TOURISM EDUCATION AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL IN INDONESIA FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE TOURISM EDUCATORS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS AND STUDENTS

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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Business, Tourism Program at James Cook University

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references given.

Diyah ERNAWATI

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THESIS ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates tourism education at the tertiary level in Indonesia from the perspectives of the stakeholders. It consists of four studies investigating current tourism curriculum, future master's degree in tourism, the relationship between tourism education and the tourism industry and future development of Indonesian tourism education. The aims of the research are as follows:(1) to investigate the respondents' perspectives on the current tourism education at the higher education level in Indonesia; (2) to identify the experts' views on a proposed masters' degree curriculum for Indonesia; (3) to investigate the relationship between tourism educators and the tourism industry professionals; and (4) to investigate the future development of Indonesian tourism education. The studies involve four different stakeholders i.e. educators, government officials

Chapter one of the thesis explores the background context for the study on tourism education in Indonesia. It examines the importance of the tourism industry to Indonesia's economy. In particular it discusses characteristics of foreign and domestic tourists, and the opportunities as well as challenges of the industry. The chapter also explores the needs for tourism education at the degree level to provide the industry with more qualified employees graduating from higher tourism education as well as to supply qualified tourism educators and researchers for the public sector. The review identifies that there are issues which may affect the development of tourism education at the university level in Indonesia. Furthermore, the chapter examines briefly the stakeholder theories which exists in management studies and discusses the importance of investigating the perspectives of four different stakeholder groups.

The second chapter examines critically tourism education development and reviews theoretical frameworks for tourism education. To identify gaps which exist within the area, a number of tourism and hospitality studies were reviewed. The review recognises that most studies conducted use quantitative approaches with few of them utilising qualitative approaches. Based on the gaps identified from literature reviews, particularly the methodological approaches, this study utilised a number of methodologies to collect data for the thesis. A qualitative semi-structured interview combined with desk research was predominantly used for Study One and Two. Study Three and Four used a content analysis and a combination of open-ended and closed questionnaires for collecting data.

The first study which is reported in Chapter 3 uses a combination of content analysis and semi-structured qualitative interviews to examine the current curriculum content of tourism education. It assesses the approaches and evaluates curriculum relevance for professional careers. Sixty respondents were interviewed with each stakeholder group represented by 15 individuals. The analysis of the curriculum indicated that course contents generally represented a broad range of the core components of the body of knowledge proposed by the British-based Tourism Society. The findings indicated that that most respondents, particularly professionals and government, perceived that a professionally based curriculum focusing on hotels and restaurants was the most common one in Indonesia. Almost two thirds of the respondents maintained that 'fulfilling the industry needs' and 'availability of future employments' were the two significant reasons for offering the program. A multidisciplinary approach was found to be the most common one and it far outweighed a monodisciplinary approach. However, the current approach was not considered appropriate by fifty-six percent of the respondents. They suggested that the current curriculum lacked practical knowledge and was not sufficiently industry-centred.

Chapter four focuses on the industry – education relationship. Based on the finding of study one, in which tourism educators and industry professionals occasionally indicated contradictory views, this study was aimed at identifying key issues influencing the relationship. A summary of the

findings indicated that different views on approaches and inadequate support by the tourism industry are influential concerns. A number of proposed solutions to lessen the conflicts were identified. For example, both groups suggested that incorporating the cooperative education in employment planning and providing incentives to the students would be advantageous. However, educators in particular are also concerned that the involvement of the industry may influence the focus of the curriculum. Educators suggested that the private sector should assist in defining job opportunities to inform tourism education.

The perspective of the experts on the proposed curriculum for a master's degree in Indonesia was also studied. The specific aims of the study included identifying subjects deemed relevant for the tourism master's degree program, investigating the area of emphases and subjects most required for each area of concentration. Of nineteen subjects provided to the experts, sixteen were considered very to moderately important. The first four subjects include Human Behaviour in Organisation, Information Management, Planning and Design for Tourism and Marketing in Tourism. The respondents strongly recommended three areas of emphases: Hotel Management, Tourism Planning and Development and Tourism Marketing for the near future. Among sixteen subjects chosen, four were common to any area of concentration. They included Communication Skills and Interpersonal Relations, Principles of Tourism, Tourism Forecasting and Administration of Travel and Tourism Services.

Chapter six used the selected findings from Study One and Two to elaborate particular issues of interest such as the future development of tourism, level of responsibility of certain stakeholder groups and the roles of government and industry professionals. It also identified elective courses for four-year tourism degree programs. The study utilised survey questionnaires distributed to 353 respondents from five provinces i.e. Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta and Bali. The selection of the sites was based on the fact that these five provinces were well equipped with infrastructure and function as mature tourist destinations. Four statements which include the need to develop undergraduate and postgraduate degree program, education and training are needed to enhance the quality of employees, more industry involvement in industrial experiences and more qualified tourism educators were all items with a high level of consensus. The findings also imply that most respondents perceived full-time faculty members as the most responsible group in program influencing curriculum design in both undergraduate and postgraduate programs.

Chapter seven summarised the selected results of each study, its limitations and the implications for future Indonesian tourism education as well as suggested research. The chapter also discussed the relationship between the findings of the studies with the existing literature and with findings of previous studies in this area. In this chapter, it is suggested that further attention should be paid to investigating tourism education, which includes programs on offer, curriculum content, and the profile and career of tourism educators.

A number of sections of the thesis have been published in conference proceedings and refereed journals. An overall perspective of the studies was published in the International Journal of Tourism Research (Vol.30 (2), 34 - 39, 2002, whereas the third study which focused on the proposed of master's degree curriculum as viewed by the experts has been published in Tourism Recreation Research 20(1), 89 - 95, 2001. The main findings of study one – the current tourism education as viewed by the stakeholders – has been presented at the First Asia Pacific Postgraduate Conference in Tourism, in China and published as a conference proceedings. A part of the findings of study one has also been published as a Research Note in Annals of Tourism Research 30(1), 255 - 258, 2003. The complete findings of study one have been accepted for the Journal of Travel and Tourism Teaching and due to be published in 2003. Findings of the second study focusing on Tourism Education – Industry Relationship have been published in Cakra Wisata 4(1), 73 - 97, 2003.

FOREWORD

In the last days of finishing this thesis, there was a series of terrorist bombings at Kuta Beach, Bali. As well as the loss of life of over two hundred people, the damage to property and the international tourism appeal of Indonesia was a major consequence of the Bali bombings.

At this time, it is difficult to predict how substantial the damage to Indonesian tourism will be. It can be suggested that the broad findings of this thesis remain intact, although some of the figures on tourism growth will undoubtedly be reshaped.