

THE AWARENESS OF SCHOOLS STUDENTS ON IMPACTS OF TOURISM AND THEIR CAREER INTENTION: THE CASE OF GAMPAHA DISTRICT, SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Problems associated with human resource in the tourism and hospitality industry is subject to great debates in the recent past. School students are the future leaders, but selection of tourism and hospitality careers is less frequent compared to other industries, which makes the industry vulnerable in the mid-term. Thus, the present study explores the school students' awareness of the impacts of tourism and hospitality industry and career intention. A sample of 400 Advanced Level school students were selected for this study using the stratified systematic sampling method. To achieve the proposed research objective, a quantitative research method was adopted and data were gathered through self-administered structured questionnaires from the school students. Collected data were analysed using SPSS (version 21) package and basic descriptive statistics, factor analysis, correlation analysis and regression tests were run on data to find out the answer for the main research question. Consequently, eight features of impacts of tourism were identified: economic gains, economic losses, social hazards, social well-being, interpersonal factors, wise consumption of resources, environmental quality and environmental degradation. Regression analysis results testified positive causal relationships economic gains, social well-being, wise consumption, environmental quality and respondents' career intentions in the tourism and hospitality industry. A significantly negative relationship between economic losses and interpersonal factors and career intention was also identified, whereas awareness on social hazards and environmental degradation upon career intentions were not statistically significant. Tourism and hospitality policy makers and professionals can encourage more school leavers to join with the tourism industry by applying the recommendations provided based on the findings of this study.

Keywords: *tourism, tourism and hospitality industry, impacts of tourism, career intention*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry, globally and locally, has encountered problems associated with attracting and retaining quality man power. This situation has hindered the growth of tourism and hospitality industry (Andorka, 1996; Bonn & Forbringer, 1992, Lokuhetty, 2014). Lack of understanding and a poor image of the job have long been debated in the tourism industry. Although various initiatives has been taken to educate and train future tourism professionals, one can never deny the importance of understanding school students' perception and attitudes towards working in the tourism industry. In Sri Lanka, tourism education is offered basically at four levels; certificate level, diploma level, degree level, and master's level. Although, tourism has been identified as a main driving force to develop the country, no tourism related knowledge is given to the students at the school level in Sri Lanka. If today's students are to become the effective practitioners of tomorrow, it is fundamental to understand their perception of tourism employment. At present, around 320,000 job opportunities have been created by

the industry (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, 2016) and by 2016 it was expected to create 500,000 employment opportunities as per the Tourism Strategic Document of 2010 (Ministry of Economic Development, 2011). The deficiency in the sector in the labor market may be due to the fact that the school leavers are not aware of the true potential of the tourism industry which keeps them away from the industry. Industry experts including the Chairman of the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management stresses that what is lacking in the tourism and hospitality sector is trained hoteliers to take up the positions (Dissanayake, 2016).

The services of the tourism and hospitality industry are produced and consumed at the same time creating direct service encounters between employees and guests, both physically and psychologically. Therefore, it is imperative to maintain well-educated, well-trained, skilled, enthusiastic and committed employees within the organization (Kusluvan and Kusluvan, 2000). However, as per many scholars (Pavesic & Brymer, 1989; Kusluvan and Kusluvan, 2000), poor image and lack of understanding on the job has long been debated in the tourism

industry. This situation is a complex one with many different factors contributing to the problem. These factors include a young transient workforce; low pay; low levels of formal qualifications; high levels of females, students, part-time, and casual workers; a high proportion of low-skilled jobs; a large proportion of hours worked outside normal business hours; a negative industry image in the eyes of potential employees; poor utilization of student labor and high levels of staff turnover (Baum, 2006; Brien, 2004; Deery & Shaw, 1999; Freeland, 2000). In knowledge-based industries like tourism, where skilled employees are often in short supply (Docherty and Fernandez, 2014), the attraction and retention of potential employees is a critical factor in securing the long-term success of the industry. In the Sri Lankan context, employment in the tourism and hospitality has been identified as a less preferred career option for a variety of reasons: economic reasons, lack of general awareness of the sector, work hours and environment, and sociocultural pressures (Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs, 2017). After identifying school students as the future hospitality professionals,

2020 Tourism Strategic Plan of Sri Lanka has proposed many actions to increase the awareness among the school students. They include: introducing a hospitality and customer service course in the local school curriculum; encouraging more schools that follow the English Advanced Level syllabus to introduce the Travel & Tourism advanced Level course; establishing travel clubs in local schools (Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs, 2017).

Although various initiatives have been taken to educate and train future tourism professionals, one cannot deny the importance of understanding how awareness affects the career intention in the tourism industry. In Sri Lanka, the number of tourism graduates, diploma holders entering in to the tourism and hospitality industry remains significantly low (Lokuhetti, 2014; Dissanayake, 2016; Samarathunga, 2018). Up to the recent past, only Sabaragamuwa and Rajarata Universities offered tourism related courses in the Sri Lankan University System. Further, the industry is of the opinion that potential undergraduates are indicating a relative low preference to select tourism courses in the

University system. This is also a clear indication of low awareness about the prospects about the tourism industry among the school leavers.

The perception and attitude of young people towards careers in the tourism industry has not been sufficiently researched in the tourism industry. Ross (1994) makes the point forcefully that relatively little research has thus far been conducted on the perceptions and intentions of those individuals who are likely to enter the tourism/hospitality workforce. Fazio (1986) also states that the perceptions and attitudes based on direct experience will leave people with a stronger and more realistic view of the industry and will therefore be more predictive of future behavior. Although international findings provide valuable blue prints, they are mostly relevant to the tourism institutes that offer tertiary education. Additionally, the literature continues to be silent on school students' awareness, interest and intention about the impacts of tourism industry and its careers. Although there are many factors affecting the career intention, there is no evidence of research studies being conducted in this area; the awareness of

students attached to schools, on impacts of tourism and their career intention. Thus, after identifying the significance of this issue, the researchers are left with the problem of identifying the school students' level of awareness about the impacts of tourism industry which is directly influencing their career intention in the future. In order to achieve the main research objective, the researchers have employed three research questions: what is the relationship between school students' awareness on economic impacts of tourism and career intention?; what is the relationship between school students' awareness on socio-cultural impacts of tourism and career intention?; what is the relationship between school students' awareness on environmental impacts of tourism and career intention?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism impacts, which are a part of tourism awareness (Bastias-Perez & Var, 1995) are often subject to great debates due to their multi-faced nature. Although sustainable tourism concepts have been introduced, one cannot deny the industry's negative and positive consequences over the host regions. The main three impacts of tourism

are associated with economic impacts, socio-cultural impacts and environmental impacts.

Economics impacts of tourism

The economic impacts of tourism are two fold: positive and negative. According to Mason (2015) economic impacts are usually seen as positive, contributing to employment, better services, and social stability. However, tourism impacts can also contribute to high living costs within the community, pushing local business out of the areas, and raising costs for locals (Ardahaey, 2011). Tourism is now, more than ever, recognized as a major economic contributor in many destinations worldwide, adding value for foreign exchange and also supporting export industries and environmental, social, cultural, and historic resources support and protection (Mill & Morrison, 1992). Stynes (1997) also identifies the positive impacts of tourism. One positive aspect of tourism is its ability to bring new money into the community. The economic impacts of tourism can also be increased by selling local products and by helping local people retain ownership of businesses that serve tourists (Cooper et al., 1993; Holloway &

Robinson, 1995). Another major benefit of tourism for a region or country is that it provides an opportunity for job creation and generation of revenue at international, national, regional and local levels. The distinct nature of labor intensiveness in the tourism industry will secure the jobs in the years to come as well (Cooper et al., 1993; Inskip, 1991). Another important economic feature of the tourism industry is that an income earned in places of residence is spent in places visited (Holloway & Robinson, 1995). Tourism is one of the most convenient ways of earnings foreign exchange, when compared with the export of manufactured goods (Zaei & Zaei, 2013). In addition to that tourism activities increase the tax-revenue of the central and the state governments (Gee et al., 1989). Tourism activities can reduce poverty through the increase in national income, employment generation; foreign currency earnings, regional development, promotion of local handicrafts and many more (Mill & Morrison, 1992). Developing countries having a deficit balance of payments find it to their advantage to receive foreign tourists to compensate for negative trade balance and the tourism industry can

play an important role in economic development for a developing country (Mill, 1990). The economic importance of tourism in national economy can be appreciated with reference to its contribution in infrastructure development (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). Tourism gives impetus to national income. International tourism and domestic tourism both have the same effect on the national income (Mill, 1990).

Mathieson and Wall (1982) further identify two distinct impacts of tourism. According to them, tourism can sometimes inflate the cost of housing and retail prices in the area, frequently on a seasonal basis. In addition tourism may lead to a wider array of goods and services available in an area of either higher or lower quality than without tourism. It is commonly known that tourism involves opportunity costs, although they are not easily definable. When destination areas invest in the development of tourism, they rarely consider what the same resources could provide when invested in another industry (Ardahaey, 2011; Mathieson & Wall, 1982,). When destinations become over dependent on tourism, they make themselves vulnerable to tourists' changes in demand (Ardahaey, 2011). The changes in

land-use patterns from an agricultural society to the tourism industry introduces modified land-use patterns as tourism increases land prices as a result of competition and thus encourages sales (Holloway & Robinson, 1995). Tourism also causes leakages. Rátz et al. (2002) define leakage as 'financial processes through which less money gets back into the economy'. When tourists demand standards that the host country cannot supply, import leakage occurs and this especially in less developed countries. Most of the income from tourist expenditure leaks out of the country in order to pay for the imports. As per Mathieson and Wall (1982) the consequences of inflation might arise in many different ways including tourist expenses. Mason (2015) speaks of the seasonal nature of tourism, i.e., as the tourism product cannot be stored and is highly seasonal, it needs to earn enough during high season in order to fight and survive the decline during the rest of the year. This also has obvious implications for employment and investment. The seasonality of tourism leads to a division between high- and low season. Some of the hotels are closed during low season, whereas others

suffer great losses in income (Mathieson and Wall, 1992).

Hence, the current study proposes the following:

H₁: There is a relationship between school students' awareness on Economic Gains of tourism and career intention

H₂: There is a relationship between school students' awareness on Economic Losses of tourism and career intention

Socio-cultural impacts of tourism

Socio-cultural Impacts are associated with interactions between people and cultural backgrounds, attitudes and behaviors, and relationships to material goods. The introduction of tourists to sensitive areas can be detrimental, cause a loss of culture, or, alternatively, contribute to the preservation of culture and cultural sites through increased resources (Mason, 2015). Pizam and Milman (1984) define social and cultural impacts of tourism as 'the ways in which tourism is contributing to changes in value systems, individual behavior, family relationships, collective lifestyles, moral conduct, creative expressions, traditional ceremonies and community organization'. Travis (1984) and Murphy (1985)

proposes a list of sociocultural benefits that may affect tourism destination. They consisted of cultural development (modernization) and exchange, social change and choice, improved image of host community, improved public health, social and amenity improvements, education and conservation, positive cultural interchange and political modifications. Tourism also helps in expansion of education and literacy in a big way (Zaei & Zaei, 2013). Due to numerous economic benefits of tourism and its potential growth it helps in the increase of the standard of living of the people by offering new and better jobs, which in terms helps them to improve the quality of life and their families (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). Tourism helps to improve the literacy and education of the people. Further, it conserves the local cultural heritage (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). However, the scholars have viewed the negative socio-cultural consequences of tourism as well. They include traffic conditions, individual crimes, organized crimes, drug addiction, and alcoholism (Milman & Pizam, 1988). Murphy (1985) and Travis (1984) also list down the socio-cultural costs of tourism that include host culture

destruction and debasement, social instability, consumerism, changes in the law and social order, commercialized host-visitor relationships, changes in traditional values and political destabilization.

Based on the aforementioned statement, the following hypotheses are, therefore, proposed:

H₃: There is a relationship between school students' awareness on Social Hazards of tourism and career intention

H₄: There is a relationship between school students' awareness of Social Well-being of tourism and career intention

H₅: There is a relationship between school students' awareness of Interpersonal factors of tourism and career intention

Environmental Impacts of Tourism

Environmental impacts can be identified as the impacts that affect the carrying capacity of the area, vegetation, air quality, water bodies, the water table, wildlife, and natural phenomena (Mason, 2015). Positive impacts which enhance residents' living are summarized by Kendall and Var (1984) as more and better leisure facilities, more beaches designated as parks, and greater

recognition of the importance of saving historical buildings. Travis (1982) also discusses development of infrastructure and superstructure, pollution control, and public health benefits as additional positive environmental aspects of tourism. Zaei & Zaei (2013) identified the environmental impacts of tourism in a more rigorous way. According to them, tourism causes increased investment in the area (may improve facilities, access and enable development); conservation of features encouraged (buildings, wildlife, countryside), increased income for upkeep and preservation of facilities. Kendall and Var (1984), after reviewing numerous articles on resident perceptions on impacts of tourism, summarized some negative environmental impacts-those which impinge on the residents' lifestyle such as crowding (including traffic congestion), noise, litter, property destruction (including crop destruction), pollution, change in community appearance, depletion of wildlife, and ad hoc development. Moreover, Travis (1982) reviews damage to cultural resources, land use loss, and increased urbanization as negative environmental impacts of tourism.

Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₆: There is a relationship between school students' awareness on Wise Consumption of tourism and career intention

H₇: There is a relationship between school students' awareness on Environmental Quality of tourism and career intention

H₈: There is a relationship between school students' awareness on Environmental Degradation of tourism and career intention

Career intention in the tourism industry

Current studies on hospitality students' career related behavior and intention while still in school are less common. Jenkins (2001) noted that "relatively little research has been undertaken to establish hospitality students' perception of the industry". Further, understanding of hospitality students' career decision-making process and career intentions has important implications for educators. Knowing the values and expectations of young people allows hospitality programs and faculty "to guide them into right employment settings and this will ensure person-organizational fit" (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986, as cited in Aycan & FikretPasa, 2003). Defining career

aspirations is a challenging task, especially for young people (Samuel et al., 2001). According to Gati, Krauz and Osipow (1996) not all individuals approach career decisions in the same manner. The career intention is defined as "the degree to which a person has formulated conscious plans to perform or not perform some specified future behavior" (Warshaw & Davis, 1985). The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) developed by Lent et al. (1994) explain factors that affect students' academic major selections, career interest exploration, goal development, and career persistence behaviors (Lent et al., 1994). The SCCT highlights three social cognitive variables and how they interrelate with personal and contextual variables during the career development process (Lent et al., 1994). In this study the focus on three central components of the SCCT; self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and intention. Self-efficacy serves as a mediator to motivate people to achieve a special goal (Feltz & Payment, 2005), such as pursuing a career in the hospitality industry. Vocational Exploration refers to a process that an individual engages when choosing a career (Blustein, Ellis, & Devenis, 1989).

This process begins with exposure to various sources of information (about one's self, the vocational world, and alternative options) and involves activities such as (a) testing occupational preferences and interests, (b) evaluating suitability and obtaining feedback, (c) establishing career goals and overcoming barriers and obstacles, and (d) engaging in and committing to a career choice (Blustein et al., 1989).

Nature of careers in the tourism industry

Factors affecting behaviors and attitudes of students towards working in the tourism industry largely correlates with the poor image of the industry. Many studies identify a high turnover rate of employees to be influenced by poor image and nature of the industry. Kuslivan and Kuslivan (1999) studies on Turkish university students tested the student's attitudes using multi-attitudinal scale. The scale places eight factors that attributed to "image" including the nature of work in the tourism industry that include social status, the physical working condition, pay benefits offered and opportunities that work as moderating factors in influencing student's perception and

attitudes. Nackervis (1997) argues that the problem of tourism image in the Asia Pacific region is bounded by traditional culture versus the nature of the industry. The negative perceptions of hotel occupations (particularly in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, and New Zealand) and the associated factors (face, status and collectivism) provide difficulties for hoteliers in attracting high quality employees. While Pavesic and Brymer (1989) asserts that one of the reasons employees are leaving the tourism industry is the lack of motivating factors; which in turn can be in monetary form. Though the literature provides a common ground for the variable, one contradicting literature challenges one of the aspects of 'poor image' in relations to employees' attitude. As mentioned by Thozhur et al. (2005), to consider attitudes to be affected by salary, one must look at two components: the idea of target wages and how such targets come about in the minds of the individual. Thus, low wages do not necessarily say that employees are unhappy with their work. Especially when there are consistent findings in the research done by Brown and McIntosh (1998) that states lower paid workers express higher

satisfaction with pay than higher paid workers. The satisfaction is determined by each individual's background differences and benchmarks that determine the 'ideal' wage which can be different between individuals. Hence, the issues of poor image juxtaposed with individual's attitudes and perceptions are highly debatable. Though poor image is said to be a contributing factor for employees to leave the tourism industry; there are however research studies that indicate positive attitudes of employees even though they are low wages. Thozhur et al. (2005) indicated that the long working hours are born out of necessity.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study mainly targeted one sample group to collect the data, i.e. Advanced Level school students in Gampaha district, Sri Lanka. The researchers adopted a convenience sampling method to select students in Gampaha District. Primary data were collected through self-administered questionnaires. Secondary data were also accessed to develop the research hypothesis and to develop the questionnaire for this study. The questionnaire was developed based on the operationalization process

considering all the dimensions of each and every variable.

The questionnaire consisted of several sections. Section A of the questionnaire consisted of the demographic information. Section B contains 39 item inventory on Likert type five scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5) to identify the school students awareness of impacts of tourism and career intention that are factored under eight main variables including economic gains (EG), economic losses (EL), social hazards (SH), social well-being (SWB), interpersonal (IP), wise consumption (WC), environmental quality (EQ), environmental degradation (ED), career intention (CI). In order to obtain the relevant factors, a varimax rotation was applied which converged 39 iterations. Coincided with prior anticipation, eight factors were extracted as the main attributes of impacts of tourism.

The population for this research is the advanced level school students in Gampaha district, Sri Lanka. According to the Gampaha Education Zone statistics, there are 19,432 number of grade 13 Advanced Level school students in Gampaha district. The researchers adopted a stratified systematic

sampling method to collect the data. At a 95% confidence level based on a 5% margin of error, a population of 19,432 requires 384 samples (Saunders et al., 2009). A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to the target respondents during December, 2017. The researchers selected grade 13 Advanced Level students who are visiting Gampha private educational institutes (tuition classes) during the weekends since visiting each and every school in Gampaha district is not feasible. The selection of sampling units were also done using convenience sampling method. However, to have a cross sectional understanding for this study, the stratas were created representing all the Advanced Level education streams available in Sri Lanka, which are listed in Table 1. Every 5th student of the class was selected at the class registration desk and were given a questionnaire. The overall response rate was 89 percent since the researchers closely monitored the data collection process. The questionnaires were distributed among the sample is also indicated in the Table 1.

Table 1: Selection of sample according to stratified systematic sampling method

Educational Stream	Population	Sample	Strata	No. of questionnaires
Commerce	4858	100	Class 01	50
			Class 02	50
Biological & physical Science	6801	140	Class 01	70
			Class 02	70
Arts	6024	124	Class 01	62
			Class 02	62
Technology	1749	36	Class 01	12
			Class 02	12
			Class 03	12
Total	19,432	400	Total	400

Source: Authors, 2018

Construct validity and reliability were applied to determine the convergent validity and internal consistency of the constructs used in the instrument. For the purpose of reliability principle component analysis and reliability test based on Cronbach's alpha were used and their results are presented in Table 2. According to Table 2, results reveals that sample size was adequate to apply factor analysis to the given constructs. Moreover, communities generated by the analysis were well over 0.5 indicating the construct validity of the measures. Cronbach's alpha coefficients which were

ranging from 0.701 to 0.835 confirm the reliability of the constructs used in the instrument. Descriptive statistics, correlation tests and regression analysis were used to test

the research hypotheses and to determine the existence of a significant relationship among the variables under the study.

Table 2: Results of principle component analysis and reliability test

Variable	No. of Items	KM O	Bartlett's Test		TVE	Cronbach's alpha
			Chi Square Value	Sig		
Economic gains	4	0.746	269.789	0.000	54.61%	0.718
Economic losses	4	0.646	94.934	0.000	51.80%	0.701
Social hazards	3	0.701	340.802	0.000	71.54%	0.800
Social well being	3	0.586	58.311	0.000	53.26%	0.723
Interpersonal	3	0.594	90.016	0.000	52.94%	0.709
Wise consumption	2	0.500	82.858	0.000	72.83%	0.727
Environmental quality	4	0.740	319.041	0.000	56.49%	0.736
Environmental degradation	4	0.667	198.978	0.000	56.35%	0.751
Career intention	9	0.826	1041	0.000	55.33%	0.835

Source: Authors, 2018

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A summary of analysis of demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in the Table 3. 357 students participated in this survey. Out of the total number of participants, 41.5% of them are male and 58.5% of them are female. The religion of the respondents are 86.6% Buddhists, 1.1% Hindus, 11.8% are Catholics and 6% of them

are Islamic. Out of all the respondents, 19.3% are Physical Science students, 17.1% are Biological Science students, 22.7% are Commerce students, 8.4% are Technological students, and finally 32.5% of them are Arts students. A vast majority of the respondents (80.7%) do not have anyone working in the tourism industry. Similarly, 60.5% of them responded that they are not interested about selecting

tourism as their tertiary education stream. 54.2% of the respondents are not interested in tourism jobs.

Table 3: Demographic information of the participants

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	148	41.5%
Female	209	58.5%
Religion		
Buddhist	309	86.6%
Hindu	4	1.1%
Catholic	42	11.8%
Islam	2	.6%
Education stream		
Physical Science	69	19.3%
Biological Science	61	17.1%
Commerce	81	22.7%
Technology	30	8.4%
Arts	116	32.5%
Any known persons working in the tourism industry?		
Yes	69	19.3%
No	288	80.7%
Interested in Higher Education in Tourism		
Yes	141	39.5%
No	216	60.5%
Interested in working the tourism industry?		
Yes	162	45.8%
No	192	54.2%

Source: Authors, 2018

Descriptive statistics of the variables and the correlations among the eight attributes are shown in the Table 4. The correlation analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between the random two variables at the 0.01 level. A regression test was conducted to examine the awareness of impacts of tourism upon career intention. Before embarking on such an analysis, it is a common practice to check for multicollinearity. Following suggestion from Hair et al. (2010), this study adopted the tolerance value to measure multicollinearity, and the results are presented in Table 5. Many scholars (Kim and Kim, 2005; Özgener and Iraz, 2006; Hair et. al., 2010) suggested that if the tolerance value is very small (less than .10) it indicates that the multiple correlation with other variables is high, suggesting the possibility of multicollinearity. The results (Table 5) shows that all tolerance values obtained are well above 0.10, demonstrating no significant multicollinearity among the independent variables. Further, for the present study all the VIF values are all well below 10 and the tolerance statistics all well above

0.2; therefore, it can be safely concluded that there is no collinearity within the data. Then the Durbin Watson test was carried out to check for the auto-correlation,

which was 1.871, indicating that there is no significance auto-correlation between independent variables.

Table 4: Means, standard deviations and correlations of scales

Variable	Mean	SD	CI	EG	EL	SH	SW B	IP	WC	EQ
CI	4.0202	.64416								
EG	3.9706	.68505	.642**							
EL	3.2185	.68534	.037	.105*						
SH	3.7162	.92966	.036	.145**	.299**					
SWB	3.4622	.74925	.501**	.281**	.186**	.015				
IP	3.3697	.80703	.019	.106*	.412**	.370**	.161**			
WC	3.5854	.91973	.406**	.224**	.117*	.140**	.211**	.201**		
EQ	3.7325	.78871	.584**	.397**	.203**	.159**	.377**	.237**	.214**	
ED	3.6723	.75286	.153**	.164**	.262**	.426**	.091	.326**	.216**	.363**

Note: ** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Source: Authors, 2018

A regression analysis was then conducted to examine the relationship between the eight attributes and tourism and hospitality career intentions (Table 5). It can be seen that only four attributes (economic gains, social well-being, wise consumption and environmental quality) have significant positive relationships with career intention (R^2 0.673). The interrelations of the eight factors were considered, and the R^2 (0.673) was significant at the 0.01 level (F 89.636). This means that 67.3 percent of the variance in career

intentions in the tourism industry could be explained by the independent variables. Based on the results of the regression analysis, four out of the eight hypotheses are supported. The awareness of “Economic gains” is the most important in terms of deciding the career intention, as it has the highest regression coefficient (betavalue) of 0.417. The second-ranked variable is the awareness of “Environmental quality”, with a beta of 0.341. “Social well-being” and “Wise consumption of resources” also have strong positive relationships with

career intention with the regression coefficient value of 0.246 and 0.236 respectively.

Table 5: The results of regression analysis

Impacts of tourism	Standardized regression coefficient (beta)	Tolerance value	VIF	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	Durbin Watson test
(Constant)	0.684			89.636**	.673	.666	1.871
EG	.417**	.799	1.252				
EL	-.075	.782	1.280				
SH	-.026	.732	1.366				
SWB	.246**	.798	1.253				
IP	-.140	.724	1.382				
WC	.236**	.882	1.134				
EQ	.341**	.674	1.484				
ED	-.037	.699	1.431				

Notes: Dependent variable: career intention; **p* < 0.01

Source: Authors, 2018

5. CONCLUSION

There are number of studies conducted in this area of research, i.e. Barron and Maxwell (1993), Getz (1994), Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000), Aksu and Köksal (2005), and Pavesic and Brymer (1990). However, none of the researchers considered the school students whose tourism awareness greatly affect their career intention. Knowledge of school students' awareness on impacts of tourism is a useful information source for mid-term man power planning, development and training. Most previous studies, are about exploring different aspects of tourism students'

attitude towards the tourism career and rarely incorporated the school students, whose tourism awareness greatly affect their career intention. However, a common conclusion could be identified across the international studies irrespective of the context and students' different knowledge levels i.e. the greater the awareness about the tourism industry, the higher the career intention is (Barron and Maxwell, 1993; Getz, 1994; Kusluvan and Kusluvan, 2000; Jenkins 2001; Aksu and Köksal, 2005).

Possibly, the present study is the first study of this nature that tries to identify the relationship between

the awareness of the impacts of tourism and career intention among school students in Sri Lankan context. Thus, the present study widens the existing literature by revealing student's awareness of impacts of tourism and career intention. Further, the present study elaborates the relationship between students' awareness of tourism and career intention based on eight variables that includes economic gains, economic losses, social hazards, social well-being, interpersonal, wise consumption of resources, environmental quality and environmental degradation. Through the analysis it was revealed that there is an optimistic impact of economic gains, social well-being, wise consumption, environmental quality on career intention. However, there is a negative impact of economic losses and interpersonal on career intention. Further, awareness on social hazards and environmental degradation did not prove to have any relationship between the awareness of impacts and career intention.

Recommendations and implications

The findings of this study has implications for the stakeholders of the tourism industry while

contributing to the theory. Since Sri Lanka has identified tourism as one of its key development strategies, it is necessary to ensure the smooth functioning of that industry. Having an effective work force is vital for sustainable development of the industry (Pavesic & Brymer, 1989). Therefore, the present study forwards following suggestions to the stakeholder.

Previous studies (Chuang & Dellmannjenkins, 2010; Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2003) suggest different approaches that can be employed to increase students' awareness about impacts of tourism and career intention. They include: in-cooperating tourism subject in to the school curricular, through conducting workshops and awareness programs, promoting tourism educations through career guidance programs, sponsoring for interesting learning methods including field trips to the hotels etc. In parallel to the previous studies, it should be ensured that much emphasis is put on increasing the students' awareness of economic gains of tourism, social well-being, wise consumption of resource and environmental impacts. To increase the school students' awareness about economic gains it is important to increase students' awareness about

foreign direct investment (FDI), employment creation, infrastructural development and economic contribution made by the tourism and hospitality industry. In order to increase the awareness of social well-being among the school students, particular attention should be paid to increasing the knowledge on living condition, increased literacy, and preservation of local cultures. Further, in order to increase the awareness on wise consumption of resources and to increase the career intention, it is important to increase school students' awareness on environmental management and environmental conservation lead by the tourism industry. Additionally, in order to increase school students' awareness of environmental impacts of tourism so as to increase the career intention, it is important to increase their knowledge on environmental awareness, protection and promotion of natural attractions, introduction of rules and regulations to protect the environment and about conversion of natural areas to resorts.

The present study similar to others also comes with some limitations. First, this study is limited to one geographical boundary; Gampaha, Sri Lanka. To get a holistic view about how school

students perceive tourism as a career intention wide geographical coverage is needed for the generalizability of this study. Secondly, it was noted that the school students have a very low knowledge of tourism and hospitality field since tourism knowledge is not provided at school levels. Thus, it is important to conduct workshops and increase their awareness before collecting data. Thirdly, the data was collected only from the Sinhala speaking students. Thus, further research needs to be consider to collect data from Tamil speaking students as well. Finally, there could be many other factors affecting school students' awareness of impacts of tourism and career intention, for example, level of exposure, parents' attitude, opportunity to study etc. Consequently, future studies should consider such factors to get a holistic idea about the issue. This study can be used only as a guiding documents to identify school students' level of awareness of impacts of tourism and career intention.

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