



# Sabbatical Activities of Faculty: The Case of Professors in Hospitality and Tourism in the U.S.

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## ABSTRACT

The focus of this research was designed to analyze the sabbatical practices of faculty in hospitality and tourism programs in the United States. The study was limited to full and associate professors who had taken at least one sabbatical during their academic careers. Results indicated that very few faculty members used sabbaticals to gain additional international experience. Faculty reported that the major reasons for taking a sabbatical were related to personal reasons such as rejuvenation and faculty reported that they came back refreshed and more productive. However from a professional standpoint the largest number reported that they wanted to work on research articles while on sabbaticals. What they liked least was related to being out of the loop in their home departments or schools.

**Keywords:** Faculty Sabbaticals, Faculty Development, Faculty Careers

## INTRODUCTION

The ranks of programs in hospitality and tourism education in the United States have gone from one university in 1922, Cornell, to over 300 today (CHRIE, 2012). The largest growth came in the 1970s to 1995 when a many universities wanted to add such programs because of growth in the hospitality and tourism industry and the anticipated need for such graduates. Based on the numbers of Hospitality and Tourism programs in the United States it is estimated that there are over 4000 faculty members (CHRIE, 2012). In terms of Hospitality and Tourism programs worldwide, that number jumps to over 3,000 with 35,000 faculty (SCHRIE, 2012). While these faculty are unique in the discipline that they teach, their programs or departments or schools

are often located within other disciplines such as Business Schools or Schools of Management. There are currently 35 programs in AACSB accredited business schools (Scott, Puleo & Crotts 2007). Many other programs are located within Colleges of Consumer and Family Science, Health and Human Sciences, Human Ecology, Technology and Agriculture. Lastly a number of such programs are located in their own colleges and schools and are considered independent (Morrison & O'Mahony, 2003). Faculty in such programs are actually a microcosm of university faculty in general because of the diverse nature of the courses and content that they teach. Their research and teaching expertise ranges from marketing to human resources to building engineering to finance and accounting to nutrition and food safety. Therefore studying faculty in this discipline has potential applications to faculty in many other areas.

In past years faculty in hospitality and tourism education had a solid mix of industry experience and academic background. This often required them to only hold a masters in hospitality and tourism or a masters in business administration. Over the last 20 years the discipline of hospitality and tourism has found equity with other disciplines and with that parity has come the need for faculty to not only increase their research productivity but also to publish in higher level publications. Today potential faculty are required to hold a Ph.D in order to even interview for such positions. However the half-life of knowledge gained during their academic as well as industry years is now less than a few years. Therefore this has created a challenge for such faculty to constantly update their knowledge in order to give students a much better knowledge base for their studies. The hospitality and tourism industry is changing rapidly and unless faculty are able to keep up, their knowledge and quickly become outdated. The field of hospitality and tourism, like business or management is not like the sciences or other areas where learning can take place in a laboratory setting. Faculty need to interact and travel in order to convey the most up to date knowledge to their students.

To update their knowledge and skills hospitality and tourism faculty must take advantage of professional development activities. Professional development is a practice geared toward helping faculty become more sensitive to the importance of continually refining and improving their skills (Ciampa, 1978). The process is one which seeks to modify attitudes, skills and behavior of faculty members towards greater competence and effectiveness in meeting students' needs, institutional needs, professional and personal needs. Such programs must establish practices that support professional development (Frances, 1975). A variety of practices and programs are in existence under the banner of faculty development. One very important practice related to professional development of faculty is the sabbatical.

The purpose of this study was to analyze sabbatical practices of faculty, specifically those teaching in hospitality and tourism programs in the United States. The specific research objectives of this study were designed to:

1. Analyze demographic variables of faculty who have gone on more sabbaticals in relation to gender, academic rank, time in academia, time at present institution and length of sabbatical
2. Categorize the primary location of where faculty members took sabbaticals and the primary and secondary purposes of their sabbaticals
3. Determine faculty perceptions of whether or not they had achieved their reported primary purpose of their sabbaticals

4. Review the importance that faculty place on specific activities that are commonly associated with taking sabbaticals
5. Ascertain faculty perceptions of what they liked most and what they liked least about taking a sabbatical

This research is significant for a number of different reasons. Firstly, worldwide 4 trillion dollars is spent on the hospitality and tourism industry and it employs over 300 million people (WTTC, 2013). It is considered the number one employer in most countries in the world. Many of the top leaders in the industry now receive degrees in hospitality and tourism management. In 2014 there will be over 1 billion international trips (WTO, 2013). Secondly because the industry is continuing to expand and grow the need for qualified managers also continues. For this reason universities all over the world now have added or expanded such programs. However finding and keeping qualified faculty is often a challenge. One such way is through increased and improved use of sabbaticals. Sabbaticals have long been associated as a benefit which university faculty are offered to development professionally. This benefit costs the university money because they are paying a professor either half their salary or their full salary depending on the length of their sabbatical. The university in turn expects that faculty members will accomplish activities that will benefit their professional careers and benefit the university at the same time. Research on sabbaticals often is related to the concept that it is an aid to organizational creativity. There are both tangible and intangible benefits and they need to be viewed holistically (Wildman, 2012). By nature institutions of higher education have a culture of lifelong learning and sabbaticals contribute to this.

Of great significance to this study is the fact that sabbaticals are under fire. During the recent economic downturn from 2007 to 2010 higher education was deeply affected. Higher education experienced severe budget cuts, travel restrictions and freezes on hiring (Fischman, 2010). When budgets got tighter there were calls for increased oversight from the public as well as legislators to try and deal with financial budget cuts. Legislators have challenged the use of sabbaticals. Sabbatical policies were one easy target because they are viewed as a vacation period that is free from accountability from work and with little benefit to organizations (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2010). Sabbatical policies in many states have gone through severe scrutiny because they are often seen as an unnecessary luxury. But in reality sabbatical have always been under fire during tough times such as during the recession of the 1930s and during the economic downturn of the 1970s (Axel, 1992; Nelson, 1973).

Research on sabbaticals is important because:

1. There is a lack of research on sabbaticals which specifically relate to hospitality and tourism faculty.
2. This research can provide colleges/universities that are not currently offering sabbaticals with information related to the benefits. Institution can then consider offering them or variations of them.
3. Research has indicated a link between faculty professional development and stress related issues.

## **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **Definitions and Criteria for Sabbaticals**

A commonly accepted definition of sabbaticals is that they are a plan for providing professors with an opportunity for self improvement through a leave of absences with full or partial compensation following a designated number of years of consecutive service (Zahorski, 1994). Researchers have traced the origins of sabbaticals to the ancient Hebrew Sabbath in which there are references to the day of rest and sabbatical practices in academia (Kimball, 1978). Harvard first offered the sabbatical leave in the United States in 1880 (Eells & Hollins, 1962). As early as 1931, Cooper studied sabbaticals for faculty and found that 87% of administrators found faculty had benefited. The most common benefits in this early study were (a) higher scholarship and culture (b) a broader professional perspective, (c) increased teaching efficiency, (d) rest and a fresh outlook, (e) a source of inspiration to other teachers. There were negatives outcomes, which included financial and replacement concerns and retention of faculty after their sabbaticals (Zahorski, 1994). Sima (2000) summarized Zahorski's previous research related to 6 benefits of the sabbatical which included rejuvenation and renewal, time for reflection, fresh perspectives, opportunity to build new professional relationships, staying current in the discipline, and enhancement of teaching. The enhancement of teaching comes as a result of improved scholarship which brings relevance into the classroom.

The criteria for sabbaticals was refined by Zahorski (1994) in listing 5 commonly accepted components which included a) a clearly defined purpose, (b) paid compensation for work, (c) prior service normally from 6 to 7 years (d) requirement for returning to the institutions, and e) completion of a final report. In general a faculty member has the burden of proof to demonstrate that their sabbatical request will bring benefits to the college and their discipline. Sabbatical policies normally carry an expectation that the time away from campus will yield significant benefits to the campus in research productivity, improved teaching or service related activities (Boening & Miller, 1997). Sima and Denton (1995) reported the major outcomes for which a sabbatical leave might be granted. These included writing journal articles, improve teaching, promote course and curriculum development, improve teaching, and to provide new experiences, to enhance artistic performance and travel. In short, some kind of faculty development is expected and the faculty member is expected to return to service after completing the sabbatical leave (Sima, 2000). The end result should be the professional development of the sabbaticant that can be defined as " a process that includes training and development, organizational development, and career development to enhance individual group and organizational effectiveness" (Holmes, 1998, p. 75).

It can be argued that faculty really do not even need a sabbatical because at certain levels of their careers they are highly unlikely to change institutions or jobs. But in reality professors can become isolated in the ivory tower of academia and not really be in touch with the needs of students or industry ( Carr & Tang, 2005). Universities often use sabbaticals as a tool to recruit potential faculty members because faculty can use sabbaticals to work on research grants or other consulting projects.

### **Activities on Sabbaticals**

During a normal academic year there is often very little time for a professor to make major changes in their courses. A sabbatical can also be used to update a professor's current courses,

to develop new courses or develop new programs. This is especially true today because of technological enhancements to classes (Wildman, 2012). Only a short time ago professors did not have to know how to put their courses online, or use podcasts or use course management. Therefore professors can use sabbaticals to update their classes using the latest technology. In addition to teaching and research there are other forms of service that a faculty member can work with other stakeholders on. These things include, development of a new journal or taking over the editorship of a journal, leadership in a professional organization or association, service to the community related to a professors expertise, or the development of a center or institute. Service activities of this type can be of great value to a university as well as the individual involved. Wildman (2012) categorized 5 benefit areas as professionalism, personal, psychological, institutional support and capacity building. Many personal benefits that the faculty member can accrue which are often less cited are the psychological benefits related to health, relaxation and family time (Wildman, 2012).

Travel is often seen as a major benefit among people who have taken sabbaticals. Faculty often use their time to explore different parts of the world and to make international contacts. Travel itself is not necessarily a direct benefit but the benefits that accrued because of the sabbatical can be. In this age of globalization, faculty travel can help faculty members develop a better understanding of the students that they work with from all over the world as well as how their discipline is developing in different parts of the world. In addition it can help faculty better connect with their international colleagues through activities such as conferences which they might not otherwise be able to attend during the school year because of their normal faculty activities. The types of benefit activities involving international travel would be especially beneficial to people who are teaching in such areas as travel and tourism, international business, agriculture etc.

The number of professors on sabbaticals in a given year varies from campus to campus but research by Wilson (1999) and Sima and Denten (1995) has shown that the number is normally between 3.8% and 5% at public universities and often times much higher at private elite institutions. In spite of the costs associated with offering sabbaticals administrators and faculty agree that sabbatical leave should be productive and have long-range benefits to the university (Sima, 2000). Sabbaticals have been seen by many faculty as an entitlement. Previous studies have indicated that 68% of institutions surveyed indicated that sabbaticals were not considered true entitlements. In fact they represent an approach to faculty development in which the proposal for sabbatical activities to be accomplished is based on the merits (Joseph & Kucera, 2004).

There has been a tremendous push by all institutions of higher education to internationalize curriculums and to allow staff to participate in programs in other countries. Sabbaticals are one important way to accomplish this. Organizations like the Fulbright Commission provide many different types of opportunities for faculty as well as staff to gain international experience. Given the fact that there are now over 800,000 international students studying at colleges and universities in the United States, having faculty gain international experience goes along very well with the current missions of these institutions (Institute of International Education, 2012). Educational institutions educate and therefore faculty and staff should be able to experience some of the same opportunities to grow. In summary Steven Covey in his famous book, "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" stated that taking time to "Sharpen your axe" is a critical component of being effective which makes other things possible (Covey, 1989). The same can be said for faculty sabbaticals.

## **Faculty Burnout and Sabbaticals**

Most professional positions at times have to deal with the issue of burnout. Burnout in university faculty can occur because of cumbersome bureaucratic rules, unclear institutional expectations, poorly prepared students, lack of time and high self expectations ( June, 2010). Research has shown that the rate of burnout among faculty is lower in older faculty than younger faculty. Older faculty had greater scores on personal accomplishment tests. Faculty who are on the tenure track struggle the most. In addition other predictors included gender which indicated that women suffered higher levels of emotional exhaustion which is a major part of the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Lastly the larger the number of graduate students that a professor was advising, the higher their burnout scores (Crosmer, 2009). The process of burnout can be a gradual process which does not happen overnight. It can occur because a professor is teaching more courses with larger numbers of students over a longer period of time. The professor may be teaching in an environment which is not really supportive of teaching (Weimer, 2012). The purpose of a sabbatical is to free the faculty member from their daily teaching and administrative responsibilities and to take stock and move in a new direction. When the faculty member returns there should be an infusion of energy and new ideas because the faculty member has been able to separate themselves from their accustomed routines (Sarason, 1990). Faculty who apply for sabbaticals normally are highly motivated because they must start the process by developing for some kind of proposal a year or more in advance (Zahorski, 1994).

## **Benefits of Sabbaticals**

Kramer (2001) stated that there appears to be limited research on sabbaticals because it might illuminate unfavorable outcomes, therefore putting sabbaticals at risk altogether. It is often difficult to immediately quantify sabbatical benefits, which also makes it difficult to study this topic. Research by Wildman (2012) indicated that faculty were still processing the sabbatical experience a year after returning. In addition sabbatical benefits evolve over time. Wildman (2012) conducted research into sabbaticals which supported earlier research that there are strong and unexpected benefits that accrue from sabbaticals, that support from administrators is highly important to the process and that more research is necessary to explore how to maximize sabbatical benefits (Stine, 1987).

In order for sabbaticals to be considered a valuable tool, the literature on sabbaticals should be used to demonstrate the benefits of sabbaticals beyond the common perceptions that many have, which is that it is a perk or a benefit. Kramer (2001) conducted research showing that sabbaticals were linked to motivating innovation and research in a variety of settings. Kramer additionally showed that sabbaticals assisted such institutional goals as recruitment and retention, institutional loyalty, increasing morale and productivity and supporting the institutional mission. Sabbaticals were not intended to be used as a reward, but at times they have been (Boening, 1996; Mamiseishvili & Miller, 2010). Sabbaticals are considered a luxury by many and this is especially true during difficult economic times. This causes many to target sabbaticals as a practice that is little more than a vacation with no institutional reward. Therefore they are often view as disposable practice to remedy difficult organizational financial situations (Brown, 2006; The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2010).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Sample**

The population for this research was associate and full professors in the United States who are currently teaching in hospitality and tourism management programs. In order to address the largest possible audience, the researchers requested that their survey research instrument be put on the website of Hospitality Educators, which is the largest listserv of hospitality and tourism educators in the world. The individuals who send out the Listserv have estimated that it is sent out to 7,000 people worldwide. The listserv is made up of faculty, graduate students and staff from hospitality and tourism programs all over the world who self subscribe to the list. The list serves as a forum for open faculty positions as well as conferences. It is estimated that half of the people on the listserv are from the United States. Since the focus of the research was professors in the United States the researchers determined that the listserv was a viable means for soliciting participation and information on the survey would reach the target for the research. In addition, the researchers used the list of schools that were members of The Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Educators (CHRIE), the primary organization with which hospitality and tourism educators and related programs are affiliated. It was estimated that there are over 1000 members of CHRIE in the United States. The researchers made a list of all associate and full professors from schools who were CHRIE members. These individuals were also sent the instrument. In the initial email faculty were informed of the purpose of the research and asked to complete the survey if they were at the associate or full professor level in hospitality and tourism management in the United States and if the university where they are employed offers sabbaticals. If the faculty member met the criteria of being an associate of full professor in the area of hospitality and tourism in the United States, they were invited to participate. The survey instrument was included as a link in the email using an online Qualtrics instrument. Participants could not be identified and confidentiality was assured.

### **Instrument**

Based on a thorough review of the literature a 4 part questionnaire was developed:

- Part 1 of the survey instrument was designed to ascertain information on the faculty member in relation to rank, years at present institution and total years in academia. In addition the research asked the number of sabbaticals taken by each faculty member and how long in advance they needed to apply for the sabbatical.
- Part 2 of the survey instrument related to each sabbatical that the faculty member has taken in regards to the year they took the sabbatical, length of time of the sabbatical, the primary purpose of the sabbatical, and whether the faculty member achieved their primary goals. Faculty members were offered the option to report on up to 4 sabbaticals.
- Part 3 of the survey instrument solicited faculty members on the importance of specific sabbatical activities such as, giving guest lectures at other universities, being able to work internationally, to write books and articles and others. Faculty were asked their attitudes on whether sabbaticals renewed them, allowed them to stay fresh in their discipline, allowed them to work with new colleagues, to do industry consulting or other activities.
- Part 4 of the survey instrument was designed to ask faculty what they liked most about their sabbaticals, what they liked least, and the major benefit they got from their sabbaticals.



Faculty members were sent a reminder two weeks after the initial survey was emailed and then another reminder two weeks later.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Demographic Data on Participants**

The initial email was sent to 240 faculty. Completed surveys were received from 132 respondents for a response rate of 55%. They were all professors who were teaching in the area of hospitality and tourism management in universities in the United States. However, only 118 answered that they were tenured. Among those 118 faculty members 67 of them (58%) had taken a sabbatical, therefore those individuals constituted the basis for the remainder of the results for an effective response rate of 28%. The majority of these professors (66%) were male, with 62% holding the rank of Full Professor. The remaining 38% held the rank of Associate Professor. In relation to how long these individuals have been in academia, the mean was 25 years. Forty percent of the professors have been in academia for 30 years or more with one third of those having been in academia 38 to 40 years. With regard to the number of years the professors had been at their present institution, the mean score was 19.5 years. Fifty six percent of the faculty had been at their present school for 20 years or more and 20 of those had been at their institutions for more than 30 years. These numbers represents the fact that the majority of faculty have made at least one job move during their careers.

### **Background, Number and Types of Sabbaticals**

The number of sabbaticals a professor has taken often relates to the amount of time that they have been at their present institutions. The results showed that 52% of the respondents (36) had taken 2 sabbaticals and 22 % had taken 3 or more. The remaining 25% have only taken one sabbatical. The vast majority of professors (68%) were required to request their sabbatical at least two semesters in advance and 15% reported that they needed to ask for their sabbaticals 3 or more semesters in advance. This relates to the administrative need for the department to plan for class coverage and other responsibilities. An interesting finding was that the majority of faculty (83%) only took one semester during their most recent sabbatical. This did not significantly change for those faculty who took a second sabbatical with 75% taking one semester and 79% of those taking a third sabbatical also taking only one semester.

### **Place and Purpose of Sabbaticals**

Faculty members who had taken only one sabbatical were asked about the primary location of their sabbatical. Thirty of the respondents (45%) said that they had primarily worked from home, with 21 professors (32%) stating that they were doing consulting and traveling. However, only 15 of the faculty (23%) said that they spent their semester teaching at another institution. When faculty took a second sabbatical the percentage of those who worked at home increased to 56 % (20 faculty) with the numbers of faculty who consulted and traveled dropping to 22% and only 8 said they taught at another institution. However, when it came to third sabbaticals the percentage of faculty who spent time as a visiting professor at another institution increased to 21%.



In relation to purpose of sabbaticals, Table 1 shows faculty primary purpose for a professor taking a sabbatical. The primary purpose whether it was a professor's first, second or third sabbatical was writing research articles

**Table 1.** Primary Purpose of Sabbaticals

<i>Primary Purpose</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>%</i>
Writing a book	15	22%
Consulting	7	10%
Research grant	8	12%
Writing articles	22	33%
Teaching in an international setting	9	13%
Other	6	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100%</b>

In terms of "other" reason for taking a sabbatical, 3 professors mentioned professional development, 3 mentioned working with industry contacts to develop industry relations and research and 3 mentioned gaining additional industry experience. Other responses related to a Center for Teaching Grant, presenting papers at conferences, developing new international partners for their HTM program and one mentioned working on their schools accreditation. Yet even in the area of others faculty members wrote writing articles a number of times even though they had already listed it as their primary or secondary purposes.

### **Achievement of Sabbatical Purpose**

In general faculty members felt that they had totally achieved their primary purpose for taking their sabbaticals. Forty six percent of faculty who have only taken one sabbatical, 53% of faculty that have taken two sabbaticals and 50% faculty that had taken at least 3 sabbaticals stated that they had fulfilled their primary purpose. Table 2 represents faculty responses to the achievement of their goals on their first sabbatical.

**Table 2.** Faculty Perceptions on Achievement of Sabbatical Purpose

<i>Achievement</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>%</i>
Totally achieved my goal	31	46%
Mostly achieved my goal	31	46%
Partially achieved my goal	4	6%
Did not achieve my goal	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Importance of Specific Sabbatical Activities**

Faculty were provided with a list of activities that are normally associated with going on sabbaticals. They were asked to rate the importance of these activities on a 5 point likert scale with 1 being "Not at all Important to 5 being Extremely Important". The top 3 reasons based on

**Table 3.** Mean Importance of Sabbatical Activities

<i>Sabbatical Activity</i>	<i>Total Responses</i>	<i>Mean</i>
To work on a specific research proposal or project	62	4.32
To rejuvenate and renew	63	4.32
To gain a fresh perspective	63	4.08
To become or stay current in discipline	63	4.03
To write a book or articles	63	3.94
A change of routine to work on new things	63	3.89
A chance to work internationally	63	3.86
To take time for reflection	63	3.78
To build new professional relationships	63	3.70
A chance to collaborate with new colleagues	63	3.67
To gain cultural experiences	63	3.52
To give guest lectures at other universities	63	3.19
The opportunity to do industry consulting	63	3.10
A chance to attend a conference	62	2.77

mean scores were “To work on a specific research proposal or project” which had the highest mean score, 4.32 tied with “To renew or rejuvenate” followed by “To gain fresh perspectives” at 4.08 and “To become or stay current in my discipline”. See Table 3.

### **What Faculty Liked Most About Taking Sabbaticals**

Faculty were asked to comment on the specific activities that they liked most or enjoyed when taking any of their sabbaticals. After coding the various answers the responses fell into the following 3 categories: (1) Personal related reasons, (2) Reasons related to their current position, research, teaching, other (3) Professional development reasons.

Table 4 shows the major comments made by faculty in each of the 3 categories

Table 5 show the major benefits that faculty reported which resulted from taking sabbaticals according to the ranking that benefit.

## **DISCUSSION**

From an analysis of the findings of the study, it is apparent that faculty members have mixed feelings about sabbaticals. The majority of faculty who took a sabbatical felt that it was a break from their routine and a time to refresh. It was frequently mentioned that it would give them additional opportunities to pursue their research and publication interests. Yet, very few said that they have used the sabbatical to explore international opportunities. Surprisingly, not many faculty members mentioned that they would use their sabbatical to update their industry knowledge by working with the hospitality and tourism industry. This is counter to what has

**Table 4.** What Faculty Liked Most About Sabbaticals

<i>What Faculty Liked Most About Sabbaticals</i>	
Personal Related Reasons	<i>Number of Faculty</i>
Time to think, reflect, renew, refresh and change of or get away from normal routine, change of pace	14
Having time for myself and recharge batteries	3
Doing something different, change of pace	2
Freedom and flexibility with my time, time off with pay, have fun	1
<i>Reasons Related to Current Position</i>	<i>Number of Faculty</i>
Chance to concentrate on projects, research papers, back logged projects, books	6
Freedom to not teach my normal load and teaching responsibilities, time off from teaching, no teaching, attend so many meetings	4
Not so much committee work, away from normal duties, no student advising	1
Simply being away from campus, away from busy work, reexamine career goals	1
Visit other hospitality programs	1
<i>Professional Development Activities</i>	<i>Number of Faculty</i>
Accomplish new goals professionally, chance to do something not done before	1
Opportunity to collaborate with new colleagues domestically and internationally	1
International exposure and new cultures and opportunities	1
Chance to work with industry and gain more industry experience	1
Time to do new things and learn new things	1
Rethink career and future directions	1

**Table 5.** Faculty Perceptions of Major Sabbatical Benefits

<i>Faculty Perceptions of Major Benefits of Sabbaticals</i>	<i>Number of Faculty</i>
Articles were published or generated, book or book chapters finished	8
Up to date on the industry and working with hospitality firms	4
Refreshed and invigorated me, improved my health, renewed my attitude and relationships	1
New research opportunities and agenda	1
Able to bring back new perspectives to the classroom	1
Finished many projects	1
Spent more time with family, better perspectives on family and work	1
International exposure and contacts	1

been found in previous studies by Stine (1987) and others. This is surprising in light of the fact that the industry has been changing at such a rapid pace from a globalization and technological standpoint. In addition, in order to remain relevant in the classroom and with industry faculty must find ways of staying on the cutting edge. This helps students by having faculty who are knowledgeable in current industry practices as well as opening opportunities for faculty to conduct research and work with the industry in other ways.

Another interesting finding is that more full professors than associate professors have taken sabbaticals. Overall there are fewer numbers of full professors among the ranks of hospitality faculty, however, since they have been in academia for longer periods of time and have more control over their lives, they are better able to take advantage of sabbatical opportunities. Perhaps another reason related to this is that associate professors are often younger with school age children and a spouse that is employed full time which makes it more difficult for them to take a sabbatical, especially one in which they are away from campus.

In regards to length of sabbatical, it is not surprising that the bulk of professors take sabbaticals of only one semester. This is often due to the fact that most universities will give a professor full pay for one semester but only half pay for an entire year. This would mean that the professor would supplement their income by teaching elsewhere or through consulting or grants etc. Since a professor's expenses continue to accrue if they are away for a year, they still need the same income stream.

The majority of faculty who had taken a sabbatical reported that there were no negative outcomes of sabbaticals, which is similar to what Wildman (2012) found. In this research faculty also reported that getting back into their routines was a challenge, which is what was found in another study by Stine (1987). A few faculty members reported that their institutions did not help them in arranging their sabbaticals in anyway.

The fact that many faculty reported that they experienced renewal to their careers means because of sabbatical can often mean that burnout is less likely. Burnout of faculty and loss of that faculty member would have negative consequences on the institution. The cost of burnout can be as much as three and half times a person's salary and the cost of replacing that employee with someone equally as qualified (Bounds, 2000). The results of this research show that faculty benefitted from the sabbaticals in numerous ways. The more time that an individual has to reflect on their sabbatical experience the more they are able to articulate the benefits to their personal lives and professional lives. This is in line with the findings of Wildman (2012).

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The majority of the comments by professors in this study were extremely positive regarding the time they spent during their sabbaticals and the time after they returned. This is in line with previous studies which indicated that professors found sabbaticals a time of renewal and new found productivity (Boice, 1987). A study by Jarecky and Sandifer (1986) indicated that 3 out of 4 professors reported that they had made substantial accomplishments. The study also indicated that faculty also reported that they had a spirit of renewal and enthusiasm which is similar to what has been found in studies by Axel (1992) and Brown (2006). Faculty from these studies reported reduced burnout, the ability to achieve more work life balance and increased job satisfaction. The results of this study showed that time away was important to a large percentage of the participants. This was similar to research done by Wildman (2012) who found that time

away was listed as a major benefit in the 4 major areas which were studied, personal benefits, professional benefits, organizational benefits.

What is not clear is whether the faculty members were awarded the sabbaticals to begin with in order to develop themselves professionally or as a reward for their past performance. Results from this survey show that the majority of faculty want to work on articles, however previous research has indicated that faculty who were highly productive were much more likely to be given sabbaticals and that upon return are no more productive than before they left (Mamiseishvili & Miller, 2010).

Post sabbatical reports are a typical requirement of sabbatical policies and the institution can gain insights into faculty experience. However research has indicated that most institutions do not use the information in the reports (Jarecky & Sandifer, 1986). Therefore one possible implication would be for universities to pay more attention to the post sabbatical reports as well as monitor the longer terms effects which sabbaticals have on faculty by following up 2 or 3 years after the individual returns. In addition, faculty could be asked to present the results of their sabbaticals to their peers. There is little empirical data on faculty sabbatical assessments. It is commonly assumed that sabbaticals are a good tool for faculty moral and that faculty use them effectively however there is little data backing it up (Kang & Miller, 1999).

An additional conclusion is that universities that do not currently have sabbatical programs might want to think about instituting them and then measuring the results and benefits which were gained by faculty and the institution. This also relates to increasing productivity as opposed to the issue of faculty burnout which the literature clearly indicates is an issue with faculty. Since the entire concept of faculty sabbaticals are under fire, the benefits reported may help to dispel the myth that sabbaticals are useless. Thus will help those universities that are currently thinking of cutting this professional development activity to reconsider.

Lastly one implication relates to facilitation of sabbaticals. Since professors mentioned that their institutions did not help to facilitate their sabbaticals, mechanisms could be set up to help faculty explore the different types of opportunities and avenues that might be available to them to do sabbaticals. In the end sabbaticals can be beneficial for faculty and their institutions. The results of this study indicate how valuable faculty thought there sabbaticals were while universities benefit because of increased productivity and employee retention.

## **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

The topic of faculty sabbaticals is a complex and important topic. This research was limited in that it only explored faculty who teach in the area of hospitality and tourism who have taken sabbaticals therefore it may not be generalizable to faculty teaching in other disciplines. It did not explore the reasons that faculty who were eligible for sabbaticals have not taken one. Another limitation was the limited sample size. There are many schools which do not encourage sabbaticals therefore the number of faculty who have taken sabbaticals is limited. The sample size was also limited due to the fact that only tenured associate and full professors are eligible for sabbaticals. In addition this research only explored faculty in the United States. Policies and practices in other parts of the world are different and a future study could explore sabbatical practices of hospitality and tourism faculty around the world.

While some of the research on sabbaticals has focused on productivity related to publications and grants, additional research should be conducted on other service related activities which

benefit the faculty member, the university and the community. While it was not included in this research, future research could look at the importance of learning another language as a sabbatical activity. In addition research could be conducted which is related to faculty motivation for sabbatical activities. Faculty members who are motivated by intrinsic things are more likely to relate to the benefits of happiness, satisfaction and work life balance. Those faculty who are more extrinsically motivated are more likely to enjoy the benefits of added income, awards for publications or other service awards (Amabile, 1988, 1998).

Further research on sabbaticals is necessary. This is in spite of the fact that some of the research appears to indicate that faculty and administrators do not think sabbaticals have to be justified. However little research has been conducted about the learning outcomes of these experiences (Avakian, 1987). The last substantial study of how administrators viewed faculty input after a sabbatical was done by Cooper in 1931, therefore updating is obviously necessary. It is also necessary to look at both the tangible outcomes as well as the intangible byproducts of sabbaticals.

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