

A Mini Review: Challenge & Issues in Outdoor Recreation-Outdoor Competency Coaches

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v11-i6/9650> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v11-i6/9650

Published Date: 15 June 2021

Abstract

The competency of Outdoor Recreation Coaches continues to be a debate among the community. This is because, issues pertaining to competency continue to be said as a result of various incidents and accidents in Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Education activities. Today, various organizations, operators and operators of Outdoor and Education Recreation activities express their commitment to organize various promotions of challenging and enjoyable activities. But as far as the competency level capabilities of outdoor recreation coaches are really competent? Is there any evaluation or measurement instrument that is truly explicit in determining the competency of Outdoor Recreation coaches in Malaysia. Therefore, this article will peel off the issues and challenges faced in relation to the competency of Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Education coaches.

Keyword: Outdoor Recreation, Outdoor Education, Measurement & Competency

Introduction

Today, Outdoor Recreation is seen growing rapidly. The high demand for Outdoor Recreation programmes has gained ground among the community. This is because society sees it being able to produce a positive impact on developing an individual's human capital. Some researchers are of the opinion that Outdoor Recreation as an individual's social and personal development process through the experience process (Seif & Sareh, 2019). In addition, Outdoor Recreation also provides opportunities for individuals to interact with individuals and the environment through learning process with experience (Cure, Hill & Cruickshank, 2018).

The Outdoor Recreational Approach is more focused on activities that are relaxed and some involve extreme activities. Among other things, Outdoor Recreation is also seen as an experience that provides excitement, exciting challenges to nature with free facilities conducive in developing positive feelings by getting rid of negative feelings such as anger and sadness (Bilton, 2010). According to Houge, Mackenzie and Brymer (2018) stated that the

implementation of Outdoor Recreational activities will provide positive hedonic emotional favor for challenging activities as well as increasing one's self-efficiency and competency.

Definition of Outdoor Recreation

Various meanings and understandings have been given by writers and studiers before. In this section, several meanings and understandings are shared in relation to Outdoor Recreation. Among the meanings or understandings of Outdoor Recreation is, Outdoor Recreation is a platform that provides an opportunity for people to enjoy nature and engage in recreational activities such as appreciating nature, escaping the daily routine, relaxing and relaxing, seeking adventure, and spending time with others. Outdoor recreational activities provide physical challenges while sparking world interest in nature (Boman et al., 2013). Meanwhile, according to Edington et al (2011) suggested that outdoor recreation could also be included activities related to indoor climbing walls or natural surroundings at the museum.

Other definitions also include all activities involving any concept of excitement in the environment of choice outside as well as interactions with the nature environment. In fact, there are also those who explain that Outdoor Recreation is not subject to organizing activities inside or outside the environment but a set of activities that provide a fun experience such as gardening, fishing, park walking and even *backpacking* (Dyment & Potter, 2015).

Meanwhile, according to Winter, Selin, Cervený & Bricker (2020) stated that Outdoor Recreation provides positive benefits that are closely related to the nature-based tourism industry. Environmental visiting activities, being outside the natural environment can actually improve the health and well-being of human beings. Besides that, it also enhances social relations, generates income, contributes to the local economic sector, foster local identity or indigenous communities as well as developing values of conservation awareness and natural preservation. In summary, Outdoor Recreation is seen as an activity that is undertaken outside the nature environment and is closely related to the development of the local economic industry as well as the country in generating revenue through organized activities using the natural environment.

Definition of Outdoor Education

The field of Outdoor Education is also seen to have various meanings and understandings about it. Today, various findings found various meanings and definitions of Outdoor Education. According to Amin (2020) Outdoor Education today is defined as one of the educational mediums based on teaching and experience-based learning (experiential learning) that uses the natural medium as an educational laboratory. According to Hickman and Stokes (2016) Outdoor Education was also named as a challenge *education (adventure education)*, challenge programs (*adventure programming*), *outdoor learning*, *environmental education*, *challenge therapy (adventure therapy)* and experience education (*experiential education*).

According to Glyn, (2019) in the study, she stated that Outdoor Education was held outside the classroom as in categorized which was able to raise one's awareness and knowledge of nature. While Munge, Thomas and Heck (2018) defined Outdoor Education as an activity carried out outside the classroom that crossed the discipline of knowledge. For

Frantz and Mayer (2014) argue, Foreign Education is a learning of nature that can increase the sensitivity of teenagers and children to the environment. Learning is very important for teenagers and children to interact more with nature. According to Omar (2016) stated That Outdoor Education as an element of identity formation in fostering environmental preservation as a primary learning laboratory as well as raising awareness of nature. While according to Meerts, Sibthorp and Rochelle (2019) describe Education Outdoor as a learning experience that uses all senses on the body. They are of the opinion that learning through experience is an effective learning to build an individual's identity and human capital.

Among other things, Outdoor Education also provides options for teaching and learning methods based on learning outside the classroom that is more enjoyable and challenging. However, the high demand for Outdoor Education activities also demands the demand for competent levels of capabilities or competency of coaches as it involves the issue of safety of participants of the activities.

According to Warren, Mitten, Amore and Lotz (2019) Outdoor Education are also defined as formal or informal activities environmental learning engagement (outdoor recreational activities, erectile dysveny, rural or Outdoor environments. Thus, on the whole, the authors summarize that, Outdoor Education is the involvement of formal or informal learning activities that *take place in the settings of* the natural environment either individually or in groups. In addition, Outdoor Education is seen as an appropriate indicator in helping and building individual characters especially one's identity.

Outdoor Recreational Issues and Challenges in Malaysia

Every year, we are heard with accident incidents in Outdoor Recreational activities. The incident occurred during the organization or implementation of outdoor recreational activities. Various factors are seen to affect the occurrence of the incident. Today, various organizations, operators and even Outdoor Recreational individuals express their ability to handle such activities, but how far is the truth of their ability to handle such activities? In the West, Outdoor Recreation coaches organizing activities consist of those with competent levels (Buhari & Marda, 2020). This is because, their ability is measured by a rigid and uniform measurement standard. This coach is evaluated using standard measurements. The coach will endeavour to achieve the standards set as one of the eligibility criteria for organizing any Outdoor Recreational activities.

For example in Malaysia, 435 cases of activity accidents in the mountains were recorded through various sources (Nik Jazwiri 2016). According to him, the data or records of these recorded incidents or accidents started from 2004 to 2014. He also explained that, among his main obstacles to obtaining data on such incidents, particularly from compulsory, the activity operator was seen to be very difficult due to the factors of confidentiality. Whereas it does not happen in western countries. Such constraints do not actually give any benefit to the Foreign Recreation industry in Malaysia. This is because, incidents or accidents will continue to occur unattained.

Among others, the issue of coach competency is related to water *activities*. Major constraints are also seen as related to failure to obtain information or data relating to incidents of welding. The incidents occurred partially did not receive coverage and eventually the accident data and statistics were not recorded or documented (Amin, 2020). Among the

drowning cases recorded by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government Wellbeing, a total of 596 cases were recorded in 2019. These reported cases are some of which are shared in the newspaper. What about unrecovered incidents or accidents? Compared to situations in the West, every accident incident of Recreational and Outdoor Education activities is recorded and informed by the organization involved in the relevant authorities from time to time.

The accident incident is not a confidentiality to the entity or operator of Outdoor Recreational activities there. They assume through the collection of such data, it will help to resolve issues in the field of Recreation. Indirectly, it will also help to the production of preventive models so that incidents that have never occurred will not recur.

Besides the challenges of failure to obtain data or statistics of Outdoor recreational activities accidents, other challenges are like the mystery of losing siblings of Acap's during the climbing activity of Bukit Batu Putih, Perak. To this day, there is no strong justification to the loss of Acap's sister. Various sources gained mystery of his disappearance were influenced by various factors including mystical elements. How far does this mystical element or influence exist in Outdoor Recreational activities? Do Outdoor Recreation coaches need their skills or knowledge on these mystical elements? Is it part of the competency of coaches who need to be in the coach circle? Thus, these issues and challenges are seen to be refined to ensure that the Outdoor Recreation industry continues to receive responses among the Malaysian community.

Hence, what are the relevance of issues and challenges in Outdoor Recreational activities with the competency level of the coach? The main issue seen by the authors is the competency issue of Outdoor Recreation coaches. Disputes and disputes related to this issue continue to be a sign of ask? What are the criteria and major assessments of Outdoor education coaches who handle the activities. Are they really trained against these risky and challenging activities?

Competency Issues

However, this scenario has not been fully implemented in Malaysia. Although, there are various organizations, operators, or Outdoor recreational individuals who express their ability to carry out such risk activities. To date, the competency standards of Outdoor Recreational Coaches in Malaysia can still be debated. What standard instruments can be used in assessing the competency level of Outdoor Recreational coaches in Malaysia (Omar 2020). This was supported by a study conducted by Nik Jazwiri (2016) stating that a number of incidents that occurred for mountainous activities were due to Outdoor factors such as coach negligence. Indeed, there are issues and debates related to the competency of a coach?

The competency of Outdoor recreation coaches in the West is a no stranger matter. This is because, competency-related instruments have been around for so long. Among the initial instrument development studies developed were the competency instruments of Outdoor Recreation coaches conducted by Priest (1986) to coaches in several countries such as USA, UK, Canada, Australia and even New Zealand. According to Priest (1986) he also stated that, the four main components need to be dominated by Outdoor Recreational coaches. Through the model "*Bricks Wall*" that has been developed. The four main elements are

foundations skills, hard skills, soft skills and skills. In addition, he also explained the 12 critical elements that need to be dominated by coaches to achieve competent coach levels in the field of Outdoor Recreation. The 12 sub-elements are sub-elements contained in the "Bricks Wall" model.

However, the development of the competency assessment instruments of Outdoor Recreational Coaches has yet to occur extensively in Malaysia. Research on the competency of Outdoor Recreational Coaches in Malaysia is quite limited. Studies in the field of Outdoor Recreation are seen as more focused on the impact of programme implementation, group unity, model development, as well as case studies related to issues in Outdoor Recreation. Studies relating to the development of competency instruments are seen to be very limited. Among the studies seen as directed at the scope of competency were the study conducted by Raj (2018) which focused on the development of the assessment instruments of programme participants to the coaches of the Sabah State Co-curriculum Centre. His research used existing and modified instruments to assess the level of cognitive, psychomotor and effective coach of the Sabah State Co-curriculum Centre. Among others is a study by Azita (2007) which focuses on the participants' assessment of the leaders of the Teachers' College Outdoor Education programme in Malaysia. The study also adapted existing assessment instruments in evaluating the competency level of programme leaders at teachers' College.

A preliminary study focusing on the development of coach competency instruments was a study developed by Omar (2020). In the study, it focused on the development of self-assessment instruments for coach competency (OLC-oMR) Outdoor Education centres in Malaysia. This instrument developed specifically focuses on evaluating the competency of Outdoor Education coaches in Malaysia. In addition, the development of competency assessment instruments is an instrument developed based on the outer education landscape in Malaysia. That is, the self-assessment instrument is an early catalyst focusing on the competency of coaches in Malaysia. He hoped that with the existence of this assessment instrument it provides guidance to the development of more measurement instruments towards coaches in the field of Outdoor Recreation.

Coach Competency

In us focusing on the impact and impact of the Outdoor Recreational programmes that have gone through, the question arises as far as the level of capabilities of Outdoor education coaches who handle such activities? Are they capable and efficient in handling the activities or programs successfully? Arises inquiries, how far the competency and efficiency of Outdoor Education coaches who handle the activities are measured? (Seemiller, 2018). Today, many Outdoor Recreational organizations are able to produce skilled coaches according to their expertise. Surely they state the coaches produced are of good quality. So the question arises as far as their level of competency? What measurements they use? How standard measurements are used in ensuring the capabilities and efficiency of these coaches can be produced (Wannapiroon, 2014).

In Malaysia, standard measurement of these coaches is new. This is because, there is not yet a standard of measurement that can be uniformly applied to the competency of the coaches involved. This is in contrast to western countries that already have a uniform standard of competency measurement (Naim & Lenka, 2017). As such, Outdoor recreation

coaches trained from western countries have rigid standards and standards compared to the coaches available in Malaysia (Martin, Wagstaff & Goldenberg, 2017). Based on the issue of absence of standards of competency measurement of the Outdoor recreational coach, it is time to develop a standard instrument of self-assessment of the competency of Outdoor recreational coaches in Malaysia.

Among the competency-related studies conducted by Warren (2016) describe competency as a quality that a person possesses to perform a task. An individual is said to have good competency when it comes to producing an excellent task. According to Seemiller (2013) states that competencies are knowledge, values, capabilities (skills or motivation) and behaviors that contribute to the effectiveness of a task. The competency intended refers to the ability of an individual to perform an task effectively.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Youth and Sports (2018) through a new programme developed highlights the young leaders' programme, *the Malaysian Future Leadership School* (MFLS) focuses on the development of future generation leaders. The main focus of the development of the programme is the development of the competency of leaders among the younger generation. Thus, through the implementation policy of the programme, the Ministry of Youth & Sports states that, the competency involves teaching processes including matters pertaining to personal, professional and social such as teaching, expertise in subjects, expertise in theory related to teaching and learning, managing learning processes, adaptation in the community and personality. Referring to the above purpose, it relates to the individual's ability to carry out a teaching process effectively.

The times continued to change, individual developments also grew in line with the technological rapidity. Today, acting abilities flexibly require a high competency force (Fullan, 2011). He explained, competency requirements as a key requirement in dealing with a task. This shows the importance of competency requirements for an individual in carrying out the assignment. Hence, based on the above argument, competency is an important component or indicator necessary for an Outdoor Recreational coach. These components or indicators are important in ensuring that every task or handling of Outdoor Recreational activities can be carried out properly and efficiently especially in Outdoor Recreation that combines elements of pleasure, challenges, and safety of controlled activities.

So overall, some key objectives need to be taken into account by all parties in ensuring the continuity of Outdoor Recreation in Malaysia:

- i. Ensure the existence of competency level assessment instruments among Outdoor Recreation coaches
- ii. Creating a competency model for Outdoor Recreation coaches in Malaysia
- iii. Ensure uniform and systematic data collection as well as easily accessible and non - confidential.
- iv. Creating a comprehensive coaching module for Outdoor Recreation in Malaysia.

Conclusion

Overall, coach competency is an important element in the field of Foreign Recreation in Malaysia. This competency-related study needs to be enhanced to help empower the Outdoor Recreation industry to continue to grow. The competency of the coach needs to be

the priority and attention of the coach to ensure that the organized activities are really conducted by competent individuals. Subsequently, the authors hope, this competency-related issue needs to be refined and expanded so that the Outdoor Recreation industry continues to grow rapidly as in the West.

The Outdoor Recreation Industry requires the commitment of all levels such as operators, industry operators, industry players as well as customers of Recreational and Foreign Education activities so that the Outdoor Recreation industry continues to be relevant among Malaysians. Thus, several recommendations are needed to help uphold the competency of Outdoor recreational coaches:

1. Empirical studies related to coach competency should be expanded among academics.
2. Increase competency enhancement module among recreation and Outdoor education coaches
3. Provides various competency enhancement modules among foreign recreation coaches
4. Promoting Recreational and Outdoor Education activities at the grassroots level

Through the proposed improvements, it is hoped that the Outdoor recreational and educators continue to grow rapidly and produce competent Outdoor Recreational coaches. The biggest contribution of this study is the existence of an instrument to assess the level of competence of Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Education coaches as well as the development of a competency model of coaches. In addition, with the existence of such studies, it can help the existence of a data base related to accident incidents in Outdoor Recreation activities and Outdoor Education in Malaysia.

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