



Impact of Engagement in Leisure and Recreational Activities on the Undergraduates' Performance; Evidence from Tourism Undergraduates in State Universities, Sri Lanka

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Leisure & recreation is important to reduce stress and enhance the performance of anyone. Leisure is an important tool that is chosen by youngsters who are willing to deal with risk and adventure and their choice is supported by the youngsters who doubt engaging in risk and adventure. Undergraduates are a significant category within the youth and the education system. Learning and assessments, strikes, and financial burdens make them stressed. Hence, there should be some alternatives to overcome such stress, otherwise that will adversely affect their academic performance. Hence this research aims to examine the impact of leisure & recreational activities on the undergraduates' performance with the mediating impact of the stress of the undergraduates of tourism degree programs in state universities. The study was carried out quantitatively to get the outcome. Purposive sampling technique and simple random sampling technique was used to select the population and sample accordingly. A total of 200 respondents were given an online structured questionnaire representing undergraduates from tourism degree programs in state universities, Sri Lanka. The outcome obtained from the analysis illustrated leisure and recreational activities including home environment activities, sports, outdoor recreations and leisure tourism activities were individually impact positively on undergraduates performance with the significant P value ($P < 0.05$) while cultural activities and having high social content activities were jointly impact positively ($P > 0.05$) on undergraduate performance. Stress significantly mediated the relationship between leisure & recreational activities and undergraduates' performance. Their engagement in leisure and recreational activities help to reduce stress and enhance their performance. Accordingly, it can be concluded there is a positive relationship between the engagement in leisure and recreational activities and undergraduates' performance. This study shows that there should be an enhancement of engaging leisure and recreational activities as sports, especially the indoor sports activities, because most of the undergraduates are interested in engaging indoor sports when they are free. Furthermore, this study suggests that facilitating undergraduates to engage in leisure and recreational activities within university premises is necessary to reduce their stress.

Keywords: Leisure; recreation; undergraduates' performance; stress