to the first question of the study which is what are the important skills required in hotel management graduates as perceived by hotel managers, graduates and educators?

Table 3 showed the results of the important skills required in graduates as perceived by graduates. This table indicated the importance of each skill category and sub-skills under each skill category by mean scores, percentage of the importance level, and the standard deviation.

Firstly, by examining all the skill categories in respect of importance; the hospitality operation skills came first, human resource skills came second, personal skills came third, and conceptual skills came fourth because the total mean of each skill category was (4.84), (4.57), (4.42), and (3.56) respectively.

Secondly, by examining the importance of each skill category separately, it was found the following: for the conceptual skills, "total quality management" was the most important skill in the conceptual skills category, also, the majority (97.5%) of respondents rated "total quality management" as very high, for the hospitality operation skills, the following five skills had the same mean score of (4.95) and also (95%) of respondents rated lodging administration, restaurant management, food and beverage management, front office management, and housekeeping management as very high. For the human resource skills, "communication", "team work", "harmonious guest relations", "conflict management skills", and handling difficult people" obtained the highest mean score of (5). Regarding the personal skills, "honesty/integrity" was the most important skill as it had the highest mean score of (5).

**Table (3) Skills required in hotel management graduates as perceived by graduates.**

Skills	Importance level						
	M.	S.D.	(%)				
			1	2	3	4	5
<b>A. conceptual skills</b>							
1. Organizational / Structure and Policies	4.1	0.59	0.0	0.0	12.5	65.0	22.5
2. Hospitality Law and Regulations	3.85	0.43	0.0	0.0	17.5	80.0	2.5
3. Principles of Marketing	3.15	0.62	0.0	12.5	60.0	27.5	0.0
4. Finance and Accounting	3.13	0.65	0.0	15.0	57.5	27.5	0.0
5. Economics	2.65	0.58	0.0	40.0	55.0	5.0	0.0
6. Statistics	2.3	0.56	0.0	75.0	20.0	5.0	0.0
7. Interrelationships	4.3	0.46	0.0	0.0	0.0	70.0	30.0
8. Total Quality Management	4.98	0.16	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	97.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>0.51</b>					
<b>B. Hospitality operation skills</b>							
1. Lodging Administration	4.95	0.22	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	95.0
2. Restaurant Operational Management	4.95	0.22	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	95.0
3. Food and Beverage Management	4.95	0.22	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	95.0
4. Hospitality Finance / Accounting	4.55	0.64	0.0	0.0	7.5	30.0	62.5
5. Marketing in Hospitality Industry	4.6	0.55	0.0	0.0	2.5	35.0	62.5
6. Front Office Operational Management	4.95	0.22	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	95.0
7. House Keeping Operational Management	4.95	0.22	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	95.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.84</b>	<b>0.33</b>					
<b>C. Human resource skills</b>							
1. Leadership	4.58	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	42.5	57.5
2. Communication	5	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
3. Teamwork	5	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
4. Negotiation	4.25	0.74	0.0	0.0	17.5	40.0	42.5
5. Harmonious Guest Relations	5	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
6. Conflict management skills	5	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
7. Handling Difficult People	5	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
8. Employee Relations	4.05	0.22	0.0	0.0	0.0	95.0	5.0
9. Public Relations	3.23	0.48	0.0	0.0	80.0	17.5	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>0.22</b>					
<b>D. Personal skills</b>							
1. Willing to Learn	4.7	0.46	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	70.0
2. Time Management Skill	4.88	0.33	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	87.5
3. Professional Appearance	4.35	0.48	0.0	0.0	0.0	65.0	35.0
4. Hands on Experience	4.1	0.38	0.0	0.0	2.5	85.0	12.5
5. Computer Applications	4.05	0.32	0.0	0.0	2.5	90.0	7.5
6. Research Skills	3.28	0.6	0.0	2.5	72.5	20.0	5.0
7. Honesty / Integrity	5	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
8. Multilingual Skills	4.58	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	42.5	57.5
9. Creativity	3.98	0.8	0.0	0.0	32.5	37.5	30.0
10. Problem Solving Skill	4.73	0.45	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.5	72.5
11. Ability to Work without Supervision	4.9	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	90.0
12. Ability to Work as a Team Member	4.93	0.27	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.5	92.5
13. Decision Making Skill	4.4	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	60.0	40.0
14. Work Flexibility	4	0.64	0.0	0.0	20.0	60.0	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.42</b>	<b>0.43</b>					

Note: Judgment of importance was made on 5-point likert scale (1-very low, 5=very high); M.=mean; S. D.=standard deviation.

### *Discussion of the results of the hotel management graduates' questionnaire*

Graduates agreed that "hospitality operation skills" were the most important for working in the hospitality industry. This result is consistent with Ladki (1993); Clark (1995); and Bach and Milman (1996) who asserted also that hospitality operation skill was the specialized and most important for the hospitality career. However, the researcher agreed with the literature as the

graduate may become a general manager one day, so he/she has to know every detail in each department.

Obviously, graduates ranked "personal skills" as important for graduates to work in the hospitality field. This result was in accordance with those studies conducted by Stewart and Knowles (2001); Athiyaman (2001), Bennett (2002); Bath and others (2004); Chan and Coleman (2004) and Raybould and Hugh (2006) who asserted that personal skills should be acquired by all graduates to make an immediate contribution to a business. However, graduates perceived that "conceptual skills" had a moderate level of importance which is consistent with Bach and Milman (1996); Defries (2001); Wood (2003) and Lucander & Christersson(۲۰۲۰) ,

In contrast to the most important skills, graduates perceived that the least important skills were statistics, and economics under the conceptual skills category. A possible justification could be that Hospitality Industry not only hires the hospitality graduates but also hires specialists such as accountants who majored in the business area .

Moreover, graduates asserted the importance of hands-on experience to work in the hospitality market and this result is consistent with literature review as Bennett et al., (2000); Bennett (2002); and Gibson (2004) who confirmed that hands-on experience was important upon-graduation. The researcher believes that hands-on experience is considered a bonus for a graduate to work in the hospitality Industry. In fact, work experience is of great importance for the Hospitality Industry as it prepares the graduates for a successful career in the industry and allows students to have positive interactions with practitioners

Lastly, graduates perceived that the top-ten important skills were communication, teamwork, harmonious guest relations, conflict management skills, handling difficult people, honestly/integrity, total quality management, lodging administration, restaurant operational management, and food and beverage management. It could be because communication and teamwork which are critical measure of success in Hotel Industry today, for example, communication can be used in every managerial activity training, interviewing, and interacting with guests.

Therefore, the above results can partly answer the first question of the study which is: what are the important skills required in hotel management graduates as perceived by hotel managers, graduates and educators?

### ***Results of the hotel management educators' questionnaire***

The results of the study regarding the educators are presented in this section and will include: (a) the importance and occurrence level of the quality indicators in the hotel higher educational institutions, and (b) the important skills required in hotel management graduates.

### ***The perception of the quality indicators importance and occurrence level by educators in hotel higher educational institutions***

This section will partially respond to the third question of the study which is: what are the quality indicators in higher hotel education institutions as perceived by the hotel management educators ? The mean gap scores on the (45) attributes was computed for the importance of the quality indicators in hotel higher educational institutions to identify the importance (table 4).

Table 4 showed the results of the important factors of the quality indicators in hotel higher education institutions as perceived by educators. This table also indicated the importance of each factor by mean score, percentage of the importance level, and the standard deviation, then the occurrence level is shown as well (will be illustrated independently). Firstly, by examining all the factors in respect of importance; people factor came first, facilities came second, assessment came third, course content came fourth, concern for student came fifth, and social activities came sixth because the total mean of each factor was (4.68), (4.45), (4.42), (4.17), (4.03), and (4.00) respectively.

Secondly, by examining items under each factor separately in respect of importance, it was found the following: for factor (A) **“the course content”** which consisted of three statements that related to the usefulness of the course, “The quality of material emphasized in course” was the most important item, then “the well-balanced curriculum”, and “the participation of industry in curriculum development”.

Factor (B) **“concern for students”** was loaded with nine statements. It reflected the fact that the students value the services of advisers from whom they can seek help as well as the provision of upward communication channels to present their ideas to the university management. “The willingness of the university management to take the opinions of the students” is the most important item as it was ranked (1) in factor B and had a high mean score of (9.30) and also (100%) of respondents rated it as high. Factor (C) **“facilities”** comprised eighteen statements related to the availability and accessibility of campus facilities like library, computer and sport center. “The amount and availability of library facilities” was the most important item as it had the highest mean score of (5), moreover, (100%) of respondents rated it as very high. Factor (D) **“assessment”** included six statements related to the students’ preference of a fair assessment scheme and their desire for getting a righteous return for their effort spent on studying. “The likelihood of getting distinction if the students work hard” was the most important item in this factor. Factor (E) **“social activities”**, comprised four statements, and narrates the importance of special activities in the faculty life. “The social events that are provided for students in the university” is the first important item. The last factor which was **“people”** related to social atmosphere in the faculty, “Staff has a sense of enjoyment in their work” was the first important item. Also, (80%) of respondents rated it as very high, while, (80%) of respondents rated “communications are bottom-up not just top-down” as very high (table 4).

With respect to the occurrence level, educators perceived that the following five factors had a low occurrence level in their educational institutions :course content, concern for student, facilities ,assessment ,and social activities because the total mean score was (2.7), (2.2), (2), (2.9), and(2.5) respectively. Only the “people” factor had a moderate occurrence level of (3.18) in their educational institution. Secondly, by examining the occurrence level of each factor separately, it was found the following: in factor (A), “the quality of material emphasized in course” had a mean score of (3.40) which meant that it occurred with a moderate level, while the other two item had a minimal level of occurrence, in factor (B), “the way lecturers talk to students when they ask for help”, and “the personal attention students get from lecturers” had a moderate level of occurrence in the respondents' institutions; whereas, the other items had a mean scores less than (0.3) which meant that they had a minimal occurrence level, with regard to factor (C), all the items had a minimal occurrence level except “the amount and availability

of library facilities" and "student incident logs are kept" which had a moderate level of occurrence and a mean scores of (3.40), (3.30) respectively.

Regarding factor (D), the three items of "the likelihood of getting distinction if the student works hard," "the appropriateness of the standard of modules offered," and "the appropriateness of the assessment system" had a moderate level of occurrence and mean scores of (3.70), (3.30) and (3.10) respectively. On the other hand, the other items had a minimal occurrence level.

For factor E, "the social events that are provided for students in the university", was the only item that had a moderate occurrence level and all the other items had a minimal occurrence level. For the last factor (F), all the items had a moderate occurrence level except for "improving the organizational climate" which had a minimal level of occurrence and a mean score of (2.60).

Through categorization, the respondents perceived that factor (E) people, had a mean score of (3.18) which meant that this factor had a moderate level of occurrence. While, all of the other factors had a mean score less than (3.0) which meant that these factors had a minimal occurrence level.

**Table (4) Factors and attributes of the quality indications in hotel higher educational institutions as perceived by educators.**

Factors and attributes	Importance level						Occurrence level		
	M	S.D.	(%)					M	S.D.
			1	2	3	4	5		
<b>A. Course content</b>									
1. The well-balanced curriculum.	4.1	0.57	0	0	10	70	20	2.9	0.99
2. The quality of material emphasized in course.	4.4	0.7	0	0	10	40	50	3.4	1.17
3. Participation of industry in curriculum development.	4	1.15	0	10	30	10	50	1.8	1.23
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>0.81</b>						<b>2.7</b>	<b>1.13</b>
<b>B. Concern for student</b>									
1. The personal attention students get from lecturers.	3.9	0.74	0	0	30	50	20	3.3	1.06
2. The willingness of lecturers to talk with students outside of class time.	3.8	0.79	0	0	40	40	20	2.6	0.97
3. The way lecturers talk to students when they ask for help.	4.1	0.57	0	0	10	70	20	3.4	1.17
4. The support of parents, business, and the local community.	3.6	0.97	0	20	10	60	10	1.8	0.79
5. The availability of advisers from whom students can seek help.	4.2	0.42	0	0	0	80	20	1.7	1.06
6. The interest that student advisers take in the progress of their students.	4.1	0.57	0	0	10	70	20	1.5	0.85
7. The ability of advisers to help students develop their course plan.	4	0.47	0	0	10	80	10	1.6	0.97
8. The willingness of the university management to take the opinions of students.	4.3	0.48	0	0	0	70	30	2.1	1.2
9. The channels for reflecting students' ideas to the management.	4.3	0.95	0	10	0	40	50	2.2	0.63
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>0.66</b>						<b>2.24</b>	<b>0.97</b>
<b>C. Facilities</b>									

1. The availability of well-maintained buildings	4.5	0.53	0	0	0	50	50	1.8	0.63
2. The availability of good work rooms for staff in the university.	4.5	0.53	0	0	0	50	50	2	1.15
3. The availability of modern culinary equipment and utensils for kitchen.	4.4	0.52	0	0	0	60	40	1.8	0.63
4. The availability of flexible restaurant for alternative layouts and functions.	4.6	0.52	0	0	0	40	60	2	1.41
5. The availability of food and beverage facilities for education.	4.6	0.52	0	0	0	40	60	2.4	1.26
6. The availability of a demo for the front office.	4.3	0.48	0	0	0	70	30	1.5	0.53
7. The availability of a demo for the Housekeeping.	4.4	0.52	0	0	0	60	40	1.4	0.7
8. The availability of a demo for the Laundry.	4	0.67	0	0	20	60	20	1.3	0.48
9. The cleanliness of most facilities used by students.	4.8	0.42	0	0	0	20	80	2.4	0.97
10. The availability of sufficient laboratory supplies	4.9	0.32	0	0	0	10	90	2	1.25
11. The amount and availability of library facilities.	5	0	0	0	0	0	100	3.4	1.26
12. The places provided for educators to relax and lounge during the day.	4.5	0.53	0	0	0	50	50	1.7	0.95
13. The amount and availability of computing facilities.	4.6	0.52	0	0	0	40	60	2.4	1.35
14. The amount and availability of sports and recreational facilities.	4	0.82	0	0	30	40	30	1.2	0.42
15. The amount and availability of using the latest technology.	4.5	0.53	0	0	0	50	50	1.7	0.67
16. Student incident logs are kept	4	0.82	0	0	30	40	30	3.3	0.95
17. health and safety policies are regularly monitored	4.2	0.92	0	0	30	20	50	2.3	1.06
18. The learning environment is well-planned and organized.	4.3	0.82	0	0	20	30	50	2.2	0.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>0.56</b>						<b>2.04</b>	<b>0.89</b>
<b>D. Assessment</b>									
1. The appropriateness of the standard of modules offered.	4.3	0.48	0	0	0	70	30	3.3	0.95
2. The appropriateness of the assessment system.	4.4	0.52	0	0	0	60	40	3.1	1.29
3. The existence of formal systems for review and evaluation.	4.5	0.53	0	0	0	50	50	2.6	1.43
4. Detailed lecture notes are distributed.	4.2	0.63	0	0	10	60	30	2.1	1.2
5. The amount of work required in most modules.	4.5	0.53	0	0	0	50	50	2.8	0.79
6. The likelihood of getting distinction if the student work hard.	4.6	0.52	0	0	0	40	60	3.7	1.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.42</b>	<b>0.54</b>						<b>2.93</b>	<b>1.14</b>
<b>E. Social activities</b>									
1. The activities and clubs the student can join in the university.	3.8	0.63	0	0	30	60	10	1.8	0.42
2. The social events that are provided for students in the university.	4.3	0.67	0	0	10	50	40	3.1	1.29
3. The chance to explore important ideas from fellow students.	4	0.82	0	10	0	70	20	2.6	0.84
4. The campus events and activities that are provided for students.	3.9	0.74	0	0	30	50	20	2.7	1.25

<b>Total</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.72</b>						<b>2.55</b>	<b>0.95</b>
<b>F. people</b>									
1. Improving the organizational climate in terms of human relations, communication, involvement, recognition, teamwork, reward system, ongoing training and career opportunities.	4.5	0.53	0	0	0	50	50	2.6	0.97
2. Staff has a sense of pride in their work.	4.6	0.52	0	0	0	40	60	3.6	1.26
3. Staff has a sense of enjoyment in their work.	4.8	0.42	0	0	0	20	80	3.1	1.29
4. Communications are bottom-up not just top-down.	4.8	0.42	0	0	0	20	80	3.2	1.23
5. Good communications are seen as a major priority.	4.7	0.48	0	0	0	30	70	3.4	1.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.68</b>	<b>0.47</b>						<b>3.18</b>	<b>1.16</b>

Note: Judgment of importance was made on 5-point likert scale (1=very low, 5=very high); M.=mean; S. D=standard deviation.

### **The perception of the important skills required in hotel management graduates by hotel management educators**

This section corresponded with the overall perception, and respectively responding to the first question of the study which is: what are the important skills of hotel management graduates as perceived by human resource managers, graduates, educators, and students?). The mean scores were used to rank the important skills (Table 5)

Table 5 showed the results of the important Skills required in hotel management graduates as perceived by educators. This table indicated the importance of each skill category and sub-skills under each skill based on mean scores, percentage of level of importance, and the standard deviation.

Firstly, by examining all the skill categories in respect of importance: hospitality operation skills came first, personal skills came second, human resources skills came third, and conceptual skills came fourth because the total mean was (4.69), (4.62), (4.6), and (3.85) respectively.

Secondly, by examining the importance of each skill category separately, it was found the following: for the conceptual skills category, "total quality management" had a mean score of (4.90) which ranked the highest score, in addition, (90%) of respondents who rated it as of very high importance. For the hospitality operation skills category, "food and beverage" item was ranked first by the mean score as it has (4.90) for the human resource skills category, "communication", "teamwork" and "conflict management skills" had the same mean score. For the personal skills category, "Decision making skill", and "ability to work as a team member" had the same mean score of (4.90) and also the same percentage of respondents who rated it as of very high importance.

Clearly, the educators perceived that the "hospitality operation skills" category had the highest level of importance with a mean score of (4.69), then, people skills had a mean score of (4.62), human resource skills, had a mean score of (4.60), and lastly, the conceptual skills had a mean score of (3.85).

**Table (5) Skills required in hotel management graduates as perceived by educators.**

Skills	Importance level						
	M	S.D.	(%)				
			1	2	3	4	5
<b>A. conceptual skills</b>							
1. Organizational / Structure and Policies	4.2	0.79	0.0	0.0	20.0	40.0	40.0
2. Hospitality Law and Regulations	3.8	0.63	0.0	0.0	30.0	60.0	10.0
3. Principles of Marketing	4.2	1.23	0.0	20.0	0.0	20.0	60.0
4. Finance and Accounting	3.2	1.55	10.0	40.0	0.0	20.0	30.0
5. Economic	2.9	1.2	10.0	40.0	0.0	50.0	0.0
6. Statistics	3.2	0.92	0.0	30.0	20.0	50.0	0.0
7. Interrelationships	4.4	0.7	0.0	0.0	10.0	40.0	50.0
8. Total Quality Management	4.9	0.32	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	90.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>0.92</b>					
<b>B. Hospitality operation skills</b>							
1. Lodging Administration	4.8	0.42	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	80.0
2. Restaurant Operational Management	4.8	0.42	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	80.0
3. Food and Beverage Management	4.9	0.32	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	90.0
4. Hospitality Finance / Accounting	4.2	1.03	0.0	10.0	10.0	30.0	50.0
5. Marketing in Hospitality Industry	4.6	0.7	0.0	0.0	10.0	20.0	70.0
6. Front Office Operational management	4.7	0.48	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	70.0
7. House Keeping Operational management	4.8	0.42	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	80.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.69</b>	<b>0.54</b>					
<b>C. Human resource skills</b>							
1. Leadership	4.6	0.52	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	60.0
2. Communication	4.7	0.48	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	70.0
3. Teamwork	4.7	0.48	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	70.0
4. Negotiation	4.6	0.7	0.0	0.0	10.0	20.0	70.0
5. Harmonious Guest Relations	4.6	0.7	0.0	0.0	10.0	20.0	70.0
6. Conflict management skills	4.7	0.48	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	70.0
7. Handling Difficult People	4.5	0.71	0.0	0.0	10.0	30.0	60.0
8. Employee Relations	4.6	0.52	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	60.0
9. Public Relations	4.4	0.7	0.0	0.0	10.0	40.0	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>0.59</b>					
<b>D. Personal skills</b>							
1. Willing to Learn	4.8	0.42	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	80.0
2. Time Management Skill	4.5	0.71	0.0	0.0	10.0	30.0	60.0
3. Professional Appearance	4.7	0.48	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	70.0
4. Hands-on Experience	4.5	0.71	0.0	0.0	10.0	30.0	60.0
5. Computer Applications	4.2	0.63	0.0	0.0	10.0	60.0	30.0
6. Research Skills	3.9	0.99	0.0	10.0	20.0	40.0	30.0
7. Honesty / Integrity	4.8	0.42	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	80.0
8. Multilingual Skills	4.8	0.42	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	80.0
9. Creativity	4.5	0.85	0.0	0.0	20.0	10.0	70.0
10. Problem Solving Skill	4.8	0.42	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	80.0
11. Ability to Work without Supervision	4.6	0.7	0.0	0.0	10.0	20.0	70.0
12. Ability to Work as a Team Member	4.9	0.32	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	90.0
13. Decision Making Skill	4.9	0.32	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	90.0
14. Work Flexibility	4.8	0.42	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	80.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.62</b>	<b>0.56</b>					

Note: Judgment of importance was made on 5-point likert scale (1=very low, 5=very high); M.=mean; S.D=standard deviation.

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**Discussion of the results of the hotel management educators' questionnaire**

Regarding the important quality indicators as perceived by educators, the majority of educators perceived that the "people" factor of quality was the most important one in their educational institutions. This result was consistent with the literature as Varnavas and Soteriou (2002); Zhang, Lam and Bauer (2001) who elucidated those quality indicators for educators were: the need to communicate the mission of the institution to all the members of staff; the need to modify the vision; and the organizational climate in terms of communication, involvement, teamwork, and reward system. This could be because the good organizational climate can achieve job satisfaction, and also provide better atmosphere for a productive outcome of all educational processes. Also, communication should lie at the heart of any successful educational institution. Finally, it could be concluded that in order to retain qualified educators, the organizational structure should be improved in terms of incentives, opportunities for staff development, and competitive salaries.

Moreover, educators thought that the "facilities" factor was the second important factor of quality in their educational institution. In fact, this result seemed to be in line with the literature review as Benito & Verge (2020) who confirmed that facilities are one of the elements for the source of quality in higher education. It might be because the facilities factor is the corner stone of any educational institution and the learning process cannot do without resources provided to students through libraries, laboratories, etc. For example, libraries could link educators with the latest references, periodicals, and conferences. Therefore, the library facility could be considered one of the important drivers towards the overall quality of the higher educational institutions. Educators also perceived the "assessment" and "course content" factors of great importance in their educational institutions. The literature review reinforced this result as Attabi (2005) said that one of the most important quality indicators was the curriculum content.

A notable outcome was found which is that educators perceived that the top-three important quality indicators in their educational institutions to be the amount and availability of library facilities, the availability of sufficient laboratory supplies, the cleanliness of most facilities used by students. These results were consistent with the literature review of Al-Bashir (2016) and Refaat (2005) asserted that facilities as library and laboratories were very important for quality in the educational institutions. It might be because the facilities factor is the corner stone of any educational institution and the learning process cannot do without sources provided to students through libraries, laboratories, etc. For example, libraries could link educators with the latest references, periodicals, and conferences. Therefore, the library facility could be considered one of the important drivers towards the overall quality of the higher educational institutions.

However, educators perceived that the "people" factor had a moderate level of occurrence. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the organizational climate in terms of competitive salaries, incentives, better lounge conditions and more opportunities for staff development. This might be because good organizational climate can achieve job satisfaction and provide a better atmosphere for a productive outcome of all the educational processes .

It is worth mentioning that educators perceived that there was a big difference between the importance and occurrence level in five quality indicators which were course content (A), concern for student (B), facilities (C), assessment (D), and social activities (E).

Based on the above, the following five factors of quality indicators were identified as the general dimensions that must be improved in the educators' educational institutions to increase the educational process level: (1) course content (A), (2) concern for students (B), (3) facilities (C), (4) assessment (D), and (5) social activities (E). In other words, these previous factors had a great importance but also had a low occurrence level; therefore, these factors must be improved.

The above results can partly answer the third question of the study which is: What are the quality indicators in higher hotel education institutions as perceived by the hotel management educators, and students?

Regarding the important skills required in graduates as perceived by educators, the majority of educators thought that "hospitality operation skills" were the most important for students to work in the hospitality industry and these skills should be learned in the curriculum and by the continuous training. The literature review reinforced these results as Clark (1995); and Bach and Benito & Verge (2020) asserted that the responsibility of hospitality education is to provide skilled graduates to hospitality industry and to provide students with the hospitality operation skills so as to apply them in the real world. It could be concluded that educators emphasize on the specialized hospitality materials instead of working experience.

One of the findings of this study supported the literature review that educators perceived which is communication, team work, decision making skills as very important for graduates. (Benito & Verge ,2020, Heinman, 1995; Breiter and Clements, 1998).

### *Discussion of the study Questions*

#### **Study question one: what are the important skills required in hotel management graduates as perceived by human resource managers, educators and graduates ?**

A summary of the study results concerning the important skills was illustrated in table 7

Firstly, the top ten important skills required in graduates as perceived by managers were willingness to learn, honesty/integrity, professional appearance, multilingual skills, lodging administration, restaurant operational management, food and beverage management, front office operational management, housekeeping operational management, and conflict management skill.

It was noticed that the "willingness to learn" skill was essential for the work place regardless of the field study because when the graduates had the ability and willing to learn could easily acquire the other skills to successfully work in the field. In addition, honesty, professional appearance, and multilingual skills were important for the direct interaction with guests to ultimately achieve guest satisfaction .

Moreover, hospitality operation skills were important also because those skills could provide qualified or specialized graduates for working in the different departments in hospitality industry.

**Table (7): Summary of the important skills required in hotel management graduates.**

<b>Human resource managers</b>	<b>Educators</b>	<b>Graduates</b>
1- Willingness to learn.	1- Total quality management	1- Communication
2- Honesty/ integrity	2- Food and beverage management	2- Teamwork
3- Professional appearance	3- Ability to work as a team member	3- Harmonious guest relations
4- Multilingual skills	4- Decision making skill	4- Conflict management skill
5- Lodging administration	5- Lodging administration	5- Handling difficult people
6- Restaurant operational management	6- Restaurant operational management	6- Honesty /integrity
7- Food and beverage management	7- Housekeeping operational management	7- Total quality management
8- Housekeeping operational management	8- Willingness to learn.	8- Lodging administration
9- Front office operational management	9- Honesty/ integrity	9- Restaurant operational management
10- Conflict management skill	10- Multilingual skills	10- Food and beverage management

Secondly, the total top ten important skills required in graduates as perceived by graduates were communication, teamwork, harmonious guest relations, conflict management skill, handling difficult people, honesty /integrity, total quality management, lodging administration, restaurant operational management, and food and beverage management.

It could be noticed that communication is considered being important for working in the work place because hospitality industry is a service one so, communication either with guests or colleagues was very important to provide quality service. Also, teamwork, harmonious guest relations, conflict management skill, handling difficult people, and honesty/integrity could be major criteria for working in the industry. Moreover, lodging administration, restaurant operation management, and food and beverage were important because those skills related to important departments in the industry.

Lastly, regarding the important skills required in graduates as perceived by educators and students, it was noticed that total quality management was ranked the first important skill from the perception of both educators and students. This skill was important to ultimately attain to the quality service and satisfy the guests. It was concluded that educators and students emphasized on the specialized theoretical materials in curriculum such as food and beverage management, lodging administration, restaurant operational management, housekeeping operational management. This could be due to the nature of the education system in their educational institutions .

Finally, it could be concluded that the difference between educators and students' perceptions might be because students were not able to define accurately those important skills for the reason of lacking an adequate experience.

**Study question two: what are the important quality indicators in hotel higher educational institutions as perceived by the hotel management educators ?**

It could be noticed that there was a clear difference between the four groups in the perception of the conceptual skills' importance level. Managers only perceived that those skills were not important for working in the hotel industry. The possible explanation could be that human resource managers were not learned those skills and also, they were not departmental managers (such as food and beverage, front office, etc...). Moreover, human resource managers emphasized on the practical and functional skills rather than theoretical ones.

In addition, there was a consensus among the four groups on the importance of hospitality operation skills, human resource skills, and personal skills. The possible explanation could be that those skills enabled individuals to work effectively with people and deliver quality service.

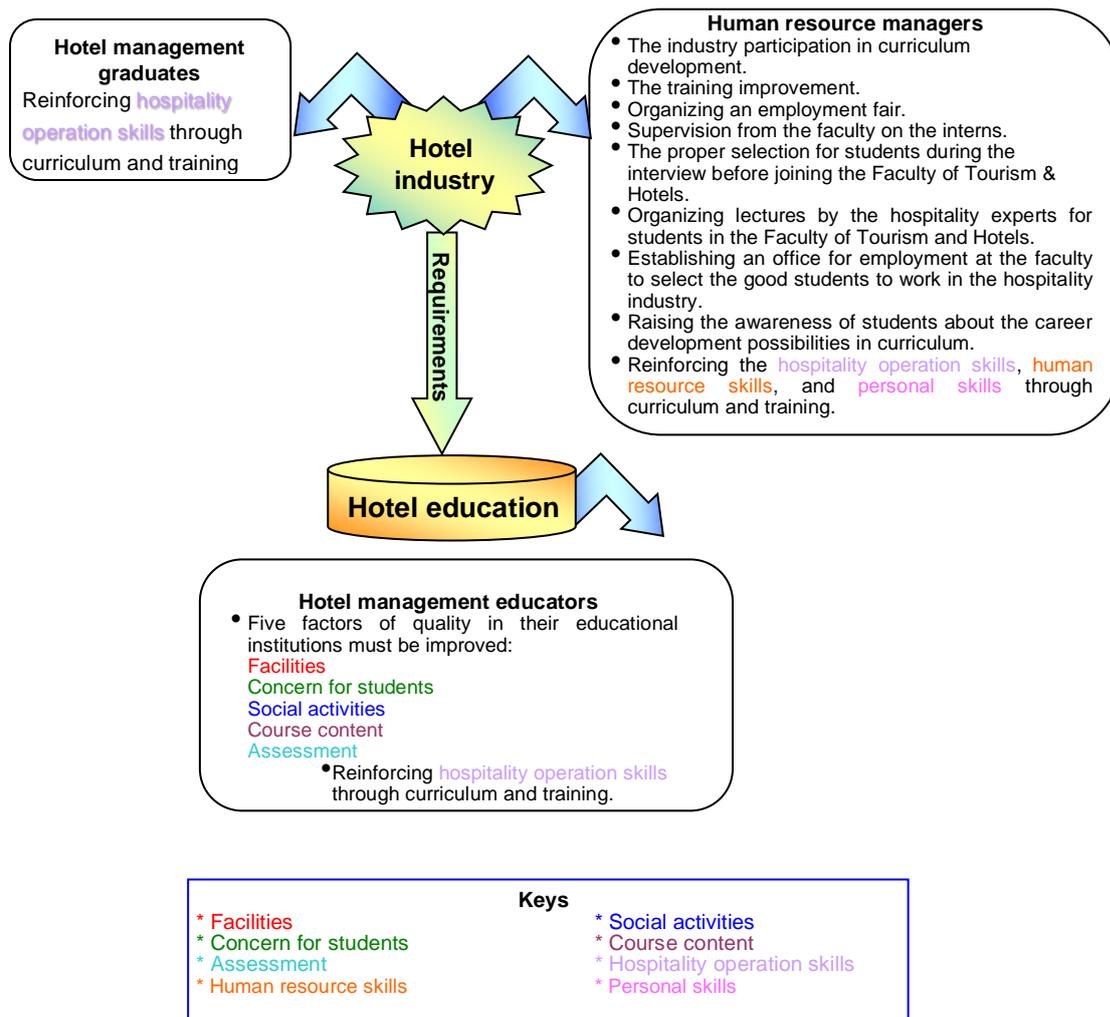
**Study question three: what is the suggested model that can reflect the requirements of the hotel managers (human resource), educators and graduates of hotel management department to the hotel higher education in Egypt ?**

Figure (1) indicated the answer of the fourth question of the study.

As shown in table 2.29, both the educators and students believed that the amount and availability of library facilities, the amount and availability of sufficient laboratories supplies were the most two factors of quality in their educational institutions. The possible explanation could be that the library could provide the updates sources as books, references, articles, researches and conferences for them as well as laboratory supplies for computer or languages could be considered important for improving the computer and multilingual skills.

Moreover, the availability of flexible restaurants layout, food and beverage facilities for education, latest technology, computing facilities were very important as perceived by both educators and students. The explanation could be that those factors of quality were the corner stone of any educational institutions and for helping students to acquire the basic skills.

Finally, educators and students perceived that "the likelihood of getting a distinction if you work hard" as very important. The possible explanation could be that when the student was distinguished, he would be encouraged to do better.



Source: The field study and the literature review.

**Fig. (1) A suggested comprehensive model for the higher hotel management education customers' requirements.**

The above model was established to link hotel education with hotel industry depending on the previous results of the questionnaires.

On the one hand, hotel industry that is represented by graduates and managers who had requirements from hotel education; graduates believed that hospitality operation skills were the most important ones, hence those skills should be reinforced in the curriculum and also to be improved through the continuous training which could help students to working in the hotel industry with less anxiety and increase their general skills. Furthermore, managers confirmed that hospitality operation skills, human resource skills, and personal skills were very important for future success in hotel industry. Meanwhile, they added that those skills had a low obtained level in graduates .

Consequently, those skills should be improved either by reinforcement in the curriculum or the continuous training. Since hospitality education was blamed for not providing qualified graduates for the industry, hotel education should enhance the students' practical skills .

Managers denoted some suggestions for cooperation between the hotel industry and hotel education. Those suggestions were: First, improving the training either in summer or during the

study. Second the industry should participate in curriculum development to bridge the gap between the classroom and working environment. Third, organize an employment fair in which job opportunities could be offered to students or graduates. Fourth, supervise of the faculty on the interns to attain to the effective training. Fifth, the proper selection for candidates in the interview before joining the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels. Sixth, organize lectures by the hospitality executives for students in their faculty. Seventh, establish an office for employment at the faculty to select the good and qualified students according to their qualifications for working in the hotel industry; and raising the awareness of students in curriculum about the career development possibilities.

On the other hand, educators had another kind of requirements. Both of them perceived that the following five factors of quality should be improved in their educational institutions: facilities, concern for students, course content, social activities, and assessment. It could be viewed that there was a consensus on the quality indicators that should be improved.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the review of literature, the analysis of the study results and taking the conclusion as guidelines, the following recommendations could be suggested:

#### ***Recommendations for Hotel higher education***

1. Hotel Management education needs to improve the training programs as the lack of training is one of the negative aspects. Managing the training process should be part of the mindset. Therefore, curriculum should emphasize internship.
2. Hotel Management education needs to qualify the students with the educational experience, social experiences and knowledge especially there is a belief among graduates that education does not qualify them enough to face real life.
3. Hotel Management education needs to make executives of the hospitality industry participate in curriculum development and interview the candidates for joining the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels.
4. Hotel Management education needs to make students aware of the realistic career development as graduates expect to get a promotion from operative to managerial levels within two or three years in the hotel industry; therefore, graduates encounter reality shock when they join in industry after graduation.
5. Curriculum needs to include Statistics and Economic as obligatory courses.
6. Curriculum needs to include some elective courses such as Communication, Negotiation, and Total Quality Management.
7. Hotel Management education needs to develop a model that aims at establishing a linkage between hotel education and hotel industry. In other words, hotel educators and industry executives must operate contemporaneously to ensure that graduates possess the skills necessary to perform their perspective jobs upon graduation.
8. Hotel Management education needs to improve the hospitality management skills, human resource skills, and personal skills in the students either in curriculum or through training.

9. Hotel Management education needs to establish an employment fair or an office for employment at the faculty to be a chance for providing the hotel industry with the qualified graduates.
10. Hotel Management education needs to improve some quality indicators as the “facilities” which comprises the library, laboratories, demos for housekeeping, food and beverages, and front office. Also, other quality indicators such as concern for student, course content, and assessment need to be improved.
11. Hotel Management education needs to improve the organizational climate for educators in terms of involvement, team work, communications, and reward system as educators need to feel that they are in good hands and have the feeling of assurance since they work for the hotel educational institutions and in order to attract good quality educators to join the education field.
12. The Faculties of Tourism and Hotels in Egypt need to take into consideration the application of TQM principles such as (customer focus & satisfaction) to solve their problems and to improve the graduates' competencies.

#### ***Recommendations for hotel industry***

1. Hotel industry needs to give Hotel Management students opportunities to acquire the hotel management skills required in the working place for the industry and the individual careers of the students.
2. Hotel industry, particularly the executives needs to help interns apply their academic knowledge and skills to the hotel industry.
3. Hotel industry needs to cooperate with the educators to supervise interns during the internship period by giving the educators the right/real evaluation about the interns' performance.
4. Hotel industry needs to cooperate with the Faculties of Tourism and Hotels by organizing field visits, lectures, etc. at the hotels.

#### ***Recommendations for further research***

1. The literature review of this study was based on Hotel Management education. The researcher encourages a similar study to be conducted based on tourism education.
2. This study excluded the administrative staff (internal customers) for the reason of the resource limitations (time and effort). The researcher encourages a similar study to be conducted to identify their requirements in the educational institutions.
3. In this particular study, the researcher did not focus on the department managers in five-star hotels. As a result, a similar study can be conducted with a focus on a functional area such as F&B manager, rooms' division manager, etc..

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