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**Students' Perceptions towards Working in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry in United Arab Emirates****Dr. Maryam Taha Mannaa****Assistant professor, Department of History and Islamic Civilization, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, UAE;****Lecturer, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Alexandria University, Alexandria, Egypt**[m.taha@sharjah.ac.ae](mailto:m.taha@sharjah.ac.ae)[maryoum1000@yahoo.com](mailto:maryoum1000@yahoo.com)**Mohamed Abou-Shouk****Associate professor, Department of History and Islamic Civilization, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, UAE;****Assistant professor, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Fayoum University, Fayoum, Egypt**[maboushouk@sharjah.ac.ae](mailto:maboushouk@sharjah.ac.ae)**Abstract**

There are few studies on student perceptions of working in the tourism sector in Arab and Islamic countries. Taking into account the factors related to the cultural dimensions and to the society, the current study aims to examine the factors that influence the perception of tourism students in United Arab Emirates (UAE) to work in the tourism sector after graduation. Based on a random sample of students enrolled in the tourism program at the university level and using the structural equation modelling technique of analysis, the findings revealed that the commitment of students to work in the tourism sector is negatively influenced by the social aspects, the nature of work and the pay and promotion benefits. The current study is useful for all policy makers in education and tourism businesses to improve the image of tourism jobs in the minds of tourism students in the UAE, as well as to attract and retain skilled national employment and reduce the leakage of tourism income resulting from a high percentage of non-national employment.

**Keywords:** Commitment to work, Students' perceptions, Tourism career, Tourism study, UAE

**Introduction**

Tourism is a rapidly growing industry and a major source of employment. One of the main arguments for endorsing tourism development is that it creates a large number of jobs, both directly in sectors where tourism spending occurs and indirectly across the links between industries (Gebbers, Pantelidis, & Turner, 2020). However, while tourism industry growth generates new jobs, these jobs are also