

Recent Trends and Patterns of Tourism Employment and Challenges for Manpower Development in Tourism Industry of Sri Lanka

Introduction

Despite having various definitions for tourism, the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) has defined tourism "travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for more than twenty four (24) hours and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited". On the other hand, tourism is a collection of activities, services and industries that deliver a travel experience, including transportation, accommodation, eating and drinking establishments, retail shops, entertainment facilities and other hospitality services provided for individuals or groups travelling away from home (WTO, 2007).

Tourism is currently one of the world's largest industries with annual receipts of over one trillion US dollars. It is almost close to US\$ 3 billion a day. In 2010, International tourist arrivals were 935 millions, showing nearly 7% growth rate compared to 2009. Tourism exports account for nearly 30% of the world's exports of commercial services and 6% of overall exports of goods and services. Tourism is the fourth highest export category according to the ranking of the world's international trade after fuels, chemicals and automotive products. For many developing countries, tourism is one of the main sources of foreign exchange as well (www.wttc.org/eng/Tourism_Research).

Global tourism also generates income and employment, contributing to socio-economic development in many developed and developing countries. The travel and tourism industry, as being one of the largest and most dynamic industries in today's global economy, generated more than 235 million jobs in 2010 representing 8 per cent of global employment. It has been forecasted that there will be more than 258,592,000 jobs (8.8% of total employment) in 2011, and it will increase from 258,592,000 jobs to 323,826,000 jobs (9.7%) by 2021 (http://www.wttc.org/eng/Tourism_Research/). In addition, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has forecasted that global tourism would provide around 296 million jobs by 2019. Tourism has a potential to become a major generator of jobs after the recent global economic crisis. However, the success of these jobs depends on service quality, which, in turn, goes hand in hand with a skilled and motivated workforce.

Attractiveness of Sri Lanka as a Tourist Destination

Sri Lanka inherits many attractions, as a tourist destination, such as, beautiful natural beaches, lakes, waterfalls, mountain scenery, rain forests and majestic ruins of ancient civilisations, along with the compact nature of these resources crowded into a tropical island making it even more attractive to tourist arrivals. Very importantly,

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friendlier people with Buddhist, Hindu, and Christian cultures have created pleasant environment for tourists. Although, Sri Lanka is still popular destination for beach holiday attraction, the country has a great potential for the development of various types of specific tourism activities/segments based on its authentic culture, unique nature, rural lifestyle and friendly people.

It is worth mentioning the statement made by Marco Polo on the attractions of Sri Lanka which could clearly indicate the potential development of Sri Lanka tourism in global tourism.

On leaving the Island of Andoman and sailing a thousand miles, a little south of west, the traveller reaches Ceylon, which is undoubtedly the finest Island of its size in the entire war.

-Marco Polo

Historical Background of Tourism Industry of Sri Lanka

Before the independence of Sri Lanka in 1948, almost all tourists were transit passengers from the West and the East passing through Colombo. These transit passengers

generated a considerable demand for shopping in Sri Lanka. Colombo port was a major service point or a transit port during that time. Realising the potential, the British colonial government established a Tourist Bureau in 1937, to provide facilities and services for these tourists in Sri Lanka. With the outbreak of World War II, tourist arrivals declined significantly and the bureau was closed down (Samaranayake, 1997).

After independence, in a bid to develop tourism industry, the government re-established tourism bureau in 1948 and renamed it 'Government Tourist Bureau', first under the Ministry of Commerce, and later under the Ministry of Defence (Samaranayake, 1997). The development of Katunayaka International Airport in 1965, was an important step as was the conversion of some colonial buildings for international hotels. The establishment of the Ceylon Tourist Board and the Hotel Corporation in 1966 and the Hotel Training Schools in 1966 were also important milestones in the development of tourism in Sri Lanka in the 1960s. The tourism industry in Sri Lanka was officially institutionalised after the establishment of the Ceylon Tourist Board in 1966.

After having set the industry on a sound legal footing and organising it systematically in 1966, international tourist arrivals increased from 18,969 in 1966 to 23,666 in 1967, representing a 25% improvement over the previous year. Out of this total tourist arrival, 43% was from Western Europe, with 32% from Asia, 17% from North America, 5% from the South Pacific and below 1% from other regions. (Annual Report of Ceylon Tourist Board, 1976; Samaranayake, 1997).

On the basis of the tourist arrivals and receipts, the growth of the industry can be distinguished into four eras since 1966 (Figure 1). The

first era, from 1966 to 1977, showed a steady and fast rate of growth of tourist arrivals and receipts in Sri Lanka. During this era, the average annual growth rate of tourist arrivals was 22% with 40% for the tourist receipts. In the second era, from 1977 to 1982, the average annual growth rate of tourist arrivals and receipts were 23% and 32% respectively. The introduction of liberalised economic policies, the development of infrastructures, the greater involvement of the private sector and foreign investors were the major reasons for these changes. These were boosted by the factors such as favourable changes in exchange rates, the improvement of mass package tourism, the rapid development of the international transport system (in the wake of declining oil prices), and a stable international political and economic environment. Tourist arrivals reached a peak point in 1982. During the third era, from 1983 to 1989, the industry faced significant a "declining" stage, its attractions marred by the ethnic conflicts and youth unrest in Sri Lanka. During this period, average growth rates of tourist arrivals and receipts were -10.3% and -16% respectively. The fourth era began in 1990. The year 1990 was a considerable turning point for the industry when tourist arrivals recorded the highest growth rates (61%) of the industry since its inception. A short-term declining trend in the Tamil terrorist activities, the easing the youth unrest in the south of Sri Lanka, the devaluation of the rupee, government various promotional activities were some of the major reasons for this impressive growth. Unfortunately, this notable

progress was limited to only a short period, falling victim once again to the restarting of Tamil terrorist activities (e.g. president Premadasa's assassination in 1993, bomb blasts at the Central Bank of Sri Lanka in 1996 and at the Hilton Hotel in 1997). Despite these terrorist activities, the industry has been able to record around 10.9% of average annual growth rate for tourist arrivals and around 16% for tourist receipts during the time period from 1990 to 1999.

Despite a pick-up, the industry has not been able to utilise more than 50% of its room occupancy in most of the time periods since the beginning of the industry. This room occupancy ratio has considerably declined because of the Tamil terrorist activities in Sri Lanka. Unsurprisingly, terrorist activities have negatively affected, not only tourist arrivals, but also tourism receipts. The time duration of a tourist's stay in Sri Lanka has shortened and the travel areas tourists can visit in Sri Lanka have also been limited to the southern and central provinces of the country. This has led to a considerable reduction in tourist income in Sri Lanka.

Among the most glaring shortcomings which impeded the industry in 1990s are:

- 1) A lack of integrated policy and plan for tourism;
- 2) An inadequate private sector and local community involvement;

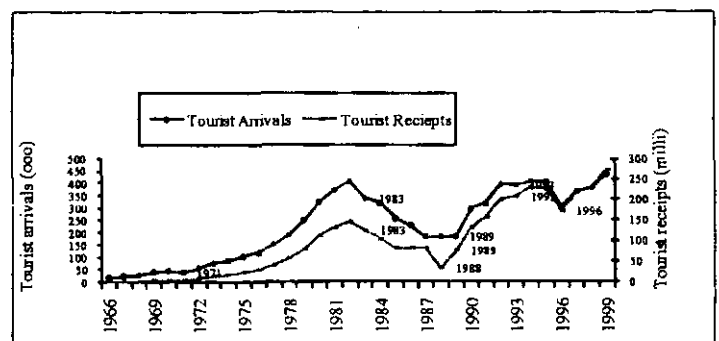


Figure 1: Tourist arrivals (000) and receipts (US\$ Mil), 1966-1999

Source: Author compilation from Annual Reports of Ceylon Tourist Board

3) A lack of a clear-cut division of responsibility between the ministry and other agencies involved in the tourism sector;

4) A lack of skilled manpower; and

5) Absence of co-ordination between the sectors responsible for the promotion of foreign investment.

After the elimination of terrorism in 2009, for last year 2010, tourist arrivals increased by 50 percent year-on-year (654,476), with earnings also keeping pace nearly 70 percent

growth (US\$ 250 million). The hotel and travel Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) index increased by nearly 200 percent in 2010. The tourism industry in Sri Lanka has generated a substantial contribution to income and employment of the economy since the 1970s. According to several empirical analyses, the estimated overall tourism income multiplier is around 2. This means that one additional unit of rupee spending on tourism industry can generate at least 2 rupees through its multiplier effects of the economy. Pertinently, the tourism sub-sector multipliers are higher than those of many other sectors of the economy. A given unit of expenditure in the tourist sector can generate higher level of subsequent expenditure within the economy than the same unit expenditure spent in most non-tourism sectors. At present, the gross tourism earning represent around between 1.5% to 2% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in Sri Lanka, which is more or less similar to the contribution of tea (1.6%) and coconuts (1.7%) to the economy. The industry has a significant relationship with the other sectors of the economy through its strong forward and backward linkages (United Nations, 1996).

Table 1: Relative importance of tourism as foreign exchange (FE) earner

Sector	2008		2009	
	FE Earnings Rs. Million	% of FE Earnings	FE Earnings Rs. Million	% of FE Earnings
Textiles & Garments	376,024	26.5	376,146	26.2
Private Foreign Remittances	316,091	22.3	382,818	26.6
Tea	137,600	9.7	136,171	9.5
Transportation Services	108,430	7.6	99,391	6.9
Rubber based products	58,671	4.1	44,163	3.1
Tourism	37,094	2.6	37,506	2.6
Minor Agriculture products	31,069	2.2	28,161	2
Petroleum products	27,551	1.9	27,616	1.9
Computer & Information Technology Services	24,917	1.8	15,484	1.1
Others	302,118	21.3	289,122	20.1
Total	1,419,565	100	1,436,578	100

Source: Author's data compilation from Central Bank Annual Report (2009, 2010)

In terms of foreign exchange earning of the country, tourism industry still represents the sixth place of the country (Table 1). Tourism contributes 2.6% to foreign exchange earnings as compared to 26.6% from private foreign remittances, 26.2% from textiles and garments, 9.5% from tea, 6.9% from transportation services, and 3.1% from rubber-based products. However, the present position of tourism contribution on Sri Lanka's export economy may go up in coming years due to the rapid growth pattern shown in Sri Lanka tourism after 2009.

Impact of Tourism on Employment Generation in Sri Lanka

Being a very wide field, the scope of employment in tourism sector in general is very extensive, and most of these potentials are still largely untapped in many tourist destinations. Career opportunities exist in public and private sectors. In the public sector, there are opportunities in the directorates and departments of tourism of the centre and the state as officers, information assistants, tourist guides, etc. Qualified tourism professionals are highly demanded in the private sector with travel

agencies, tour operators, airlines, hotels, transport and cargo companies, etc. In addition, opportunities for self employment and employment in non-governmental organisations are available.

The tourism industry creates employment opportunities directly in tourism-related business establishments such as hotels and other accommodation units, restaurants, travel agents and tour operators, recreation and entertainment businesses, souvenir, handicraft and other shops, etc.

The contribution of tourism employment to the total employment of a country varies from country to country. In countries like Macao, China and the Maldives, tourism makes a significant contribution (around 60%) to their total employment of the country. Table 2, clearly shows that the contribution of direct tourism employment to total Sri Lankan employment (0.63%) and its total contribution (1.27%) are very low compared other Asian and Pacific countries.

In addition, various business operations indirectly involve with tourism businesses. In general, indirect employment generated as

a result of tourism is much higher than direct employment.

The tourism industry accounts for nearly 1.3% of the total employment in Sri Lanka. This can vary from 1.3% to 1.7% due to the different performance of tourism industry on total employment of Sri Lankan economy (Table 3), more specifically after post-war period. Hotel and restaurant, travel agents and tour operators, airlines and tourist shops are some of the important sectors in tourism employment of the country. Hotels and restaurants plus tourist shops are the most labour intensive sectors of the industry. Over three-quarters of the total direct employment is represented by hotel and restaurant of the industry. Travel agencies and tour operators, and airline companies also generate a considerable contribution towards tourism employment in Sri Lanka (Annual Reports of SLTDA (Former Ceylon Tourist Board), 2008 and 2009).

In comparison to most of the other sectors of the economy, contribution of tourism to the total employment in terms of compensation (salaries, wages, staff benefits, etc.) is relatively high, but not for all categories of employments of the industry. An

Table 2: Tourism Employment in some selected countries and in the world in 2008

Country	Direct tourism employment as a % of total employment	Total tourism employment as a % of total employment
Australia	4.7	11.0
Bangladesh	1.3	3.2
China	2.4	8.1
Fiji	9.3	24.7
India	2.7	6.5
Indonesia	2.0	6.5
Japan	4.0	10.1
Korea	2.1	8.1
Laos	3.3	9.1
Macao, China	37.6	70.7
Malaysia	5.2	11.7
Nepal	2.0	5.0
New Zealand	5.6	12.6
Pakistan	1.7	4.7
Philippines	4.0	10.5
Sri Lanka	0.63	1.27
Thailand	5.1	11.3
World Average	2.8	7.9

Source: Author's calculations based on <http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/> Publications, Central Bank Reports

even closer examination of the structure of tourism employment reveals several important characteristics. It is said that *"Too Many Unskilled, Low Paid Employees and Too Few High Skilled, High Paid Employees, but Fewer Employees between These Two Extremes"*. This situation can be shown in the composition and distribution of direct tourism employment in Sri Lanka (Annual Reports of SLTDA, Former Ceylon Tourist Board, 2009, 2010).

Mostly, the industry does not require highly academically-qualified and skilled experts, but the greater demand is for more supervisors, clerical and allied staff and, operative and manual workers. In general, around 83% of total direct employment is represented by technical, clerical and supervisory, and manual and operative jobs of the industry. Of the total direct employment, 58.5 percent represent in the technical, clerical and supervisory grades, 25 percent represent in the manual and operative grades and the balance 15 percent in managerial grades (SLTDA, 2010).

The total number of persons employed directly in the tourism sector as at end of 2009 amounted to 52,071 and 51,306 recorded in 2008. Out of this total direct employment, around two-thirds of employees represent accommodation and catering sectors. Travel agents and tour operators accounted nearly for 14 percent while Airlines account for around 10 percent. Moreover, the share of technical, clerical and supervisory employment has

Table 3: Contribution of tourism to employment in Sri Lanka in 2008 and 2009

	2008	2009
Tourist arrivals	438,475	447,890
Labour force (000)	8,081,702	8,073,668
Unemployment ratio	5.4	5.8
Total employment of tourism	123,134	124,970
- Direct	51,306	52,071
- Indirect	71,828	72,899
Percentage of direct tourism employment in total tourism employment	42	42
Percentage of tourism employment in the labour force	1.27	1.79
Ratio of employment to tourist arrivals	3.6	3.6

Source: Compiled by Author from Annual Reports of Central Bank, 2009-2010; Annual Reports of SLTDA, 2009-2010.

significantly increased for last few years. Most of the employment in the tourism industry, particularly in the hotel sector, is also temporary or seasonal. (SLTDA, 2010).

Tourism affects all communities directly or indirectly. It involves a huge range of businesses, from accountants and builders to hotels and supermarket workers. The tourism is one of the few intensive sectors of employment. Furthermore, the employment impact of tourism goes beyond employment in sectors in which tourists directly spend their money, such as hotels, restaurants and airlines. The establishments which receive tourists also buy goods and services from other sectors that generate employment in those sectors through multiplier effect.

On the other hand, domestic resource intensive, small-scale tourism sector has generated more employment opportunities, outstripping the large-scale sector. This can be traced to the higher backward linkages of tourist shops, guesthouses and restaurants (Silva, 2002; United Nation, 1996). Moreover, these linkages, too, produce a considerable amount of indirect employment, which is significantly higher than the amount of direct employment of tourism in Sri Lanka (Table 3). Ratio between direct employment to indirect employment represents around 1:1.4 (SLTDA, 2009). On the other hand, for every 100 jobs created in the tourism sector, there

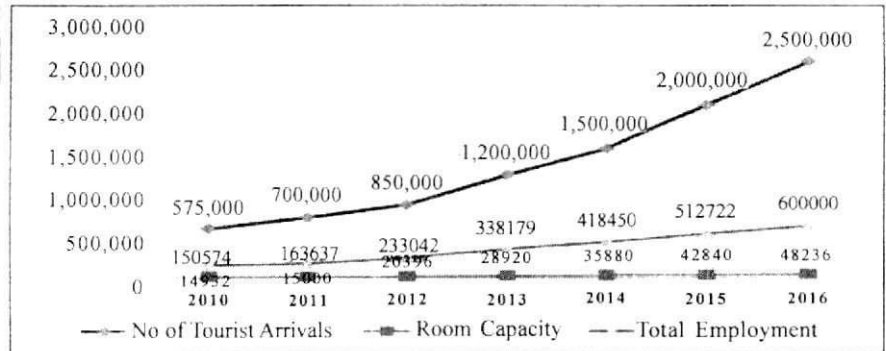


Figure 2: Expected tourist arrivals, tourist receipts and tourism employment

Source: Way Forward Report of SLTDA, 2010

will be 140 jobs generated in the supportive sectors to the tourism industry.

Future Challenges for Increasing Tourism Manpower Development in Sri Lanka

After elimination of ruthless terrorism, tourism industry has reached a new era of its development, which had not been seen for the last thirty years of Sri Lankan history. As a result, it is expected to attract 2.5 million tourist arrivals by 2016. It will require around 600,000 trained personnel for travel, tourism and hospitality industry in Sri Lanka (Table 4). Increasing tourist arrivals would lead to improve foreign income as well.

Along with expected tourist arrivals and anticipated room capacity, expected tourism employment has been forecasted from 1,50,574 persons in 2010 to 600,000 persons in 2016, as shown in Figure 2.

On the basis of expected tourist arrival from 2010 to 2016 and required accommodation facilities, the annual growth rates of tourist arrivals, accommodation facilities and levels of employment can also be illustrated in Figure 3.

Number of employment required with tourist arrivals can be measured either as a ratio based on number of tourists to the number employed or as the number of required employment per room. In general, 4 to 5 tourists can create one job (Silva, 2002; United Nation, 1996, 1993). Secondly, in tourism accommodation sector, on average, manpower requirement is 1.75 per room (SLITHM, 2010). This ratio can vary according to levels of star grade of these hotel rooms (Figure 4).

Along with the forecasted 2.5 million tourist arrivals, expected manpower for tourism industry can also be categorised into different

Table 4: Forecasted tourist arrivals from 2010 to 2016

Category	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
1. Arrivals	575,000	700,000	910,000	1,183,000	1,537,900	1,999,270	2,500,000
2. Employment							
Direct Employment	62,739	68,182	104,545	140,908	177,271	213,634	250,000
Indirect Employment	87,835	95,455	146,363	197,271	248,179	299,088	350,000
Total Employment	150,574	163,637	250,908	338,179	425,450	512,722	600,000
3. Avg. Duration(nights)	8.9	8.6	8.3	8.0	7.7	7.4	7.0
4. Rooms Capacity	14,932	15,000	21,960	28,920	35,880	42,840	49,800
5. Foreign Ex Earnings (US \$ Mn)	506.1	600.0	980.0	1,360.0	1,740.0	2,120.0	2,500.0
6. Avg spending per tourist per day (US \$)	90.3	97.1	103.9	110.7	117.5	124.3	130.0

Source: Way Forward Report of SLTDA, 2010

classifications by considering skill levels of employees. Figure 5 indicates that a large amount of technical, clerical and supervisory category employment are required for tourism industry by 2016.

In addition, manpower requirement by different departments from 2010 to 2016 is shown in Figure 6. Food and Beverages (F&B) category of trained manpower will be the largest part among these categories. Generally, it represents around 24% of the total manpower requirement of the hotel and accommodation industry.

According to a newspaper-based job vacancy survey recently conducted by Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM), several job categories in the hotel sector are highly demanded, but a very few trained persons are available for this categories jobs (Figure 7) (e.g. chef and executive chefs, management staff and trainee staff).

In addition to hotel and restaurant employees, more than 5,200 trained national guides and chauffeur guides are required for tourism industry by 2016 (Table 6) (SLITHM, 2010-2016).

On the basis of above analysis of future requirement of manpower development for tourism industry in Sri Lanka, major challenges in meeting the industry requirements are as follows:

- i. Increasing trained and skilled manpower with high quality and good customer-care attitudes within a short time period.
- ii. Meeting the demand for trained manpower by the industry with changing and churning due to the improvement of various new fields or segments in tourism and hotel management (such as spa management, event management, ecotourism, health and wellness tourism etc).
- iii. Poor tendency of the youth to engage with tourism employment.
- iv. Poor participation of women in tourism employment due to negative

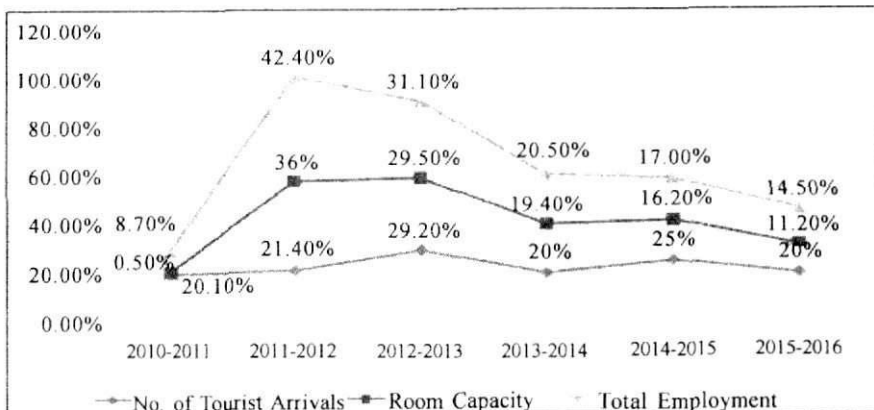


Figure 3: Growth rates of tourist arrivals, accommodation facilities, and employment

Source: Author's Calculation from Way Forward Report of SLTDA, 2010

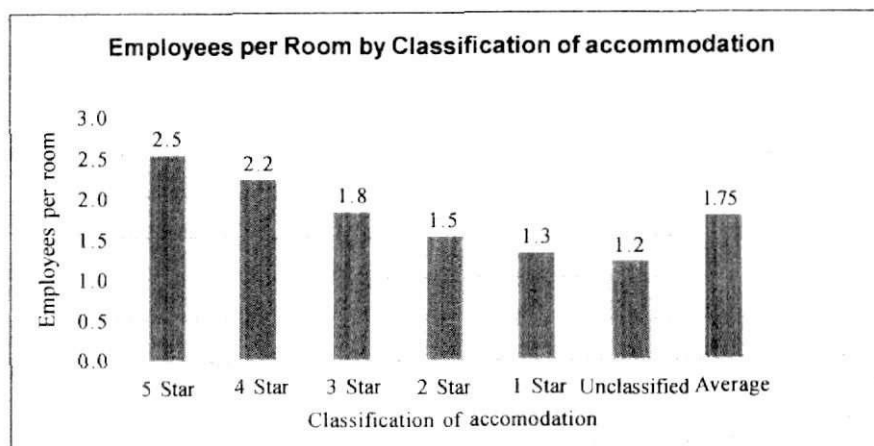


Figure 4: Employees per room by the type of accommodation

Source: Author's calculations from a Market Survey conducted by SLITHM

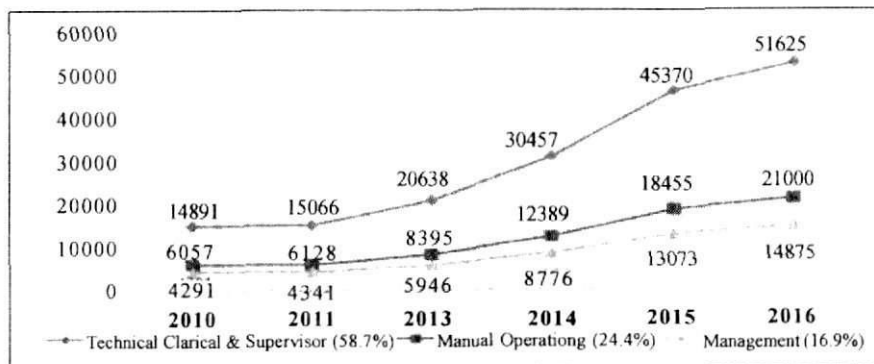


Figure 5: Manpower requirements by different categories

Source: Way Forward, SLTDA 2010.

response and attitudes by many parts of Sri Lankan societies (SLITHM Survey, 2010).

v. Language and other technical barriers to get employed in tourism industry (e.g. young and teenagers are highly demanded by the industry).

vi. Lack of awareness of tourism operation.

vii. High demand for low-paid and low-skilled jobs.

viii. Highly seasonality and temporary basis of employment.

ix. Lack of private sector investments for hotel school services.

x. Lack of trained trainers for training manpower tourism industry.

xi. Emigration of skill manpower.

xii. Tendency of shifting educationalists to practitioners in the industry.

Possible Strategies for Manpower Development of Tourism Industry in Sri Lanka

Tourism being a highly labour-intensive and 'people-centric' industry, friendly, efficient and professional services are essential ingredients for tourism development in any country. Many tourist destinations in the world are presently facing greater challenges, often suffering from a lack of well-trained staff and a lack of locally-available training resources. This has adversely affected product quality, product consistency, and service standards of man power in travel, tourism and hospitality industry.

As the number of international visitors increase, the tourism sector must have even better skilled manpower and professionals to meet, ever-increasing demands in newly-emerging in global tourism. Therefore, the rapid development of a skilled workforce, capable of sustaining high levels of service and competency is crucial to the long-term viability of development of Sri Lanka Tourism.

The major challenge ahead before the tourism Industry in Sri Lanka is to bridge the gap of demand and supply of skilled workforce through attracting and retaining the talented skill to serve the industry.

Sri Lankan tourism industry still lacks the competent professionals. Education and training institutions have not yet been able to produce

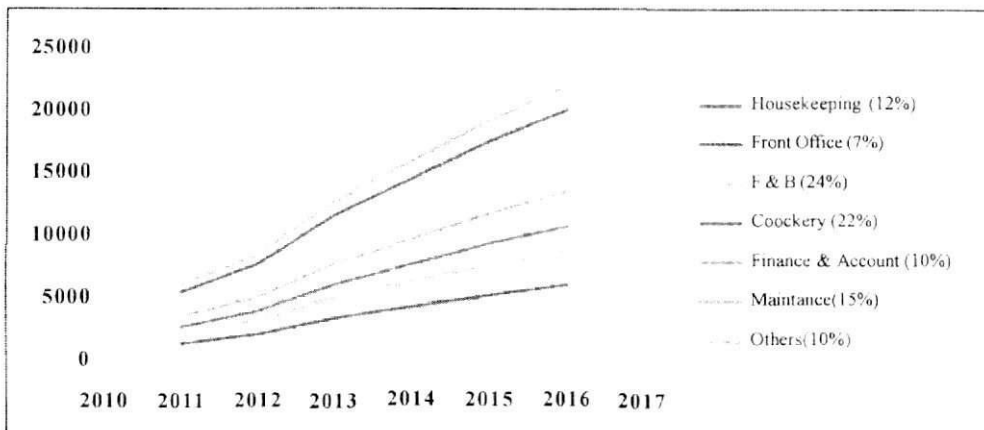


Figure 6: Manpower requirements by different departments of the hotel industry

Source: Way Forward, SLTDA 2010.

professionals to meet the industry needs.

To become one of the most sought destinations in the world, well-trained manpower is a vital requirement. This can provide much valuable guarantee for taking Sri Lanka to global heights of keeping the excellence in Sri Lankan hospitality.

Human Resource development programs must be established without delay for Sri Lankan tourism development. Some suggestions in this regard are:

i. Elevating the present tourism education programmes of Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism Hotel

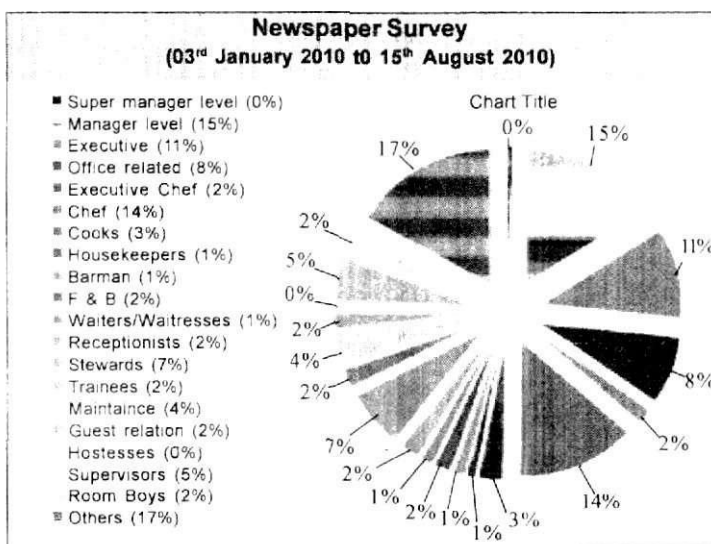


Figure 7: Demand for different job categories in the hotel industry of Sri Lanka

Management (SLITHM), which is the prime national training institute established in 1966 for manpower training of tourism and hotel industry in Sri Lanka (www.slith.edu.lk), and other related organisations and universities to meet the global standards through curriculum development and periodic revision of training methodology.

Table 6: Required National and Chauffer Guides, 2010-2016

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Arrivals (Total)	447,890	575,000	700,000	910,000	1,183,000	1,537,900	1,999,270	2,500,000
Arrival growth rates			20.1%	21.4%	29.2%	20%	25%	20%
Required No. of Guides		1,198	1,458	1,896	2,465	3,204	4,165	5,208

ii. Developing new tourism education programmes to cater to industry's emerging demands by addressing the local and global tourism industry's human resource requirements.

iii. Opening the more equal opportunities and fare share for all segments of the societies in Sri Lanka.

iv. Achieving wider expansion for tourism and hospitality training, developing partnership, collaboration and coordination with private and public sector organisations.

v. Promoting private sector-managed educational institutions while providing necessary national guidelines and monitoring.

vi. In addition to normal teaching methods, online learning such as E- and M-learning methods should be developed.

vii. International, regional and national co-branding while improving product quality and establish educational standards through international accreditation and awards (e.g., Tourism Educational Qualification approved by WTO).

viii. Introducing national-level training and awareness programmes for Sri Lankan youth while developing positive attitudes to get engaged them with tourism employment. Some of the highly-demanding training areas are Front Office Operation, Professional Cookery and Culinary Arts, Food & Beverages, House Keeping, Travel & Tourism, Pastry and Bakery, Tour Guiding, MICE and Event Management, Community Based Tourism, Spa & Leisure Tourism, Human Resource Management, Tourism Marketing and Advertising, Agro-tourism, Language Training and so on.

viii. Including tourism and hospitality management as a subject for school curricula.

Conclusion

Tourism is currently one of the world's largest industries. In Sri Lanka, it is one of the growing industries, with the prevailing harmony in the Island. Tourism industry generates employment for a large segment in the population, branching to formal and informal, direct and indirect, skilled and unskilled, seasonal and regular, etc.

Moreover, with the rapid globalisation and the conditions favourable to Sri Lanka after cessation of terrorism, there are many opportunities in Sri Lanka Tourism development. Hence, our expectation by the year of 2016 is about 2.5 million tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka. To fulfil this demand, new strategies need to be formulated and policy reforms have to be implemented. To achieve these goals, present tourism education programs and curriculum development and periodic revision of training methodologies have to be undertaken. Regional educational centres should be established to intake rural talents, they should be updated with language proficiency and modern e-learning, new technological tools needed for the tourist industry. One of the major constraints in this context is lack of training facilities for manpower development in Sri Lanka. SLITHM, the primer national institute for manpower training for tourism and hotel industry, with its five provincial colleges (Ratnapura, Kandy, Bandarawela, Koggala and Anuradapura) is using its maximum potential to meet the future challenges in manpower requirement of Sri Lanka tourism development. However, it is noteworthy to mention that still

private sector has not paid sufficient attempt to train the required manpower for tourism industry. It must take the leadership in this national requirement as the tourism industry itself is largely driven by the private sector and through its innovative product development. The tourism training programmes related employment should be coupled with the identification of gaps in planning, provision, positioning and marketing of tourism products towards 2.5 million tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka by 2016.

Furthermore, tourism is a multi-dimensional product. It inherently seeks multi-stakeholders participation to satisfy tourists' expectations. Therefore, it is essential that all wings of the government (including all national universities and technical colleges), private sector and voluntary organisations should become active and responsible partners in the endeavour of developing a well focused, competent, committed trained manpower for Sri Lanka tourism development.

Special attention is also required for increasing the employment of women in the tourism industry. Employers should set up programs and schemes to encourage women to move into non-traditional occupations, invest in women's training, appoint them in managerial positions, and re-appoint them after years of diminished involvement due to family responsibilities.

Under Mahinda Chintana Development Framework, Sri Lanka must be an educational hub for Asia. This target can be achievable if a proper manpower training system is developed for tourism

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industry. Most of South-Asian countries will be attracted for such training programmes in near future.

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