STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTION ON
THE PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM EDUCATION IN INDIA

Dr. Sumit Kumar Singh[*]
Mr. Subhash Chandra Kannaujiya[**]
Ms. Suneetha K[***]

ABSTRACT

Tourism is a service industry and it is based on human resource. This paper explores the current trends in tourism education system in India with respect to human resource development through tourism education. This paper examines to know stakeholders' perspective on the quality, competence and availability of manpower in tourism with reference to the problems of supply from tourism education. It aims to assess the potential to develop existing tourism education system and analysis the future initiative in tourism education in India. This paper further analyses the growth of tourism in India with respect of tourism education and the government's role, participation, promotion and policy making in the development of tourism education system.

Keywords: *Tourism Education, Learning, Stakeholders' of Education, Skills, Knowledge & Experiences.*

_____

Introduction

With the aim to provide quality manpower to the industry and in order to develop, enhance and disseminate knowledge of tourism in the society. Formal education in tourism evolves in India during 1970s, Similar to the international scenario. Tourism education in India is confined to diploma, certificate, degree at undergraduate & post graduate levels and PhDs. Though a late starter, tourism education in India has reached length and breadth of the country. Almost all states and the related government have at least on tourism programs running in its institutions. Increased job opportunities, globalization and automation have influenced the growth of tourism educational programs in the country and so as the takers.

Existing literatures on tourism education in India scare compared to the international scenario. Studies so far in tourism education have been focused upon attributes of tourism syllabi, skill-set required for professionals I tourism industry. Trends and patterns of tourism education have been helpful in understanding the background of tourism education. However there has been hardly any study till date that could compare the quality of tourism education vis-à-vis it industry requirements.

The available studies such as Srivastava P.K. 2008, Singh S. 1997, Khan NA 2008, and CII report 2003 have helped the researcher in conceptualizing the attributes and John Tribe, Amoh1997, Huang 2012, Wheeler 2006 and Ross 1997 have helped in studying the industry needs. Taking the inputs from existing literatures, the present study aims to critically evaluate the various aspect of tourism education in India from an integrated stakeholders' perspective. Further the perception of cross section stakeholders has been compared for the gap in their expectations. The study aims to evolve a conceptual model for effectively positioning tourism education as a concluding remark.

[*]   Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism, School of Professional Studies, Garden City University, Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

[**]   Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism, School of Professional Studies, Garden City University, Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

[***] Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism, School of Professional Studies, Garden City University, Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

Research Gap

Tourism Education researches largely studied Tourism Curriculum, Institutional Infrastructure, programmes, Policy, Supply & demand of manpower, contents and delivery; (Srivastava P.K. 2008, Singh S. 1997, Khan NA 2008, CII report 2003). The studies focused on understanding the critical variables that influence the quality of tourism education are *few and far between*. Further, in India, there is a mismatch between industry expectation and the quality & professional orientation of tourism syllabi. There is a significant gap in research with respect to what attributes make tourism education more relevant to the industry needs.

Problem Statements

Tourism education in the country is still considered to be at a nascent stage and Uncertainties exist about the content, quality and nature of tourism education and about their relevance. Many institutions lag behind as they are not able to provide sufficient employment opportunities to its graduates. The inability to provide efficient manpower to the industry on one hand and lack of industry patronage of tourism syllabi on the other, give rise to the widening gap between demand and supply of quality manpower in the tourism industry.

Objectives of the Study

- To evaluate the existing structure and relevance of tourism education in India;
- To identify the critical variables of tourism education which determine its future;
- To assess the stakeholders' perspective on varied dimensions of Indian tourism education;

Research Methodology

The research design and procedures utilized for this descriptive study include collecting data by the use of a questionnaire to answer questions concerning the objectives of this study. To explain the methodology in detail, the following key aspects will be addressed:

- Firstly, the research design will be outlined in order to explain the objectives and application of the empirical investigation;
- Secondly, the planning of the survey will be described, focusing on the questionnaire design, testing procedure, questionnaire layout and contents, as well as the population and sample size;
- Thirdly, the methodology used to disseminate the questionnaire will be described;
- Finally, the process of data analysis used in this study is discussed.

Planning the Empirical Research

The empirical survey was conducted by means of an electronic-mail survey and hand delivered questionnaires developed on the basis of issues raised in the literature review. The questionnaire included an introductory cover Letter explaining the purpose of the survey & who is implementing it, an Informed Consent Letter and the main Questionnaire. The process followed during the empirical survey is described below.

The Layout and Contents of the Questionnaire

An introductory and directional paragraph was placed at the beginning of the questionnaire for the guidelines to the respondents in order to complete the questionnaire. There are four populations groups in this study, i.e. students, faculty members, employees & employers but only one questionnaire was developed for all. The questionnaires contained qualitative and quantitative questions that required open ended and close ended answer.

- **Section A** required information regarding Demographic profile, (Name, Institutions, Income, Qualification, Post, reason to choose tourism and experience in tourism) and attributes of Tourism Education in India (Building, classroom, Curriculum, Students, faculties, administration and other features of tourism education). There were 08 questions on demographics and 21 questions on Tourism Education Features in India in this section.
- **Section B** considered the extent to which current tourism curricula are perceived to address skills, knowledge and experience items within three educational clusters. Based on the review of literature, the researcher factored 21 skills items, 28 Knowledge item and 12 Experience Item, which were used for evaluating the extent to which a curriculum is perceived to address.

- **Section C** required general opinion on Tourism education Outcome (Placement, Growth & Satisfaction) and conclusive Comment on Tourism Education and Industry. This section had both close ended and open-ended questions.

Ethical Considerations

In order to attend ethical consideration, an informed consent letter was first sent to potential respondents to participate in this study. The potential participants were informed of the following ethical principles: (a) The name of the institution supporting the research; (b) the name of the researcher; (c) the name of the supervisor; (d) the aims of the research; and (e) The voluntary participation of potential respondents. Anonymity was considered as the identity and the name of the respondent and the company was not requested. The potential respondents were also informed that confidentiality will be maintained and that the researcher will not identify respondents or associate particular views with particular institutions.

Population

Since the objective of this study was to study the perspective of stakeholders on Tourism education in India, the population of this study were academics from both Private and public higher education institutions in India, as well as tourism graduate employees from these education institutions and human resource managers or Employers from the tourism industries that have employed these tourism graduates.

Sampling

For the purpose of sampling, the students, faculty members and industry professionals in India are considered to be the universe. The major source of the sampling frame for tourism graduates are from Indian Universities and Institutions. The departments in India universities and institutions were approached with a request for detail of students and alumni tourism graduates. The researcher decided to directly approach to the students by choosing Judgmental sampling method. With this approach a very large percentage of potential respondents were automatically eliminated. Employers from the tourism industry also formed part of the sample frame. Extracting the sample of tourism graduates / employees automatically determined the tourism employers of the various sectors. The researcher was concerned with employers that employed tourism graduates from the Indian higher education institutions. The researcher contacted Some of the human resource managers by directly and some of the managers by telephone and explained the aims of the research and requested their participation. All the human resource managers contacted were interested in participating in the research as they felt that the aims of the study were relevant to the industry and education.

Data Collection

A Total of 663 respondents participated in the survey which were approached either personally or approaches by electronic mail. The respondents combined of students from Postgraduates' courses of tourism, the faculty members from Postgraduates' programs in tourism, the employees/ex postgraduates' students employed in the industry and the employers that employed tourism graduates from the Indian higher education institutions. The details of respondent groups and obtain responses in each category are explained below.

- A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to the students of the various Indian Universities and Institutions. Only 264 questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a 66% overall response rate.

- A total of 150 questionnaires were sent to the faculty members of the various Indian Universities and Institutions either directly or through email. 71 questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a 47% response rate.

- A total of 400 questionnaires were either interviewed personally or were approached through email to the employees. Only 258 questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a 64% overall response rate.

- A total of 150 questionnaires were sent by electronic mail or they were interviewed directly to human resource managers or Entrepreneurs from the tourism industry. 70 questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a 46% response rate.

The questionnaires were thus distributed and collected during September 2015 to June 2016. For online responses reminders in the form of telephone calls and emails were sentto potential respondents requesting their feedback if, they did not respond to the first request.

Data Processing and Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences program (SPSS)and Excel wereused for analysing the quantitative data. Comparative graphs for each Tourism Education Features item were developed showing the responses of the four groups in percentages. Further, composite graphs were developed showing the mean result for all the Tourism Education Features, Training & Learning and Outcome items added together within each educational cluster.

Simple Mean Analysis

Like frequency, simple mean analysis is also a part of descriptive statistics, which shows the average value of response chosen by the respondents. Simple mean analysis has been used for all the construct variables such as Educational Infrastructure, students & Faculty members, Educational environment, skills, knowledge, experiences, employment opportunities, employment growth and employment satisfaction in tourism education. The simple mean analysis has been done with the help of Microsoft Exceland SPSS software.
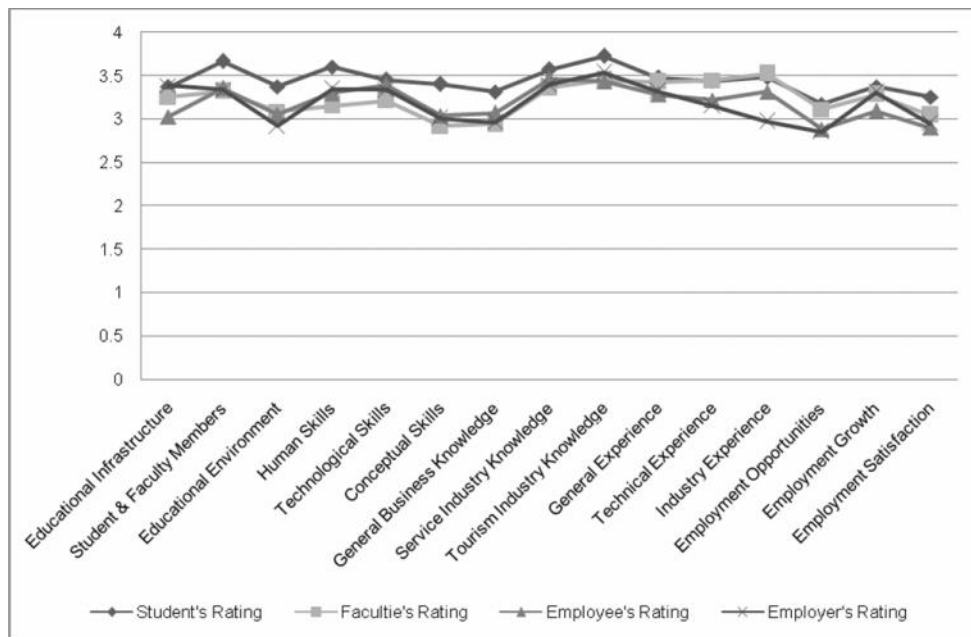
Line Chart for Total Respondent's Rating Mean
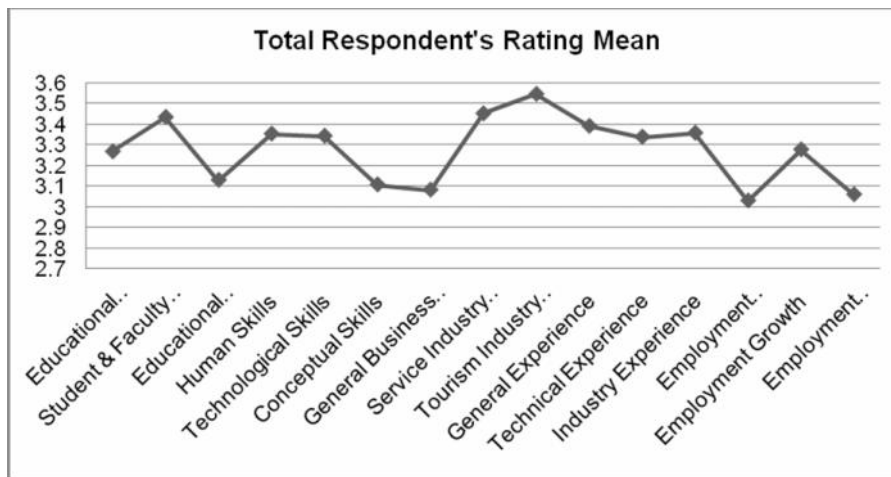
This chart shows the total respondent's rating meanon each factors of the tourism education. Overall respondents have given the ratings above average (3.3 out of 5) to all factors of tourism education. After seeing all the factors one by one, it was found that respondents have given high ratings to some factors (Such as students and faculty members, service industry knowledge, tourism industry knowledge, general experiences) and low ratings to some factors (Such as educational infrastructure, educational environment, human skills, technical skills, conceptual skills, general business knowledge, technical experiences, industry experiences, employment opportunities, employment growth and employment satisfaction). With this chart we can conclude that the employment opportunities, growth and satisfaction in tourism are low in comparison of other factors. This may be because of low performance in infrastructure, environment, skills and knowledge in tourism, which revealed according to respondents' ratings.

Line Chart for Academic's and Industry's Respondents Rating Mean
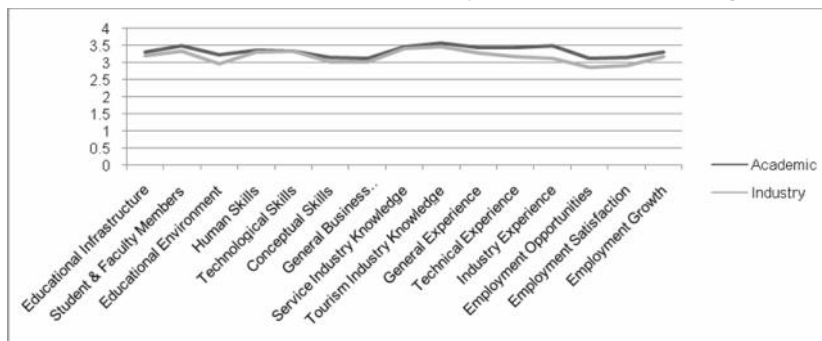
This chart shows the Academic and Industry Respondent's Rating Mean on each factors of the tourism education. Overall respondents have given the ratings equal or above average (3.3 out of 5) to all factors of tourism education. In this chart, it is clearly visible that academic's respondents have given high ratings (ratings mean = 3.3762) to the tourism education in comparison of industry's respondents rating (ratings mean = 3.1397).Both types of respondents have given similar kind of ratings on each factor but industry respondents have given little low ratings to each factor. Both have given low ratings to the employment opportunities, growth and satisfaction factors. At last we can conclude that, according to academic respondents' opinion, it is clear that tourism education is doing well enough and it is understanding the needs of tourism industry. But according to Industry respondent's opinion, it is clear that tourism education is not doing good enough and also it not understanding the needs of tourism industry.

Line Chart for students, faculty members, employees and employers Respondents Rating Mean

This chart shows the students, faculty members, employees and employers Respondent's Rating Mean on each factors of the tourism education. Overall respondents have given the ratings equal or above average (equal to or more than 3 out of 5) to all factors of tourism education. In this chart, it is clearly visible that students, faculty members, employees and employer's respondents have different rating mean on the different factors of tourism education. In this chart, student's ratings mean (3.4219) are highest followed by faculty's ratings mean (3.2064), employer's ratings mean (3.1719) and employee's ratings mean (3.1310) respectively.

There is similarity in the all the respondent's rating, everyone has given low ratings to the employment opportunities, growth and satisfaction factors but for others factors high ratings. With this chart it can be concluded that each have different opinion about tourism education in India. The reason for high ratings from students may be that, they are unaware about the needs of the tourism industry.

Limitations of the Study

Every study irrespective of it scale and nature suffer from more than one short comings. This study also suffers from limitations as follow: - (a) The concept of Tourism education is highly complex and exhaustive. The issues may vary among Institutions which are engaged in various part of India. (b) The study covers only Master Degree Programmes and does not concentrate on the Other Programmes such as Distance education, Degree, Diploma and Certificate. (c) The study has collected data for the research were collected only from the six major cities (i.e. Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad) and nearby institutes/organizations, not covering all Institutes and Organizations. Thus, the collected data may suffer from biasness as they belong to metro cities only not including institutions from rural area.

Findings of the Study

- **Findings from Survey**
    - Outcome of tourism education is dependent on the 'Attributes' i.e. Facilities, Students & faculty members and Environment and 'Training & Learning' i.e. Skills, Knowledge and Experiences.
    - There are significant differences among the perspectives of different stakeholders i.e. Student, Faculty, Employee and employer on varied dimensions of Tourism Education.
    - Students were more concerned about the placement, salary and job opportunity than other academic requirements in the campus.
    - Faculty members were more concerned about students' quality, placement and social recognition of tourism profession.
    - Employees were highly concerned about work culture in the industry and salary growth.
    - Employers were mostly concerned about competencies and accountability of tourism professionals.

- **Findings from Content Analysis**
    - Faculty responses indicate that the students are able to execute the tasks and responsibilities required for the industry.
    - To the above Employers disagreed and they were of the opinion that they need to further train students according to the standards of the industry.
    - While Faculty members are of the opinion that they are in touch with the industry and that industry is satisfied with their alumni, but industry feels the opposite.
    - The absence of a system of record keeping in the Institutions with respect to the students' progression in the industry creates doubts about the understanding of the academia about the industry needs.
    - These findings are in line with that of Evans (2001), that there are differing expectations between educators and the industry.

Conclusion

The Success of tourism industry largely depends upon the quality of manpower it engages**.** A good amount of responsibility thus, lies with tourism academia in the country. Although both academic and industry are varying from each other in terms of their expectations. There is need for synergy between the two. Industry on the one hand can contribute to the academia in terms of strengthening the syllabi with latest updates in the industry. Academia on the other hand, based on it research can formulate measures and suggest industry partners about the changing market trends. The interaction between industry and academia instead of discrete as occasional meetings and recruitment can be continues. The industry input at every level of professional education can not only prepare student for the industry but can also save their own cost in training and development. The present research highlighting the grey areas in tourism education has brought into sight the avenues for seamless interaction between two pillars of tourism industry and academia.

References

~ Airey, D., & Johnson, S. (2000). Tourism degree and postgraduate level courses in the UK 1999/2000 – dimensions, characteristics, contents – a report to the British Travel Education Trust (unpublished study for the British Travel Educational Trust).

~ Airey, D., & Tribe, J. (Eds.). (2006). An international handbook of tourism education. Routledge.

~ Amoh, E. E. (2019). Reintegration of Skilled Returned Migrants in Ghana: An Advantage or a Challenge? (Doctoral dissertation, University of Ghana).

~ Ayikoru, M., Tribe, J., & Airey, D. (2009). Reading tourism education: Neoliberalism unveiled. Annals of Tourism Research, 36(2), 191-221. doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2008.11.001

~ Busby, G., & Huang, R. (2012). Integration, intermediation and tourism higher education: Conceptual understanding in the curriculum. Tourism Management, 33(1), 108-115.

~ DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijcar.2019.20621.4037

~ Hsu, C. H., Xiao, H., & Chen, N. (2017). Hospitality and tourism education research from 2005 to 2014: "Is the past a prologue to the future?". International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 29(1), 141-160.

~ Inui, Y., Wheeler, D., & Lankford, S. (2006). Rethinking tourism education: What should schools teach. Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education, 5(2), 25-35.

~ Jafari, J. (1997). Human capital in the tourism industry: Tourismification of the profession: Chameleon job names of the industry. Spain: The World Tourism Organisation.

~ Jafari, J. (2002). Tourism education and training models, getting to the core of destination planning and management. TedQual, 1/2002, 29-34.

~ Khan, N. A. (2008). Human resource development in tourism industry in india: A case Study of Air India Ltd., New Delhi. El Periplo Sustentable: revista de turismo, desarrollo y competitividad, (14), 89-116.

~ Khan, N. A. (2008). Tourism and Development in India: Myths and Realities. Johar, 3(2), 101.

~ Ross, G. F. (1997). Hospitality/tourism job applications and educational expectation. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management.

~ Rynne, J., Kwek, A., & Bui, J. (2012). Insights into the academic motivation of tourism and hospitality students in a research methods course. Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education, 24(2-3), 28-39.

~ Singh, S. (1997). Developing human resources for the tourism industry with reference to India. Tourism Management, 18(5), 299-306.

~ Singh, S. K., Kannaujiya, S. C., & Sharma, A. K. (2019). An overview on tourism education in India – an evaluative study. International Journal of Current Advanced Research, 20618-20621.

~ Singh, S. K., Mishra, J. K., & Rao, V. K. (2017). Tourism Education in India: Current issues & challenges. CRPTH conference, Pondicherry University, India. (pp. 188-194)

~ Singh, S. K., Mishra, J. K., & Rao, V. K. (2018). A Study on the Application of System Approach in Tourism Education with respect to Quality and Excellence. International Research Journal in Business and Management. 11(12) (pp.07-17)

~ Singh, S., & Singh, T. V. (2006). India. In An international handbook of tourism education (pp. 203-222). Routledge.

~ Singh, T. V. (Ed.). (2012). Critical debates in tourism (Vol. 57). Channel View Publications.

~ Singh, T. V., & Singh, S. (2005). India, In Airey, D. & Tribe, J. (2005) in An International Handbook of Tourism Education, (191-210), U.K., ELSEVIER

~ Singh, V., Singh, D. & Singh, R. (2006). Tourism education an emerging essential: reengineering tourism industry through information technology initiatives. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers.

~ Srivastava, P. K. (2008). HR Challenges in Tourism Industry in India.

~ Tribe, J. (1997). The indiscipline of tourism. Annals of tourism research, 24(3), 638-657.

~ Tribe, J. (2000). Balancing the vocational: The theory and practice of liberal education in tourism. Tourism and Hospitality Research, 2(1), 9–25.

~ Tribe, J. (2002a). Research trends and imperatives in tourism education. Acta Turistica, 14(1), 61–81.

~ Tribe, J. (2002b). The philosophic practitioner. Annals of Tourism Research, 29(2), 338–357.

~ W. Faulkner, M. Fagence, M. Davidson & S. Craig-Smith (Eds), Tourism research and education in Australia conference (pp. 311–320). Canberra: Bureau of Tourism Research

~ World Tourism Organization (2002). The Key Role of Education in the New Age of Tourism. TedQual, 36-37.

~ World Tourism Organization. (1988). Guidelines for the transfer of new technologies in the field of tourism. Madrid, Spain: Author.

❖◆❖