

ABSTRACT

The tourism industry is considered as one of the rapidly booming industries in the world and it is a vital industry that contributes to global economic development. The tourism industry of Sri Lanka also makes a significant contribution to the national economy in many ways. Therefore, providing tourism education since school level is very important to create professionals in the future tourism industry and also gaining competencies in the related skills and attitudes. But the current school education system in Sri Lanka has not yet paid considerable attention to introducing tourism education like other subjects in school curricular. Meanwhile tourism education is being given as diploma and degree levels targeting the tourism industry in Sri Lanka. But, considering the rapid growth of industry, the output from these government and private institutes is insufficient to fulfill requirements that have been demanded. Therefore, this study mainly aims to identify the effect of providing tourism education in secondary education on Future of tourism industry by analyzing teachers' and parents' perspective. Hence, the objectives of this study were to explore the teachers' perspective on providing tourism education in secondary level education and to identify the parents' perspective on providing tourism education in secondary level education in Sri Lanka. The primary data was collected from 18 teachers and 15 parents by covering all the nine provinces in Sri Lanka. Purposive sampling was used to formulate the sample and semi- structured interviews were used to collect data. Under the qualitative research approach, collected data were transcribed and analyzed by using thematic analysis method. The findings of the study revealed that respondents' desires about providing tourism education. Moreover findings illustrated that mainly providing tourism education affect for future employability of industry in many ways and how tourism education should be provided in secondary education in schools. This study recommends to enhance the awareness of tourism among teachers and parents, to introduce tourism as a basket subject, to provide opportunity for practical exposure and promote foreign language fluency within tourism education.

Key words: tourism education, secondary level education, future tourism industry, teachers' perspective, parents' perspective