

The Value and Benefits of Fieldtrips in Tourism and Hospitality Education

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Abstract: The objective of this article is to understand how the use of fieldtrips can enhance students' educational experience in Tourism and Hospitality education. A total of 23 students who participated in a fieldtrip as part of their hospitality and tourism degree programme were included in this research. A comparison study was conducted among Year 1 and Year 2 undergraduates to examine differences between their perception of fieldtrips and their educational experience. Results revealed two key categories of attitudes: 1) learning towards subject, and 2) interest toward subject as motivational factors through fieldtrips. A key finding revealed Year 1 students' attitude towards fieldtrips as an enhancement to their education whereas Year 2 students viewed fieldtrips as a form of learning towards their future career pathway.

Keywords: fieldtrips, student educational experience, experiential learning, tourism and hospitality education

Introduction

The fieldtrip in Tourism and Hospitality education is a useful educational tool for transforming learning experience beyond the traditional classroom (Do, 2006). Recent studies (such as Gretzel et al., 2008; Wong and Wong, 2008; Sanders and Armstrong, 2008) have reported fieldtrips to have enhanced students' learning and increased their practical knowledge in the absence of actual work experience. Besides enhancement of student learning, fieldtrips also benefit faculty members with valuable professional development experience (Porth, 1997) especially for younger tourism educators (Peace, 2007). As the hospitality and tourism industry has become a more complex industry, research on fieldtrips in this area of education is an important and neglected research area (Sigala & Baum, 2003), where future employers expect non-vocational skills as well such as interpersonal skills, analysis and reflection (Jonker & Jonker, 1990; Kay & Russette, 2000; Littlejohn, 2004). Furthermore, Petrova and Mason (2004) and Ladkin (2005) have also criticized the tourism education industry for not adequately preparing people for employment in the tourism industry. In order to respond to employment needs in a challenging environment, Amoah and Baum (1997, p.5) stress that "keeping abreast with the latest technology and trends in the industry" is one of the key factors education programmes must be included in their course curriculum. Morrison and O'Mahony (2003) have also urged educational institutions to modify their higher education curriculum to incorporate more reflective thinking and critical analysis components.

Surprisingly, researchers in Tourism and Hospitality have focused very little attention in Tourism and Hospitality education. In a meta-analysis of 2868 tourism journal articles from the top 12 tourism journal articles (Tourism Management; Annals of Tourism Research; Journal of

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Travel Research; Journal of Vacation Marketing; Tourism Economics; Journal of Recreation Research; International Journal of Tourism Analysis; Tourism Analysis; Current Issues in Tourism; Journal of Tourism Studies; Tourism Geographies; and Tourism Culture and Communication), only 2% were tourism education and training related (Ballantyne et al., 2009, p. 151). Within the limited studies of tourism education (Ballantyne et al., 2009, p. 151), there is a growing body of research on student attitudes toward attending field trips (such as Xie, 2004; Gretzel et al., 2008; Wong & Wong, 2008; Ritchie & Coughlan, 2004; Sanders & Armstrong, 2008; Goh, 2010). However, no research has been conducted to compare and understand the differences between graduates in different levels of university education. This is important because year 1 students who are participating in a fieldtrip for the first time are less autonomous in their learning as compared to year 3 students who are more experienced and are more self-directed in their learning experience (Kent et al., 1997, p. 314). Furthermore, Fuller et al. (2000) have indicated that a “one size fits all” approach does not provide the best learning outcome for every student. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to understand and compare student attitudes toward fieldtrips across different stages (e.g. year 1, year 2, and year 3) of their university undergraduate programme.

Literature Review

Traditional Lecture-Based Learning and Experiential Learning

Adopting traditional lecture-based learning is a major teaching methodology in most universities and higher education institutions (Fry et al., 2003). Although educators view traditional lecture-based learning as an effective method to transfer knowledge to students, there are limited opportunities for students to practice active learning (Exley & Dennick, 2004). In traditional lectures, students are limited to passive learning through mainly note taking and listening. However, traditional lectures are necessary (Light & Cox, 2001) as they serve as a platform for providing background information, basic concepts, and theories required by students before they embark on their independent learning journey and become effective participants in discussions (Fry et al., 2003). Nevertheless, it is often necessary to include other learning methods such as experiential learning to compensate the limitations of traditional lecture-based learning.

Experiential learning is an interactive learning method by doing (Gillis, 1991), in which students learn through direct hands-on action or activity, and carry that particular experience into future experiences (Dewey et al., 1994, p. 10). One of the most influential models of experiential learning is presented by Kolb (1984, p. 41) where he proposed that an individual's learning process of knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. These concrete experiences and reflective observations are essential for learning (Kolb, 1984; Dewey, 1997). This cyclical experiential learning process is widely known as Kolb's (1984) four stage experiential learning model: (stage 1) concrete experience – where the learner is actively experiencing an activity; (stage 2) reflective observation – where the learner is consciously reflecting back on that experience; (stage 3) abstract conceptualization – where the learner is being presented with a theory or model of what is observed or to be observed; (stage 4) active experimentation – where the learner is trying to plan how to test a model or theory or plan for a forthcoming experience. A way of learning by doing is through fieldtrips and school excursions, which has been considered an important part of school life (Cooper & Latham, 1989). Fieldtrips are very useful for theoretical courses to engage in experiential activities for a chance to reflect upon the fieldtrip experience and relate it to their wider reading and theoretical aspects of the course (Jenkins, 1997).

Roles of Educator and Learner in Fieldtrips

Educators play an important role in enhancing the students' learning experience. Burger and Sakofs (1987, p. 23) described experiential educators as "ministers of the light of understanding" who has experienced a higher truth and is actively liberating and guiding learners to a new level of awareness through questioning. This sees educators highly involved in the different stages of planning and organizing the fieldtrip. Port (1997) recommends a three stage (pre-trip; on-trip; and post-trip) learning process in fieldtrips. At the pre-trip stage, educators need to prepare students for learning during the fieldtrip by providing lectures, guest speakers, or related assessments. During the on-trip stage, the educator should perform the role of a facilitator and allow students to perform active learning and independent participation during the fieldtrip. A question and answer should also be included to allow informal interactions and networking with the host. The post-trip stage occurs when the students return to the classrooms, where students reflect their fieldtrip experience to the theories studied in the pre-trip lectures. Several educators (such as Cushner, 2004; Ap, 2005; Wong & Wong, 2008) have adopted a similar fieldtrip learning process when organizing fieldtrips. Regardless of the fieldtrip learning framework used, fieldtrips should demonstrate experiential learning outcomes through preparation, participation and reflection (Do, 2006).

Students are viewed as learners during fieldtrips, with the learning by doing approach, and taking some ownership of their learning experience (Joplin, 1981). Durian et al. (1990) identified certain essential roles students perform during experiential learning, such as involvement in the pre-trip stage, and engaging in interactive activities during the on-trip stage. Although providing support and feedback throughout the experiential learning process is essential (Joplin, 1981; Otten, 1985), the students / learners are responsible for their learning experience during the fieldtrip and not dependent on the educator (Burger & Sakofs, 1987).

Students' Attitude towards Experiential Learning and Fieldtrips

Limited research has been undertaken in the area of motivation behind attending fieldtrips. This is supported by Xie (2004, p. 104) who mentioned that "there is scarce literature on the perception of experiential learning in tourism studies". Within the limited studies of fieldtrip research, most studies do not compare the differences between year 1, 2 and 3 students. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to explore students' attitudes toward fieldtrips and compare these attitudes among year 1 and year 2 students.

Research has shown that fieldtrips and experiential learning are a good strategic fit with positive support from teachers and students (Xie, 2004; Gretzel et al., 2008; Wong & Wong, 2008; Sanders and Armstrong, 2008). Teachers and students who have employed experiential learning methods and techniques in hospitality and tourism courses have consistently reported positive student responses and beliefs that their learning has benefited from the fieldtrips (Wong & Wong, 2008). Over a two-day period, Wong and Wong (2008) conducted three fieldtrips to Guangzhou, Macau, and Pearl River Delta China for 305 students undertaking a hospitality and tourism course (Hong Kong Polytechnic University). At the end of the fieldtrip, a 20 item survey was administered to measure students' attitude towards the fieldtrip (mean satisfactory score of 4.9 out of 7) (p. 248). With regards to experiential learning and fieldtrips, their students reported positive evaluations such as (p. 248):

"The field trip enhanced my learning in this subject",

"I could relate the field trip to the learning objectives of the subject",

“The debriefing after the field trip was useful for my learning of the subject”.

Xie (2004) organized a four-day fieldtrip to Niagara Falls for his tourism class (Bowling Green State University, n=15). Throughout the fieldtrip, students recorded their experience in a journal with evaluations, photos, and personal thoughts. Students reflected a positive learning outcome with journal comments such as (p. 108):

“The fieldtrip was a bonus. It helped make the material in tourism more real”

“I feel I learned a lot about tourism and the destinations while we were on the fieldtrip.”

Xie (2004, p. 108) also reported that the fieldtrip provided a different perspective for students to understand the complexity of tourism as the guest speakers talked about personal experiences rather than theories and concepts”.

Students at Texas A & M University (n = 35) participated in a fieldtrip to Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico (Gretzel et al., 2008). At the end of the fieldtrip that lasted for eight days, students had to submit a reflective journal about their experience. This was used to measure the students’ attitudes of the field trip. The instructors reported a number of students providing good personal insights and evidence of a deep understanding of the course materials with positive comments such as (p.274):

“...it is one thing to learn about tourism in a classroom, but it’s something else to go out into the world and actually live it!”

“My overall experience on the trip was a good one. I was exposed to things I never thought I would have a chance to see.”

However, despite providing a partial scholarship to cover part of the fieldtrip expenses, and course credits for attendance, only 22 out of 24 first year students attended.

Sanders and Armstrong (2008) organized a one-day field trip to Braidwood, NSW, Australia (University of Canberra, n=60). This was meant for 3rd year students studying a tourism management course. Students completed a 25 item questionnaire before (pre-fieldtrip) and after (post-fieldtrip) the fieldtrip. The majority of students revealed positive learning attitudes toward the fieldtrip experience. The most agreed item was “I think I am going to learn more about this destination by visiting it than I could from books or the internet (mean = 4.5, pre and 4.2, post out of 5)” (p. 33). However, there was a very interesting finding on the students’ perception of pre and post –fieldtrips. All nine attitudes toward learning revealed that students’ perceptions were reduced after completing the fieldtrip. For e.g., “I think this fieldtrip will help (helped) me understand the theoretical material we have learned in class” students scored 4.1 before and 3.4 after fieldtrip. This was probably due to the “fieldtrip programme being more complicated than necessary and students’ expectations were not met” (p. 36).

Data and Methodology

Background of Fieldtrip

The fieldtrip was organized for students enrolled in Marketing Fundamentals (Year 1) and Services Marketing (Year 2) in a Tourism and Hospitality degree programme. The purpose of the fieldtrip was to provide students with an opportunity to understand and experience marketing activities in a hotel environment. More importantly, the fieldtrip was designed to allow students an opportunity to apply theoretical concepts learnt in traditional classroom settings in a

practical environment. The fieldtrip was related to the students' group report, which placed significant importance in the fieldtrip. Both year 1 (20 students) and year 2 students (22 students) were involved in the fieldtrips. Out of the 42 students, 23 participated (year 1 = 11, year 2 = 12). The fieldtrip design adopted the three stage process (pre-trip, on-trip, and post-trip) theoretical framework proposed by Xie (2004); and Wong and Wong (2008).

Pre-trip

Prior to the fieldtrip, students spent two tutorial sessions on background information and relevant theories to be used during the fieldtrip. Students were instructed to conduct secondary research by visiting the hotel's website to understand the hotel's marketing activities and competitive industry. Warburton et al. (1997, p. 337) have recommended the use of information technology in the planning stage to enhance learning outcomes. As these students have limited fieldtrip experience, they played a minor role in designing their learning outcomes for the fieldtrip, which resulted in the lecturer leading the fieldtrip planning process (Kent et al., 1997). These learning outcomes were then structured into marketing questions. Along with the questions, the fieldtrip itinerary was given to students two weeks before the fieldtrip to better manage student expectations. Students were also briefed on Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) conduct to be observed during the fieldtrip.

On-trip

Students travelled to the hotel in a coach accompanied by two academic staff. During the fieldtrip, students were given a one-hour tour of the hotel facilities visiting hotel rooms, restaurants, bars, gyms, conference rooms and the front office. This was followed by a lecture-presentation by the Director of Marketing and General Manager of the five-star hotel. A question and answer session was conducted towards the end for students to direct questions to the presenters.

Post-trip

Following the fieldtrip outing, students presented their experience with a short presentation during tutorial classes. This experience learning process was then reflected in the students' group report, which they submitted 5 weeks after the fieldtrip.

Methodology

Data was collected using a qualitative projective technique called "Bubble Drawing" (Will et al., 1996). This technique encourages respondents to express their private and unconscious beliefs and feelings by talking about other people (Sykes, 1990). Due to the sensitive nature of this research, this technique helps to overcome the elements of social desirability bias (Lilenfeld et al., 2000). Other researchers such as Boddy (2004) has also reported projective techniques to be a useful method for assessing educational evaluations. Furthermore, Ballantyne et al. (2009, p. 151) recommend using a qualitative paradigm in the early stages of a research topic area.

The objective of this paper was exploratory in nature to understand and compare students' attitudes toward fieldtrips between year 1 and year 2 students across the three stages (pre-trip, on-trip, and post-trip). Respondents consisted of students who attended the fieldtrip, a convenience sampling strategy (Jennings, 2001). Out of the 42 students, the 23 participants (year 1 = 11, year 2 = 12) who attended the fieldtrip were given a total of three questionnaires across the three stages of the fieldtrip:

A: What are your attitudes before going on a fieldtrip? (Pre-trip stage)

B: What are your attitudes during the fieldtrip? (On-trip stage)

C: What are your attitudes after attending the fieldtrip? (Post-trip stage)

The open-ended questions are ideal for qualitative research because they disclose the nature of individual experiences in particular instances (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This allowed the researcher to explore further into the students' fieldtrip experience. Content analysis was used to analyse the data collected from the fieldtrip journals. Similar themes were identified and grouped to answer the research questions by emphasizing on descriptive data in relation to attitudes across the three stages of fieldtrips (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Results and Discussion

Learning Attitude Towards Subject

First and foremost, a key theme that emerged from the questionnaire was positive learning attitude. Most students reported a positive learning attitude throughout the three fieldtrip stages. These learning attitudes became more positive through the later stages. For example, students mentioned:

"During the pre-trip, I perceived the information from the fieldtrip to be very useful for my assignment; and when I was at the hotel, the information was really useful for my studies. After the fieldtrip, I felt I could relate my assignment with real life examples from the hotel." (Year 1 Student).

Another student had similar thoughts:

"I hope to get a better understanding of the theories in the textbook from the fieldtrip. During the fieldtrip, we were given practical examples. The post-trip discussion also reinforced certain key points, which made me studying easier." (Year 1 Student).

A year 2 student made the following comment:

"Before the fieldtrip, I wondered if it's going to be fun and knowledgeable. When we were at the hotel, the tour was very useful in understanding the importance of service quality. After the fieldtrip, I referred to my lecture notes to see how I can apply service quality theory and use it for my working experience."

However, year 1 students were more concerned about how the fieldtrip enriched their knowledge in passing the subject whereas year 2 students associated the fieldtrip experience to their future work experience. Some of the year 1 students mentioned:

"I think this fieldtrip will help me to better understand this subject. During the fieldtrip, the presentation by the hotel director was interesting and I think could be tested in our exam. After the fieldtrip, I started to pay more attention to the 4ps as it's important for my exam." (Year 1 Student)

"I am able to apply the textbook theories better now and I spent a day after the fieldtrip reflecting on how these theories can be applied to our assignment." (Year 1 student).

In relation to future working experience, some Year 2 students commented:

"I hoped it was going to be fun and knowledgeable. When the marketing department met us, they gave a very interesting presentation with diagrams of marketing concepts, which gave us a good understanding. I kept some of their handouts such that I can use for my future working experience." (Year 2 student)

"I was really looking forward to the fieldtrip as our expectations were very high based on our lecturer's exciting stories and materials. During the fieldtrip, I took pictures of the hotel's facilities. After the fieldtrip, I shared the pictures with my classmates and we learnt about how current hotel designs can be improved." (Year 2 student)

Interest Level in Subject

The second main theme identified was the increased level of interest in the subject over the three fieldtrip stages. Almost all those interviewed said that they became more interested in the subject after going on the fieldtrip. Year 1 students tend to have a higher increase level of interest in the subject as they had less practical exposure and relied heavily on theories and concepts from textbooks. The fieldtrip assisted their learning and visualization of key concepts. However, year 2 students became more interested in the subject because it adds to their working experience. Some of their comments include:

"It should be as boring as textbooks. However, when we were there, it was very exciting to see how the 4ps work in an actual hotel; it's so different from the textbook. After the fieldtrip, I realized the importance of marketing and it can be quite interesting too." (Year 1 student)

"Initially, I thought that the fieldtrip was going to be a waste of time. However, when the Director presented, he made marketing very interesting. We should have spent more time there, it was much better than reading textbooks." (Year 1 student)

"At first, I don't think it would be anything different from my past working experience. However the tour of the hotel exposed me to places I have never seen such as the penthouse suite. I would now consider working in marketing." (Year 2 student)

"I am sick of classes in school and needed some fresh air. The fieldtrip was very professional and well presented by the Marketing Department, they seemed so passionate. I can see myself working in marketing, everyone is so passionate." (Year 2 student)

However, there was a student who became less interested in the subject:

"I have worked in most hotel departments and it's all the same with long hours and low pay. I don't see if we learnt anything new from this fieldtrip." (Year 2 student)

These results (See Table 1 for all responses) indicate that students' attitudes about fieldtrips can be categorized into two key areas: 1) Learning towards the subject and 2) Interest towards the subject. Year 1 students' attitudes towards the fieldtrip were more about how the experience and knowledge can enhance their learning in relation to the subject. Whereas, year 2 students' attitudes about fieldtrips were related to how the fieldtrip experience would enhance their future career and employment. Nevertheless, fieldtrips can be seen as enhancing understanding of subject materials, which translates into positive pedagogical outcomes for students (Pawson & Teather, 2002, p. 286). The enhancement of understanding of the

subject through fieldtrips also allows students to test theories and concepts studied in traditional lectures. In relation, this helps to stimulate interest in the subject material and application in their group report. This is a form of experiential learning process through reflective observation and active experimentation of various marketing theories to an actual situation.

Knowledge transfer benefits has been reported in past studies to be a key benefit in fieldtrip learning (Light & Cox, 2001; Murphy, 1998). Senior students who have prior working experience also reflect on their studies and past working experience in a real working environment and help them to maintain currency and be ahead of latest trends and currency in the industry. Sanders and Armstrong (2008, p. 33) have also reported that students strongly believe that fieldtrips allow education to be experienced in a real life setting.

Table 1. Responses of All Students at Different Stages of the Fieldtrip

	Pre-trip	On-trip	Post-trip
Year 1 Student	<i>"After spending 2 weeks preparing for the fieldtrip, it should be quite important for my exam."</i>	<i>"This is really useful for my studies."</i>	<i>"I am confident about this subject now."</i>
Year 1 Student	<i>"The information from the fieldtrip is going to be very useful for my assignment."</i>	<i>"I can relate my assignment with real life examples from the hotel."</i>	<i>"This was a great experience. It was fun and I learnt a lot from the Marketing Director."</i>
Year 1 Student	<i>"The hotel's website is very informative and the press release section is very useful for our assessment."</i>	<i>"I noticed that some of the theories and concepts were quite identical when we were there."</i>	<i>"I am more aware of marketing activities in a hotel now."</i>
Year 1 Student	<i>"I think this fieldtrip would help me to better understand this subject."</i>	<i>"During the fieldtrip, the presentation by the hotel director was interesting and I think could be tested in our exam."</i>	<i>"After the fieldtrip, I started to pay more attention to the 4ps as it's important for my exam."</i>
Year 1 Student	<i>"I would like to see if my research on customer service provided by the hotel is true. They claim to have the best service."</i>	<i>"The Director was very insightful about his hotel. I t think it was worth coming here."</i>	<i>"I can see the concepts in the textbook being applied in a real hotel."</i>
Year 1 Student	<i>"I think this fieldtrip is going to be useful for this subject and assignment with firsthand experience."</i>	<i>"The design of hotel facilities assisted my understanding of how the product is as important as promotions for a hotel."</i>	<i>"I can apply and use real examples in my assignments and exams now."</i>
Year 1 Student	<i>"I perceived the information from the fieldtrip to be very useful for my assignment."</i>	<i>"When I was at the hotel, the information was really useful for my studies."</i>	<i>"After the field trip, I felt I could relate my assignment with real life examples from a hotel."</i>
Year 1 Student	<i>"I hope to get a better understanding of the theories in the textbook from the fieldtrip."</i>	<i>"During the fieldtrip, we were given practical examples."</i>	<i>"The post-trip discussion also reinforced certain key points, which made me studying easier."</i>
Year 1 Student	<i>"It should be as boring as textbooks."</i>	<i>"However, when we were there, it was very exciting to see how the 4ps work in an actual hotel; it's so different from the textbook."</i>	<i>"After the field trip, I realized the importance of marketing and it can be quite interesting too."</i>
Year 1 Student	<i>"It should be useful for our assignments and learning of subject."</i>	<i>"The role of the economic environment is important. Given that this is the peak period and there are only a handful of customers."</i>	<i>"The lecturer helped to reinforce certain key marketing concepts that would be helpful when doing the assignment and exam."</i>

	Pre-trip	On-trip	Post-trip
Year 2 Student	<i>"I think that the fieldtrip is going to be a waste of time."</i>	<i>"However, when the director presented, he made marketing very interesting."</i>	<i>"We should have spent more time there, it was much better than reading textbooks."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"This will be very useful for my future career."</i>	<i>"The long travel journey was worth it."</i>	<i>"My impression of marketing has changed completely. It is so glamorous."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"I can try to apply what I have learned in lectures."</i>	<i>"My knowledge in marketing has increased."</i>	<i>"I am more confident about marketing hotels."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"I think it's going to be fun and knowledgeable."</i>	<i>"The hotel tour was very useful in understanding the importance of service quality."</i>	<i>"This can add to my future working experience."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"Maybe this would be helpful in understanding the practical side of marketing."</i>	<i>"The marketing department was very interesting with diagrams of marketing concepts."</i>	<i>"I think I have been exposed to the practical aspects of marketing in a hotel."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"I am really looking forward to the fieldtrip as our expectations were very high based on our lecturer's exciting stories and materials."</i>	<i>"During the fieldtrip, I took pictures of the hotel's facilities."</i>	<i>"After the fieldtrip, I shared the pictures with my classmates and we learnt about how current hotel designs can be improved."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"I don't think it would be anything different from my past working experience."</i>	<i>"The tour of the hotel exposed me to places I had never seen such as the penthouse suite."</i>	<i>"I would now consider working in marketing."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"I am sick of classes in school and need some fresh air."</i>	<i>"The fieldtrip was very professional and well presented by the Marketing Department, they seemed so passionate."</i>	<i>"I can see myself working in marketing, everyone is so passionate."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"I have worked in most hotel departments and it's all the same with long hours and low pay."</i>	<i>"This could be learnt in textbooks, I don't see why we have to be here."</i>	<i>"I don't see if we learnt anything new from this fieldtrip."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"I think this fieldtrip is going to be useful for this subject and be an eye opener."</i>	<i>"The conference rooms are very well equipped with the latest business technologies. This relates the importance of currency with the industry standards."</i>	<i>"I can apply marketing concepts and work in the conference/ MICE industry."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"I think it's pretty much the same as any five star hotels."</i>	<i>"The awards won by the hotel is very good publicity for the hotel. That should be featured on their website to help promote the hotel."</i>	<i>"I would like to do my next industry placement in the marketing department in a hotel."</i>
Year 2 Student	<i>"This should be educational and exciting."</i>	<i>"The hotel was well designed with a high quality service approach and that translates into their brand name."</i>	<i>"I have learnt a lot from this fieldtrip than the past few classes. It was very practical and enriching."</i>

Conclusion and Future Research

This paper has contributed to the limited attention given to tourism education research especially to Xie's (2004, p. 102) call for further research into students' perception of fieldtrips. The main purpose of this study was to compare and identify the underlying motivations of students toward attending fieldtrips between year 1 and year 2 students. Enhancing knowledge and interest level were the two key attitudes among students. Overall, year 1 students viewed fieldtrips in enhancing their education pathway, whereas year 2 students viewed fieldtrips as a form of experience that enhanced their future career pathway. This study's results strongly re-emphasize the need for institutions to include fieldtrips as part of their course curriculum given

the known benefits and students' perception of enhancement of understanding of course materials. This is important in hospitality and tourism education due to its practicality nature of the need to have hands on experience. One recommendation is to ensure that year 1 and senior students have two different fieldtrip experience outcome.

This study also found students' expectations to increase during the three stages of the fieldtrip. Therefore, it is important for academics to manage students' expectations with clear objectives before the fieldtrip and ensure that these objectives are met during the fieldtrip with appropriate activities and to allow reflection during the post fieldtrip stage with discussions to maximize the fieldtrip experience. It is recommended that future fieldtrip designs should adopt the three stage process (pre-trip, on-trip, and post-trip) theoretical framework proposed by Xie (2004) and Wong and Wong (2008).

Results and conclusions from this research must be treated with caution as the sample groups are based on a single fieldtrip rather than multiple fieldtrips. Thus, results must not be generalized for the entire population. Therefore, one future area of research is to include students from other fieldtrip subjects to reduce subjectivity and bias toward a single subject.

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