

Measuring Stakeholder Engagement and Drivers of Success in Ethiopian Tourism Sector

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Abstract : The FDRE Tourism Training Institute organizes forums for debates, best practices exchange and focus group discussions to forge a sustainable and growing tourism sector while minimizing negative impacts on the environment, communities, and cultures. This study aimed at applying empirical research method to identify and quantify relative importance of success factors and individual engagement indicators that were identified in these forums. Response to the 12-question survey was collected from a total of 437 respondents in academic training institutes (212), business executive and employee (204) and non-academic government offices (21). Overall, capacity building was perceived as the most important driver of success for stakeholder engagement. Business executive and employee category rated capacity building as the most important driver of success (53%), followed by decision-making process (27%) and community participation (20%). Among educators and students, both capacity building and decision-making process were perceived as the most important factors (40% of respondents), whereas community participation was perceived as the most important success factor only by 20% of respondents. Individual engagement score in capacity building, decision-making process and community participation showed highest variability by educational level of participants (variance of 3.4% - 5.2%, $p < 0.001$). Individual engagement score in capacity building was highly correlated to perceived benefit of training on improved efficiency, job security, higher customer satisfaction and self-esteem. On the other hand, individual engagement score in decision making process was highly correlated to its perceived benefit on lowering business costs, improving ability to meet the needs of a target market, job security, self-esteem and more teamwork. The study provides a set of recommendations that help educators, business executives and policy makers to maximize the individual and synergetic effect of training, decision making process on sustainability and growth of the tourism sector in Ethiopia.

Keywords : engagement score, driver of success, capacity building, tourism

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