

Impact of Tourism Education On Job Performance of Tourism Graduates from State Universities in Sri Lanka

W.D.L Prasangika¹, J.P.R.C Ranasinghe² and W.G.S.R Wijesundara¹

¹*Department of Public Administration, Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Management Sciences, Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

Tourism is one of the fastest growing umbrella industries in the world. Each one in eleven jobs in the world are from tourism sector. It is equally important to have well trained, educated and skilled work force for high quality performance. Despite the rapid growth in the provision of tourism higher education in the past 40 years, uncertainties remain about the content and nature of tourism degrees and how these are aligned with the needs of the tourism industry. Some research has been done on designing tourism higher education curriculum but the extent to which tourism higher education meets the industry needs and the job performance of the graduates has not yet been closely investigated. This study aims to identify the impact of tourism education on the job performance of the tourism graduates. Conceptual framework was developed to outline the research process. Sample consisted 160 respondents by covering all the four state universities providing tourism degree programs in Sri Lanka. An online survey was conducted to collect the relevant data. Data was analysed by using descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis, path modelling through SPSS and Smart-PLS (SEM). The study found considerable variance between tourism education and job performance and there is a positive moderate impact from tourism education to the job performance. Learning outcomes have a moderate positive relationship with job performance. Tourism graduates have a good perception about the tourism education in order to fulfil the industry requirements. As the recommendations tourism curriculum must be well planned and rich with more practical exposure. The faculty members must provide a great support for the undergraduates in accomplishing their career objectives and the learning outcomes. The learning environments must facilitate the supportive exposure in order to get fulfil the learning outcomes of the courses.

Keywords: Tourism education, Job performance, Learning outcomes, Tourism graduates, Structural equation modelling