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ORGANISATIONAL DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYER IMAGE:¹ A CASE OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN POLAND

DETERMINANTES ORGANIZACIONALES DE LA IMAGEN DEL EMPLEADOR: EL CASO DEL SECTOR TURÍSTICO EN POLONIA

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Abstract

Growing recognition of the importance of the customer-employee interaction in the tourism service delivery has led to the need to increase efforts to attract and retain qualified and committed personnel. The objective of the paper is to analyse the dimensions of the company employment image in the tourism industry and to identify organisational factors which influence the perception of the tourism organisation attractiveness as a workplace by potential employees. The study was conducted on the group of 351 undergraduates and graduates enrolled in tourism and hospitality studies in Poznan. Research revealed that students do not believe that careers in tourism will offer them values they expect. It was also found that tourism company employment image is affected by company size, level of internationalisation, chain affiliation, ownership type, and type of services offered.

Key words: Employer Image; Tourism Industry; Potential Employees; Poland.

JEL: J24, M51, L83

Resumen

El capital humano es un elemento fundamental para competitividad del sector de turismo. Para el logro de dicha competitividad es esencial que los directivos sean capaces de atraer y retener al personal más adecuado. El objetivo del artículo es analizar las dimensiones de la imagen del empleador en el sector turístico y determinar los factores organizacionales que influyen en la percepción del atractivo del trabajo en las empresas turísticas. La investigación del campo se realizó en la muestra de 351 estudiantes universitarios de turismo y hotelería en Poznan, Polonia. Las evidencias empíricas demostraron que los estudiantes no tienen confianza en que la carrera en turismo les aporte lo que consideran importante en relaciones laborales. También se comprobó que la imagen del empleador turístico está relacionada con el tamaño de empresa, el nivel de

internacionalización, la afiliación de cadena, el tipo de propiedad y la oferta de servicios.

Palabras clave: Imagen del empleador; Sector turístico; Empleados potenciales; Polonia.

Introduction

It is generally recognised that human capital, being the source of differentiation, is the foundation of competitive advantage in today's service industries. Competitive advantage realised through tangible, functional benefits is no longer sustainable. Due to growing recognition of the significance of the customer-employee interaction in the service delivery practitioners and scholars pay more attention to recruiting employees who are committed to the set of values and organisational goals of the company (GRÖNROOS, 1994; KING, 2010). If companies wish to build a competitive advantage through attracting and retaining the best available human capital, they should take measures to place an image of being a great place to work in the minds of current and potential hires. This can be done effectively when organisations are aware of the job attributes that are important for job-seekers and of the image the industry they are embedded in presents to employees.

The role of the service provider in the consumer's evaluation of the service experience is unquestionable. As noted by BERRY and LAMPO (2004) a service brand can be only as strong as the people who perform the service. High quality interactions with employees often lead to customer satisfaction regardless of problems with tangible aspects of service delivery, whereas dissatisfying interactions with employees might ruin otherwise enjoyable service encounters (BROWN & LAM, 2008). Because service providers contribute to service delivery excellence, companies

must take measures to effectively manage their staff to ensure that their attitudes and behaviours are commensurate with customer relationship objectives (HARTLINE & FERRELL, 1996).

The important role of employees and their impact on the service organization's performance is well documented in numerous investigations run within the service profit chain framework. The research have identified causal links between employee satisfaction and positive workplace attitudes, intentions, behaviours, and performance outcomes both at the individual and the unit levels (HESKETT, JONES, LOVEMAN, SASSER, & SCHLESINGER, 1994; CHI & GURSOY, 2009; YEE, YEUNG, & CHENG, 2011). Findings of these studies support a company's efforts to communicate to existing and prospective staff that it is a desirable place to work – implementing strategies to shape the company employment image helps recruit high-performing, quality oriented, and committed employees who will contribute to the efficient and effective delivery of services and to the market success of the organisation.

The effective recruitment of quality labour is determined by perceived status of employment. This study seeks to contribute by recognizing the dimensions of the company employment image in the tourism industry and by identifying factors which affect the perception of the tourism organisation attractiveness as a workplace from potential employees perspective. The first section of the paper is devoted to reviewing the literature on the employer image in the tourism market. Then the findings of the study on the students' perception of the attractiveness of career in tourism are presented. Finally, the overall implications and guidelines for future research are proposed and the main conclusions are summarised.

1. Tourism employer image – literature review

Each company has a bundle of images as it deals with numerous stakeholders, who develop various relationships with and hold various impressions of the organisation. There seems to be a general consensus that employees are a key stakeholder group, who co-create value by co-operating with customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders (EWING, PITT, DE BUSSY, & BERTHON, 2002). Both current and potential employees have opinions and beliefs about the company's attractiveness as a workplace. These impressions are labelled in the literature as the company employment image (HIGHHOUSE, ZICKAR, THORSTEINSON, STIERWALT, & SLAUGHTER, 1999; LEMMINK, SCHUIJF, & STREUKENS, 2003) or the employer image (LIEVENS, VAN HOYE, & ANSEEL, 2007). A closely related concept is employer attractiveness which is the sum of envisioned benefits offered by a specific organisation to its personnel (BERTHON, EWING, & HAH, 2005).

In early recruitment stages applicants have only some basic knowledge of potential jobs and organizations they take into consideration. As a consequence initial intentions to pursue employment opportunities at a particular firm are based on general impression of company's attractiveness as a place to work (GATEWOOD, GOWAN, & LAUTENSCHLAGER, 1993; HIGHHOUSE et al., 1999). Those impressions are evidenced to be affected by the industry in which firm operates (CABLE & GRAHAM, 2000). Companies must be then aware of inter-organizational interdependence which influence their reputation due to spillover effects (BARNETT & HOFFMAN, 2008)

Researchers argue that employer desirability depends on being embedded in the right industry. Moreover, the applicants' low knowledge about the company leads to the stronger link between industry image and

corporate image (BURMANN, SCHAEFER, & MALONEY, 2008; WILDEN et al., 2010). Such situation is fairly common in the tourism sector, which is fragmented and dominated by small and medium sized enterprises. Given the critical role of the industry image, the need to explore potential employees' opinions and beliefs about tourism career attractiveness is becoming evident. Job seekers comprise an important stakeholder group that is said to be the subject of scarce research (CABLE & GRAHAM, 2000)

Attitudes and perceptions of job prospects in tourism of students enrolled in tourism and hospitality studies have been addressed in relatively few studies. Research revealed the dichotomy regarding the image of the industry as an employer. In their investigation of tourism and hotel management students in Turkey, KUSLUVAN and KUSLUVAN (2000) identified that disadvantages of working in the tourism industry outweighed advantages. Respondents evaluated critically pay and benefits level, promotion opportunities, qualifications of managers and co-workers, work-life fit, physical working conditions, and social status of employment; on the other hand the majority of them regarded job as being interesting. Similar conclusions were drawn by RICHARDSON (2010) and BARRON MAXWELL, BROADBRIDGE, and OGDEN (2007). The former surveyed undergraduates in Australia and found that while careers in the tourism industry were considered interesting, skill-developing, and providing friendly relationships and team spirit, they were also perceived as offering low remuneration, limited stability, slight chances for clear career path, and poor treatment by supervisory staff. The latter examined work experiences of students in United Kingdom, who pointed out both positive and negative attributes of working in the hospitality industry. Positive aspects included social nature, prospects for career advancement, potential to work internationally, and interesting experiences via

the rapidly changing sector; negative factors centred on the level of reward, antisocial hours of work, insecure nature of working life, and lack of appreciation displayed by management staff.

Several investigations diagnosed the negative image that acts to undermine commitment to careers the tourism industry. In the research carried out by JIANG and TRIBE (2009) in China, interviewed students reported that, due to instability, low incomes, repetitive tasks, unfavourable physical working environment, limited promotion opportunities, incompetency of management, and low social status, they considered tourism jobs as the first stepping stone to a career elsewhere. These results correspond with BEDNARSKA and OLSZEWSKI's findings (2010), who examined perceived attractiveness of tourism organisations as employers in Poland and with Richardson and Butler's results (2012), who investigated attitudes towards tourism-related jobs of undergraduates in Malaysia. Their general conclusion was that students did not trust an employment in the sector would offer them the factors that they found important in job choice so they did not see the industry as an appealing career path. Factors discouraging from planning career in the sector were also found by MUELLER and PETERS (2005). They surveyed apprentices working in hotels in Italy and revealed that trainees were disappointed with the perceived options for moving up the career ladder within the firm and the relationship with their supervisor or owner manager.

Considerable stream of research underlines that the negative image of the industry as an employer appears to be developed with the increase in the exposure of hospitality and tourism students to working life in the industry (RONEY & ÖZTIN, 2007; KOYUNCU, BURKE, FIKSENBAUM, & DEMIRER, 2008; BLOMME, VAN RHEEDE, & TROMP, 2009; RICHARDSON, 2010). As a result many under-

graduates do not plan to pursue a job in tourism upon graduation or leave the industry within a few years (KING, MCKERCHER, & WARYSZAK, 2003; LU & ADLER, 2009; MAXWELL, OGDEN, & BROADBRIDGE, 2012). As noted by KUSLUVAN and KUSLUVAN (2000) this tendency may imply undesirable consequences for the students, who may have a feeling of wastage of investment, for the tourism industry, which may fail to recruit and retain qualified employees, and for the government due to inefficient expenditure on higher tourism education.

2. Conceptual framework

Most of research on attitudes to careers in the tourism industry has focused on the overall employer image in the sector. However, many questions about differences in perceived organisation attractiveness as a workplace remain almost completely unaddressed. While the influence of individual factors on commitment to tourism-related careers have been explored in several studies (RONEY & ÖZTIN, 2007; KOYUNCU et al, 2008), the importance placed upon objective organisational factors is poorly represented in research on job choice in tourism.

In line with person-environment fit perspective employer attractiveness is posited to be correlated with the perceived compatibility between the abilities and needs of the individual and the job and organization demands and supplies (KRISTOF-BROWN, 2000; CARLESS, 2005). ANDREASSEN and LANSENG (2010) argue that the higher congruency a prospective employee perceives between ideal and a company's image, the more likely he or she will have a positive attitude towards working for that company. As BACKHAUS and TIKOO (2004) noted, applicants are attracted to a company based on the assessment of firm's employment related characteristics and the importance they place on those character-

ristics. This is the reason why the study investigates potential employees' expectations towards careers (preferred job/organisation attributes) and perceptions of tourism careers (perceived job/organisation attributes).

It is argued in the paper that when exploring factors which influence employer image in the tourism industry objective organisational aspects should be taken into consideration. Such characteristics, being visible to job seekers, might be interpreted as signals of organisational culture and, therefore, affect applicants' attitudinal judgments about a company as a potential employer (LIEVENS, DECAESTEKER, COETSIER & GEIRNAERT, 2001).

Company size is recommended to be included in organisation attractiveness research as small and large employers, due to resources availability, are likely to provide different working conditions and follow different human resources management practices (BARBER, WESSON, ROBERSON, & TAYLOR, 1999; WALMSLEY, THOMAS, & JAMESON, 2006). The level of internationalisation, chain affiliation, and ownership type are also important objective characteristics that act as indicators of company's cultures and values. The presence of organisation's divisions which are dispersed across different countries signals to prospective employees that overseas assignments may be common (LIEVENS et al., 2001). Being a part of a chain may suggest relatively strong internal labour markets, hence career development and promotional opportunities (GUNLU, AKSARAYLI, & PERÇIN, 2010).

Due to inherent incongruities between the norms and principles that shape relations in the family and in the business, the management of human resources in family organisations faces challenges with regard to staffing, compensation, appraisal, and training (REID, MORROW, KELLY, ADAMS, & MCCARTAN, 2000). These problems may affect the perceived attractiveness of family firms as emplo-

yers. Finally, type of service offering is argued to be linked with the employer image in the tourism industry as various economic activities serving visitors for and during tourism trips differ in both job content and job context.

Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses with regard to objective organisational factors as determinants of employer image are developed and summarised in the following conceptual model:

H1: Company size affects the tourism company employment image.

H2: Level of internationalisation affects the tourism company employment image.

H3: Chain affiliation affects the tourism company employment image.

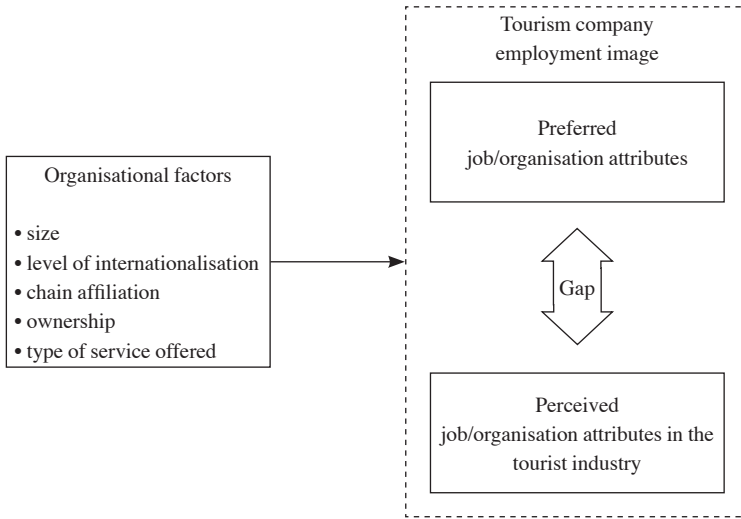
H4: Ownership type affects the tourism company employment image.

H5: Type of services offered affects the tourism company employment image.

3. Research method

In order to verify proposed hypotheses, field investigation was conducted. The target population comprised undergraduates and graduates enrolled in tourism and hospitality studies in universities in Poznan. Poznan is one of the main centres for higher education and science in Poland, 27 schools of higher education are located there with more than 130 000 students and 8 000 academic teachers (BDL, 2012). Eight public and private higher education institutions in Poznan offered bachelor and master degrees in tourism in 2012 and a total of 4150 students took tourism and hospitality courses. To obtain a representative subset of the target population a single-stage cluster sampling was employed. The sample size was determined based on statistical pre-

FIG. 1. Conceptual model



cision approach – assuming the confidence level at 95%, the desired precision at 5%, and the degree of variability at 50%, and applying the finite population correction yielded the minimum sample of 352 respondents.

Deductive approach was applied for measurement instrument development. The basis for the analysed variables operationalisation were the findings of several empirical studies on dimensions of employer image and employer attractiveness, namely KUSLUVAN and KUSLUVAN (2000), BERTHON et al. (2005), BLOMME et al. (2009), BEDNARSKA and OLSZEWSKI (2010).

The questionnaire consisted of three main components. Participants were requested first to envisage an ideal employer and rate a range of 15 items displaying various dimensions of the company employment image based on their expectations. In the second section they were asked to assess the analysed attributes regarding employers in the tourism industry. The data enabled to compute the gaps between preferred and perceived job/organisation attributes, which are dependent

variables in the study². To test the influence of objective organisational factors on perceived organisation attractiveness five versions of questionnaire were prepared. Section three sought information about students’ age, gender, year of study, study mode, study degree, attitude to tourism studies, and work experience. The inquiry form contained closed-ended questions, a seven-point Likert scale was used, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7), for gradations of opinions.

Data were collected through group-administered questionnaires distributed during a regularly scheduled class period. The actual sample accounted for 351 respondents and it was demographically diverse. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 38 years old, with the mean age of 22; and 71 % of them were female. The majority of students was at pu-

² The gap was calculated as a difference between expectation and perception for desired attributes and as a difference between perception and expectation for undesired attribute, thus a positive number represents a negative situation (unmet expectations).

blic university (75 %), was pursuing bachelor degree (58 %), and the sample was dominated by full time students (72 %). 73 % of those surveyed declared tourism studies to be their first choice and 47 % of them had work experience in the tourism industry. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for the sample.

The data analysis involved descriptive statistics and correlations to portray the main features of variables under study and relations between them. In order to confirm the dimensionality of the questionnaire the factor analysis was performed. The paired samples t-test was employed to test for significant differences between means. The statistical processing of the survey data was conducted using the SPSS software package.

4. Results

In a first step of data analysis an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed to reduce the number of variables and generate relevant employer image dimensions. All 15 items loaded resulted in a

four-factor structure, accounting for 70.6 % of the total variance. Factors were labelled as job content, economic value and work-life fit, development value, and social value (see Appendix for the dimensions and the items). All constructs reported strong internal consistency evidenced by Cronbach’s alpha ranging from 0.683 to 0.833. The results of the procedure are presented in table 2.

TAB. 2. Summary of factor analysis

<i>Image dimension</i>	<i>Number of items</i>	<i>Cronbach’s alpha</i>
1. Job content	3	.683
2. Development value	4	.822
3. Economic value and work-life fit	4	.742
4. Social value	4	.833

Basic statistics for the study variables are reported in table 3. It presents means, standard deviations, and correlations among the computed gaps between preferred and perceived job/organisation attributes for generated constructs. Table 4 provides information about the

TAB. 1. Respondent profile

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Share [%]</i>	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Share [%]</i>
Gender	Female	70,9	Study degree	Bachelor	58,4
	Male	29,1		Master	41,6
Age	20 and less	21,7	Study mode	Full time	72,1
	21-22	36,0		Part time	27,9
	23-24	34,9	Year of study	First	18,6
	25 and more	7,4		Second	8,3
First choice studies	Yes	72,6	Third	25,1	
	No	27,4	Fourth	19,1	
Work experience in tourism	Yes	47,4	Fifth	28,8	
	No	52,6	Type of school	Public	74,6
		Non-public		25,8	

distribution of perceived gaps. The picture that emerges from the tables is that students generally do not believe that a career in the tourism industry will offer them values they find desirable.

For all the dimensions under study the number of students who think that tourism-related jobs will not meet their expectations is 3.3 – 5.3 times larger than the number of those who have the opposite opinion. Respondents are particularly pessimistic about prospects for work-life balance, flexibility, remuneration level, and physical environment (economic value and work-life fit), while holding relative optimism about matching individual interests,

performing challenging tasks, and influencing decisions that are important for company (job content).

Additional analysis was carried out to examine the differences in company employment image between respondents with and without working experience in the tourism industry. The results are provided in table 5. The data suggest that those who have been exposed to working life in tourism hold more negative belief about the extent to which tourism-related job can meet their expectations with regard to all investigated dimensions of employer image, development value being the worst perceived one.

TAB. 3. Variable descriptive statistics and correlations

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Correlations			
			1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Job content-gap	.712	1.076	1.00			
2. Development value-gap	.801	.960	.436*	1.00		
3. Economic value and work-life fit-gap	.977	1.087	.540*	.608*	1.00	
4. Social value-gap	.729	.965	.474*	.672*	.627*	1.00

* Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

TAB. 4. Variable distribution

Variable	Gap < 0 [share in %]	Gap = 0 [share in %]	Gap > 0 [share in %]
1. Job content	20.1	13.7	66.3
2. Development value	16.2	11.6	72.2
3. Economic value and work-life fit	14.1	10.7	75.2
4. Social value	18.7	13.4	67.9

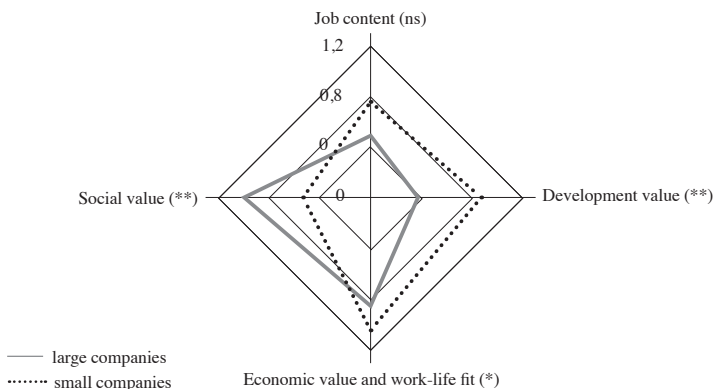
TAB. 5. Variable means – comparison of students with and without work experience in tourism

Variable	Students with work experience	Students without work experience
1. Job content – gap	.7800	.6484
2. Development value – gap	.8870	.7263
3. Economic value and work-life fit – gap	1.0215	.9383
4. Social value – gap	.7816	.6743

In order to identify organisational factors that affect the level of gaps between preferred and perceived job/organisation attributes, hence determine the tourism company employment image, the paired samples t-test was applied.

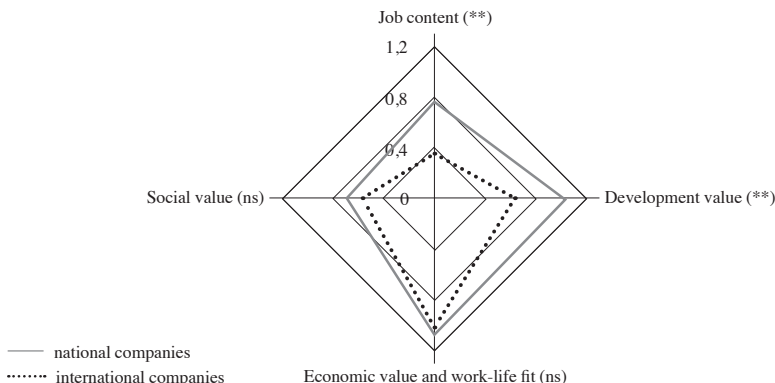
The results of the analysis are displayed in figures 2-6. Values show the level of mismatch between students' expectations and perceptions of job content and job context in the tourism industry.

FIG. 2. Company size and tourism employer image



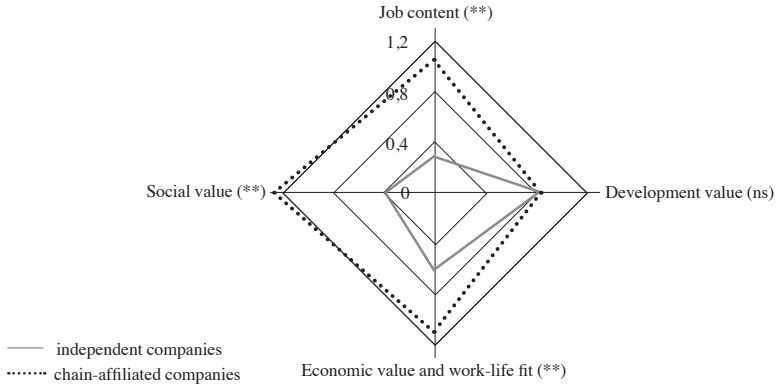
(*) Significant at the 0.05 level; (**) significant at the 0.01 level; (ns) not significant.

FIG. 3. Level of internationalisation and tourism employer image



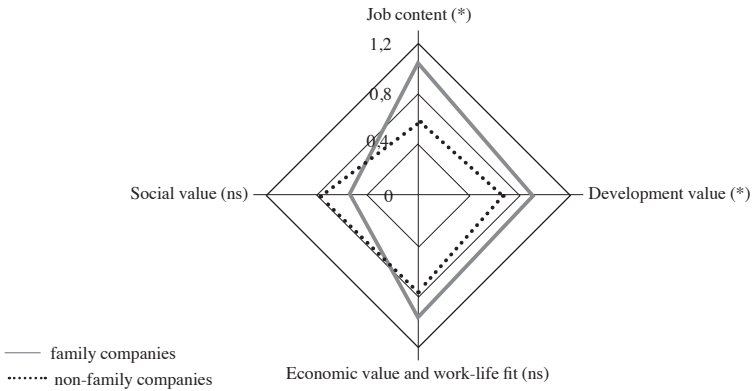
(*) Significant at the 0.05 level; (**) significant at the 0.01 level; (ns) not significant.

FIG. 4. Chain affiliation and tourism employer image



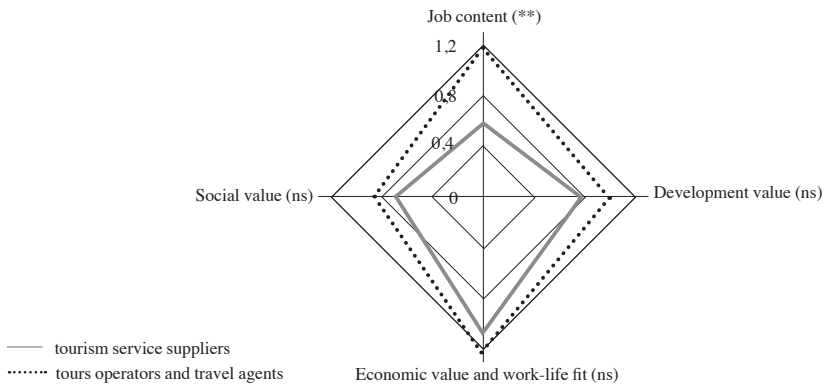
(*) Significant at the 0.05 level; (**) significant at the 0.01 level; (ns) not significant.

FIG. 5. Ownership type and tourism employer image



(*) Significant at the 0.05 level; (**) significant at the 0.01 level; (ns) not significant.

FIG. 6. Type of services and tourism employer image



(*) Significant at the 0.05 level; (**) significant at the 0.01 level; (ns) not significant.

Small tourism enterprises are generally considered to offer less development opportunities, less chances for work-life balance, and worse financial conditions but they are supposed to reward employees with better social values than large ones. Tourism companies having international divisions are believed to satisfy to a greater extent requirements concerning intrinsic value of work and career advancement path. Chain-affiliated establishments in the tourism industry are associated with poorer social relations in the workplace, reward package, compatibility between career and family life, and limited chances to perform interesting and challenging tasks. Family firms in tourism are thought to provide employees with unsatisfactory avenues for training and career-enhancing experience, they are also less likely to meet job content expectations. Tourism service suppliers, unlike tour operators and travel agents, are regarded as better employers in terms of work itself.

Summarizing, as hypothesized, objective organisational variables influence employer image in the tourism industry. Each of five analysed characteristics proved to be significantly related to at least one of four dimensions of the tourism company employment image, two of characteristics under investigation were significant determinants of three employer image dimensions. Thus data support all proposed hypotheses.

5. Discussion and implications

Given the role of human capital in the competitive advantage development in today's tourism market, relatively few studies to date have focused on the tourism industry image as a place to work and its ability to attract and retain the best available job candidates. The present investigation addresses this knowledge gap by testing relationships between objective organisational variables and expectation-perception discrepancies for

job/organisation attributes in tourism from potential employees perspective.

The research has investigated the differential impact of organisational characteristics that were not examined in the previous studies on employer image in tourism. The results clearly indicate that company size, level of internationalisation, chain affiliation, ownership type, and type of services offered serve as signals of the job quality and influence prospective employees' perceptions of career attractiveness in the tourism industry. Job content is the dimension of employer image which is the most prone to be affected by analysed organisational variables.

The findings that the tourism company employment image is affected by objective factors are to some extent complementary to those obtained in previous research on organisation attractiveness for prospective applicants in different contexts. In their investigation of Belgian final-year students of two majors – engineering and business, LIEVENS et al. (2001) diagnosed that level of internationalisation, company size, and level of centralisation significantly influenced attraction to organisation. BARBER et al. (1999) surveyed graduating seniors in business, engineering, and related fields in United States and revealed that firm size was important factor of labour market segmentation with regard to preferences and job search behaviours.

The results of the present study extend previous research findings, because they provide a more complete and integrated perspective of determinants of the tourism company employment image. First, a set of organisational characteristics were examined as potential factors influencing the expectation-perception gaps for job/organisation attributes. Chain affiliation proved to have the most predictive power in explaining the variance of perceived tourism career attractiveness. Second, the investigation is not limited to overall company employment

image, it gives the insight into employer image dimensions and their links with organisational characteristics under study.

The investigation has both research and practical implications. The study may contribute to existing knowledge of job choice decisions by investigating differences in assessment of tourism organisation attractiveness as a workplace. It is important for tourism companies to understand organisational characteristics which potential employees interpret as signals of working conditions in order to effectively influence job choice behaviours. As stated by WALMSLEY et al. (2006), unmet expectations may be inevitably associated with the entering an unfamiliar organisational setting. In order to reduce the gap between preferred and perceived job/organisation attributes, students need to be informed realistically about working conditions in the tourism industry. Presenting only a positive picture of the employment experience can bring about unrealistic expectations of potential employees which could lead to disappointment, reduced job satisfaction, and subsequently undesirable workplace attitudes, behaviours, and performance outcomes.

6. Limitations and future research

As with all research, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the study. First, self-reported data were analysed and they are prone to common method bias, especially social desirability. Moreover, all variables under investigation relied on single-source data, thus the research findings might be influenced by response consistency effect. Another limitation of this research is that it was carried out only in one city in Poland within higher education institutions. Although the students, being close to entering the labour market, are appropriate respondents for the study, due to unique characteristics of the population, generalizations beyond the specific context of this

research must be guarded. Thus, replication using a more diverse sample of prospective employees who have more working experience and are at other stages of their careers would be beneficial. The findings may not generalize to other regions either, because of the different level of the tourism sector contribution to the local economy.

A number of opportunities for further research can be identified. An enhanced understanding of determinants of the employer image in the tourism industry is surely the major contribution this study offers. It would be worth to further identify and refine consequences of the perceived tourism labour market attractiveness for job search intentions and behaviours. Promising avenues for further research would be to explore circumstances in which a company employment image would be more or less influential in decisions regarding the choice of organisation as a workplace. Interesting findings could be produced by a longitudinal study following undergraduates as they progress through their degrees and the training programs; it would enable to track changes in students' expectations towards work and perceptions of careers in tourism. Still to be examined is the degree to which the results could be confirmed for other target groups. Further studies are needed to verify or repudiate these findings within different contexts.

Conclusion

Because of the utility of having the top-quality applicants, it is increasingly important for tourism companies to expend more effort in attracting and recruiting practices. Promoting a positive employer image can be considered as an important tool for enterprises to attract high-qualified, high-performing, service-oriented, and committed personnel who will cooperate in developing competitive advantage. Learning expectations and perceptions of

students can help gain insights into the factors that may influence positively or negatively the assessment of the tourism industry as an employer. By investigating their employment image, companies would benefit from getting a clear picture of the preferences of future employees and from locating any incorrect beliefs that job seekers might hold. Understanding how potential applicants evaluate the importance of various job/organisation attributes and the extent to which the company can satisfy their needs with regard to job content and context, gives tourism enterprises opportunity to take measures aimed at ensuring that prospective employees are not failing to enter the industry after graduation or treating tourism jobs as short-lived professions. Only when companies work towards identifying desired job and organisation attributes and then striving to develop these attributes can they hope to successfully compete in recruiting the best available candidates and retaining them.

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Appendix

Employer image dimensions and items

<i>1. Job content</i>
Your job matches your individual interests.
Your job involves tasks that are challenging.
You can influence decisions that are important for your work.
<i>2. Development value</i>
Your job offers good prospects for career advancement.
You are given possibilities of enhancing qualifications.
Your job provides you with experience for future employment.
Your job offers stable employment conditions.
<i>3. Economic value and work-life fit</i>
Your job guarantees high salary.
You are equipped with adequate devices for performing tasks.
Your working hours are irregular.
Your work fits in with your family or social commitments.
<i>4. Social value</i>
Your job offers friendly atmosphere.
You have the feeling of trust and cooperation at your workplace.
You are provided with feedback on your work.
Your job enjoys high social prestige.