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ABSTRACT

Drowning incidents in the beaches of Southern Province is considerably higher than other beaches of Sri Lanka. Placing lifeguards in the beaches is a key drowning prevention method. Sri Lanka Coast Guard (SLCG) has deployed lifeguards in five crucial beaches in Southern province where SLCG has been able to save number of lives since 2009. However, in the lifeguarded beaches, drowning incidents and even deaths are reported frequently. Therefore, it is needed to understand the effectiveness of SLCG lifeguards in drowning prevention in the protected beaches. This study aims at investigating the effectiveness of SLCG lifesaving in the beaches of Southern Province. Three factors were identified by the literature, which contributed to the lifesaving effectiveness. Those are lifeguard competency, organizational factors and external factors. Three hypothesis are developed based on these three factors and a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from randomly selected sample. Study sample was 73 active lifeguards of SLCG performing duties in lifesaving points in Southern Province. Data analysis was done using IBM SPSS Statistics 23 software. Results proved that all three factors which have been identified as independent variables have a positive correlation with the dependent variable, lifeguard effectiveness. When analyzing the constructs of each independent variable in detail, it was revealed that certain areas in SLCG lifesaving need to address in order to enhance the effectiveness. At the end of the study, several recommendations were made to uplift the effectiveness of SLCG lifesaving in the beaches of Southern Province.

Keywords: Drowning, Lifesaving, Lifeguards, Effectiveness, Sri Lanka Coast Guard