

**Glo1735 Bringing Destination Management to Tourism Education
Curriculum:
An Examination of Students' Prior Knowledge of DMO**

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Abstract

The inclusion of Destination Management Organization (DMO) Management as an emerging core subject in studying tourism destination management is crucial in equipping the students with knowledge and skills to manage destination effectively. Studies suggest that prior knowledge is among variables which might impact the student's learning outcomes. This study was designed to investigate the students' prior knowledge of DMO as a profession and a subject in Bachelor Program of Tourism Destination at two premier tourism institutes in Indonesia. The research applied a qualitative content analysis method in evaluating the answers of a survey participated by 169 students. Information regarding basic knowledge of DMO such as constructed definitions, examples, perceived responsibilities and the role(s) of DMO in tourism destination was examined. The findings of this study are expected to assist program directors to establish instructional design for the future tourism education curriculum.

Keywords: Destination management, DMO, prior knowledge, tourism education curriculum

Introduction

There has been an intensifying competition among tourism destinations nowadays, followed by the growing interest in managing tourism from a destination perspective. According to Ritchie & Crouch (2003), the success of tourism relies on a coordinated approach to the planning, development, management and marketing of the destination. The United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) suggests that destination management is a vital process that allows destinations to maximize tourism value for visitors while ensuring local benefits and sustainability (UNWTO, 2007). In order to make tourism as a leading sector in development and to increase its competitiveness, there is an urge to manage tourism destination more professionally. In fact, tourism is an amalgamated sector, a very fragmented and heterogenous industry with many small businesses. Moreover, tourism sector includes a network of interconnected stakeholders and organizations, both public and private working together. In this regards, a Destination Management Organization (DMO) serves as a leading and coordinating body for the many organizations involved in tourism (Morrison, 2013). According to UNWTO, DMO is 'the entity, which brings together various authorities, stakeholders and professionals and/ or facilitates tourism industry partnerships towards a collective destination vision' (UNWTO, 2010, p.4). The report also states that the ultimate goal of a DMO is 'to develop and promote the destination by coordinating and managing certain key activities, such as funding, strategic planning, marketing, decision making and product development of the destination' (p.4). The effectiveness of the DMO can play a critical role, helping local businesses to build and create sustainable competitive advantage for the destination. According to Destination Consultancy Group (DCG), mentioned in Morrison (2013), there are six different roles of DMO, such as (1) leadership and coordination, (2) planning and research, (3) product development, (4) marketing and promotion, (5) partnership and team-building, and (6) community relations. In this regards, DMO plays a significant role

in destination governance, indicated by the actions and performances of this organization in terms of its operational activities, expectations, priorities and goals.

Effective destination management leads to successful operational performance and helps destination to build a strong competitive identity, to develop sustainable tourism, to improve tourism yield and to increase the benefits for host communities (UNWTO, 2007, 2010). Similarly, Bornhorst, Ritchie, & Sheehan (2010) summarize the roles of the DMO are to broadly work towards 'enhancing the well-being of destination residents, do everything necessary to ensure the visitors are offered visitation experiences that are at a minimum, highly satisfactory and where possible, highly memorable, while doing so, to ensure the provision of effective destination management and stewardship' (p.573).

Despite its dependability in managing destination, UNWTO (2010) also identified some major challenges of running a DMO, including the bearability of funding sources, the centralism of tourism management by national administration, IT advancement, the sustainable product and service design, effectiveness of promotion. In terms of authority and control, the structure of a DMO can be public, private, or in the form of public- private partnerships, and the later model has been increasingly applied for its governance efficacy. These conditions suggest an imperative for tourism human resources to understand well how the way this particular organization operates productively in order to ensure the long term development of a tourism destination. Professional managers are needed to respond to the mature, more 'sophisticated and specialized' tourism industry therefore higher educational institutions started to offer curriculum programs based on management principles (Hsu, 2006). Responding to this demand, it would be necessary for tourism education institutions to redesign their tourism education curriculum (Airey, Dredge, & Gross, 2015). While curriculum should secure the balance between an emphasis on business and on the tourism context, tourism education takes on the need become more managerially orientated (Riley, Ladkin, & Szivas, 2002). In dealing with destination management issues and challenges the mastery of DMO managerial knowledge and skills in destination management by local human resources is thus essential in this undertaking, particularly in developing regions.

This is also the case in Indonesia, since the Ministry of Tourism of this country has initiated the incorporation of Destination Management Organization (DMO) Management subjects in the new curriculum of Tourism Destination study program in tourism education in this country. The introduction of DMO as a profession in destination management is part of the national's tourism education strategy to learn tourism from the perspective of destination, in addition to hospitality and tourism which are common at this time. Tourism Destination study program in Indonesia was first being offered at two selected tourism institutes operated under the Ministry of Tourism the Republic of Indonesia. The program initially started in 2006 at STP Bandung (Tourism Institute of Bandung) as a Diploma IV Bachelor of Applied Science in Tourism Destination Management (a vocational degree) and Bachelor of Tourism Destination Studies (an academic program) in 2008 (Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Bandung, 2016). A year later, the Bachelor of Tourism Destination (an academic stream) was opened for enrolment at STP Nusa Dua Bali (Bali Tourism Institute) (Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Nusa Dua Bali, 2016). This education programs have been followed by the government initiatives to establish preliminary DMOs in 15 different destinations in Indonesia (Table 1).

Table 1 The Government Initiative's DMOs in Indonesia (2010-2014)

Destination Theme (Cluster)	DMO
Ecotourism	1. Pangandaran- West Java 2. Flores – East Nusa Tenggara 3. Tanjung Puting – Central Kalimantan 4. Sanur – Bali
Geotourism	5. Toba – North Sumatra 6. Bromo Tengger Semeru – East Java 7. Batur – Bali 8. Rinjani – West Nusa Tenggara
Cultural and Heritage	9. Kota Tua – Jakarta 10. Borobudur – Central Java 11. Toraja – South Sulawesi
Marine tourism	12. Sabang – Aceh 13. Derawan – North Kalimantan 14. Bunaken – North Sulawesi 15. Wakatobi – Southeast Sulawesi 16. Raja Ampat – West Papua

Source: *Kementerian Pariwisata Republik Indonesia (2015)*

The number of DMO in Indonesia will continue to grow and this progress indicates the national government's vision on tourism destination management strategy. Therefore at the end of the study, the students are expected to work in a DMO in Indonesia. However, since the beginning of the program, the destination courses offered at both campuses have not been significantly distinctive from the 'common' tourism management study program, and it remains inadequate in the content of destination management organization. For this reason, a review of curriculum has been undertaken after five years administering this program, in order to ensure the relevancy with the current industry requirement by embracing DMO Management as a core subject. Recently, lecturers of STP Bandung and STP Nusa Dua Bali have formulated a revised curriculum with the assistance of destination management expert. Table 1 shows the list of DMO Management subject names added in the proposed improved curriculum will be implemented by tourism higher education in Indonesia in 2017.

Table 2 New DMO Management Subjects

Subject Code	Credit point	Subject name
INTRO 1	3	Introduction to Destination Management
DMOM1	3	Accounting and Finance for DMO
DMOM2	2	Advocacy for Tourism and DMO
DMOM3	3	Crisis management for DMO
DMOM4	3	DMO Governance and Performance Measurement
DMOM5	3	DMO Human Resource Management
DMOM6	3	DMO Organization, Structure and Funding
DMOM7	3	DMO Partnership and Team Building
DMOM8	2	Stakeholder Relationships
DMOM9	3	Community Resident Relationship and involvement
DMOM10	3	Leadership Theories and Practices for DMO

The new subjects listed above address the need to see the destination management as an organizational entity — comparable with a business unit, to ensure its manageability and accountability. Acknowledging the diversity of the tourism and hospitality industry, this occupational focus on destination management will be most useful in response to the global requirements of generic skills include communications, showing initiative, delivering customer experience, and demonstrating a willingness to learn (Hospitality Training Foundation, 2000). The insertion of Destination Management Organization (DMO) management aims at preparing students with a focused curriculum content and the achievement of graduate outcomes with industry relevance through the mastery of tasks in managing destination professionally. This new competency is also align with tourism and hospitality management ‘overall’ expected graduate outcomes in terms of developing broad professional skills and expertise (Business Council of Australia, 2011), such as ‘the ability to think independently, to critically analyse issues and problems, and to adapt thinking and analytical capabilities to different contexts and new problems’ (p.4). It is argued that educational providers should tailor their skills development provision to meet the needs of a targeted segment of the industry, rather than attempting to be all things to all business (Baum, 1997). By doing so, a new curriculum containing a DMO Management will make the students of STP Bandung and STP Nusa Dua Bali be on the right career track.

Literature Review

Considering the increasing challenges in tourism human resources, tourism educational programs need to ‘fundamentally retool and redesign- not incrementally by adding new courses ... but by changing the nature of what is taught and how it is taught’ (Sheldon *et al.*, 2008). Curriculum changes, consolidation and review will be the future challenges in tourism education curriculum that should be fulfilled by the qualified academics in knowledge development (Tribe, 2005a, 2005b). In conceptual change learning, high interest and high prior knowledge will facilitate learning achievement (Cordova, *et al.*, 2014), as the confidence in prior knowledge can be considered as one of variables that might impact ‘a learner’s likelihood of engaging with new, conflicting information’ (p.165). It is historically recognized that prior knowledge has been considered one of the most important factors in learning achievement (Dochy, Segers, & Buehl, 1999).

Prior knowledge is described as the whole of a person’s actual knowledge, available before a certain learning task, structured in schemata, declarative and procedural, partly explicit and partly tacit, and dynamic in nature (Dochy, 1994). Derived from several conceptions, the term ‘prior knowledge’ refers to a learner’s beliefs or commitments whether or not they are true, which can facilitate learning, increase the rate at which new subjects are learned, decrease prediction errors during learning and make it possible for learners to acquire categories with a complex relational structure (Williams & Lombrozo, 2013). However, Dochy *et al.* (2002) argue that when prior knowledge is relatively complete, accurate and accessible, prior knowledge is beneficial for learning, and in conceptual change learning, it may present a barrier to learning because some prior knowledge may be in conflict with the information to be learned. Therefore, assessing prior knowledge gives instructors an indication of the level of initial conceptual understanding as well as highlights the inaccurate misconceptions students may hold. Since this attribute is a multidimensional and hierarchical entity that is dynamic in nature and consists of various knowledge and skills, it is recommended that student’s prior knowledge should be taken into consideration in instructional design and curriculum planning (Hailikari, *et al.*, 2008). In spite of this, little research has been conducted to examine the use of student’s prior knowledge, particularly in association with developing instructional design and curriculum planning in hospitality and tourism education.

From this point of departure, the purpose of this study was to examine the students' prior knowledge of DMO since understanding of destination management organization shortly will be effected in the tourism education curriculum in Indonesia. The questions about prior knowledge in this survey was developed according to two types of knowledge as distinguished by many scholars, namely declarative knowledge (such as knowledge of facts and concepts) and procedural knowledge i.e., know-how (Hailikari *et al.*, 2007, Stern, 2015). Accordingly, the survey was divided into four open-ended questions to understand participants' basic prior knowledge of Destination Management Organization (DMO). Firstly, it asked the students to provide of the definition of DMO; secondly, it inquired student to give an example(s) of DMO; thirdly, it asked students to mention DMO tasks and areas of responsibility; and finally, it requested students' opinion about the role(s) of DMO in a tourism destination. In addition, this research also looked at the students' current intention of future employment in a DMO. The framework of this study was based on the scholarly literature about the developing theories and the current practices in DMO and destination management.

Methodology

The research aims to investigate the prior knowledge of DMO of students in Tourism Destination study program which have implications for learning outcomes and to provide suggestions for teaching methods and development of curriculum in tourism destination study program. This study utilised qualitative content analysis to analyze textual data including the contextual meaning of the text, from written narrative responses of open-ended survey questions. The reasons of using qualitative content analysis were due to its flexibility in analysis when examining texts intensively and clasifying large amount of texts into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings (Weber, 1990), and its capability to provide new insights and practical understanding about a particular phenomeneon (Krippendorf, 2004). Data analysis process included coding, comparing, observing the frequency of textual data, followed by categorizing based on preselected criteria (Lin & Mao, 2015; Kim & Yoon, 2013; Guthrie, et al., 2004).

The study was conducted in the first and second terms of the academic year of 2015 at two assigned tourism institutes – where the new curriculum of tourism destination has been introduced in Indonesia: STP Nusa Dua Bali (Bali Tourism Institute) and STP Bandung (Tourism Institute of Bandung). The survey was participated by 169 students of Tourism Destination study program (see Table 3). All the answers given by the research participants were in *Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian) national language, and translated into English for publication purposes.

Table 3 Research Participants

	n	%
Campus		
Bali	100	59.17
Bandung	69	40.83
Year of Study		
First Year	54	31.95
Second Year	46	27.22
Third Year	52	30.77
Fourth Year	17	10.06
Gender		
Female	96	56.80
Male	73	43.20

Results

The collected data were examined to identify patterns and key features shows in frequency and/ or percentage to reveal how students perceived DMO as both a concept and an entity with their various knowledge sources and backgrounds, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Student's Knowledge about DMO

	n	%
Knowing about DMO		
Yes	116	68.64
No	53	31.36
(If Yes), Source(s) of knowledge		
Search engine	58	52.25
Information from Fieldtrip (visiting a DMO)	53	47.75
Journal article	39	35.14
Book	32	28.83
Website	28	25.23
Wikipedia	16	14.41
Lecture	14	12.61
Mass Media (TV, Newspaper, magazine, radio)	14	12.61
Seminar	11	9.09

From content analysis of students' answers, the above table displays that majority participants possessed the knowledge about DMO (68.64 %), and 31.36 percent of respondents admitted their unfamiliarity with the term. Among the respondents who answered 'yes' for knowing about DMO, as much as 93.1 percent of them were at higher levels (second, third and fourth year), and 6.9 percent were those in the first year. On the other hand, those providing a 'no' answer were majority the first year undergraduates (86.79%), second year (5.66%), third year (7.55%) and none from the final grade students.

Students’ constructed definition of DMO

To give the illustration about the students’ understanding about the concept of DMO, they were requested to define DMO in their own words. The results show that participants mentioned the following phrases in their definition of DMO (see Table 5):

Table 5 Most Frequent Used Texts in Student’s Definition of DMO

Word (task)	Frequency	Word (object)	Frequency
Management	133	Destination	64
Organization	97	Attractions	4
Governance	70	Places	3
Control	70	Area	3
Coordination	70	Activities	2
Development	25	Resources	2
Marketing & Promotion	10	Team	2

The respondents scripted the various descriptions about DMO with different sentence’s density. Table 6 exhibits two different dimensions of definitions constructed by study participants.

Table 6 Example of the constructed definition of DMO

Condensed definition	DMO is an organization for managing a tourism destination (#30)
Elaborated definition	DMO is a structured tourism destination governance including coordination of planning, implementing, and controlling tourism destination organization systematically and innovatively through the use of integrated information, network and technology, with the support from stakeholders (industry, association, academics and government) to achieve common objectives to improve destination management and to provide benefits to local community (#94)

Example(s) of DMO

In order to find out the students’s awareness of the existence of DMO in the destinations, they were asked to give example(s) of DMO they have already known. From the survey it can be found that students of the two campuses provided different names of DMOs in Indonesia. The frequency of answers are presented in percentage (Table 7).

Table 7 Student Answers about the Example(s) of DMO

STP Bandung	DMO Flores- East Nusa Tenggara (33.33%), DMO Pangandaran-West Java (24.64%), DMO Kota Tua- Jakarta (10.14%), DMO Wakatobi-Southeast Sulawesi (8.7%), DMO Toraja- South Sulawesi (7.25%), DMO Bromo Tengger Semeru-East Java (2.9%)
STP Nusa Dua Bali	DMO Batur- Bali (23%) DMO Bromo Tengger Semeru-East Java (16%), DMO Sanur- Bali (13%) DMO Borobudur (2%)

In addition to the above instances, respondents from Bali and Bandung institutes also exemplified DMO with Ministry of Tourism (15.38%), UNWTO (10.06%), local tourism office (3.55%) and travel agency (2.37%).

Perceived DMO tasks and areas of responsibility

Students were expected to list the responsibilities of a DMO related to its tasks and objectives based on their current perception. Table 8 records the words in the descriptions of DMO’s responsibility that appeared quite often in the text.

Table 8 Most Frequent Types of Responsibilities of DMO’s by Students

Word (task)	Frequency	Word (object)	Frequency
Manage	46	Destination	64
Develop	40	Sustainability	28
Market & Promote	37	Local Community	20
Coordinate	23	Attraction	14
Safeguard/ maintain/ preserve	17	Tourists/ visitors	13
Organize	15	Product	8
Support	14	Tourism Ethics	6
Govern	12	Potential	5
Control	9	Culture	4
Provide	9	Information	4
Research	7	Problem	3
Lead	6	Programs	3

Several given explanations about the responsibility of DMO are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9 Examples of Perceived DMO’s Responsibilities by Students

Simple answer, using 1-2 task words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing and developing tourism destination (#1) - Organizing tourism destination (#30) - Providing tourism information (#43) - Marketing and promoting destination (#71)
Complex answer, using 3 or more task words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating stakeholders, developing tourism product, managing and planning the destination (#65) - Supporting tourism development, facilitating changes in tourism destination, developing sustainable tourism, improving the quality of tourism and competitiveness (#108) - Managing tourism destination, safeguarding destination, providing positive impacts of tourism to local community, evaluating management (#159) - Managing sustainable tourism destination, empowering and educating local community in environmental conservation, preserving local values and culture (#161)

Perceived role(s) of DMO in a tourism destination

Prior knowledge of the role of DMO is investigated through the last question in the survey. Table 10 contains the lists of perceived role(s) of DMO in managing tourism destination, followed by some selected examples of DMO’s role(s) written by the students (Table 11).

Table 10 Most Frequent mentioned Roles of DMO's by Students

Word (task)	Frequency	Word (object)	Frequency
Develop	75	Destination	112
Manage	49	Local Community	23
Market & Promote	44	Sustainability	20
Coordinate	23	Stakeholders	13
Safeguard/ maintain/ preserve	17	Tourists/ visitors	8
Govern	12	Product	8
Organize	9	Attraction	6
Provide	8	Economy	5
Support	6	Potential	5
Lead	6	Culture	4
Control	5	Information	3
Research	5	Policy	4

Table 11 Examples of Perceived Roles of DMO by Students

Simple answer, using 1-2 task words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing quality and promoting destination (#19) - Managing tourism destination professionally (#80) - Improving destination (#92) - Maintaining authenticity of destination (#142)
Complex answer, using 3 or more task words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing product, marketing, promoting, planning and research, community networking in managing destination (#50) - Coordinating all stakeholders, research and planning destination, marketing, product development, community relations (#61). - Marketing, coordinating stakeholders, developing product, supporting local community to create uniqueness and distinctiveness (#105) - Coordinating and managing destination, providing quality of experience and tourist satisfaction, improving wealth of local community (#113)

This survey also uncovered the students' interest in DMO as their potential occupation. The following table shows how the students plan their future with regards to DMO.

Table 12 Student's Intention to work with a DMO in the future

	n	%
Intention to work with a DMO in the future		
Yes	64	37.87
Maybe	62	36.69
Have not thought about working with DMO	37	21.89
No	6	3.55
Reason(s) of future work with DMO		
Developing tourism and its potentials	32	47.05
Relating to current education background	16	23.53
Contribution to tourism in Indonesia	13	19.12
Managing a tourism destination	13	19.12
Looking for working experience	8	10.29
Working in tourism marketing	4	5.88
Working with local community	2	2.94

In addition to above results, among the participants who do not have prior knowledge about DMO, 22.64 percent of respondents had willingness to work with a DMO in the future, and others said 'Maybe' (45.28%) 'Have not thought about working with DMO' (26.42%) and 'No' (5.66%).

Discussion

This paper attempted to examine student's prior knowledge about DMO before the implementation of the new curriculum on tourism destination management. Analysis of the answers showed that the students possess wide-ranging degree of knowledge about the term of DMO, from completely unfamiliar to conversant, relative to the year of study. Another interesting finding is that the length of study determines the sources of information about DMO. Most of the younger respondents (first and second year) largely depend on external and non academic references, such as search engine, Wikipedia, mass media, and websites to find the information about DMO, while the third and fourth year students understand DMO mainly from academic learning, such as books, journal articles, lectures and fieldtrips. In a highly competitive technologically changing world, educators should seek to implement varied teaching techniques and instructional objectives to accommodate a diverse student cognitive abilities and background (Deale *et al.*, 2010). The results suggest that the future teaching methods should include external sources of knowledge and go beyond academic references.

Even though the students have not been properly exposed to the scholarly literature about the theories of DMO, the overall responses indicated their comprehension about the concept and awareness of the current practices of DMO and destination management. This condition is favorable as suggested by Dochy *et al.* (2002) that students will have a more positive attitude in learning. Moreover, the analysis of responses indicated that there was no substantial conflicting information about the languages and terms used by the participants about their prior knowledge of DMO, as expressed from their composition about DMO's definition, examples, responsibilities and roles.

Another finding is that students in the first and second year mostly defined DMO derived from the abbreviation, such as 'an organization in managing destination'. This points out that students do not have a strong theoretical background about DMO from academic references such as UNWTO publications and/ or destination management bibliography. Consequently,

most of the students' responses did not explicitly address DMO as 'a leading and coordinating' organization (Morrison, 2013). In contrast, a comprehensive definitions were provided by the higher level students by elucidating the DMO term in a more specific and complex description including its tasks and objectives (see the example of elaborated definition in Table 6). Listed frequent words used in students' in describing DMO demonstrates students's understanding about the managerial terms (such as management, development, governance, control, coordination) and DMO's leadership characters.

As presented in Table 7, students were able to provide the right example(s) of DMO by correctly mentioning a number of existing DMOs in Indonesia (as listed in Table 1). This result suggest the students' awareness of the presence of this organization and its locations. In terms of example, it is interesting to note that the model(s) of DMO known by the participants were likely associated with proximity of their campus location. For example, students of STP Nusa Dua Bali preferred to mention DMO Batur and DMO Sanur, which are operated in Bali Island. The undergraduates of STP Bandung provided more varied examples of DMO in West Java, Jakarta, and from other islands in Indonesia, but interestingly, they excluded those of located in Bali (Table 6).

Next, the findings also indicated DMO's responsibility as perceived by the students. When the ideal tasks should be in accordance to the UNWTO's descriptions include coordinating and managing key activities such as 'funding, strategic planning, marketing, decision making and product development' (UNWTO, 2010, p.4) and the proposed subjects of DMO Management (as presented in Table 2), the students predominantly mentioned management, development and marketing of tourism destination as the responsibilities of the DMO, yet they unspecified the tasks of managing the DMO as an organization (see Table 8 and 9).

Among six different roles of DMO, such as (1) leadership and coordination, (2) planning and research, (3) product development, (4) marketing and promotion, (5) partnership and team-building, and (6) community relations (DCG in Morrison, 2013), and as suggested Bornhort, Richie & Sheehan (2010, p. 573) on the enhancement of the well-being of destination residents and visitor experience, the research participants mainly mentioned the role of DMO similar to its (perceived) responsibilities, such as to develop, manage, market and promote destination (see Table 10). Even so, the students recognized this establishment as an important actor in a tourism destination for its roles of supporting and coordinating the stakeholders including local community to achieve tourism development objectives (as indicated in Table 11).

This study would further have practical implications for the contemporary tourism education and industry. As found in this study, the lack of understanding about DMO and its functions thus lead to students' reluctance of working with this organization (see Table 12). DMO should be promoted widely for its importance in tourism and hospitality. The current established DMOs should actively report and publish their progress and performance, so communities could gauge and appreciate DMO's effectiveness and its contributions to tourism destination. Such information would later be utilized by the students to evaluate the existing DMO's programs and achievements and be a good reference for case studies. If this reporting scheme is actuated, it might increase students' intention of future employment in a DMO. This study provides indication for lecturer about the level of student's understanding of DMO indicated from their prior knowledge to highlight some issues encountered by the students in learning a new subject, that futher might influence the learning outcome and their occupational preference. Nevertheless, some limitations may have affected the process and the results of this study. The inadequate numbers of participants, the selected samples of tourism institution

and the research approaches used could be the impediments by which the results should not be generalized. Besides, the study also disregarded the degree of intelligence of the students which is to certain extent inextricably linked with prior knowledge acquisition (Stern, 2015).

This study affirms the previous study's suggestion that student's prior knowledge is important to be considered in instructional design and curriculum planning (Hailikari, *et al.*, 2008). The updated curriculum has to be followed by selecting teaching and learning methods as well as the course materials which considered most effective for the students. The inclusion of destination management in tourism education curriculum consequently entails innovative approaches in subject delivery, which should encourage the students from the onset to learn how to manage tourism destination in a professional manner.

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