

The Tourism Workforce and Policy: Exploring the Assumptions using Crete as the Case Study

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The size of the tourism workforce has grown rapidly to the extent that today, travel and tourism is considered to be the world's largest employer. The potential of tourism for generating jobs in areas where there are few other alternatives for employment has resulted in many governments electing to expand their tourism industry. Nevertheless, tourism has been criticised for creating part-time, seasonal, low quality and informal jobs often occupied by migrants and females. This paper sets out the main characteristics of the tourism workforce as reported by academic papers, identifies whether the same characteristics are evident on the island of Crete (Greece), and discusses the issues surrounding tourism policy formulation in relation to the tourism workforce of Crete. The conclusion is that very often jobs in tourism are judged, and responses formulated, on a normative (value laden) basis (an ideal) without full consideration being given to the actual (technical) underpinnings and implications.

Keywords: tourism, jobs, seasonality, quality, policy, Crete.

Introduction

Tourism development has been seen as a positive agent of change for many areas because of its potential for job creation, income generation, improvements in the balance of payments and the acquisition of hard currency (Andriotis, 2001, 2002a). This potential of tourism to generate economic activity in areas where there are typically few alternative sources of economic diversification has been realised by many governments and, as a result, tourism has been identified as playing a role in many development and regeneration strategies.

However, there is, and has been, widespread debate about the contribution of tourism to economic development and/or economic regeneration. For example, over a decade ago Williams and Shaw (1991: 1), while drawing attention to earlier authors who questioned the overall benefit-cost impact of tourism, identified that tourism was 'shrouded with myths and stereotypes' and that there was a need to 'examine critically . . . its contribution to economic development'.

The need for critical examination is still relevant in respect of the development and adoption of policies aimed at improving the quality of tourism as an economic activity providing job opportunities. As Tosun (1999: 227) has stated,

'questions about the quality of the jobs created by the tourism industry . . . should be taken into account when examining the contribution of tourism to employment . . . Although there is no reliable research or agreement on this issue'. In addition, some of the underlying assumptions and inter-relationships are rarely, if ever, discussed. The questions to be addressed when developing policies are whether the characteristics of tourism jobs are really good or bad and whether addressing them as problems is always the correct way forward.

To provide a critical analysis of the relationship between tourism as a provider of jobs, and the subsequent policy intervention(s), this paper adopts a case study approach based on tourism as a provider of jobs in Crete. The paper has five main sections as follows. The first section describes the scale, characteristics and economic impacts of tourism on the Cretan economy. The second section provides a review of the general characteristics of the tourism workforce, as reported by academic papers and research reports. This section illustrates the key elements of the debate on the nature of tourism as an economic activity and of the related jobs in particular. This is followed by an examination of the characteristics of the tourism workforce in Crete, taking each of the foci identified in the general review. The fourth section outlines a selection of policies adopted towards tourism in Crete, recognising that much tourism policy is not specifically directed at the workforce but has implications for it. The final section is a discussion of the interrelationship between the nature of the tourism workforce and tourism jobs and other considerations in the performance of tourism and the Cretan economy.

The Context: Tourism and the Economy of Crete

Measuring tourism in Crete

It is not an easy task to uncover the scale of tourism in the Cretan economy because of the existence of a black economy (parallel economy). The existence of a black tourism economy is evident in Crete in the considerable number of undeclared, unlicensed units and rooms, known as 'parahoteleria'. These increase the bed supply, evade taxation and operate without control and regulation (Andriotis, 2002b; Apostolopoulos, 1994; Leontidou, 1998). This black economy has been estimated to be equal in Greece, as a whole, to approximately 29% of the Gross National Product (EIU, 1995; Williams & Windebank, 1995). With this as the background, indications of the likely scale, pattern and impact of tourism on the economy of the island of Crete are given below.

The scale of tourism

Before 1960 Crete attracted small numbers of non-institutionalised types of tourist, as has been the common experience for most destinations in their early stages, according to Cohen (1972) and Smith (1978). In the case of Crete, such tourists consisted of the 'small numbers of archaeologically or classically educated foreigners . . . [who] . . . came on what amounted, for them, to a sacred pilgrimage' (Greger, 1988: 112). After 1960, with the introduction of rapid air travel, tourism has increased rapidly and the island today is a destination for organised mass tourism. For example, in 1980, the number of nights spent by

foreign (non-Greek) tourists in Crete was 4.9 million or 16.7% of the national total for Greece. Nineteen years later in 1999, the number had increased by 147.3% to 12.25 million or 27% of the national total. In comparison, domestic (Greek) tourist bednights in 1999 reached approximately 0.86 million or 6% of the total bednights spent on the island. However, any reference made to statistics of domestic tourists should be treated with caution because, as Leontidou (1998: 113) remarks, domestic tourism in Greece is difficult to measure, because domestic tourists usually prefer room to let and second homes, and most of these rooms/homes are undeclared.

The seasonal distribution of tourism activity

There is an unequal seasonal distribution of tourism activity in the island with the tourism season lasting from April to October and almost 80% of the bednights recorded between May and September (Donatos & Zairis, 1991; Drakatos, 1987; Tsitouras, 1998). As Drakatos (1987) states, seasonal concentration has considerable implications for the competitiveness of the island's tourism industry, as well as for the cost of the tourist product. Nevertheless, tourist arrivals in Crete show a lower seasonal variation compared to other Greek islands. As Tsitouras (1998) states for the period 1991–1995, seasonality in Crete reduced by 9.7% and charter flights to the airport of Chania arrive for over six months a year, and for the airport of Heraklio 6.3 months, although for the other airports of insular Greece, the charter flight season lasts for less than 5.5 months. (An exception is the airport of Rhodes with 6.1 months.)

The spatial distribution of tourism

As well as an uneven temporal distribution of tourism activity, there is an unequal geographical concentration of tourism businesses. For example, it is estimated that 70% and over of hotel establishments are located in the northern coastal area (HNTO, 2002). As a result, tourism has contributed to regional imbalances with more than 70 percent of the population concentrated in the northern coastal areas (Eurostat, 1994) and almost half of the population residing in the Prefecture of Heraklio. Thus, the southern coast, and the hinterland where tourism is underdeveloped, is subject to serious depopulation, because of the migration of a large proportion of their economically active population to the urban centres, mainly the capital city of Heraklio.

The spending of visitors to Crete

In 1997, close to 2.5 million tourists visited the island, spending an estimated 500 billion Greek Drachmas (HNTO, 1998). Although not directly comparable with the overall spending figure, an indication of the way tourists divide their spending is given in a report by the TEI (1998). In that report it is stated that 42% of the total expenditure by foreign tourists is paid to foreign tour operators for the purchase of the tourist package (transport and accommodation). Of the remaining 58%, 24% is spent on shopping, 17% on catering expenditure, 12% on local transportation and 5% on services.

The importance of jobs in the tourism industry to the economy of the island

The Region of Crete (1995) estimated that approximately 40% of the local population is, directly or indirectly, involved in tourism activities. However, this

estimate may be an underestimate because of the problem of the black economy referred to above. This black economy takes in non-registered family members, expatriate employees without a work permit and employees in undeclared accommodation establishments. The number of such black economy jobs is significant. For example, Papadaki-Tzedaki (1997) reported that, in Rethymno (a city in Crete), 73% of hotel establishments had one or more undeclared family member working full or part-time but receiving no payment.

The overall importance and impact of the tourism sector

The contribution of tourism to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) exceeds 30% of the island's total GDP (Anastasakos & Lykos, 1997). In addition, employment opportunities in the tourism industry have had an effect on the unemployment rate for the island (Glytsos, 1999). In 1997 the unemployment rate was very low at 4.8% compared to 10.3% for Greece as a whole (NSSG, 1999). Glytsos (1999) has estimated that, in the future, unemployment rates will increase in Greece while in Crete the opposite will be true due to the flourishing tourism industry and the efficient agriculture. Therefore, he predicts that if no movement of workers into Crete takes place, labour shortages will result.

Evaluating the Tourism Workforce

Each of the above elements of the review of tourism in Crete has implications for the tourism workforce in Crete as discussed later. However, before that discussion, consideration of the ways in which the tourism workforce might be evaluated, given previous research, is presented. The intention is to identify what researchers have found out about the characteristics of the tourism workforce in other locations and how they have evaluated those characteristics.

The tourism workforce

The tourism industry covers enterprises that directly receive most of their income as a result of tourism spending, such as: hotels, catering establishments, travel agencies, car rentals, retail outlets, and various tourist attractions and leisure outlets. In addition, the industry encompasses other types of enterprise including construction, manufacturing, retailing, and services. These economic activities do not directly receive income from tourism spending, but they supply those enterprises that serve tourists directly. Thus, academic literature contains the results of many studies (e.g. Archer, 1977, 1995; Archer & Fletcher, 1996; Fletcher, 1989; Henry & Deane, 1997; Jackson, 1986; Milne, 1987; Ruiz, 1985; Wanhill, 1988; West, 1993; Witt, 1987) that have recognised the extensive linkages that tourism creates with other sectors of the economy, by devoting attention to the multiplier effects of tourism consumption. However, this paper focuses on the direct workforce: the workforce in the businesses in which tourists spend their money.

Evaluating the direct tourism workforce

Academic papers, as illustrated below, have identified the characteristics of the direct tourism workforce. They have generally highlighted the negative implications of many of these specific characteristics, as also illustrated, but have

not necessarily put those characteristics into an evaluative framework. Therefore, why a characteristic is positive or negative can become muddled, as can the basis of the evaluation. However, the authors of the papers have generally pointed to the need to improve the situation.

The first area of concern with regards to the evaluation of the characteristics of tourism, and of tourism jobs in particular, is whether such evaluations are based on value judgements or technical criteria. Value-based evaluations focus on a hidden 'ideal'. Thus the characteristics of tourism as an economic activity are compared with the characteristics of a 'real' economic activity such as manufacturing. That tourism offers different economic characteristics is therefore often presented as a problem. For example, it is often inferred, if not categorically stated, that jobs for males are better than jobs for females. The reason for this is that in the past, male employment has been seen as the basis of community economic survival and or development (Van Houts, 1983). The alternative would be technical evaluations that are based on what can be, or what is possible, rather than with an 'ideal'. As a result, the focus of a technically based evaluation is on what tourism provides rather than on what some other economic activity might have provided, had it not been for the fact that the alternative economic activity might find the area an unattractive location in which to conduct business.

The second area of concern with regard to evaluation of the characteristics of tourism, and of tourism jobs in particular, is that the existence of alternative viewpoints is often not recognised. Evaluations, however, can be based on a number of viewpoints, of which three are illustrated in this paper, and these can give different results. For example, an evaluation of the tourism workforce could focus on the contribution to the economy, the operation of the tourism-related businesses, or on the quality of the job for the individual worker. The nature of the question about the characteristic(s) differs in respect of each of these viewpoints and as a result the overall answer, even in simple terms of good and bad, may be different.

The third area of concern with regard to evaluation of the characteristics of tourism, and of tourism jobs in particular, is the notion of quality because in many academic papers (e.g. Bednarzik, 1988; Choy, 1995; Williams & Shaw, 1988) the quality of jobs in tourism is criticised. However, what the term 'quality' is referring to varies. First, quality may be defined in terms of the contribution of tourism jobs to the 'prospects' of the area. In this case, as identified above, jobs for males are presented as superior to jobs for females, as are manufacturing sector jobs compared to service (tourism) sector jobs. Also, seasonal and or part-time jobs are perceived as less good than full-time, or all-year jobs. In each of these cases the evaluation is based on which type of worker and which type of job will best maintain the local/national economy (Kontogeorgopoulos, 1998; Williams & Shaw, 1988). Second, quality may be defined in terms of the nature of the jobs offered. Waiting staff, sales assistants and kitchen porters, for example, are seen undertaking jobs of a lower quality in comparison with management and technical jobs; not least because of the relative terms and conditions of those jobs based on monetary rewards, working hours and opportunities for advancement (Choy, 1995).

The components of the direct workforce evaluation

Table 1 presents the major characteristics of the direct tourism workforce and gives examples of the various researchers who have identified those characteristics. Table 2 provides examples of how those characteristics have been evaluated using the three different viewpoints (contribution to the economy, the operation of the business and the jobs of the individual workers) and associated quality assessments. While most attention has been paid to the negative assessments

Table 1 Key characteristics of the tourism workforce identified by various researchers

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Studies</i>
Seasonal	Baum and Hagen (1999); Ashworth and Thomas (1999); Shaw and Williams (1988); Polytechnic of Central London <i>et al.</i> (1990); Ball (1988, 1989); Krakover (2000); Sinclair (1998).
Part-time	Robinson and Wallace (1983); Shaw and Williams (1988); Polytechnic of Central London <i>et al.</i> (1990); Sinclair (1998); Heerschap (1999).
Female	Robinson and Wallace (1983); Vaughan and Long (1982); Shaw and Williams (1988); Polytechnic of Central London <i>et al.</i> (1990); Purcell (1996); Heerschap (1999).
Expatriate/Migrant	Tsartas (1989); Ankomah (1991); Cukier-Snow and Wall (1993); Cukier and Wall (1994); Cukier (1996); Edwards and Fernades (1999); Lazaridis and Wickens (1999); Ayres (2000).
Pluriactivity	Papaoiannou (1987); Mourdoukoutas (1988); Tsartas (1991); Cukier-Snow and Wall (1993); Kassimati <i>et al.</i> (1993).
Informal economy	MacKay (1987); Kermath and Thomas (1992); Cukier-Snow and Wall (1994); Oppermann (1993); Cukier and Wall (1994); Woodcock and France (1994).

Table 2 Examples of evaluations of the tourism workforce

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Economy viewpoint</i>	<i>Business viewpoint</i>	<i>Individual viewpoint</i>
Seasonal	Under-utilisation of labour resources	Workers as required	Need alternative work outside 'season'
Part time	Flexibility in labour market	Flexibility in staffing	Skills not developed
Female	Male jobs are the basis of the economy	Lower staffing costs	Primarily 'lower quality' jobs
Expatriate/Migrant	Repatriation of incomes	Better management and other skills	Prevents locals obtaining higher quality jobs
Pluriactivity	Diversity of economic activities	Viability of 'marginal' economic activities	Flexibility of work
Informal economy	Lack of knowledge of workforce	Lower staffing costs	Potential for exploitation

(some of which are given in the table) some authors have drawn attention to the positive aspects of the tourism workforce characteristic, as explained below.

The nature of the job

Seasonal

Ball (1988), among many, has found that tourism is characterised, in many regions and countries, by a single main season and a period of the year when hotels and other tourist facilities remain closed or operate at reduced potential. This seasonal nature of tourism creates fluctuations in the number of local and regional jobs in tourism (Tsartas, 1989). As a result, workers involved in tourism usually have to find other jobs, or remain unemployed, during the off-season (Baron, 1975; Spartidis, 1976). This is not always seen as a good thing as indicated by Baum (1999).

Part-time

Part-time jobs are also widespread in the tourism industry. For example, Bull and Church (1994) indicated that 64% of hotel and catering employees in the UK in 1989 were part-time. However, as noted by Vaughan and Long (1982), such part-time employment is held up to be entirely inadequate if employees do not earn a satisfactory living. On the other hand, in cases where the tourism job provides an additional income, such jobs can be seen as beneficial.

Informal employment

Beyond the development of jobs in the formal sector, tourism is characterised in many host areas by widespread employment creation in the informal sector, such as prostitutes and street and beach vendors (Kermath & Thomas, 1992; MacKay, 1987; Woodcock & France, 1994). Employment in the informal sector, as well as second jobs, is very often not declared. As a result, such jobs are not included in official statistics. Consequently, it is often very difficult to gauge the real size of the tourism workforce (Cukier-Snow & Wall, 1993). Informal jobs, therefore, are seen as both a social and a tourism industry problem.

Pluriactivity

Tourism creates multiple employment when an individual works in more than one activity (Cukier-Snow & Wall, 1993; Kassimati *et al.*, 1993; Mourdoukoutas, 1988; Papaioannou, 1987). For example, an individual might be a civil servant during the day and a waiter at night or run a tourist shop during the summer season and be involved in agricultural activities during winter. Such pluriactivity has been presented as good and bad.

Quality of conditions of work

Quality may be denoted in monetary terms. When it has been, the tourism sector has been condemned for low wages. However, it can be argued that if the value of fringe benefits such as accommodation or meals, and monetary benefits such as tips, are taken into account the position might be different (Johnson, 1983).

Alternatively, quality in conditions of work may be evaluated in terms of working hours. In tourism working hours often exceed the norm for the working day. This tendency towards excessive hours is considered to be innate in the

tourist industry along with the absence of overtime rates of pay (Kassimati *et al.*, 1993: 164). On the other hand, limited working hours (part-time employment) are obviously advantageous for women who have a family, students or persons looking for a complementary income, since they can arrange their own working hours.

The people involved

Female

Many studies indicate that tourism creates jobs mainly for women. For example, the Polytechnic of Central London *et al.* (1990) reported that, although in the English economy 56% of jobs were done by men and 44% by women, in the tourism industry the proportions were 40% and 60% respectively. In addition, Phillimore (1998) indicated, more generally, that men tended to occupy most of the managerial positions. To this end, Richter (1995) likens tourism employment to a pyramid, with the base being predominantly women in seasonal and part-time jobs, and with only a minority reaching the top management positions. Also, Cukier *et al.* (1996) found, as is also the case elsewhere, that in the hotel sector of Bali women were paid less than men for similar work.

Expatriate

Given the tendency to concentrate tourist facilities in certain places, tourism creates labour shortages in some regions. Thus, tourism can generate jobs for migrants/immigrants and expatriate labour (Ayres, 2000; Cukier, 1996; Cukier-Snow & Wall, 1993; Edwards & Fernades, 1999; Tsartas, 1989). For example, Kontogeorgopoulos (1998) reported that local hotel staff in Samui and Phuket in Thailand accounted for only 18% and 46% respectively.

It is evident that in developing countries, foreigners, or non-locals, usually hold the managerial jobs and that jobs for the local population have been, if not still are, limited to low-level positions, such as waiters, bartenders, chambermaids, receptionists, kitchen help and maintenance (Ankomah, 1991). As foreign workers often repatriate their salaries, a proportion of earnings from the tourism industry leaks out of the economy (Ankomah, 1991).

Overall evaluation of the direct workforce

As noted above, the majority of studies have concluded that direct tourism jobs are largely seasonal, part-time, mostly taken by women and migrants and often in the informal sector (or a combination of all these).

Based on the characteristics described above, many authors have drawn attention to the question of whether jobs in tourism are real jobs (e.g. Papadopoulos & Mirza, 1985). In addition, other authors have drawn attention to tourism being perceived as a 'candyfloss industry' (Williams & Shaw, 1988). Also, as Vaughan and Long have reported, 'many view work in the tourism industry as being demeaning, requiring not service but servility' (Vaughan & Long, 1982: 30). Other authors (e.g. Baum, 1996; Burns, 1993; OECD, 1995; Williams & Shaw, 1994) have similarly indicated that many jobs in the tourism industry are of low quality and, as Tosun (1999) points out, that may reduce the long-term effectiveness of using tourism as a vehicle for economic development.

However, care must be taken in interpreting the results of studies simplistically. For example, in a study of tourism developments in the inner cities of England (Polytechnic of Central London *et al.*, 1990) it was found that the jobs created were of 'lower' quality, as defined by the critics, in that the jobs required a low level of skill and were filled with a high proportion of females working part time. However, the jobs matched the requirements of the unemployed inner-city residents for whom they were created, as defined by the pre-requisites of the grant aid that contributed to the financing of the projects (Polytechnic of Central London *et al.*, 1990). Therefore, notwithstanding the observations of Tosun (1999) on the possibility of widening the gap between rich and poor, criticism based on some 'ideal' (often male, full time, all year, manufacturing) is perhaps misplaced. While higher quality jobs, or different distributions of jobs throughout the year and across different groups within the community, may be the ideal, such ideal characteristics may not match the short-term requirements or capabilities of the area. However, to hold the view that tourism may be, or is, providing jobs relevant to the locality is, to some commentators, 'negative' and 'pragmatic', as stated by Shaw and Williams (2002: 270) about the interpretation (given above) by Vaughan (1990) of inner-city tourism jobs resulting from grant aid which had those types of jobs and workers among its objectives.

The Characteristics of the Tourism Workforce in Crete

This section is based on examining the position in Crete in relation to the main characteristics of the tourism workforce identified in research elsewhere in the world (as set out above). It examines whether Crete has the same characteristics as elsewhere in the world and sets the basis for the consideration of tourism-related policy in Crete in so far as that policy affects the workforce. The section is primarily based on a survey of 139 tourism enterprises, covering 1313 workers, undertaken in Crete in 1997 (Andriotis, 2000). Reference is also made to work undertaken by previous researchers on Crete.

Seasonality and the tourism workforce

Not surprisingly given the seasonal nature of tourism in Crete, and as found elsewhere in the world, Table 3 shows that the workforce in the enterprises contained in the sample was mainly seasonal (80%). However, this aggregated finding hides differences between the sectors. As shown in Table 4, tourist shops were largely staffed by seasonal workers (84%), although in the other sectors seasonal labour was slightly lower, approximately 79%.

Table 3 The workforce of the sampled enterprises (in percentages)

<i>All Sectors</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Seasonal	36	43	80
All year	10	11	20
Total	46	54	100
Number in the workforce	608	705	1313

Table 4 The workforce of the different sectors in the sample (in percentages)

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Accommodation</i>			
Seasonal	32	47	79
All year	10	11	21
Total	42	58	100
<i>Travel agencies/Car rentals</i>			
Seasonal	54	23	77
All year	10	13	23
Total	64	36	100
<i>Catering</i>			
Seasonal	49	30	79
All year	12	9	21
Total	61	39	100
<i>Tourist shops</i>			
Seasonal	39	45	84
All year	6	10	16
Total	45	55	100

Source: Andriotis 2000

Part-time/full-time characteristics of the tourism workforce

Unlike elsewhere in the world, 98% of the workforce in the sample of establishments worked full time. The proportion of part-time employment was very low for all sectors and included mainly family members who also had full-time employment, women family members in non-paid jobs or students who were working in the enterprises during their free time. However, since part-time employees are not usually registered with the appropriate National Insurance Agency, the respondents may have been reluctant to reveal their number.

Non-registered workers/informal employment

OANAK (1995) estimated that during the period 1979 to 1994 the number of hotel establishments increased by 16% annually while the number of rented rooms increased by 58%. This has had positive effects on employment. However, it has led to a demand for informal/underground employment. Informal employment can arise in two ways: oral agreements for the supply of non-family labour and either paid or non-paid family members assisting in family businesses (Kassimati *et al.*, 1993).

Pluriactivity

From the literature it was evident that very often people engaged in tourism activities receive additional income from other activities. This characteristic is evident in Crete in two ways. First, the 1997 survey found that 23% of the owners of the businesses included in the survey had a share of, or owned, other businesses. For 46% of owners with a second business, this business was related sectorally to their tourism enterprise. On the other hand, entrepreneurs had

diversified interests in other non-tourism businesses, such as retailing/wholesaling (21%), services (12%) and farming (6%). Moreover, 27% of the entrepreneurs received additional income from a second employment. The real percentage of owners with a second employment activity may be higher. As previous studies in Greece report (e.g. Kassimati *et al.*, 1993; Tsartas, 1989), respondents hide any second employment because it is usually unofficial. Among the owners with a second employment, this was either in services for (15%) or tourism (10%). However, the vast majority (64%) had farming activities, mainly during the winter months, indicating that in the island there is pluriactivity involving tourism and agriculture.

Second, from the employees' point of view, many locals have combined their tourism employment with a complementary job. As Papadaki-Tzedaki (1997) found among the hotel employees of Rethymno, 47% had a second employment, of which 77% were in agriculture.

Conditions of work

The review of existing tourism studies did not reveal much evidence about how residents/business people view employment in the tourism industry of Crete. The only study that has paid attention to Cretans' preferences in respect of employment was a study by Tsartas *et al.* (1995). According to this study, the residents of the Prefecture of Lassithi consider as good jobs those in the scientific professions (38%), those in the tourist professions (24%) and those in commerce (18%).

Another study by Mourdoukoutas (1988) reported that tourism employees work for many hours during the summer season, on average over 60 hours per week, and they receive 6.8% more in earnings per hour compared to employment in the industrial sector. Although the vast majority of tourism employees work for a maximum of 6.5 months a year, their income during the off-season is supplemented with unemployment compensation from the state. Therefore, one third of seasonal tourism employees do not want to work during the off-peak season even if they had the opportunity to have the same job at the same wage for that season (Mourdoukoutas, 1985). Thus in Crete tourism may not be considered a low quality job opportunity.

Gender and the tourism workforce

Overall, 54% of the workforce in the enterprises contained in the 1997 sample was female (Table 3). As was the case for seasonality, this aggregated finding hides differences between the sectors (Table 4). The accommodation sector had the highest proportion of female employment (58%), followed by the tourist shops (55%). Travel agencies/car rentals had a very high percentage of male employees (64%). Finally, the tourist shops had the lowest share of male employees (45%).

The overall gender characteristics hide different contributions by each sex within the workforce. These different contributions perhaps confirm stereotypes of the division of work in the tourism industry or reflect simple historical accident.

First, in terms of stereotypes, there is no intrinsic reason for any work in the tourism industry to be specifically for women or men but some men possibly

think that such employment would compromise their masculinity (Vaughan & Long, 1982). In Crete, as revealed in the 1997 survey, the accommodation sector exemplifies these possibilities with the males usually being responsible for the management, maintenance, supplies, bar, negotiation and signing up of contracts, as well as financial functions, while the females were more involved in cleaning, cooking, serving and reception responsibilities, since these types of jobs represent an extension of housekeeping skills traditionally acquired by women.

Second, as a result of historical accident, the position in relation to tourist shops is different. Many of the shops have been set up by women in certain areas. For example, in Anoya, a Cretan mountain village, tourism was seen as a new economic activity that entered the life of the villagers and many women of the village working manual looms opened small shops, where they could sell their products to tourists (Saulnier, 1980).

Overall, in most of the tourism sector of Crete, males have been found to be employed high in the hierarchy of jobs, while women dominate the middle or low rank of the hierarchy: in other words 'lower quality jobs' (Kassimati *et al.*, 1993). As Papadaki-Tzedaki (1997) reported for Rethymno, although 64 percent of all hotel employees are women, only 20% held managerial positions. On average, Kassimati *et al.* (1993) estimated that, in Crete only 28% of the hotel managers were women. In addition, women managers were mostly employed in lower standard hotels, often owned by their family (Kassimati *et al.*, 1993).

These gender characteristics of the tourism workforce in Crete mirror those found elsewhere in the world: as identified earlier.

Migrant workers

Tourism development in the island has attracted a migrant workforce (Papadaki-Tzedaki, 1997). For instance, AHTE (1995) estimates that in Chersonisos (a mass developed resort), the local population is approximately 4000, although the incoming workforce during the summer is approximately 10,000. The characteristics of this workforce are similar to those identified by Lazaridis and Wickens (1999) for Greece as a whole. First, there is 'a replacement labour' force, filling the undesirable, low paid menial jobs in the primary and tertiary sectors, that have recently been deserted by Greeks. Second, there are the Western tourist-workers. These workers are European Community citizens who enter the country legally during the summer season, attracted by the good life and the climate. Most of these employees, even those who work legally, get wages up to 50% below those of Greek nationals despite the agreement of the Greek state with the International Labour Office convention (Diktakis, 1993: 639 cited in Lazaridis & Wickens, 1999: 639).

In addition, the island's tourism industry has attracted many Greek nationals, as reported by Mourdoukoutas (1988), Papadaki-Tzedaki (1997) and Herzfeld (1991). As Herzfeld (1991) remarks in respect of Rethymno, no Greek national entrepreneurs operate their firms during the winter because the vast majority return to their home towns. To these ends, Mourdoukoutas (1988) estimated that in Crete 77% of the total employees in tourist establishments were all-year residents, and the remaining 23% came from other regions of Greece just for the summer tourist season.

Intervention in Tourism in Crete

Public sector intervention in tourism on Crete is largely the same as that of Greece as a whole (Andriotis, 2001). Some of the tourism intervention policies that have a bearing on the subject of this paper are described below as the context for the discussion of the implications for potential workforce policies.

Incentives for investment

The early five-year plans for Economic Development 1968–1972 and 1973–1977 have viewed tourism as one of the most dynamic sectors of the economic development of Crete and as a solution for the unemployment problem of the underdeveloped areas of the island (Andriotis, 2002b). The next five-year plans of 1976–80 and 1983–1987 attempted to support local control and increase employment opportunities for the local population by giving incentives to local investors for the construction of small units. This interest of the Greek authorities in small and medium-sized enterprises is attributed to their potential to provide both an alternative to unemployment for many Greeks and because in Greece it is thought that the quality of working life in a small firm may be better than in a large one (Andriotis, 2002b; EC, 1987).

However, many problems resulted from the concentration of numerous small and medium-sized hospitality firms, mainly related to the physical transformation of the island as the building of more and more tourist enterprises mars the landscape and makes it difficult to control their activities (Andriotis, 2001). As a result, the five-year plan of Economic Development 1988–1992 and the last Development Laws 2234/94 and 2601/98 changed direction towards the promotion of selective tourism in large hotels and large-scale developments that increased employment opportunities to outsiders.

Due to the considerable interest of the Greek Government in the tourism industry of the island, and the support provided to the private investors for the creation of new vacancies (Andriotis, 2002b; Kassimati *et al.*, 1993), 18% of subsidies for hotel construction through incentive laws in Greece during the period 1982 to 1995 were given to Crete (Hotel Chamber of Greece, 1996). In particular, 435 hotel establishments were subsidised by, approximately, 17 billion Greek drachmas (Hotel Chamber of Greece, 1996). The total amount of investment was approximately 56 billion drachmas and 5800 jobs were created (9.64 million drachmas created one job). The main reason for this provision of incentives to private investors for the establishment of tourist businesses and the creation of infrastructure by the Greek state was to create new job vacancies and to reduce the emigration problems of the past.

Incentives for job creation

In addition, to eliminate unemployment the Greek Government provided in 1997 a subsidy of 4000 drachmas per full working day to entrepreneurs that hire workers who were listed as unemployed in the records of the State Labour Organisation for at least six months and who were between the ages of 18 and 64, or alternatively people up to 27 years of age who had been unemployed for at least three months (ELKE, 1999). This subsidy is provided for 16 months in the

case of men and 18 months in the case of women (ELKE, 1999: 18–19). (In Greece subsidy terms and conditions are revised annually in ministerial decisions.)

Greek tourism policy has also given high priority to the generation of employment for women and the legislation protects women from discrimination in employment. As a result, a Secretariat of Equality was set up as a part of a conscious government policy to improve women's affairs, generate income for Greek women and more specifically to provide an opportunity for work for rural women who find little or no work in the labour market (Castelberg-Koulma, 1991). The initiatives of the Secretariat for increased opportunities for women in the tourist industry include the operation of programmes providing financial support, training and technical education (Kassimati *et al.*, 1993).

Addressing seasonality

Due to a lack of synergy, state attempts to entice foreign tourists to visit Crete during the winter have not been successful, despite the great potential of the island for the expansion of its tourism season (Donatos & Zairis, 1991; OANAK, 1995). Only recently, a plan for 12-month tourism was designed in an attempt to mitigate the seasonal concentration of tourism activity. This plan attached major importance to publicity, the coordination of all participant action, and the provision of incentives to Cretan enterprises, airlines and tour operators (Unique Hellas, 1997). A pilot programme (1998–99) was designed with the cooperation of the HNTO, the Region of Crete and a large group of businessmen (hoteliers, travel agents and Greek tour operators) (Xenios, 1998). However, up to now the results are not encouraging.

Controlling immigration

Greece has recently changed from being a country with a long history of emigration to become a destination for migrants originating from underdeveloped countries (mainly Albania, the former Soviet Union, and the former Yugoslavia) where political instability and poverty exist. The pull factors for these Eastern workers are mainly the employment opportunities, the relative ease of entry throughout the long coastline and the mountains and, until recently, the lax immigration policy (Lazaridis, 1996). To eliminate the illegal activities of these employees, the state has introduced policies to regularise illegal migrants. On the other hand, the membership of the European Union (EU) has given rights to EU nationals to enter the country legally and work in the tourism industry without intervention by the Greek state.

The Implications of Intervention in the Tourism Workforce Characteristics of Crete

Questions relating to the characteristics

The expansion of the island's tourism industry has been used as a means of replacing traditional full-time employment lost by other sectors of the Cretan economy, mainly agriculture, and has contributed to the reduction of unemployment rates. However, as evidenced above, the tourism sector on Crete displays characteristics that have been criticised elsewhere, in particular seasonality, a high proportion of females in the workforce and migrant labour. However, negative

interpretations of the observed characteristics may be simplistic and be doing tourism a disservice both in Crete and elsewhere. Thus, this final section explores whether it is always the case that tourism policy, and tourism workforce policy in particular, should address seasonality, gender, and jobs for locals.

Interrelationships

Given the importance of the tourism industry to the local community, and the potential negative implication of seasonality for the profitability of many tourist enterprises, efforts could be, and have been, made to expand the season. For example, there could be programmes for the attraction of markets such as senior citizens, conference/incentive tourism and specialised types of tourism, for example nautical tourism, sport, cultural, agro-tourism, eco-tourism, mountain and trekking tourism. Reducing seasonality in these ways can be seen as positive for the economy and for workers. However, changes in one aspect of tourism, seasonality, can have implications for the others. Significantly reducing seasonality by increasing visits out of the main season, rather than decreasing visits during the main season, could have implications for pluriactivity and for migrant labour, in either or both of the tourism and the agricultural sectors, as explained below, and these implications may not be entirely positive.

First, much of the tourism workforce in Crete displays, as was found in studies elsewhere, pluriactivity. Many Cretans work in tourism during the summer season and in agriculture during winter. Pluriactivity in the island's economy is considered beneficial, since there is a seasonal balance that increases income and employment opportunities for the local population. Reducing seasonality through increasing off-season visits may cause problems for the agricultural sector by taking away workers who otherwise would be pluriactive and may affect the ability of the agricultural sector to supply the local tourism industry.

Second, migrant labour is a concern, not just because it brings in people from outside Crete, but because of two potential outcomes. First, migrant workers are prepared to receive lower wages compared to locals and therefore they may bring about difficulties for locals in finding a job in the tourism industry. Second, most of the non-Greek workforce is undeclared and this makes such workers attractive to employers but much less attractive to the Government, because of lost taxation revenues. Thus, reducing seasonality may bring about a requirement for an agency responsible for the inspection of tourism enterprises and the legality of their workforce. Without such an agency there may not be the expected increase of taxes receivable by the Greek Government and the increase of employment opportunities for locals.

Seasonality as a way of life

Tourism in Crete, and therefore the workforce, is seasonal. However, most of the tourism workforce in Crete would be unable to find a job in any other economic sector, and thus seasonal employment is better than unemployment (Mourdoukoutas, 1985). In addition, the seasonality of tourism has created, as already noted, a beneficial pluriactivity with a seasonal balance in incomes, as well as pluriactivity based on combining tourism and agriculture. If future policy seeks to make tourism jobs year round and full time, there might be a decrease of pluriactivity because the tourism workforce might, perhaps, prefer the stable

income created by tourism employment to the uncertainty of agricultural production. As a result, there might be a monoculture in tourism and a subsequent increase of leakages through the purchase of imported agricultural products, with negative consequences to the economy of the island.

While it might be argued that simply because there is no alternative a thing is not necessarily good, it is not the case that seasonality is always viewed in a negative light by the individuals involved. Elsewhere in the world, for example, other advantages of seasonality have been documented. Ball (1988), for example, has pointed to seasonal jobs providing not only income, but also access to holiday facilities or a pleasant seaside environment, and perhaps being seen as higher quality and prestigious. Likewise, Lundtorp *et al.* (1999) remark that some employees in Denmark find that 'having a two or three month lay-off out of season is a bonus rather than a hardship' (p. 63).

Migrants in the workforce

Tourism is seen as beneficial for the island and its population. Bearing in mind that tourism activity is expected to increase (Eurostat, 1994), and that the 'reserve' labour supply is limited, a further increase in the migrant workforce will probably be unavoidable. However, this demand/supply situation will probably not prevent calls being made to ensure that any new jobs are for locals rather than outsiders, or that certain types of higher quality jobs (managerial) be reserved for locals. The reason is that migrant workers, and even people who move on a more permanent basis, are often viewed negatively: they are not 'locals' and they may be making tourism jobs more difficult to find, and the financial rewards from tourism jobs lower. Therefore, what should be the policy response in terms of the residence/origin characteristics of the future workforce?

The simple policy reaction is to try to 'reserve' the benefits of tourism for locals. For example, attempts might be made to decrease, or even nullify, unemployment rates for the local population through reserving the jobs for Cretans. In addition, or alternatively, through education and training a higher share of 'better' jobs might be the objective in order to stop locals becoming 'the servants of foreigners'. However, the simple policy reaction might not be appropriate. There are the questions of why local labour should be considered better and also the questions posed by labour mobility laws within the EU to consider.

The gender balance

Tourism in Crete has a high proportion of females in the workforce. However, different types of tourism enterprise have different workforce characteristics in respect of the gender of their employees. Specifically, accommodation establishments have a higher share of female employees, whilst travel agencies/car rentals have a higher share of male workers. In addition, in Crete, tourism creates direct employment mostly for women while males occupy the majority of indirect jobs. For example, construction jobs are almost totally occupied by men and, as Kassimati *et al.* (1993) estimate for Greece as a whole, 70–80% of employment in the agricultural, industrial and manufacturing sectors are filled by men. As a result, for the economy as a whole, there may be a balance between male and female employment, or even a surplus of male jobs, when indirect employment is taken into account.

With the above as the context, reacting to the current gender balance by attempting to reduce the proportion of the workforce accounted for by females, as is often suggested as a policy proposal in academic and official documents, may not necessarily be appropriate and would run counter to the Government's efforts to foster female employment, particularly in rural areas, as mentioned earlier. In addition, there are the more difficult questions of what would be a 'better' gender balance and why it would be better. Is an equal number of male and female employees better and is providing jobs for males better than providing jobs for females? Developing 'standard' policies, based on the some 'ideal' gender balance within the tourism workforce, is all too simple, as is criticising tourism for not matching that ideal.

Conclusion

This paper has explored the characteristics of the tourism workforce, the interpretation of those characteristics by academic researchers and commentators, the policy initiatives that have been proposed or implemented to address specifically the negative interpretations placed on the characteristics of the tourism workforce, and the interlinkages between the foci of policy that address tourism workforce issues.

The paper used Crete as a case study context for the exploration of the issues identified above in relation to the tourism workforce, because research had shown that the workforce of the Cretan tourism industry, the issues identified in regard to that workforce and the policy responses shared many similarities with other areas of the world. The workforce characteristics, in Crete and in other areas of the world, had led to criticism and proposals for policies to rectify the perceived problem: the problem being that tourism jobs which are seasonal, part time and taken by females and migrants are often seen as less 'worthy'. However, as illustrated in the paper, the reality may not be as simple as this and the policy prescriptions may not be as straightforward as they seem. In this, Crete also offered advantages as a case study because the scale and nature of the Cretan economy, and of its tourism economy, allowed the interrelationships between policy foci to be identified and evaluated.

The discussion of the implications of the characteristics of the tourism workforce, as found in research in Crete and in other areas of the world, illustrated a range of pitfalls in interpretation of the situation and the policy response. First, the viewpoint, or the focus of the evaluation (the implications for the economy, for the business or for the individual) will make a difference to the evaluation. This may appear a simple point but it is one that is often overlooked in the interpretation of the characteristics of the workforce. Thus, the section on evaluating the direct workforce illustrates that there is more than one view possible and that the different viewpoints may give different answers. Second, there is the hidden 'ideal', involved in many policy proposals, based on the characteristics of the tourism workforce. There is a difference between the technical considerations (a positive, 'what can be', viewpoint) and the value considerations (a normative, 'what should be', viewpoint). Very often jobs in tourism are judged, and responses formulated, on a normative (value laden) basis (an ideal) without full consideration being given to the actual (technical) underpinnings and

implications. Finally, many of the characteristics of the tourism workforce may be interdependent with other aspects of the economy. Thus 'solving' a perceived problem in relation to the tourism workforce may have ramifications for other aspects of the economy that need to be taken into consideration.

However, to suggest on the basis of the arguments presented in this paper that nothing can, or should, be done to improve the contribution of tourism to the socioeconomic welfare at the economy and individual level, would be as misleading as to suggest that tourism is intrinsically not a real economic activity with little to offer to the economy and the individual. This paper acknowledges that the characteristics of the tourism workforce can be interpreted in a negative light by those interested in the contribution of tourism to the economy, by business people trying to operate efficiently and effectively and by people in the tourism workforce. However, what the paper has tried to highlight is that not all the perceived problems may actually be problems in all places and at all times (for example, labour turnover in the hotel sector might be viewed both as a problem and as an opportunity for the industry) and that responses or policies appropriate in one situation may not be appropriate in another situation.

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