

Papers

Labor market for tourism graduates: comparisons between 2012 and 2018 data

O mercado de trabalho dos egressos de cursos superiores em turismo: comparações dos dados de 2012 e 2018

El mercado laboral para egresado de programas superiores de Turismo: comparaciones entre datos de 2012 y 2018

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Keywords:

Tourism,
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Palavras-chave:

Turismo,
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Abstract

There has been much debate about tourism education, including work groups in several events. However, there is little information about the employability of graduates of these programs. Over time there has been an increasing gap between the interests of training providers and employers, the former being more focused on the academic and humanistic formation of undergraduates and the latter focusing on the need for professionals with proper skills acquired during their undergraduate education. Analyzing the data from research on the Professional activity of tourism graduates in 2012 and 2018, this article discusses the labor market of higher education graduates in Brazil, in terms of the main activities, sectors of activity, and remuneration. This study is based on primary and secondary data, with a descriptive character and a qualitative approach in the interpretation of the data. Among the main results it is possible to highlight that tourism jobs are not as diverse as suggested by higher education institutions, since we found most jobs are concentrated in one or few positions. Also, the perception of a small improvement in remuneration, the rise of the participation of teachers in the market, and the growth of respondents linked to the public sector are among the main findings.

Resumo

Ainda que haja muito debate acerca da formação em turismo, incluindo grupos de trabalho em muitos eventos, há, do outro lado, pouca informação acerca da empregabilidade dos egressos desses cursos. Houve ao longo do tempo um distanciamento notório entre os interesses dos formadores e dos contratantes, sendo os primeiros mais voltados à construção acadêmica e humanística dos graduandos e os últimos com foco em profissionais com habilidades adquiridas de forma adequada durante seu período de formação. A partir da comparação entre os dados da atuação profissional dos egressos de cursos superiores em turismo 2012 e 2018, o presente artigo discute o mercado de trabalho de egressos de cursos superiores no Brasil, no que diz respeito às principais atividades, setores de atuação e remuneração. Baseia-se em dados primários e secundários, com caráter descritivo e enfoque qualitativo na interpretação dos dados. Entre os principais resultados destacam-se que o mercado de trabalho em turismo não é tão diversificado quanto se pensa e se ensina nos cursos de turismo já que se percebe concentração de turismólogos em uma única ou poucas áreas de atuação; uma percepção da melhora discreta na remuneração e aumento da participação de docentes no mercado e o aumento de respondentes ligados ao setor público.

Palabras clave:

Turismo,
Formación Superior,
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**Resumen**

Mucho debate acerca de la formación en turismo há ocurrido, incluyendo grupos de trabajo en muchos eventos. Por el otro lado, hay poca información acerca de la empleabilidad de los egresados de estos cursos. A lo largo del tiempo se han alejado notoriamente los intereses de los formadores y de los contratadores, con los primeros más orientados a la construcción académica y humanística de los graduandos y los últimos con foco en profesionales con habilidades adquiridas de forma adecuada durante su período de formación. Desde la comparación entre los datos de la actuación profesional de los egresados de cursos superiores en turismo en 2012 y 2018, el presente artículo discute el mercado de trabajo de egresados de cursos superiores en Brasil, en lo que se refiere a las actividades principales, sectores de actuación y remuneración. Se basa en datos primarios y secundarios, con carácter más descriptivo y con enfoque cualitativo en la interpretación de los datos. Entre los principales resultados se destacan que el mercado laboral en turismo no es tan diversificado cuanto se piensa e se enseña en los cursos de turismo una vez que se percibe una concentración de turismólogos en una única o pocas áreas de actividad; la percepción de la mejora discreta en la remuneración, aumento de la participación de docentes en el mercado y el mayor cantidad de respondientes ligados al sector público.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The labor market for tourism graduates can be considered diversified since it encompasses multiple activities linked, for example, to accommodation, food, transport, and leisure and entertainment, which has direct effects on the training of professionals in this area.

Tourism education in Brazil has boomed with the expansion of higher education programs and the increase in the number of students, especially, in the early twenty-first century; however, more recently, it suffered a sharp drop in demand (Medaglia, Silveira, & Gandara, 2012; Santos, Costa, & Malerba, 2015; Sogayar & Rejowski, 2011). Scholars in the field of tourism have been debating and investigating these issues which leads to a rethinking of education and training (Cunha Aranha & Daniela Chaves Rocha, 2014; Paula, Carvalho & Pimentel, 2018). Despite the considerable amount of research on higher education in tourism, along with multiple discussion groups, there is little research on a phenomenon directly related to tourism graduate education: the labor market and employment in tourism. It is understood that employability, in its broadest sense, can establish closer connections between education and work, since many skills are acquired in the workplace and learning goes beyond formal education.

However, for some time now there has been a mismatch between employers' needs and educational institutions' approach to training (Barretto, Tamanini, & Silva, 2004; S. R. Leal, 2010; Medaglia et al., 2012; Sogayar & Rejowski, 2011). The former wants specialized and up-to-date labor, and the latter is more concerned with developing citizenship competencies and with deep (theoretical) knowledge of structural issues. What is perceived, then, is a dialogue gap that hinders the integration between market and education. So, it is against this background that this 'umbrella' project arose from which this study originated, as well as the research group that analyzes these data and encourages investigation of the topic.

This paper aims to discuss the labor market of tourism professionals in Brazil, analyzing the results of two editions of the survey "Professional activity of higher education graduates of tourism programs, 2012 and 2018" (Silveira & Medaglia, 2012; Silveira, Medaglia, & Massukado-Nakatani, 2018), in particular, issues related to the main area of activity of tourism graduates, payment, and professional integration in the public and private sectors. For the specific purpose of this research, we considered as a tourism professional the tourism graduate, in the modalities that make up Brazilian undergraduate education in tourism, i.e., bachelor's and associate's degrees, being this latter in the case of Brazilian educational system, a complete undergraduate level called *tecnólogo* in Brazilian Portuguese.

Comparisons between the two different moments provide important insights to understand the relationship between employability, education, and the labor market and to discuss the professional activity of graduates. Other research on employability has already shown us the importance of what Pimentel and Paula (2014) call self-diagnosis, but broader and more comprehensive studies are needed, where not only the professional performance but also the profession itself are questioned.

This paper begins with a brief discussion about the historical-political context of tourism programs in Brazil. Then, it presents the analyzed research with a brief explanation about origins and characteristics, describing the sample context. The fourth part brings research data and results, comparing, where necessary, with another or broader fields. We conclude with the discussion of the main results, also presenting the limitations of the study and avenues for future research.

2 CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT DATA SOURCE AND PROFESSIONAL CONTEXT: WHO COULD BE INTERESTED IN THIS?

Tourism education and training was, on the one hand, the result of the evolution of the professional market that fostered new activities related to services, and, on the other, the release of new programs at two different moments in recent Brazilian history: the origins (in the 1970s) and expansion (in the 1990s). The first curricula brought to higher education characteristics of technical or operational activities (Ansarah, 2002; Matias, 2002) that together were enough workload for tertiary education, and were related to activities performed in workplaces by tourism graduates. The expansion in the 1990s was marked by and oriented towards management, since at that time the experts who evaluated tourism programs came from the management field, and the regional boards of directors embraced and accredited tourism graduates (Matias, 2002). With the growth in the supply of higher education programs in tourism along with other academic, political, and associative actions – such as the establishment of the Brazilian curriculum directive for tourism programs in 2006 and the creation of representative bodies – tourism education was moving away from management and gaining its own space within academy in Brazil.

This search for identity, however, did not translate into well-established or specific professional activities arising partially or totally from tourism education, as occurred with programs such as design, speech therapy, or even architecture in earlier times. On the contrary, Barretto et al. (2004) argue that the breadth of the field that encompasses the various tourism jobs makes it difficult to perceive or establish the profession directly resulting from tourism education, which also results in difficulties in defining the competencies needed by tourism professionals (Paula et al., 2018).

In the late 1990s, in an attempt to define the role of tourism professionals in the labor market and, hence, the skills needed to perform their jobs, broad areas of activity were identified (e.g. Ansarah, 2002; Barretto et al., 2004; Matias, 2005). With some variations, the areas were basically: Agency Services, Transport, Hospitality, Food and Beverage, Events, Leisure and Recreation, Ecotourism and Environment, Tourism Planning, and Public Policy. Over time, the number of programs offering tourism majors increased and teaching in such programs became one of the main professional opportunities for tourism graduates and, especially, graduates (Medaglia et al., 2012). These areas guided the initial data survey for this article, except for some minor adaptations, because some of the most valued areas in the programs could not be reflected in the labor market, either in number of graduates working or in their payments.

During this period, there was an attempt to value higher education in tourism and the profession of “tourismologist” (from the Portuguese word *turismólogo*), which was politically directed to the regulation of the profession in a market that had been deregulated by the neoliberal model of the 1990s and, as Baum (2018) points out, against the need of considering society in which tourism is inserted and its workforce needs. This conformation of the labor market stemming from a view of academia and the inquiries about the expansion and shrinkage of supply of tourism programs and, more recently, the decline in demand for higher education in tourism, was the context for conducting data surveys that contribute to discussions about the labor market for tourism graduates.

3 THE STUDY: CHARACTERISTICS AND DATA

One purpose of the study was to examine the performance of tourism graduates; thus, we used a descriptive survey (Babbie, 1999) to collect data on the characteristics of this population. The surveys were conducted in 2012 and 2018, through Web Survey, using Google Driver as a tool. In the 2012 edition, the forms were available online for approximately 1 month from March 26 to April 30, and in 2018 for 3 months from May 29 to August 28. With both datasets, the survey design can be characterized as longitudinal or trends study, in which the population was examined and sampled at different times (Babbie, 1999).

The unit of analysis and observation were graduates (bachelor's and associate's degrees) from Brazilian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Methodologically, as the population of tourism undergraduate programs in Brazil – from their creation to the present day – can be estimated, but is not completely known, was assumed to be infinite. In both editions, the surveys were conducted with non-probability, self-selection type of samples and the sample size was determined by saturation. Dissemination was made through mailing lists, social networks (especially Facebook), professional associations (in the first edition), and other contact networks. In both cases, there were respondents from all Federation Units, which provided a broad view of graduates, despite the concentration of respondents in the Southeast and South regions of Brazil. This fact can be explained by the number of programs in these regions, according to e-MEC¹ data 39% in the Southeast and 16% in the South (Ministério da Educação, 2018). In 2018, a total of 1,360 questionnaires were collected, of which 1,341 (98.6%) were considered valid. In the 2012 edition, there were 1,380 respondents, corresponding to 1,351 valid responses. Since the samples were similar but not identical, percentages were used for comparisons.

To discuss the labor market of tourism professionals in Brazil from the main area of activity, remuneration, and professional integration in the public and private sectors, the following definitions were used:

To understand the AREA OF ACTIVITY AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION, the following question was asked “What is your main area of activity?”, with the answer options divided into: agencies and operators, food and beverages, consulting, teaching, events, accommodation, leisure and recreation, official tourism organizations, research, tourism planning, and transport. Other non-tourism related areas, such as official (public) agencies in related areas, and 'not working' and 'no answer' options were also included. Options were given to respondents so that we could assess the main activity performed by the graduate and, thus, verify if some of the areas that are integrated (such as consulting, planning and public policy, for example) have specific characteristics. In addition, we intended to assess whether some of the areas that are often linked to tourism form a considerable part of the labor market of graduates of these programs (such as 'transport' or 'leisure and recreation').

For the REMUNERATION dimension, we chose not to call it 'salary' because in many situations—e.g. self-employed and outsourced workers—income and compensations were variable. Initial 2012 figures ranged from “up to R\$500” to “over R\$10,000”, including 15 more intermediate levels. In 2018 these values were no longer round numbers and for comparison they were “up to R\$708” and “over R\$14,161” based on the Central Bank²'s monetary correction, ignoring the cents. Because of this update, instead of depicting the amounts in Reals in the figures that follow, the respondents' monthly income is presented in 17 levels to allow comparisons. Table 1 presents the levels for easy understanding.

The surveys and comparisons were exploratory, aiming to broaden knowledge and not necessarily to prove theories or assumptions. This article, however, takes a more descriptive format, since it presents data and comparisons that may lead to new conclusions, but which need to be further examined to be fruitful. In this sense, despite the amount of data handled, the approach is primarily qualitative.

¹ According to the Ministry of Education “e-MEC was created to conduct the electronic processing of regulatory processes. Through the Internet, higher education institutions do accreditation and recertification, seek authorization, recognition and renewal of program recognition”. Available in <http://portal.mec.gov.br/e-mec-sp-257584288>, accessed August 19, 2019.

² Available in <https://www3.bcb.gov.br/CALCIDADA0/publico/corrigirPorIndice.do?meth od=corrigirPorIndice>, accessed in February 11, 2018.

Table 1 – Level of income of respondents: 2012 and 2018

Level of income	Monthly income (2012)	Monthly income (2018)
Level 1	≤R\$500.00	≤R\$708.00
Level 2	From R\$501.00 to R\$900.00	From R\$709.00 to R\$1,274.00
Level 3	From R\$901.00 to R\$1,200.00	From R\$1,275.00 to R\$1,699.00
Level 4	From R\$1,201.00 to R\$1,500.00	From R\$1,700.00 to R\$2,124.00
Level 5	From R\$1,501.00 to R\$2,000.00	From R\$2,125.00 to R\$2,832.00
Level 6	From R\$2,001.00 to R\$2,500.00	From R\$2,833.00 to R\$3,540.00
Level 7	From R\$2,501.00 to R\$3,000.00	From R\$3,541.00 to R\$4,248.00
Level 8	From R\$3,001.00 to R\$3,500.00	From R\$4,249.00 to R\$4,956.00
Level 9	From R\$3,501.00 to R\$4,000.00	From R\$4,957.00 to R\$5,664.00
Level 10	From R\$4,001.00 to R\$4,500.00	From R\$5,665.00 to R\$6,372.00
Level 11	From R\$4,501.00 to R\$5,000.00	From R\$6,373.00 to R\$7,080.00
Level 12	From R\$5,001.00 to R\$6,000.00	From R\$7,081.00 to R\$8,496.00
Level 13	From R\$6,001.00 to R\$7,000.00	From R\$8,497.00 to R\$9,912.00
Level 14	From R\$7,001.00 to R\$8,000.00	From R\$9,913.00 to R\$11,328.00
Level 15	From R\$8,001.00 to R\$9,000.00	From R\$11,329.00 to R\$12,744.00
Level 16	From R\$9,001.00 to R\$10,000.00	From R\$12,745.00 to R\$14,160.00
Level 17	≥R\$10,000.00	≥R\$14,161.00

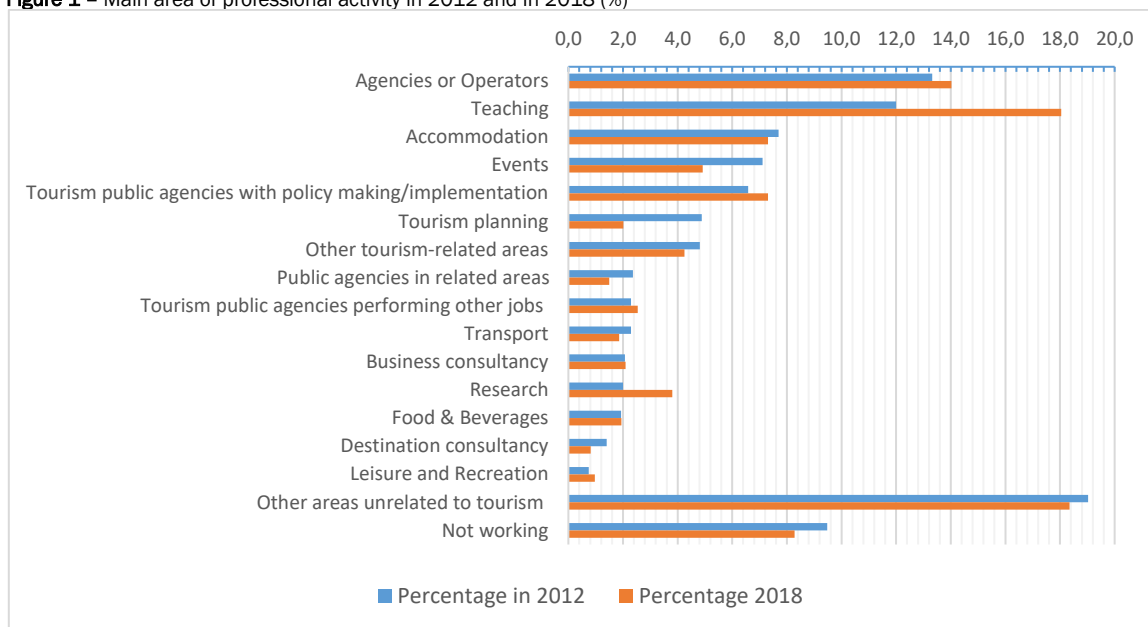
Source: data from the 2012 and 2018 surveys *Atuação profissional dos egressos de cursos superiores em turismo* [Professional activity of tourism graduates].

4 WHAT DOES THE DATA INDICATE?

The focus of this article is the comparison of data from 2012 and 2018 on issues related to the MAIN AREA OF ACTIVITY, REMUNERATION, INTEGRATION IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS, leading to a quite wide and complex range of interpretations.

The first analysis is related to the main professional area, as shown in Figure 1:

Figure 1 – Main area of professional activity in 2012 and in 2018 (%)



Source: data from the 2012 and 2018 surveys *Atuação profissional dos egressos de cursos superiores em turismo* [Professional activity of tourism graduates].

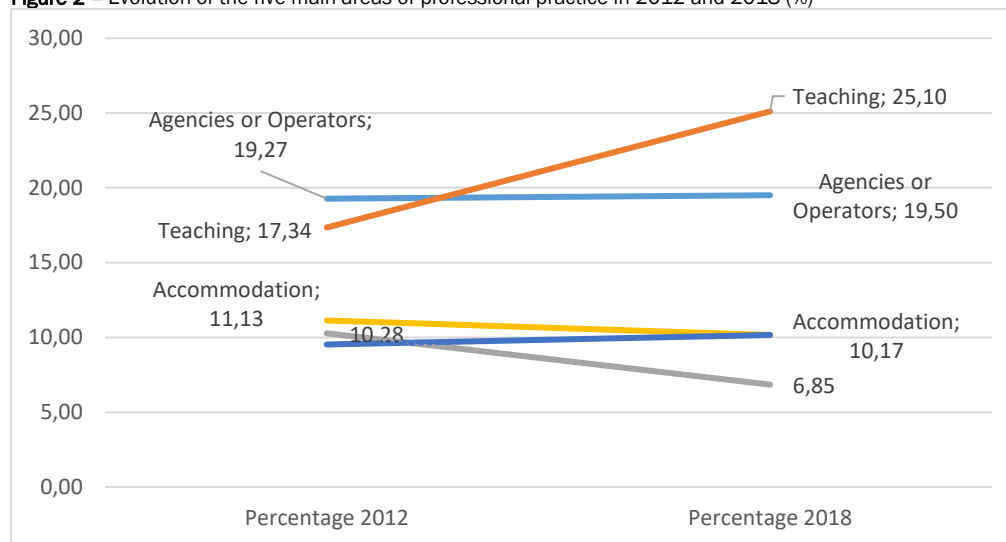
The category ‘Other areas unrelated to tourism’ stands out, however, from 2012 to 2018 the item decreased, which suggests that there was a growth in the number of tourism graduates working in their field of study.

Another relevant fact is that, by removing the categories 'Other areas unrelated to tourism', 'Not working', and 'Public agencies in related areas', in order to examine tourism-specific activities, we can see that the number of respondents in 2012 was 69.13%, increasing to 71.89% in 2018. This fact positively indicates a tendency toward maintenance – or slight increase – of the number of graduates undertaking tourism-related jobs, unlike other contexts where large numbers of graduates do not work in the area (Paula et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, areas emphasized in graduate programs such as 'Tourism Planning' and 'Consulting/Destination Management' have declined as the main area of activity for tourism graduates. The latter, whose share was already low in 2012, with 2.03% of respondents, drop to 1.14%, and 'Tourism Planning' – sometimes the name given to programs and subjects – fell from 7.1% to 2.8% in the 2018 edition. On the other hand, there was a movement of tourism graduates from the private to the public sector, as discussed later in this paper. However, the increase from 9.53% to 10.17% in the category 'Tourism public agencies with policy making/implementation' is hardly enough to qualify as migration of planners and consultants to the public sector.

We observed changes regarding the main activities between the 2012 and 2018 editions. Also, the five main areas of activity of tourism graduates remained the same, which together totaled 67.56% in 2012 and 71.78% in 2018, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Evolution of the five main areas of professional practice in 2012 and 2018 (%)

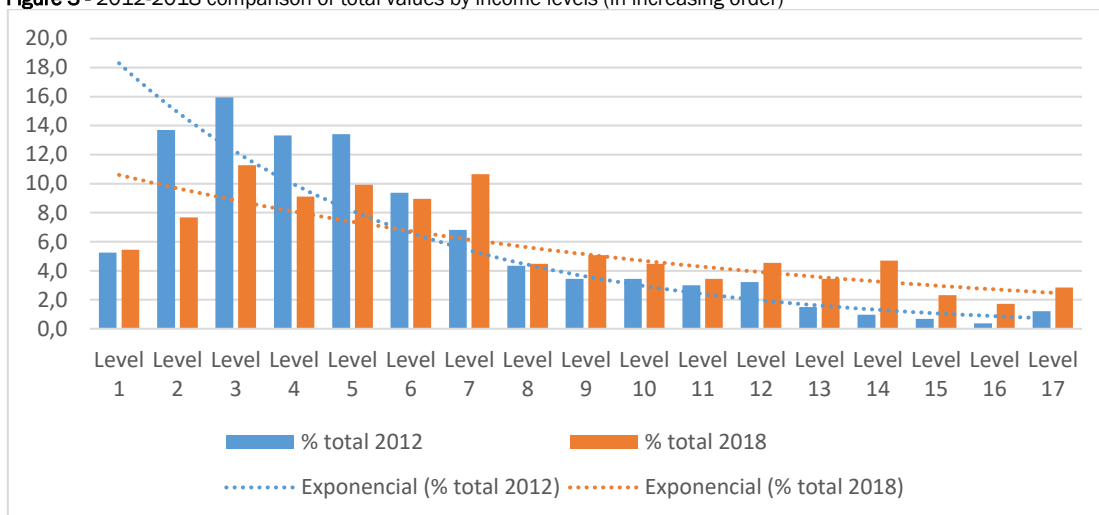


Source: data from the 2012 and 2018 surveys *Atuação profissional dos egressos de cursos superiores em turismo* [Professional activity of tourism graduates].

The most significant changes identified in the top five tourism-related activities were the rise of 'Teaching' and 'Tourism public agencies with policy making/implementation'. The percentage of teaching respondents rose from 17.34% to 25.10%, which was the largest change observed in this group and in the dataset, surpassing the area of 'Agencies and Operators', which was the main activity of graduates in 2012 (19.27%). A caveat is in order here. Because of the authors' academic background, it is natural that the personal contact network has a high frequency of colleagues. However, in the 2012 survey this situation also applied – as the authors were already active scholars for many years – which justifies the focus given to this growth since the comparison is made between compatible audiences in the first and second survey editions. 'Agencies and Operators' and 'Accommodation' were the most stable categories. The biggest drop was observed in the category 'Events', which decreased from 10.28% in 2012 to 6.85% in the last edition. This fact can be seen in the light of changes in employability which tend to impact tourism students' training and skills (Aranha & Rocha, 2014; Paula et al, 2017; Pimentel & Paula, 2014) and as such may explain graduates' movements on the labor market.

Regarding REMUNERATION, the 2018 data show a decrease in the number of respondents within the income levels 1 to 6 (up to R\$3,540.00 in 2018 prices).

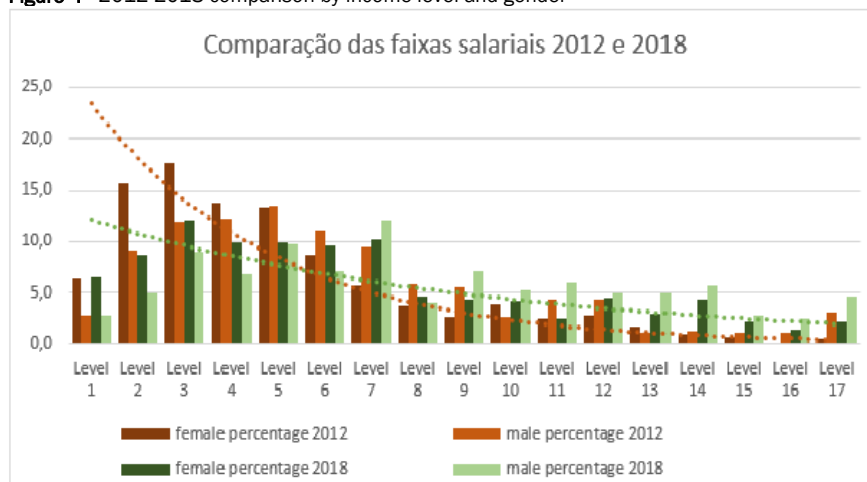
Figure 3 - 2012-2018 comparison of total values by income levels (in increasing order)



Source: data from the 2012 and 2018 surveys *Atuação profissional dos egressos de cursos superiores em turismo* [Professional activity of tourism graduates].

Figure 3 also shows an increase in level 7 (from R\$3,451 to R\$4,248), as well as a slight increase in levels 9 to 17, with emphasis on level 14 (from R\$9,913 to 11.328), which suggests a change toward higher income in the most recent survey. The trend lines show that despite the higher concentration of respondents remaining between levels 2 to 7 (from R\$709 to R\$4,248 in adjusted values) the highest pay levels, from 8 to 17, increased in the 2018 edition. In general, the wage gap between men and women respondents narrowed in terms of mean monthly income.

Figure 4 - 2012-2018 comparison by income level and gender



Source: data from the 2012 and 2018 surveys *Atuação profissional dos egressos de cursos superiores em turismo* [Professional activity of tourism graduates]

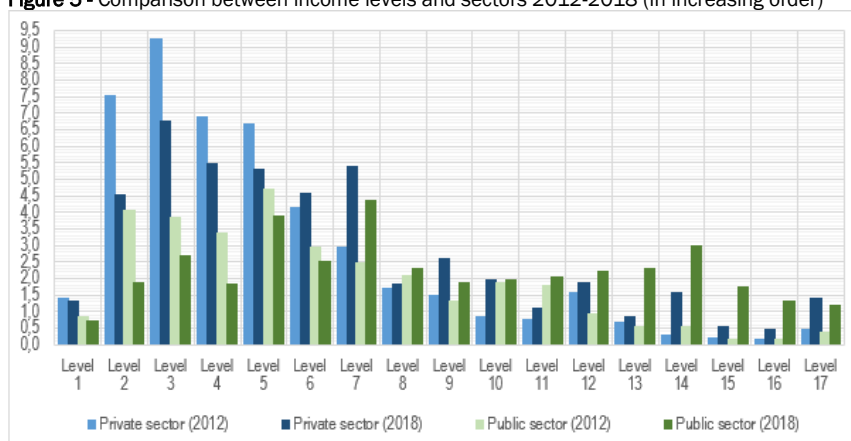
Although gender is not the focus of this analysis, in the case of tourism professionals the comparison between men and women is inevitable, since tourism jobs are mostly performed by women. According to IBGE3 data, women comprise more than half the Brazilian adult population, which is in line with our context. However, among higher education graduates in tourism women represent more than 70%, which is well above the national mean. Despite the numerical superiority, female-predominant income levels are between 2 to 7. Nevertheless, the trend lines show an approximation between men’s and women’s earnings. Comparing the

³Available in <https://brasilemsintese.ibge.gov.br/populacao/populacao-por-sexo-e-grupo-de-idade-2010.html>, accessed June 10, 2019.

data with the Brazilian reality, the current wage gap between graduates is 22% in favor of men, which is already slightly below the national wage average of almost 23% (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2018). Considering the 2012 wage gap between men and women respondents, which was 26%, the gap is narrowing 0.67% per year, which means that in a simple projection for comparison, female to male salaries, even in a predominantly female area, it would take up to 30 years to close the wage gap.

In another analysis, we sought to understand the PROFESSIONAL INCLUSION of graduates in the PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS. When the data from the sectors in which the respondents' main professional activities fall were cross-checked with income information, we found that the private sector predominates in the lowest income levels.

Figure 5 - Comparison between income levels and sectors 2012-2018 (in increasing order)



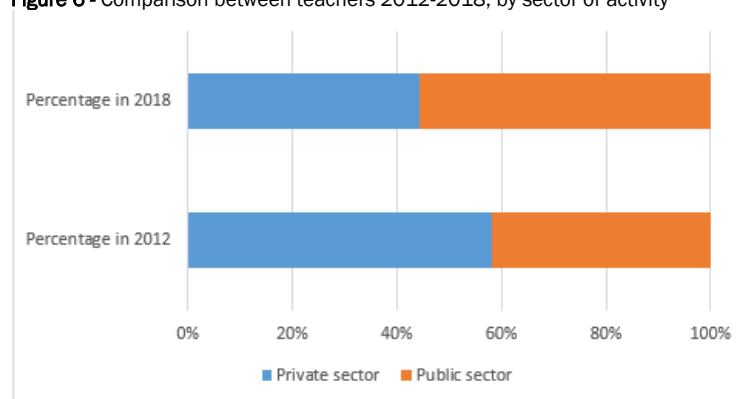
Source: data from the 2012 and 2018 surveys *Atuação profissional dos egressos de cursos superiores em turismo* [Professional activity of tourism graduates]

In 2012, levels 1 to 7 were the most representative of the private sector, exceeding 80%, with more than 50% in levels 2, 3, and 4. Although there was a drop in this concentration in the 2018 edition compared to 2012, the private sector remained dominant in the lower income levels. In 2018, levels 1 to 10 concentrated 83.4% of private income, with almost 58% in groups 3 to 7, consistent with what Leal and Padilha (2005) consider to be a greater focus on the technical dimension than on the professional dimension.

The public sector, on the other hand, showed a growth of tourism graduates in the higher income levels, although these are less numerous. In 2012, almost 89% of the remuneration concentration was between levels 2 and 11, with the most representative levels being from 2 to 6, with 59% of respondents falling within these range. The proportion of the most representative levels in the public sector increased proportionally in 2018. The distribution of 87% of the income mentioned in this survey was between bands 2 and 14. Also, we noticed an increase in levels 10 to 16 (from R\$5,665 to R\$14,160) which continued to have a small share in numerical terms, but went from 18.7% in 2012 to 38.6% in 2018.

In addition to these findings, there was a considerable drop in third sector participation from 7.68% to 5.45% in 2018, as well as in the mixed sector, from 6.53% in 2012 to 5.81%. Numerically, the private sector remains the largest employer of tourism professionals (49.64% in 2012 and 47.09% in 2018). Unlike other sectors, 30.43% of respondents in 2012 and now 32.69% in 2018 were linked to the public sector, being the only one that grew among respondents. The growth of the public sector and teaching stimulated an interest in investigating whether there is a link between them.

Figure 6 shows an increase in the teaching market in the private sector and a more marked expansion in the public sector. In terms of income, isolating the remuneration of teachers in the public sector, it was observed that 86.84% respondents in this sector were placed in level 14 (from R\$9,913 to R\$11,328). The same occurred in levels 13, 15, and 16, in which the proportion of teachers among public sector tourism experts was 68.97%, 59.09%, and 76.47%, respectively. Among the highest income levels, the only in which teachers were not the majority was the highest: above R\$14,161.

Figure 6 - Comparison between teachers 2012-2018, by sector of activity

Source: data from the 2012 and 2018 surveys *Atuação profissional dos egressos de cursos superiores em turismo* [Professional activity of tourism graduates]

The political-governmental context up to 2018 was conducive to the growth of public sector employment, as well as the increase in the number of programs and Public Higher Education Institutions (Mancebo, Vale, & Martins, 1995), a context that will hardly repeat in the coming years. It should be considered, however, that even in this favorable scenario, there was a drop in the number of higher education tourism programs⁴, most notably in Bachelor's degrees, but also observed in Associate's degrees, which is an apparent contradiction between the increase in teacher employment and decrease in the number of programs. The development of the labor market for tourism graduates seems to be influenced by political conditions—in addition to other commonly addressed market issues—and it has also been overlooked in broader sustainability and development policies (Baum, 2018). The findings suggest that decisions made by educational institutions influence the training of future professionals and their integration in the labor market, but these decisions are not necessarily guided by a vision for the future or for the profession and its role in society.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

From the comparative analysis of the data collected, we can observe that the labor market for tourism professionals in Brazil showed improvement in income, with a tendency toward increase of professionals in the upper income levels and reduction in the lower income levels, although these still encompass most graduates. In addition, most of the lower-income tourism professionals work in the private sector; but even in this sector we observed a reduction in the number of graduates in the lowest income levels, suggesting a migration to higher ones and to public employment, as the results of the study also showed an increased employment in the public sector.

Wage differences between men and women persist, even in an area that is mostly occupied by women, and even in the public sector, where in theory there is an equality of positions, functions, and wages.

Although the survey was conducted through social networks and lists that may favor the presence of respondents from academia, using the same means and lists for distribution, the main area of occupation in the 2018 edition, compared to 2012, was teaching. This area of activity represented one in four tourism professionals, with an increase in the participation of respondents linked to public higher education institutions, with higher mean income than in the private sector. The growth of the teaching area contrasts with the low market inclusion of tourism graduates in fields such as consulting, research, tourism planning—the latter being the focus of many higher education programs—and of transport, which had significant reductions.

As concluding remarks and limitations of the study it is noteworthy that the surveys carried out in both situations reached all Federation Units, with greater or lesser participation. The samples, however, had no stratification determined and were obtained by saturation, relying on social networks and dissemination among

⁴ Available in <http://portal.inep.gov.br/web/guest/sinopses-estatisticas-da-educacao-superior>, accessed in February 21, 2019.

peers and collectives formed by tourism professionals. Moreover, due to the broad scope of this analysis, the positions held in each activity were not detailed.

However, although there are data limitations, it is understood that the results should not be considered conclusive due to data collection method and geographic predominance of the South and Southeast regions of Brazil, nonetheless the study presents trends and provide useful insights into the professional evolution and current situation of higher education graduates in tourism programs.

We hope that this study may open avenues for future research and contribute to the discussion on the topic, whether considering the relationship of female participation in the tourism labor market, the role of public employment in the career of the tourism graduate, or the perspectives on educational policy changes and tourism higher education. We conclude that the tourism labor market, although diversified, is more concentrated in some areas than one might have thought and is taught in tourism programs. This was noticed, as there is a concentration of tourism professionals in a few areas, especially 'agencies and operators' and 'accommodation' (which is more intense in the first), which also largely qualifies the low remuneration and performance in the private sector. The impact of this on the tourism professionals' employment, therefore, deserves that higher education in tourism be rethought, because this scenario is contradictory with the areas highlighted in the programs and the inclusion of tourism graduates in the labor market.

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