



## Tourism Graduates-Are They Employable?

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study intends to assess the employability skills of tourism graduates and investigate the perspectives of tourism employers regarding the most significant skills required for employment in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. **Design/Methodology/Approach:** For this objective, a quantitative research strategy was utilized for this study. A questionnaire was issued to respondents to collect data from them. Measurements for the variables were derived following a comprehensive literature review. The questionnaire was constructed with a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was delivered to Saudi Arabian and Egyptian respondents. The collected data was evaluated using SPSS.

**Findings:** The results indicate that in Saudi Arabia, professional ethics, morals, community ethics, and responsible behaviour toward the environment are crucial abilities. In contrast, work ethic, devotion and attentiveness are essential characteristics in Egypt. **Implications:** The study's conclusions are valuable for academics, professionals, policymakers, and graduates of the tourism sector.

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## Introduction

The education level of a country has a significant impact on its development. The primary purpose of the education sector of a nation is to cultivate brilliant and skilled workers who can contribute to the nation's development. In this context, the value of higher education has increased significantly. Universities provide the majority of the nation's higher education. Universities produce graduates who are regarded as the nation's most intelligent citizens. National policies are concerned with expanding higher education because of the abovementioned factors (Kromydas, 2017).

Moreover, skilled individuals can play a significant role in capturing global market share. Universities serve as abundant sources of human capital essential to the nation's development. Consequently, one of the objectives of education is employability, as it plays a crucial part in the growth of a nation (Ali & Jalal, 2018).

Numerous distinct studies have defined employable within the context of their research. Employability is how employers and institutions have supported their students' workforce-relevant identity, disposition, traits, abilities, and knowledge. In a worldwide context, the employment rate has reached an alarming level. In contrast to what experts have reported, there is a discrepancy between employed graduates and grads (Gill, 2018). One of the reported causes of this issue is a mismatch between the desired and existing skills of the personnel.

Employability has implications for both society and individuals. Thus, Römngens, Scoupe, and Beusaert (2020) assert that academics' interest in employability has increased in recent decades. According to researchers, this concept is not novel, and numerous studies have been undertaken to determine its drivers. Several recommendations are made by stakeholders, companies, universities, and governments to boost the employment rate of graduates of higher education institutions. Notwithstanding this research, university students' employability is the primary concern (Sumanasiri, Yajid, & Khatibi, 2015).

That has resulted in employment becoming one of the world's most pressing challenges. In an increasing number of nations, this problem is intensifying. The lack of work among graduates of universities and other higher education institutions is one of the leading causes of unemployment. The quality of education, policies, university curricula, university access, and other variables that make students competent are not included in university curricula (Hwang, 2017). Thus, such a student cannot find employment on the market.

Moreover, the tourist sector is a major contributor to the GDP in most countries. Thus, no one can disregard the significance of this industry. This industry is also a significant contributor to employment. This contribution is direct and indirect, as the tourism industry stimulates the nation's consumption pattern (Rasool, Maqbool, & Tarique, 2021). There is a direct correlation between the country's employment rate and the tourism industry (Južnik Rotar, Gričar, & Bojnec, 2022). Consequently, this study aims to investigate the elements and competencies that tourism students in Egypt and Saudi Arabia deem crucial.

## Literature Review

### *Employability*

Some previous studies have defined employability in their research. They have also concentrated on the most important aspects of employability. Scholars have identified human capital, personal adaptability, and career identity as employability's three most important components. Eventually, researchers also identified self-assurance, self-perception, and practical training as essential employment variables. Employability is primarily concerned with a person's ability to obtain and maintain employment (Römgens et al., 2020). In other words, employability is the human capacity to achieve self-sufficiency within the labor market so that the individual's potential can foster sustained development (Gill, 2018).

Tsai (2017) reports that earlier research has uncovered a variety of crucial components of employability. These components include employee assets, personal conditions, presentation, and deployment. Personal conditions include the labor market and familial obligations. According to researchers, graduate employability is "a collection of accomplishments, understandings, and personal characteristics that make individuals more likely to acquire work and succeed in their chosen careers" (Misra & Khurana, 2017). In addition, they suggested a close relationship between good learning and employment.

### *Graduate*

Previous studies A graduate is described by Hardre and Hackett (2015) as "a person who has completed a course of study or training, particularly one who has been awarded an undergraduate or first academic degree." There have been many definitions and discussions of employability in academic research. Scholars have described employability as an essential educational objective. In this regard, graduate skill development is essential for gaining employability. This demonstrates the value of employability for students and researchers. In their studies, scientists noted that the most important part of employability is increasing the potential to obtain employment. Participation in learning at a high level is essential for students to achieve employability (Alam, Ogawa, & Islam, 2022). It is essential to create and gain employment.

Previous studies employ several terminologies on the elements that influence students' employment. The term for one of these criteria is employability skills. The term employability skills have received much attention during the past few decades. A variety of crucial abilities for gaining employment have been highlighted in the literature. These talents include vital, key, core, non-technical, and transferable skills. These abilities are essential for both experienced and entry-level personnel. This skill set applies to nearly all areas and industries (Fajaryati & Akhyar, 2020).

### *Generic or General Skills*

They are regarded as fundamental skills, including communication, mathematics, writing, and reading. These skills also include the capacity to interact rapidly with individuals who speak different languages. Other researchers have also identified management, PowerPoint, Excel, and graphic interpretation as essential general abilities. Studies have observed that these skills are necessary for entry-level employment. The research revealed that corporations require and value writing in various languages (Saleh & Lamsali, 2020).

### ***Disciplinary Skills***

Researchers believe they choose the classrooms to develop the students' talents. The primary objective was to predict student approaches and correct them as appropriate. The response of pupils determines the possibility of their future employment. Recent literature has recognized and discussed its active ability (Shekhar et al., 2015). The classroom experience influences the views and values of the students. In previous studies, students described five classroom experiences. These experiences include collaborative work, problem-solving techniques, appreciation, practical applications, and scientific writing. Researchers have found a positive correlation between these skills and the employability of pupils (Marbach-Ad, Hunt, & Thompson, 2019).

### ***Career Planning Skills***

The capacity to organize one's career is a crucial talent for gaining marketability. It assists students in pursuing a profession based on their objectives, interests, and skills. Employability is the capacity of a person to obtain employment. Various career planning abilities exist (Quinlan & Renninger, 2022). Self-awareness refers to individuals' capacity to identify their self-interests, limitations, strengths, and talents. In addition to the capacity to define and achieve career goals, goal-setting is a vital career planning skill. The third essential ability for career planning is networking, which facilitates the acquisition of employment possibilities based on professional relationships (Quinlan & Renninger, 2022). Similarly, research has cited adaptability and learning & development as essential career planning skills (Akkermans et al., 2018).

### ***Problem-solving skills***

The business or individual faces an issue on multiple occasions. It represents the disparity between the desired situation and the actual situation. The technique for resolving an issue includes categorizing the desired condition and the actual situation and then taking significant action to capitalize on market opportunities. In contrast, decision-making is the selection process through which alternative solutions are chosen to meet desired goals. Decision-making is selecting the best option from various possibilities (Maegala et al., 2021). Almost identical stages are engaged in both decision-making and problem-solving. Less research has interchanged these names. Decision-making and problem-solving are the most crucial talents for business and employee success. Several of today's grads must possess these talents to make significant and productive decisions. A variety of abilities are required for effective decision-making (Odacı, Çıkrıkçı, & İrem Değerli, 2022).

### ***Communication skills***

Communication is a procedure involving numerous persons in which one person delivers a message to another individual or individuals. The process of communication frequently occurs in the workplace. This communication occurs among coworkers, managers, and employees to discuss and manage tasks. Communication is one of the most important abilities for gaining employment. It also boosts the graduates' prospects of success in the workplace. A candidate with superior communication abilities will be more likely to be chosen. Several studies

have found that organizations and employees benefit from communication skills. The success of an organization is largely influenced by the communication abilities of its employees and market decision-makers (Suartha et al., 2017).

Some researchers have discovered a correlation between abilities and employment. According to Ayoubi, Alzarif, and Khalifa (2017), there is a gap between employees' knowledge and abilities and employers' needs. In contrast, Osmani et al. (2019) discovered that most recent college graduates are unprepared for employment. In contrast, according to Tsai (2017), employability among vocational institutes is higher in the tourist business. Similarly, Coetzee (2014). Graduates must possess specific competencies to obtain employment in the higher education sector.

Based on the literature mentioned above, it is anticipated that graduates' skills are essential for gaining employability in the tourism industry.

### Research Methodology:

#### *The scale and the study construct*

A quantitative research methodology distributed a closed-ended questionnaire to Saudi Arabian and Egyptian tourist employers. The scale used in this study to evaluate the major talents was derived from numerous exhaustive literature reviews. Tsai's GS (5 subskills), DS (7 subskills), PA (5 subskills), and CPS (4 subskills) have been implemented (2017). From Coetzee, we inherited enterprising skills-ES (9 sub-skills) and ethical and responsible behaviour-ERB (5 sub-skills) (2014). The PSS (5 subskills) was derived from Fajaryati and Akhyar (2021). Aulbur, Arvind, and Bigghe (2016) contributed technology utilization skills-TUS (5 subskills), and Wakelin-Theron, Ukpere, and Spowart contributed professional skills-PS (11 subskills) and personality traits and communication-PTS (10 subskills) (2019).

#### *Sample Size*

Given the lack of official data and statistics on the actual number of tourism employers in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and according to Veal (2006), the sample size for any study with an infinite population would be based on an assumed population of 20,000 individuals, the target population of this study is tourism employers in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, specifically tour operators, travel agencies, and airlines. Stephen Sampson's formula presented below was utilized to determine the sample size for this investigation. Therefore the sample size for the study is 372 replies.

$$n = \frac{Nxp(1-p)}{[(N-1)x(d^2 \div z^2)] + p(1-p)}$$

Where "n" is for sample size, "N" is for the population size, "z" represents the level of confidence (95%), and "p" is for the probability distribution.

#### *Data collection and analysis*

For this study (Ibeh, Brock, & Zhou, 2004), 450 questionnaires were provided to tourist employers in Saudi Arabia, and 510 questionnaires were distributed to tourism employers in Egypt. The response percentage for surveys in Saudi Arabia is 97.3 percent, while the response rate for questionnaires in Egypt is 96.5 percent. The

questionnaire consists of two major sections. The first was devoted to evaluating the graduates' knowledge of ten core competencies and 66 subskills derived from them. The second section was devoted to defining the essential talents for employment in the tourism labor market, as regarded by Saudi Arabia and Egypt tourism employers. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of skills tourism graduates should possess on a five-point Likert scale, where "1" indicates very low importance and "5" indicates very high importance. SPSS vs25 and Excel Sheet 2016 were used to analyze data and estimate descriptive analysis, a one-sample T-test was used to determine the statistical significance of each skill, and Cronbach's alpha scores were used to evaluate scale reliability.

## Results

### *Instrument Reliability and Validity*

To ensure the internal consistency of all indicators of the examined skills and the instrument's reliability, it was tested using Cronbach's coefficient alpha.

**Table 1**

#### *Instrument Reliability and Validity*

Major Skills	Cronbach Alpha	Validity
Generic Skills "GS"	0.782	0.888
Disciplinary Skills "DS"	0.776	0.842
Professional Attitude "PA"	0.882	0.922
Career Planning Skills "CPS"	0.882	0.922
Enterprising skills "ES."	0.778	0.812
Ethical and responsible behaviour "ERB."	0.782	0.842
Problem-Solving Skills "PSS"	0.792	0.784
Technology utilization skills "TUS."	0.888	0.941
Professional skills "PS."	0.884	0.932
Communication and Personality Traits "CPT"	0.762	0.822
Total for Instrument	0.820	0.874

Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all key skills indicators ranges from 0.762 to 0.8898, which are extremely good and satisfactory results, as they exceed the cutoff (0.6), confirming each indicator's reliability and internal consistency (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In the meantime, the instrument's validity coefficient is 0.874, confirming its validity and measuring utility.

### *Evaluation of tourism graduates' competence*

To examine the efficacy of tourism graduates and the extent to which they possess the employment skills required by the labor market, as perceived by tourism employers in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The data contained in the responses to the second part of the questionnaire, which was designed to assess the competency of tourism graduates, as well as their mastery of 10 main employment skills and 66 subskills, were analyzed from the perspective of tourism employers in both countries, based on their direct interaction with tourism graduates after graduation. Figures 1 and 2.

**Table 2***Evaluation of tourism graduates' competence and mastery of employability skills as perceived by tourism employers in Saudi Arabia*

Elements "Statements"	Min.	Max	Mean	Std. deviation	Competence	Ranking
Generic Skills "GS"						
GS1. Communication	2	4	3.44	0.942	Moderate	16
GS2. Ability to work in a team	3	5	4.22	0.398	High	9
GS3. Foreign Languages Knowledge & Skills	1	3	2.55	0.888	V. Low	19
GS4. Tourism Training Certification	2	5	3.46	0.868	Moderate	15
GS5. Physical Stamina	2	5	3.56	0.822	Moderate	14
Skill's Weighted Mean		3.446			Moderate	
Disciplinary Skills "DS"						
DS1. Air Ticket Booking Skill	1	4	3.35	0.982	Low	17
DS2. Tour Planning Skill	1	4	3.35	0.982	Low	17
DS3. TourCost Analysis Skill	1	4	3.35	0.982	Low	17
DS4. Marketing Tourism Products Skill	1	3	2.24	0.828	V. Low	22
DS5. Team Leadership Skill	1	5	4.28	0.684	High	7
DS6. E-commerce Skill	1	2	1.462	0.982	V. Low	25
DS7. Crisis Management Skill	1	3	2.266	0.986	V. Low	21
Skill's Weighted Mean		2.9			Low	
Professional Attitude "PA"						
PA1. Professional Ethics and Morals	3	5	4.66	0.664	High	1
PA2. Devotion to Work	3	5	3.86	0.922	Moderate	10
PA3. Self-Reflexivity	1	3	2.55	0.988	V. Low	19
PA4. Toughness and quickly recover from difficulties.	1	3	2.82	0.688	Low	18
PA5. Learning Initiative	3	5	3.56	0.922	Moderate	14
Skill's Weighted Mean		3.49			Moderate	
Career Planning Skills "CPS"						
CPS1. A life-long learning skill	1	5	3.44	0.896	Moderate	16
CPS2. Self-promoting and marketing skills	2	4	3.66	0.964	Moderate	12

Elements "Statements"	Min.	Max	Mean	Std. deviation	Competence	Ranking
CPS 3. Comprehension of professional orientation	2	4	3.46	0.968	Moderate	15
CPS4. A global perspective	2	4	3.44	0.896	Moderate	16
Skill's Weighted Mean		3.5			Moderate	
Enterprising Skills "ES"						
ES1. Logical thinking when dealing with problems	2	4	2.82	0.848	Low	18
ES2. Provide solutions based on specialization and general knowledge.	2	4	3.44	0.964	Moderate	16
ES3. Ability to deal with organizational policies.	2	4	3.66	0.964	Moderate	12
ES4. Good awareness of market trends and competitors.	3	5	3.86	0.922	Moderate	10
ES5. The ability to identify business opportunities.	1	3	2.364	0.968	V. Low	20
ES6. Knowledge of the feasibility and impacts of proposed solutions.	2	4	3.44	0.964	Moderate	16
ES7. Cost management and budgeting	3	5	4.24	0.598	High	8
ES8. Good financial awareness	3	5	4.24	0.598	High	8
ES9. Has a special style of doing work.	2	4	2.82	0.848	Low	18
Skill's Weighted Mean		3.43			Moderate	
Ethical and Responsible Behaviour "ERB"						
ERB1. Commitment to professional ethics and values.	3	5	4.66	0.664	High	1
ERB2. Commitment to community ethics.	3	5	4.66	0.664	High	1
ERB3. Taking responsibility for decisions and actions.	3	5	4.48	0.648	High	4
ERB4. Encouraging responsible behavior towards the environment and community.	3	5	4.54	0.464	High	3
ERB5. The ability to guide, motivate and empower others.	3	5	4.44	0.448	High	5
Skill's Weighted Mean		4.56			High	
Problem-Solving Skills "PSS"						
PSS 1. The ability to identify problems	2	5	3.74	0.986	Moderate	11
PSS 2. The ability to identify and analyze the causes of the problem	1	4	3.66	0.828	Moderate	12
PSS 3. The ability to provide alternative solutions to problems	2	5	3.56	1.212	Moderate	14
PSS 4. The ability to choose the optimal solution to the problem	1	4	3.66	0.828	Moderate	12
PSS 5. The skill of implementing the proposed solutions with the highest efficiency	2	5	3.74	0.986	Moderate	11
Skill's Weighted Mean		3.67			Moderate	
Technology Utilization Skills "TUS"						
TUS 1. Knowledge of IT basics	1	3	2.24	0.982	V. Low	22
TUS 2. Skills in using computers and smart machines	1	3	2.364	0.968	V. Low	20
TUS 3. The ability to use technology in communication	1	3	2.142	0.866	V. Low	24

Elements "Statements"	Min.	Max	Mean	Std. deviation	Competence	Ranking
TUS 4. Knowledge of data protection basics	1	2	1.462	1.122	V. Low	25
TUS 5. Effective use of technology in the tourism business	1	2	1.462	0.982	V. Low	25
Skill's Weighted Mean		1.93			Very Low	
Professional Skills "PS"						
PS 1. Critical thinking	1	2	1.462	0.982	V. Low	25
PS 2. Ability to work under pressure	2	4	3.58	0.948	Moderate	13
PS 3. Ability to handle multiple tasks	1	3	2.266	0.986	V. Low	21
PS 4. Negotiation and persuasion skills	1	3	2.162	1.122	V. Low	23
PS 5. Arithmetic skills and dealing with numbers	1	2	1.462	0.982	V. Low	25
PS 6. The ability to manage relationships at work	1	4	3.66	0.968	Moderate	12
PS 7. Professionally written communication skill	1	2	1.462	0.982	V. Low	25
PS 8. The ability to deal with and serve customers	2	4	3.58	0.948	Moderate	13
PS 9. Pay attention to the outward appearance	4	5	4.66	0.664	High	1
PS 10. Good time management	1	3	2.266	0.986	V. Low	21
PS 11. Professional/training experiences in the field of tourism	1	3	2.162	1.122	V. Low	23
Skill's Weighted Mean		2.6			Low	
Communication and Personality Traits "CPT"						
CPT1. Honest and moral uprightness	4	5	4.66	0.464	High	1
CPT 2. Flexibility and adaptability	3	5	4.22	0.433	High	9
CPT 3. Tact and diplomacy	3	5	4.44	0.433	High	5
CPT 4. Sense of humorous	3	5	4.22	0.433	High	9
CPT5. Take responsibility	1	5	3.74	0.986	Moderate	11
CPT6. Presentation skills	2	5	3.74	0.986	Moderate	11
CPT7. Motivation towards work	4	5	4.62	0.492	High	2
CPT 8. Research and development skills	3	5	4.35	0.433	High	6
CPT9. Effective networking	3	5	4.54	0.444	High	3
CPT10. Entrepreneurial thinking and skills	3	5	4.44	0.433	High	5
Skill's Weighted Mean		4.3			High	

(\*) Likert Scale (1 to 5), "1" = Very Low Competence, up to "5" = Very High Competence.

Table 2 displays the findings of an analysis of the assessment responses of Saudi Arabian tourism employers regarding the effectiveness of tourism graduates and their mastery of necessary work skills. The ethical and responsible behaviour skill "ERB" received the highest evaluation among the ten major skills on which the evaluation was based, achieving a general evaluation of "High Competence" with a mean score of 4.56. This result may be attributed to Saudi Arabia's interest in developing society and the environment in recent years, directly related to Vision 2030 projects and the Saudi Green Initiative. In second place were the "CPT" communication skills and personality qualities, which similarly received an overall rating of "High Competence" but a mean score of 4.3.

On the other hand, the technology usage skills "TUS" recorded the lowest evaluation among the ten major skills that were used to evaluate the efficiency of tourism graduates as judged by tourism employers in Saudi Arabia, with a mean rating of "Very Poor Competence" In addition, the evaluation of professional skills "PS" and disciplinary skills "DS" was subpar, as both received an overall rating of "Poor Competence" with mean scores of 2.60 and 2.90, respectively. This outcome may be attributable to the lack of cognitive and skill-based coverage of information technology fundamentals and their applications in courses taught at the undergraduate level and as the remaining eleven major skills received a general evaluation score of "Moderate Competence," indicating that graduates' proficiency in these areas must be improved.

For a more in-depth evaluation, 66 sub-skills stemming from the ten major skills were evaluated; the overall evaluation revealed that 18 sub-skills were rated "High Competence," 23 skills were rated "Medium Competence," 6 skills were rated "Low Competence," and 18 skills were rated "Very Low Competence." The results presented in table 2 indicate that the highest evaluation of the efficiency and mastery of employment skills among tourism graduates in Saudi Arabia was in favor of the Professional ethics and morals "PA1", commitment to professional ethics and values "ERB1", commitment to community ethics "ERB2", pay attention to the outward appearance "PS 9", and Honest and moral uprightness "CPT1", which ranked first with an overall rating of "High Competence" and a mean o.i.d. of .92. This outcome may be attributable to the character of Saudi culture, which retains conventions, traditions, and societal ethics, as well as the teaching of courses at the undergraduate level that have direct and indirect ties to professional ethics.

While "e-commerce Skill-DS6", "Knowledge of data protection fundamentals-TUS4", "Effective use of technology in the tourism business-TUS5", "Critical thinking-PS1", "Arithmetic skills and dealing with numbers-PS5", and "Professionally written communication skill-PS7" recorded the lowest level of evaluation of the competence of tourism graduates from the perspective of tourism employers in Saudi Arabia, as they ranked twenty-fifth "the last" among all

This low level of graduates' competence in the effective use of technology in tourism and e-commerce applications may be primarily attributable to the nature of the courses taught at the undergraduate level, which do not emphasize these skills, either as a component of some courses or as specific courses for information technology and its applications in tourism.

**Table 3**

*Evaluation of tourism graduates' competence and mastery of employability skills as perceived by tourism employers in Egypt*

Elements "Statements"	Min.	Max	Mean	Std. deviation	Competence	Ranking
Generic Skills "GS"						
GS1.	1	5	4.24	0.968	High	6
GS2.	1	5	4.24	0.968	High	6
GS3.	1	3	2.84	1.128	Low	23
GS4.	2	5	3.46	0.888	Moderate	18
GS5.	3	5	4.46	0.886	High	3
Skill's Weighted Mean	3.85				Moderate	
Disciplinary Skills "DS"						
DS1.	1	4	3.35	0.985	Low	21
DS2.	1	5	4.24	0.886	High	6
DS3.	1	4	3.82	0.988	Moderate	10
DS4.	1	4	3.82	0.988	Moderate	10
DS5.	1	5	4.44	0.888	High	4
DS6.	1	3	2.55	1.189	V. Low	27
DS7.	1	3	2.55	1.189	V. Low	27
Skill's Weighted Mean	3.54				Moderate	
Professional Attitude "PA"						
PA1.	2	4	3.4	0.868	Moderate	20
PA2.	3	5	4.26	0.862	High	5
PA3.	1	4	3.4	0.988	Moderate	20
PA4.	1	4	3.62	0.785	Moderate	14
PA5.	3	5	3.56	0.922	Moderate	16
Skill's Weighted Mean	3.65				Moderate	
Career Planning Skills "CPS"						
CPS1.	1	4	3.64	0.886	Moderate	13
CPS2.	2	4	3.66	0.964	Moderate	12
CPS 3.	2	4	3.66	0.988	Moderate	12
CPS4.	2	4	3.44	0.886	Moderate	19
Skill's Weighted Mean	3.6				Moderate	
Enterprising Skills "ES"						
ES1.	2	4	3.24	0.888	Low	22
ES2.	2	4	3.44	0.964	Moderate	19
ES3.	2	4	3.66	0.964	Moderate	12
ES4.	3	5	4.14	0.984	Moderate	8
ES5.	1	3	2.64	1.118	Low	26
ES6.	2	4	3.44	0.964	Moderate	19
ES7.	3	5	4.24	0.648	High	6
ES8.	3	5	4.24	0.688	High	6
ES9.	2	4	2.82	0.848	Low	24
Skill's Weighted Mean	3.54				Moderate	

Elements "Statements"	Min.	Max	Mean	Std. deviation	Competence	Ranking
Ethical and Responsible Behaviour "ERB"						
ERB1.	1	4	3.66	0.968	Moderate	12
ERB2.	3	5	4.66	0.664	High	1
ERB3.	1	3	2.22	0.968	V. Low	31
ERB4.	3	5	3.54	0.664	Moderate	17
ERB5.	1	2	1.46	1.422	V. Low	34
Skill's Weighted Mean	3.11				Low	
Problem-Solving Skills "PSS"						
PSS 1.	2	5	3.64	0.946	Moderate	13
PSS 2.	1	4	3.66	0.888	Moderate	12
PSS 3.	2	5	3.64	0.912	Moderate	13
PSS 4.	1	4	3.66	0.868	Moderate	12
PSS 5.	2	5	3.88	0.946	Moderate	9
Skill's Weighted Mean	3.7				Moderate	
Technology Utilization Skills "TUS"						
TUS 1.	1	3	2.44	1.162	V. Low	28
TUS 2.	1	3	2.22	0.968	V. Low	31
TUS 3.	1	3	2.14	0.856	V. Low	32
TUS 4.	1	2	1.46	1.422	V. Low	34
TUS 5.	1	2	1.46	0.982	V. Low	34
Skill's Weighted Mean	1.95				Very Low	
Professional Skills "PS"						
PS1.	1	3	1.46	0.986	V. Low	34
PS2.	2	4	3.66	0.968	Moderate	12
PS3.	1	3	2.266	0.986	V. Low	29
PS4.	1	4	2.24	0.942	V. Low	30
PS5.	1	4	3.44	0.986	Moderate	19
PS6.	1	4	3.66	0.968	Moderate	12
PS7.	1	2	1.564	0.988	V. Low	33
PS8.	2	4	3.58	0.948	Moderate	15
PS9.	4	5	4.66	0.664	High	1
PS10.	1	3	2.266	0.986	V. Low	29
PS11.	1	4	2.66	0.988	Low	25
Skill's Weighted Mean	2.86				Low	
Communication and Personality Traits "CPT"						
CPT1.	3	5	4.44	0.433	High	4
CPT2.	3	5	4.22	0.446	High	7
CPT3.	3	5	4.44	0.536	High	4
CPT4.	3	5	4.22	0.446	High	7
CPT5.	1	5	3.74	0.986	Moderate	11
CPT6.	1	3	2.82	0.688	Low	24
CPT7.	4	5	4.66	0.642	High	1
CPT 8.	3	5	4.54	0.444	High	2
CPT9.	3	5	4.54	0.444	High	2
CPT10.	3	5	4.44	0.433	High	4
Skill's Weighted Mean	4.206				High	

(\*) Likert Scale (1 to 5), "1" = Very Low Competence, up to "5" = Very High Competence.

Table 3 displays the findings of the analysis of responses to the evaluation of tourism employers in Egypt about the effectiveness of tourism graduates and their command of the skills necessary for work in the tourist labor market. The communication skills and personality traits "CPT" obtained the highest rating among the ten primary skills on which the rating was based, with a mean score of 4.206, indicating "High Competence." While no other major skill achieved a high evaluation, six major skills scored average. The remaining three skills were evaluated as unsatisfactory, as the ethical and responsible behavior "ERB" skill and the professional skills "PS" obtained a general evaluation of "Low Competence" and a mean score of 3.11 and 2.86, respectively. In addition, the technology utilization skills "TUS" ranked last with an overall evaluation of "Very Poor Competence" and a mean of 1.95. This result suggests a major deficiency in the knowledge and abilities acquired by tourism bachelor's degree graduates in this area throughout their studies, which must be addressed in the future.

In addition, table 3 displays the results of evaluating the competency of Egyptian graduates and their mastery of employment-related skills for 66 subskills comprising 10 major skills. 18 subskills were rated "High Competence," 27 subskills were rated "Middle Competence," 7 subskills were rated "Low Competence," and 14 subskills were rated "Very Low Competence." "Pay attention to the external appearance-PS9", "Commitment to community ethics-ERB2", and "Motivation towards work-CPT7" received the highest grade as perceived by Egyptian tourist employers, with an overall rating of "High Competence" and a mean of 4.4. This conclusion may be attributable to the social structure of Egyptian society, which has preserved societal conventions and traditions for generations, as well as the courses taken by tourism undergraduates that are indirectly tied to the identity of the society and its customs.

As for the negative evaluation, the skills of "Critical thinking-PS1", "Knowledge of data protection basics-TUS4", "Effective use of technology in the tourism business-TUS5", and "The ability to guide, motivate and empower others-ERB5" scored the lowest level among all the sub-skills in which the mastery of tourism graduates was evaluated, it ranked "34th from the bottom" among all sub-skills, with an overall rating of "Very Its poor rating may be due to a shortage of courses that emphasize the abilities to utilize information technology and its applications in tourism and e-commerce directly.

#### ***Evaluate the importance of skills for employment:***

Determine the relative relevance of the skills required for employment in the tourism labor market that tourism graduates should possess, according to the perceptions of tourism employers in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The data contained in the responses to the first section of the questionnaire, which was designed to measure the relative relevance of the previously identified and verified 10 primary abilities and 66 subskills, were analyzed.

Table 4 displays the relative relevance of disciplinary skills, ethical and responsible behavior, and technology utilization abilities, as Saudi Arabian tourism employers regarded as the three most significant talents for tourism graduates to possess. The relative relevance index for the three abilities was 0.884 (Mean score: 4.46), indicating a high significance level. This illustrates the extent to which tourism employers in Saudi Arabia are interested in talents directly relevant to the nature of tourism companies and technological usage skills, which may be attributed to the significant growth in the tourism industry's technological applications. In addition to skills related to ethical considerations and responsible behavior towards the workplace, society, and the environment, this is a significant global trend.

**Table 4***One Sample T-test and Relative Importance Index of the importance of the skills for employment as perceived by tourism employers in Saudi Arabia*

Dimensions	Mean	Std. deviation	IRR	Importance	Ranking	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Generic Skills "GS"	3.42	0.782	0.688	Moderate	6	10.686	0.000
Disciplinary Skills "DS"	4.46	0.522	0.884	High	1	12.228	0.001
Professional Attitude "PA"	3.44	1.314	0.712	Moderate	5	6.428	0.000
Career Planning Skills "CPS"	3.12	1.122	0.498	Low	7	-2.334	0.005
Enterprising skills "ES."	3.86	0.828	0.731	Moderate	4	9.826	0.000
Ethical and responsible behaviour "ERB."	4.46	0.522	0.884	High	1	12.224	0.000
Problem-Solving Skills "PSS"	3.66	0.828	0.712	Moderate	5	11.886	0.000
Technology utilization skills "TUS."	4.46	0.522	0.884	High	1	12.214	0.001
Professional skills "PS."	4.012	0.826	0.742	Moderate	3	8.826	0.000
Communication and Personality Traits "CPT"	4.161	0.724	0.766	Moderate	2	9.626	0.000

In contrast, tourist employers deemed career planning skills the least significant, with a relative relevance index of 0.498 (mean score of 3.12), indicating a low level of importance. This may be because identifying these talents needs close interaction with the graduate to determine whether or not they possess them. The previous table shows that the remaining abilities recorded a medium degree of importance, with a relative relevance index ranging from 0.688 to 0.742 (Mean score between 3.42 and 4.012). Moreover, all "t" values are statistically significant at the 5% significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

**Table 5***Relative Importance Index for the importance of the skills indicators for employment as perceived by tourism employers in Saudi Arabia*

Skills' Indicators	Mean	Std. deviation	IRR	Importance	Ranking
Generic Skills "GS"					
GS1. Communication	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	5
GS2. Ability to work in a team	3.42	1.192	0.684	Moderate	19
GS3. Foreign Languages Knowledge & Skills	4.2	0.398	0.84	High	7
GS4. Tourism Training Certification	4.2	0.398	0.84	High	7

Skills' Indicators	Mean	Std. deviation	IRR	Importance	Ranking
GS5. Physical Stamina	2.922	1.612	0.522	Low	23
Disciplinary Skills "DS'					
DS1. Air Ticket Booking Skill	3.66	1.272	0.728	Moderate	12
DS2. Tour Planning Skill	4.32	0.468	0.844	High	5
DS3. Tour Cost Analysis Skill	4.46	0.764	0.888	High	1
DS4. Marketing Tourism Products Skill	4.34	0.428	0.868	High	3
DS5. Team Leadership Skill	4.28	0.588	0.864	High	4
DS6. E-commerce Skill	4.46	0.664	0.868	High	3
DS7. Crisis Management Skill	3.78	1.188	0.755	Moderate	9
Professional Attitude "PA"					
PA1. Professional Ethics and Morals	4.2	0.398	0.84	High	7
PA2. Devotion to Work	3.46	0.864	0.692	Moderate	17
PA3. Self-Reflexivity	2.82	1.348	0.574	Low	22
PA4. Toughness and quickly recover from difficulties.	3.46	0.864	0.692	Moderate	17
PA5. Learning Initiative	3.61	0.864	0.722	Moderate	13
Career Planning Skills "CPS"					
CPS1. A life-long learning skill	3.17	1.326	0.634	Low	21
CPS2. Self-promoting and marketing skills	3.56	1.114	0.712	Moderate	15
CPS 3. Comprehension of professional orientation	3.46	0.868	0.692	Moderate	17
CPS4. A global perspective	3.41	1.162	0.681	Moderate	20
Enterprising Skills "ES"					
ES1. Logical thinking when dealing with problems	2.82	1.348	0.574	Low	22
ES2. Provide solutions based on specialization and general knowledge.	3.405	1.164	0.681	Moderate	20
ES3. Ability to deal with organizational policies.	3.405	1.164	0.681	Moderate	20
ES4. Good awareness of market trends and competitors.	3.56	1.212	0.712	Moderate	15
ES5. The ability to identify business opportunities.	3.56	1.212	0.712	Moderate	15
ES6. Knowledge of the feasibility and impacts of proposed solutions.	3.56	1.212	0.712	Moderate	15
ES7. Cost management and budgeting	4.2	0.398	0.84	High	7
ES8. Good financial awareness	3.86	0.828	0.731	Moderate	11
ES9. Has a special style of doing work.	2.82	1.348	0.574	Low	22

Skills' Indicators	Mean	Std. deviation	IRR	Importance	Ranking
Ethical and Responsible Behaviour "ERB"					
ERB1. Commitment to professional ethics and values.	4.48	0.498	0.844	High	5
ERB2. Commitment to community ethics.	4.32	0.498	0.842	High	6
ERB3. Taking responsibility for decisions and actions.	4.32	0.498	0.842	High	6
ERB4. Encouraging responsible behavior towards the environment and community.	4.46	0.764	0.888	High	1
ERB5. The ability to guide, motivate and empower others.	3.56	1.212	0.712	Moderate	15
Problem-Solving Skills "PSS"					
PSS 1. The ability to identify problems	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	5
PSS 2. The ability to identify and analyze the causes of the problem	3.66	0.828	0.698	Moderate	16
PSS 3. The ability to provide alternative solutions to problems	3.56	1.212	0.692	Moderate	17
PSS 4. The ability to choose the optimal solution to the problem	4.082	0.846	0.712	Moderate	15
PSS 5. The skill of implementing the proposed solutions with the highest efficiency	3.56	1.212	0.692	Moderate	17
Technology Utilization Skills "TUS"					
TUS 1. Knowledge of IT basics	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	5
TUS 2. Skills in using computers and smart machines	4.46	0.764	0.888	High	1
TUS 3. The ability to use technology in communication	4.64	0.492	0.882	High	2
TUS 4. Knowledge of data protection basics	2.922	1.612	0.522	Low	23
TUS 5. Effective use of technology in the tourism business	4.34	0.428	0.868	High	3
Professional Skills "PS"					
PS 1. Critical thinking	2.82	1.348	0.574	Low	22
PS 2. Ability to work under pressure	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	5
PS 3. Ability to handle multiple tasks	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	5
PS 4. Negotiation and persuasion skills	4.082	0.846	0.698	Moderate	16
PS 5. Arithmetic skills and dealing with numbers	4.161	0.724	0.714	Moderate	14
PS 6. The ability to manage relationships at work	4.044	0.846	0.698	Moderate	16
PS 7. Professionally written communication skill	4.012	0.826	0.742	Moderate	10
PS 8. The ability to deal with and serve customers	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	5
PS 9. Pay attention to the outward appearance	4.044	0.824	0.714	Moderate	14
PS 10. Good time management	4.082	0.846	0.698	Moderate	16
PS 11. Professional/training experiences in the field of tourism	4.044	0.824	0.714	Moderate	14

Skills' Indicators	Mean	Std. deviation	IRR	Importance	Ranking
Communication and Personality Traits "CPT"					
CPT1. Honest and moral uprightness	4.44	0.398	0.868	High	3
CPT 2. Flexibility and adaptability	4.161	0.724	0.766	Moderate	8
CPT 3. Tact and diplomacy	4.161	0.724	0.714	Moderate	14
CPT 4. Sense of humorous	2.922	1.612	0.522	Low	23
CPT5. Take responsibility	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	5
CPT6. Presentation skills	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	5
CPT7. Motivation towards work	4.161	0.724	0.688	Moderate	18
CPT 8. Research and development skills	4.161	0.724	0.688	Moderate	18
CPT9. Effective networking	4.044	0.824	0.714	Moderate	14
CPT10. Entrepreneurial thinking and skills	4.044	0.846	0.698	Moderate	16

(\*) Likert Scale (1 to 5), "1" = Very Low Importance, up to "5" = Very High Importance.

The rating of the importance of skills that tourism graduates should possess, according to Saudi Arabian tourism companies, is presented in Table 5. The relative importance index for all 66 assessed talents ranged from 0.888 to 0.522, and the overall importance evaluation revealed that 25 skills were rated "High Important," 33 skills were rated "Medium Importance," and 8 skills were rated "Low Importance." The skills with the highest index of relative importance were "Tour cost Analysis skill- DS3", "Encouraging responsible behavior towards the environment and community- ERB4", and "Skills of using computers and smart machines- TUS2", with a relative importance index of 0.888 (High Importance) and a mean of 4.46. While "The ability to use technology in communication-TUS3" ranked second with a relative importance index of 0.882 (High Importance), "E-commerce Skill-DS6", "Marketing tourism products skills-DS4", "Effective use of technology in the tourism business-TUS5", and "Honest and morally upright traits-CPT1" ranked third with a relative importance index of 0.868 (Medium Importance) (High Importance). Several skills linked to information technology and its applications are repeated in the top three places. In contrast, "Understanding of data protection fundamentals-TUS4", "Physical stamina-GS5", and "Sense of humor-CPT4" rated twenty-third and last among all examined skills from the perspective of Saudi tourist employers, with a relative relevance index of 0.522. (High Importance). This may be because basic data protection understanding is more closely associated with information technology than with tourism. As for physical stamina, its low ranking may be attributable to the fact that most positions in the tourism business are office professions with a favorable work environment. As for a sense of humor, it may be attributed to the pragmatic perspective of tourism companies when assessing talents.

**Table 6***One Sample T-test and Relative Importance Index of the importance of the skills for employment as perceived by tourism employers in Egypt*

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>	<b>IRR</b>	<b>Importance</b>	<b>Ranking</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>
Generic Skills "GS"	4.242	0.626	0.845	Hight	2	8.886	0.000
Disciplinary Skills "DS"	4.62	0.222	0.898	High	1	13.244	0.000
Professional Attitude "PA"	3.312	0.918	0.698	Moderate	7	6.428	0.000
Career Planning Skills "CPS"	3.442	1.116	0.712	Moderate	6	6.444	0.001
Enterprising skills "ES."	3.842	0.946	0.732	Moderate	5	8.626	0.001
Ethical and responsible behaviour "ERB."	3.244	0.824	0.682	Moderate	8	8.642	0.000
Problem-Solving Skills "PSS"	3.912	0.628	0.742	Moderate	4	11.886	0.000
Technology utilization skills "TUS."	4.62	0.222	0.898	High	1	12.214	0.001
Professional skills "PS."	4.114	0.726	0.762	Moderate	3	8.624	0.000
Communication and Personality Traits "CPT"	4.242	0.626	0.845	High	2	9.422	0.000

Table 6 demonstrates that the relative value of disciplinary skills and technology usage abilities was the greatest among the ten skills examined, as perceived by tourism employers in Egypt, for tourism graduates to possess. The relative relevance index for the two abilities was 0.898 (Mean score: 4.62), indicating a high significance level. This demonstrates the extent to which tourism employers in Egypt are interested in skills directly relevant to the operation of tourism businesses, as well as technology use skills, following the global technological revolution. Ethical and responsible behavior, on the other hand, was the least important skill from the perspective of tourism employers in Egypt, which is surprising given the global importance of social responsibility activities, as it scored a relative importance index of 0.682% (Mean score: 3.244), indicating a moderate level of importance. This may be related to their interest in financial and economic concerns and profit maximization. The previous table shows that the remaining abilities recorded a medium degree of importance, with a relative importance index ranging from 0.698 to 0.785 (Mean score 3.312 to 4.242). Moreover, all "t" values are statistically significant at the 5% significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

**Table 7**

*Relative Importance Index for the importance of the skills indicators for employment as perceived by tourism employers in Egypt*

<b>Skills' Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>	<b>IRR</b>	<b>Importance</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Generic Skills "GS"</b>					
GS1.	4.44	0.398	0.868	High	4
GS2.	4.25	0.498	0.842	High	10
GS3.	4.66	0.664	0.898	High	1
GS4.	4.25	0.498	0.842	High	10
GS5.	3.92	0.724	0.688	Moderate	23
<b>Disciplinary Skills "DS"</b>					
DS1.	4.35	0.574	0.844	High	9
DS2.	4.35	0.468	0.844	High	9
DS3.	4.66	0.664	0.898	High	1
DS4.	4.44	0.448	0.868	High	4
DS5.	4.48	0.648	0.848	High	7
DS6.	4.54	0.464	0.864	High	5
DS7.	3.78	0.988	0.766	Moderate	14
<b>Professional Attitude "PA"</b>					
PA1.	4.2	0.398	0.84	High	11
PA2.	3.46	0.864	0.692	Moderate	22
PA3.	2.82	1.348	0.574	Low	27
PA4.	3.46	0.864	0.692	Moderate	22
PA5.	3.61	0.864	0.722	Moderate	18
<b>Career Planning Skills "CPS"</b>					
CPS1.	3.17	1.326	0.634	Low	25
CPS2.	3.41	1.162	0.681	Moderate	24
CPS3.	3.46	0.868	0.692	Moderate	22
CPS4.	3.55	0.918	0.714	Moderate	19
<b>Enterprising Skills "ES"</b>					
ES1.	2.76	0.988	0.588	Low	26
ES2.	3.405	1.164	0.681	Moderate	24
ES3.	3.842	0.946	0.732	Moderate	17
ES4.	3.55	0.918	0.714	Moderate	19
ES5.	3.55	0.918	0.714	Moderate	19
ES6.	3.56	1.212	0.712	Moderate	20
ES7.	4.22	0.586	0.842	High	10
ES8.	3.842	0.946	0.732	Moderate	17
ES9.	2.66	0.978	0.564	Low	28
<b>Ethical and Responsible Behaviour "ERB"</b>					
ERB1.	4.42	0.456	0.864	High	5
ERB2.	4.32	0.498	0.842	High	10
ERB3.	4.25	0.658	0.822	Moderate	12
ERB4.	4.25	0.658	0.822	Moderate	12
ERB5.	3.58	0.928	0.742	Moderate	16

Skills' Indicators	Mean	Std. deviation	IRR	Importance	Ranking
Problem-Solving Skills "PSS"					
PSS1.	3.912	0.628	0.742	Moderate	16
PSS2.	3.86	0.922	0.712	Moderate	20
PSS3.	3.56	0.988	0.692	Moderate	22
PSS4.	4.12	0.846	0.722	Moderate	18
PSS5.	3.74	0.986	0.714	Moderate	19
Technology Utilization Skills "TUS"					
TUS1.	4.35	0.433	0.854	High	6
TUS2.	4.66	0.664	0.898	High	1
TUS3.	4.62	0.492	0.884	High	3
TUS4.	3.124	1.314	0.544	Low	29
TUS5.	4.64	0.428	0.888	High	2
Professional Skills "PS"					
PS1.	2.94	0.988	0.588	Low	26
PS2.	4.54	0.444	0.864	High	5
PS3.	4.44	0.433	0.844	High	9
PS4.	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	9
PS5.	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	9
PS6.	4.044	0.846	0.698	Moderate	21
PS7.	4.012	0.826	0.742	Moderate	16
PS8.	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	9
PS9.	4.044	0.824	0.714	Moderate	19
PS10.	4.082	0.846	0.698	Moderate	21
PS11.	4.114	0.726	0.762	Moderate	15
Communication and Personality Traits "CPT"					
CPT1.	4.44	0.398	0.868	High	4
CPT2.	4.18	0.826	0.788	Moderate	13
CPT3.	4.242	0.626	0.845	High	8
CPT4.	3.14	1.422	0.542	Low	30
CPT5.	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	9
CPT6.	4.22	0.433	0.844	High	9
CPT7.	4.44	0.398	0.868	High	4
CPT8.	4.12	0.826	0.712	Moderate	20
CPT9.	4.44	0.398	0.868	High	4
CPT10.	4.044	0.846	0.698	Moderate	21

(\*) Likert Scale (1 to 5), "1" = Very Low Importance, up to "5" = Very High Importance.

Employers in the tourist industry in Egypt have ranked the relevance of the skills that tourism graduates should possess in Table 7. The relative importance index for all 66 assessed skills varied from 0.898 to 0.542, with 29 skills rated "High Important," 30 rated "Medium Importance," and 7 rated "Low Importance." "Knowledge of foreign languages-GS3", "Tour cost analysis skill-DS3", and "Computer and smart machine abilities-TUS2" got the highest index of relative importance among all talents, with a relative importance index of 0.898% (High Important) and a mean of 4.66. Whereas "The effective application of technology in the tourism industry-TUS5" ranked second with a relative significance index of 0.888 (High Importance), "The ability to use technology in communication-TUS3" ranked third with a relative relevance value of 0.884 (Moderate Importance) (High Importance). These results indicate that Egyptian

tourism employers are interested in the skills that are directly related to the operation of tourism businesses, in addition to the skills of using information technology in tourism businesses, which ranked in the top three positions of the relative importance index of the skills as perceived by Egyptian tourism employers. This is extremely congruent with the perspective of Saudi employers in the tourism industry, who likewise placed a high value on the ability to use information technology in the tourism industry.

In contrast, "Sense of humor-CPT4" rated thirty and last among the measured abilities from the perspective of Egyptian tourist employers, with a relative significance value of 0.542. (Low Importance). This may be related to the pragmatic perspective of tourist companies in their assessment of talents.

### Discussion and Implications:

This study seeks to This study aims to evaluate tourism graduates' employability skills competence and explore the perceptions of tourism employers regarding the most important skills required for employment in Saudi Arabia and Egypt by evaluating 10 major skills and 66 sub-skills, which were adopted from [Tsai \(2017\)](#), [Coetzee \(2014\)](#), [Fajaryati and Akhyar \(2021\)](#), [Aulbur et al. \(2016\)](#) and [Wakelin-Theron et al. \(2019\)](#).

The greatest appraisal of efficiency and mastery of employment skills among tourism graduates in Saudi Arabia was for adherence to professional ethics, values, and community ethics, as well as responsible behavior towards the environment. The lowest level of evaluation of the competence of tourism graduates in Saudi Arabia, from the perspective of tourism employers, was for the effective use of technology in the tourism industry, arithmetic skills, and professional written communication, with an overall rating of "Very Low Competence." Employers in the Egyptian tourism industry rated the graduates' competency as "Very Competent" overall, with the highest ratings for job motivation, devotion to community ethics, and attention to physical appearance. While the lowest score of the competence of tourism graduates in Egypt was for critical thinking, efficient use of technology in the tourism industry, and the capacity to lead, motivate, and empower others, the overall grade was "Very Low Competence." Hence, some of the skills and knowledge of tourism graduates in Saudi Arabia and Egypt are deficient.

According to the results, the tour cost analysis skill, encouraging responsible behavior towards the environment and community, and computer and smart machine skills ranked first in terms of importance for employment, as judged by Saudi Arabian tourism employers. E-commerce comes after the ability to employ technology in communication: talent, proficiency in marketing tourism products, and successful application of technology in the tourism industry. The highest-ranked talents in terms of relevance, as regarded by tourism employers in Egypt, were knowledge of foreign languages, tour cost analysis, and computer and smart machine skills. Thus, based on the employers' assessment of the graduates' competence and their ranking of the skills that the graduates must possess in terms of importance, there is a discrepancy between the tourism employers' perspective on the essential skills graduates need for employment in the tourism labor market and the skills that universities teach students during their undergraduate studies and before entering the workforce. So, universities must consider the actual employment requirements (skills and knowledge) demanded by the labor market and regularly adapt their courses accordingly.

Practically, this study benefits universities, academics, employers, tourism officials, researchers, students, and graduates, as it provides a practical foundation that can serve as the foundation of a road map that assists universities (faculties of tourism) in improving and developing curricula to keep up with the demands of the tourism job market, thereby producing more qualified graduates. Similarly, some courses must be developed and related to the ideas of social responsibility. In contrast, the practical component of other courses must be strengthened to allow students to participate in community activities, and students must be encouraged to propose initiatives and small group projects. This study's findings can also be applied to future studies to enhance graduates' knowledge and skills and boost their productivity.

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**Institutional Review Board Statement:** This study was conducted in accordance with the controls of the Declaration of Helsinki approved by the ethics committee at the the scientific research, King Faisal University (project number: GRANT2773, date of approval: 17/10/2022).

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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