

CHALLENGES FOR TOMORROW TOURISM EDUCATION – THE CASE OF SLOVENIA

IZAZOVI OBRAZOVANJA ZA TURIZAM U BUDUĆNOSTI – PRIMJER SLOVENIJE

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Abstract

The goal of our study was to analyse the impact of Slovenian educational institution culture on the self-assessed tourism relevant skills and competencies. Our study shows that to cope with the rapid changes in the field of tourism new educational approaches for next decades should be developed. Contemporary process is according to our findings strongly result oriented. Organizational culture on the level of the college tourism program does not stimulate the development of relevant skills and competencies expected and needed by tourism industry. To be more future oriented, tourism industry needs educational institutions that are able to develop more learning process oriented education programs. Development of the new learning culture should result in IT supported, with tourism industry coordinated and constantly tourism trend reconceptualized programs. Author suggests that the learning culture change is based on the change of the teacher's role that must support open learning and development of skills and competencies that enable autonomous and active problem solving in the concrete tourism environment.

Sažetak

Zbog sve bržih promjena u području turizma javlja se potreba za razvoj novih edukacijskih metoda i pristupa obrazovanju za turizam. Cilj rada je analizirati utjecaj organizacijske kulture obrazovnih institucija na obrazovanje u turizmu za područje Slovenije. Istraživanje pokazuje, da organizacijska kultura obrazovnih institucija za turizam ne stimulira u proces usmjerenog učenja u kome imaju studenti središnju ulogu. Posljedica toga jest, da studenti percipiraju vrlo slab utjecaj obrazovnog programa na razvoj za turističku privredu važnih kompetencija. To osobito važi za obrazovne programe na univerzitetskoj razini. Autorica je ustanovila, da moraju obrazovne institucije razviti otvorenu kulturu učenja, koja će stimulirati izravno povezivanje sa turističkom privredom. Uz to morala bi omogućavati neprekidno prilagođavanje programima, efektivnu upotrebu informacijske tehnologije u procesu učenja i razvoj nastavnika, koji će graditi proces usmjeren kulturi učenja.

1. Introduction

Slovenia is a moderately developed country in terms of tourism industry. Nevertheless, the educational system within the field of tourism struggles how to provide the industry with the quality workforce needed. The main reasons for this provision, is that modern tourists have been increasing travel experience and expect perfect service during their leisure time. It is obvious, that education is the most fundamental basis of success for a country's tourism industry.

Starting in early 1980s traditional form of tourism had radically changed /1/. These dramatic changes moved tourism industry much closer to the

characteristics of the new economy /2/. Undifferentiated conservative and economizing a mass tourist gave way to a much experienced and more travel active and conscious individual tourist /3/. Modern tourists have been increasing travel experience and expect perfect service during their leisure time. The pressure of the new customer on tourism industry to develop new products, services, excitements and experiences, increased enormously. Global companies adapted quickly and began to penetrate individual and local markets. Better integrated clusters of tourism-related businesses emerged. Novel information and communication technologies changed the competitive conditions through tourism industry tech-

nology. Labour in tourism became much more human capital intensive. Accordingly, employees in tourism become an asset. Location and climate as factors of production of products and services were integrated with “soft” factors such a design and entertainment /4/. A tourism education system went through a radical change. Nowadays, the educational system within the field of tourism struggles how to provide the industry with the quality force needed. It became obvious that education is one of the fundamental factors of a national tourism industry.

Many publications concerning the issue of education in tourism were published in the last decades, describing and comparing different educational systems or reporting on industry survey results. Unfortunately, few recommendations can be found on how tourism education programs could best possibly support the tourism industry. This paper will try to fill this gap partially and take the step into this direction by researching the factors that influence the competence building on different levels of education for tourism in Slovenia.

A number of publications concerning tourism education, research projects or scientific articles were published in the last decades describing factors of effective tourism education and comparing different educational systems. Very few tackled the issue how an education system could support national tourism industry. This paper will try to fill this gap partially and take the step into this direction by researching the factors that influence the skills and competence building on different levels of education for tourism in Slovenia.

2. Theoretical issues

2.1. Flexible learning and mobility

Sadlak /5/ sees the new stage of globalization as the emergence of “knowledge societies” realized as collaboration of industry with higher education in uniting to convert the intellectual resources of a region, country or city into contributing factors in order to achieve economic growth and social gains. Bologna Process was developed from the same principles of the universal education set by eminent researchers of education systems. Bologna process argues that apart from high level competence in the traditional academic disciplines stated by Herbart /6/, students need to

know more about the society and the world /7/. They must be included in the problems of society /8/ and be smarter about new sources of information /9/. Besides, they must develop good communication skills, based on openness and democracy /10/. The fundamental nature of assessment and evaluation must enhance all students’ learning. Accordingly, assessments should be based on the students’ intellectual interests and how well their knowledge and interests are realized in products and performances of their own making /11/. These critical strategies and competencies have to be supported by post modern pedagogy comprised of: self-reflexivity, decentering, deconstructing and non-universalis approach to a world view and problem solving. Students become thinking members of their learning communities /12/. These theoretical implications are embedded in the main objectives of the Bologna process:

- To increase the attractiveness, transparency and mobility within higher education,
- To facilitate the recognition of studies and qualifications,
- To adapt higher education better to the needs and fluctuations of the labour market,
- To enhance the role of higher education in democratic society.

The emergence of Bologna process is also based on the fact that there is growing awareness for the need change of the educational systems to realize its potential. A clear demand for students, who have the experience of working in multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary working environment, triggered the need for change in the area of education. The challenge of education transformation change on European level is to create a European research and teaching area that combines diversity across and within European countries while adhering to unifying principles and values. The intention of Bologna process creators was to enable a harmonization of systems by setting up European standards. The Bologna reform pursues its mission and goals by articulating the need for new roles and competences for existing staff, a new way of cooperation, staff training and development, new services and financial models, new structures and organization and new strategies and planning models.

2.2. Change of the education institutions or- ganizational culture

The need for a new structures and new organiza-
tions of education processes calls for the culture
change of the educational institutions and educa-
tion processes. Culture change conveys a connota-
tion of quality as a shared value and a collective
responsibility for all members of an institution,
including the students and the administrative
staff /13/. Difficulties to implement changes are
deeply embedded in the fabrics of institution in
the form of learned patterns that include values,
attitudes and behavior of an academic communi-
ty, and make the sense of its existence. Dill /14/ is
convinced that organizational culture in educa-
tion institutions highlights the centrality of hu-
man values, beliefs, and behavior. Moreover, Deal
and Ancell /15/ establish the link between the
educational institution organizational culture and
its efficiency and effectiveness. Godlad /16/, Lortie
/17/, Rutter /18/, Joyce et al /19/, provide addi-
tional evidence to the link between organizational
culture and desired educational output. Peters
and Waterman /20/ adopt a more holistic view,
when link successful organizations with their
special features that are realized in stories, slo-
gans, and legends and build their organizational
culture. They argue that organizations with weak
organizational culture are less effective because
they are more internal policy oriented, and fewer
customers oriented. Eckel, Hill and Green /21/ are
convinced that learned patterns that build organi-
zational culture prove to be a critical component
in understanding the process of planned change
and transformation in colleges and universities
today.

The significance of organizational culture be-
comes particularly clear, when we try to change
and transform the education institution in the
planned way. The culture change process is often
difficult and complex. Partly, because the process
of knowledge creation is complex, unpredictable,
and deeply rooted in the organizational culture
/22/, and partly because the education institution
is not a company and exists in a strong political
environment with openly articulated interests that
make the change process even more difficult /23/.
In such an environment only a transformational
change of organizational culture can be successful
/24/. Political nature of an educational process
creates eminent political subcultures that have a

substantial impact on material and moral re-
sources in the education institution. Many re-
search studies showed which cultural factors in-
fluenced the use of the resources in the education
institution /25/. Transformation of traditional
education institutions to be more open learning
systems is difficult and timely consuming. Ryder
and Wilson /26/ emphasize that this could not be
done in the short term. Learning communities are
unpredictable, so are the change processes that
are aimed to change them. Bureaucratic structures
want quick changes, teachers don't want to
change their traditional roles, because they are
afraid to lose their control, and employers con-
stantly press on educational institutions to pro-
duce students with up to date knowledge that can
produce immediate results in the market.

Fyans and Maehr /27/ revealed that the achieve-
ments of the students are based on the academic
achievements of the institution, the sense of
community, the achievement recognition, and on
the well known goals of institution. Cheong /28/
found the relation of the cultural factors such as
ideology of institution, cooperation between insti-
tution members, charismatic leadership, and close
relationships, with motivation and satisfaction of
the teachers in the institution. Teske and Schnei-
der /29/ revealed that successful principals influ-
enced the culture of education institution by con-
trolling staff hiring and development practices
that allowed teachers' professional development.
According to their findings, principals implement
change strategies based on their wide experience
with institution culture that gave them policy
space to purpose their goals. During the change
process, they define the articulated mission that
helped them to mobilize the staff and the school
community. Researchers also found out that most
important factor to implement change is to estab-
lish the high expectations for students in practice
/30/.

2.3. The knowledge accessibility and innova- tion

The answer to satisfy the expectations of the stu-
dents can be found in the open innovation para-
digm /31/. Open innovation paradigm can be un-
derstood as the antithesis of the traditional educa-
tional model where internal education programs
are developed. Open educational programs are
based on the use of purposive inflows and out-

flows of knowledge to accelerate internal innovation in education, and expand the markets for external use of innovative knowledge. It is commonly known that mode of knowledge production is traditionally contained in specialist institutions like universities. This ends in a linear notion of invention, innovation and diffusion. The answer to make it more non-linear lies in the forming of trans-disciplinary mode of knowledge production, which is diffuse and collaborative. It involves complex feedback loops and is the problem and not the discipline oriented. ICT technology helps to increase the accessibility to many forms of knowledge presentation media that increase the flexibility of delivery of knowledge. Learners can access knowledge anytime and from anywhere. Besides, ICT technology can influence the way the students are taught and how they learn. Learning becomes a more process and fewer mentoring driven. Hatangdi and Atanu /32/ argue that this way of learning would better prepare the learners to cope with the demands of industry. Use of new technologies in education develops collaboration skills and helps solving complex real world problems /33/.

As we already noted, culture change in the educational institutions directly affects the performance of knowledge creation and transformation. According to the Lisbon strategy, the educational system is challenged to boost its performance by improving the education efficiency through the accessibility to education programs and knowledge. This is achieved with Lifelong Open and Flexible Learning (LOF) that facilitate an access and participation of all ages of population. Moreover, a broad spectrum of learning tracks, programs and qualifications is available and responsive to the diversity in student needs and profiles along with specific expertise developed by universities. Only the integration of new technologies and new services, allowing for new kinds of learning content management, services to students, interactivity with staff and between peer students, can make education more flexible and adapted to the personal needs of students. Students of all ages are easily connected online from home and from the workplace and the degree of personalization in education grows. As a result, learning tracks are more personalized for learners of all ages, which are manifested in so-called personal portfolios /34/.

2.4. Tourism education development and change

Knowledge accessibility and innovation are particularly important in tourism education because it is a sector specific. Any public education has therefore, to be considered as a part of an industry specific policy. Buchanan and Tullock /35/ citing public choice theory, argued that all public spending is influenced by lobbying of organizations and power groups. Regional politicians often try to found schools in their region. Industry associations are inclined toward founding specialized schools to create benefits for their members. On the other hand, trade unions try to qualify their members to get better jobs /36/. Visioning this problem, Baum et al /37/ argued that human resource management is a central strategic and operational concern within the tourism and hospitality industries. They also argue that all stakeholders would benefit from a close integration of human resource, labour market and education policies /38/. Broader and more general public programs combined with internal company training are the issue in the future tourism education. These programs will reinforce mobility on higher educational levels. New structures of the school in the form of newly defined public-private partnerships as well as bigger units will appear /39/. Nevertheless, teacher is the by no means ultimate key to educational change and school improvement. He or she delivers, develops, defines and reinterprets the curriculum. Teachers teach in the way they do because of their experiences and biographies, and influenced by the organizational culture of the institution they belong to. Improving teaching is a complex task. It is not only the matter of developing better teaching methods. Lemke, Coughlin, Thadani and Martin /40/ point to the role of the teacher as one of the core success factors in the implementing process orienting teaching in the future educational institutions. They suggest that educational decision-makers must acknowledge that the academics of yesterday are not sufficient for today. The educational needs are to be designed, organized, and managed with a focus on student success in post secondary education, the workplace, and community life of the 21st Century. Because of the rapid changes more robust, rigorous and students' relevant future educational system should be developed.

Dede et al /41/ argue that recognition and respect for teaching as a profession will depend on whether the objectives, content, methods, and assessment of teacher, education, induction, and professional development alter to take full advantage of new technological capabilities.

Some tourism education and training centers still offer rigid and static systems of education founded on the principles of the past that are based on a scientific-management model of education. Today's students live in a constantly and rapidly changing world that is culturally diverse, and technologically and media driven. Educational systems need changes that will make them capable of coping with the challenge of the next few decades.

Somehow closed, traditionally based institutions that are constantly pressed by contemporary demands of tourism field, should be transformed to be fit to the new challenges of the education. Renewal cycles in tourism will be shorter and shorter. This will generate a constant pressure on well developed learning methods and skills and increased accessibility to all sources of knowledge. Constant innovation and improvement in a cross-cultural environment will be a part of every tourism activity in the future. The synergy between different ways of learning and thinking will be needed in future tourism education. Distance learning, which is based on the already mentioned concept of bringing knowledge to people instead of people to knowledge, combined with the culture change of tourism education institutions is one of the best solutions.

2.5. Creative coupling of competencies and work experiences

It is already recognized by now that learning, adaptation, flexibility and analytical skills are the values for the future. Companies and institutions become flexible organizations with increasing innovation capacity /42/. Co-operation between the corporate world and educational sectors in the field of curriculum development, research, training and dual programs becomes nuance. Lecturers get involved in the business world and vice versa. The result of mutual co-operation is the development of competencies of the students that add value to their employer business. Boyatzis /43/ defines competence as an underlying characteristic of an employee which results in effective

and even superior performance. Quinn et al /44/ suggest that a competency is a product of possession of knowledge and the behavioral capacity to act appropriately. On the personal level, the competence is any human characteristic or trait that individual uses in the appropriate way to successfully achieve one or more outputs or results expected from them. These characteristics or traits include an individual's knowledge, skills, and aspects of one's self-esteem, social roles, mindsets, and thought patterns. Competencies are predictors of performance success, observable and measurable set of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Two major types of competencies may be distinguished: visible and hidden competencies. Visible competencies include the rational components of the system that are necessary for satisfactory work performance, i.e. theoretical and professional knowledge as well as practical skills. Hidden competencies, on the other hand, derive from the individual's cultural, personal and psychological characteristics, thus they constitute the emotional components of the system /45/.

Comparing to a working task, competence is enduring and more readily transferred to across work assignments. In other words, competencies are the tools that individuals use for successful performance. Without them performing is not taking place. Today's critical strategies and competencies of interconnected workforce and society are critical thinking, problem solving, innovation, research, proactive use of technology and creativity /46/. Many educational leaders already recognize the outputs of these competencies in the form of user-created content and social networking that become common on campus.

Knowledge and skills easily get outdated and competencies must be continuously updated, renewed or even rebuilt. The curriculum that fits all circumstances and needs will inevitably fail to produce such innovations, because every student has its own professional profile, learning needs, learning style, and level of already built competencies /47/. Besides, employers in the tourism sector search for employees with transferable skills and competencies including strong communication skills, interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, and the ability to make fast and appropriate decisions /48/. Customer satisfaction and actual and perceived service quality force employers to search for employees that personally contribute to an involvement in the service provi-

sion process /49/. To achieve this goal, education institutions in the field of a tourism offer compulsory internship programs in an industry setting, involve visiting professionals from tourism in the program curriculum and develop process learning methods. Specific skills and competencies developed by practical experience improve student employment chances and help them plan their future career path in the industry. In this manner employer maintain their links with education institutions and relieve the pressure on their permanent staff /50/.

3. Research methods

According to the purpose of this study, the overall process of developing the instrument for the study of tourism skill and competencies development was divided into three separate parts. Part one generated sample of items by a literature research and by the skills and competencies study of Ambrož /51/. In part two data were drawn from a survey originally administered to respondents in tourism institutions. Questionnaire was sent to 325 respondents. Only 165 returned the questionnaire which was used to perform principal component factor analysis. In part three questionnaires with outliers were removed, and 149 questionnaires were used to perform regression analysis.

4. Instruments and sample

We divided instrument in the research into three parts. First part comprised thirty-two variables describing the organizational culture of educational institution dimensions: (1) inclusion, (2) mobility, (3) expertise, (4) employability. The second part comprised nine variables describing the tourism skills and competencies. The third part comprised demographic variables: gender, status, tourism educational program. The fourth part

included variables: (1) How many invited experts from tourist organizations lectured in your program last year? (2) Which is the percent of mentoring in the learning process in your institution? (3) Which percent of all learning materials are available in e-form?

Respondents' gender has asymmetrical distribution of 30% males and 70% females. This is a typical gender distribution of tourism education programmes population in Slovenia, where the labor characteristics of the tourism and hospitality industry reflect the international trend of hospitality being considered a rather feminine economic activity. In the structure, there are 20% respondents from a master program, 14% respondents from accredited school, 25% respondents from college, and 41% respondents from high school.

5. Data analysis

5.1. Factor analysis

Factor analysis is used to discover patterns in the relationships among variables and enables reduction of the number of variables into factors combined from these variables. In our study exploratory principal component analysis with Varimax rotation was applied to the list of skills and competencies to reduce the number of items for analysis and to reveal the latent factors. Tourism skills and competencies were measured on a three-item scale from under-developed to well develop (1-under-developed, 2 – somehow developed, 3 – good developed). The list contained nine specific tourism skills and competencies. Analysis revealed that every item accounted at least 0.70 of the variance in the component matrix. This skills and competencies factors development scale was found to be reliable with Cronbach's alpha 0.76, and explains 71% of variability in the factor structure (Table 1).

Table 1: Factor analysis of tourism relevant skills and competencies

Factor	Factor loading	Explained variance (%)	Eigenvalue	Mean	St. Dev.	Cronbach's alfa
Developed communication skills	0.82	71 %	6.38	2.32	0.42	
Autonomous search and benchmarking of knowledge	0.88			2.50	0.39	
Ability to work in a team	0.89			2.77	0.27	

Autonomous decision making	0.82	2.33	0.41	.76
Analysis, synthesis and prediction of consequences in problem solving	0.79	2.27	0.42	
Ethical reflexivity and development of professional ethics	0.85	2.41	0.42	
Ability to research in the field of tourism marketing	0.86	2.22	0.40	
Research competencies	0.81	2.18	0.39	
Ability to apply theoretical knowledge in praxis	0.85	2.26	0.64	

The second exploratory principal components analysis was applied to the list of questions that describe organizational culture of the educational institution. Organizational culture dimensions of tourism institution were measured on a five-item scale (1- totally agree, 2 – agree, 3 – do not agree, 4 – totally disagree, 5 – do not know). The principal component analysis -Varimax rotated of the thirty-two perception variables about organizational culture revealed that each of the items accounted for at least 0.40 of the variance in the component matrix except for items: (1) extensive use of best practices and case studies (0.390), and (2) develop-

ing the tourism job market (0.370). These two variables were retained in the factor analysis. Organizational culture dimensions comprise 43% of variance (Table 2). The highly correlated in the factor are: ability to work in a team, autonomous search and benchmarking of knowledge, ability to research in the field of tourism marketing. Organizational culture dimension scale was found to be reliable with first factor (Cronbach's alpha 0.83) with second factor (Cronbach's alpha 0.71) with third factor (Cronbach's alpha 0.70), and with fourth factor (Cronbach's alpha 0.76).

Table 2: Factor analysis of organizational culture dimensions of tourism educational institutions

Factor	Factor loading	Explained variance (%)	Eigenvalue	Mean	St. dev.	Cronbach's alfa
F1. Inclusion						
IT supported educational process.	0.70			2.79	1.34	
Successful implementations of new programs.	0.67			2.46	1.09	
Program concept and contents consistency.	0.67			2.82	1.30	
Advising and personal help to students.	0.44	26,01 %	8,32	2.25	1.05	.83
Inclusion of tourism experts in educational process.	0.51			2.62	1.05	
Extensive use of best practices and case studies.	0.39			2.87	1.13	
Partitipation of the students in institution governance.	0.65			2.97	1.28	
Development of learning organization.	0.52			1.50	0.50	
Quality of institution infrastructure.	0.45			2.08	1.05	
Organized self representation of students.	0.48			2.13	0.65	
F2. Mobility						
Intensive inclusion of students in programs of international mobility.	0.36			2.37	0.91	

develop new skills in a tourism profession.	0.37			2.82	1.24	
evaluate teachers and administrative staff.	0.62	6,27 %	2,01	2.36	0.79	.71
It evaluates the image of the school.	0.58			2.68	1.38	
educate internationally competitive workforce.	0.64			2.63	1.31	
follow local, national and global tourism trends.	0.74			3.26	1.54	
F3. Expertise						
It has a developed system of skills training.	0.69			2.55	1.20	
Teachers frequently advise students in the process of skill training.	0.60			2.80	1.17	
Motivate constant availability of teachers to advise students.	0.48	5,19 %	1,66	2.46	1.05	.70
Extensively collaborates with tourist organizations in the field of tourism.	0.47			2.96	1.33	
develop a quality information systems for students.	0.48			2.92	1.23	
Intensively follows up the success of the student in a business environment.	0.61			3.51	1.27	
F4. Employability						
It develops new forms of student self-organization.	0.41			2.81	1.23	
include students in the research process and project work.	0.40			1.82	0.66	
help a student to develop their career through career centers.	0.46			1.59	0.49	
Develops job market.	0.37			1.70	0.46	
Efficiently develops specific and core competencies of students.	0.39	4.62 %	1,48	2.71	1.25	.76
It enables students to actively participate on many tourist events.	0.41			1.20	0.57	
Evaluates achievements of students.	0.42			2.89	1.20	
integrate motivated, knowledgeable and productive teaching and administrative staff.	0.63			2.78	1.15	
maintain a reasonable average of teachers per student.	0.54			2.55	1.18	
Teachers and students communicate effectively.	0.51			2.57	1.13	

Factor analysis revealed four dimensions of education institutions organizational culture:

1. **Inclusion.** The highly correlated in the factor are variables: IT supported educational process, successful implementation of new programs, program concept and contents consistency,
2. **Mobility.** The highly correlated in the factor are variables: It educates internationally competitive workforce, follows local, national and global tourism trends,

3. **Expertise.** The highly correlated in the factor are variables: it has developed a system of skill training, intensively follows up the success of the student in a business environment, teachers frequently advise students in the process of skill training.
4. **Employability.** The highly correlated in the factor are variables: It integrates motivated, knowledgeable and productive teaching and administrative staff, maintains a reasonable average of teachers per student, and teachers and students communicate effectively.

5.2. Regression analysis

For the purpose of the regression analysis, we built the General regression model (GRM) including predictor variables: inclusion, mobility, expertise, employability, mentoring, availability of e-learning materials, invited lecturing experts from tourist organizations and the portion of mentoring in the structure of learning process in the institution. We included the tourism skills and self-

assessment of competency development as a dependent variable in the regression model. Skills and competencies are the result of their self-assessment. The regression model is significant and prediction variables explain thirty percent of variance on skills and competencies development ($R^2_{adj} = .30$, $F = 10.59$, $p < .00000^{***}$). Results are explained in the table 3. Overall results show that employability and educational institution explain the largest portion of variance in the model.

Table 3: Regresion analysis of development of tourism relevant skills and competencies

Variables	Tolerance	R ²	β	Partial coefficient	P
Invited lecturing experts	0,92	0,08	0,16	2,26	0,03
Mentoring	0,94	0,06	-0,15	-2,20	0,03
E-learning material	0,71	0,29	0,20	2,57	0,01
Employability	0,86	0,14	-0,30	-4,12	0,00
Master program	0,42	0,58	0,26	2,51	0,01
Accredited program	0,37	0,63	0,25	2,29	0,02
College program	0,38	0,62	-0,39	-3,61	0,00
R ²	0,33				
R ^{2adj}	0,30				
F	10,59				
p	0,000***				

Test of the model using beta coefficients reveals the impact of each predictor variable on dependent variable holding other variables constant. Attitudes about skills and competence in the college students' sample explain the highest amount of variance ($\beta = -0.39$, $p < 0.0000^{***}$). It seems that the students from a college sample perceive that their college program negatively impacts their self-development. Accordingly, the development of their relevant tourism oriented skills and competencies suffer.

Three dimensions of the educations institution organizational culture dropped out from the equation. Dimension "Employability" as the only predictor of organizational culture explains thirty percent of variance ($\beta = -0.30$, $p < 0.0000^{***}$) and is negatively connected to the perceived development of skills and competencies. The problem lies in the quality of teaching and in the quality of the work of administrative staff in the education institution. Besides, one teacher teaches too many students and communication between a teacher and a student is not efficient. Institution career center adds no value to the employability of the students. Student development is not evaluated, and they have a little opportunity to train their

presentation and verbal skills and gain specific competencies.

Mentoring is negatively connected to the development of tourism relevant skills and competencies ($\beta = -0.15$, $p < 0.03^*$). Negative relationship points to the lack of process learning methods as well as the lack of appropriate learning culture, where a student is the performing actor. It is evident that educational institutions in our study still offer mentoring that is not based on process learning. Process learning enables a student to assess knowledge, to participate in the purposive inflow and outflow of knowledge, and develop internal innovations that can be expanded to the market. Process learning results in robust, rigorous, and students' relevant learning system.

Attitudes about development of skills and competence in the master students' sample are positively related to the development of tourism relevant skills and competencies ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.01^*$). By our conclusion this is the result of specific and relevant tourism skills and competencies oriented master program. Evidently master program reflects the expectations and requirements of the tourism industry. Students from the master pro-

gram perceive that the program upgrades and develop their skills and competencies.

Almost the same results show the students from an accredited program. They positively link accredited educational program to development of tourism relevant skills and competencies ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.02^*$). Their program is more practically orienting, and students perceive its relevance to their skills and competencies development.

Accessibility to the electronically supported and transient learning materials is positively linked to the development of tourism relevant skills and competencies ($\beta = 0.20$, $p < 0.01^*$). To provoke students' intellectual interests and the realization of products and performances of their own making, teaching process must be supported by post-modern pedagogy concepts. Besides, the integration of new technologies, new teaching methods and new services, supported by new learning content management, can make education more flexible and adapted to the personal needs of students. Online connection from home or from a workplace and high degree of personalization, can contribute to the building of a new learning culture.

Actual and perceived tourism service quality force employers to search for employees that can personally contribute to it. To achieve this goal education institutions involve visiting experts from tourism in the program curriculum. In our study, the involvement of tourism experts in the education program bears results because the involvement of experts is positively linked with the development of skills and competencies of the students in the study ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < 0.03^*$).

6. Discussion and conclusion

Every educational institution has its own organizational culture that has an impact on students' self-perceived skills and competencies. However, results of our study signal the need to ensure a change in values, attitude and behavior within an institution and to build the robust, rigorous, and students' relevant education programs in the field of tourism. Particularly strong attention should be paid to develop an agreed institutional profile. Results of the study show that organizational culture dimensions that motivate inclusion, mobility, and expertise are not developed, thus not

perceived by respondents. Respondents do not link them to the development of their tourism oriented skills and competencies. Employability as the relevant organizational culture dimension points to the fact that the quality of the education process is the most important. Only teachers, staff, students, and employers can build teaching quality continually assessing the development of tourism relevant skills and competencies. Additional, in Slovenia one teacher is responsible for too many students. Comparing to other EU countries it ranks high on the average students per teacher. Quality communication between teachers and students, and students' presentation skills, so highly respected in tourism are seriously under-developed.

It is surprising that students in the study from a college tourism education program do not perceive the link between the program and the development of their skills and competencies. College program should develop transient critical thinking, problem solving skills, research competencies, good communication skills and creativity. These are all skills and competencies for the next decades that are expected and needed by tourism industry. Tourism skills and competencies cannot be developed only theoretically. They must be developed and tested in the real tourism circumstances. However, it is definitely the responsibility of the educational institutions to change the program and make it more tourism process oriented and transient at the same time. This is the problem of a contemporary college program for tourism, which conceptually does not develop theoretically sound, practically oriented, and problem solving transient skills and competencies. Contemporary educational process, especially on the college level is according to our findings strongly mentoring based and result oriented and fails to develop relevant skills and competencies. Mentoring develops non-autonomous and non-problem solving agency, which results in shaping submissive personality that accepts common and acceptable solutions. To change the actual learning culture, educational institutions must primarily change the teacher's teaching style and the learning environment where strong leadership and consulting skills of the teacher dominate. The new teacher's teaching style is to be designed, organized, and managed with a focus on student success in post secondary education, the workplace, and community life of the 21st Century.

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