

ABSTRACT

The events industry is one of rapidly growing industries with clear tourism synergies. Events have the potential to boost the tourism sector, attract media attention, encourage development, and inspire infrastructure modifications, including the formation of new partnerships. The conference event sector is growing as an important component of the MICE industry. The demand for both paid and volunteer employees increase as the number of conferences grow. Undergraduates are playing a major role in the volunteer sector. They are motivated to volunteer at the conference events for a variety of reasons. Hence, this research was conducted to determine the undergraduates' motivation factors, which affect for volunteering at conference events in Sri Lanka. This study's population did consist of 3rd and 4th year undergraduates pursuing hospitality and tourism-related degree programs at state universities. There were 425 students in the population. Sample size was 202 students and stratify random sampling technique was used in selecting the sample. Structured questionnaire with closed-end questions was used as the prime data collection method and questionnaire was distributed among the sample via a Google form. In addition to that, quantitative approach was used to conduct this study and collected data were analyzed by using SmartPLS software. The outcome obtained from the analysis illustrates that there is a significant positive relationship between determinants and volunteer motivation. Undergraduates were interested in volunteering at conference events because of altruistic and value-driven benefits, instrumental or career-related benefits, and socio-or ego defensive benefits. Furthermore, this study suggested that facilitating undergraduates to engage in volunteering at conferences during their university period gains more benefits for their future career as well as their personal life.

Key words: Volunteer, Motivation, Conference Events, University Undergraduates