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Srilankan Tourism (SLT): A Forecast of Foreign Tourists (FFT)

By Ismail, M.B.M, Velnampy.T & Mustafa, A.M.M

South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Ouvil

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Keywords : *Srilankan Tourism, Forecast.*

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Srilankan Tourism (SLT): A Forecast of Foreign Tourists (FFT)

Ismail, M.B.M^α, Velnampy.T^σ & Mustafa, A.M.M^ρ

Abstract - Tourism has become a popular global leisure activity. Srilankan tourism has beaches, Archeological Sites, National Parks, Elephants, Adventure Sports and Precious stone mining. Sri Lanka has 39 tourist attractions all over the island. The International media reports published about the improvements in tourism industry of January 2008 by 0.6%, March 2008 by 8.6% when comparing to last year's (2007) figures. The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami and the past civil war have reduced tourist arrivals but Sri Lanka received over half a million tourists in 2006. Number of tourists' arrival was 559600 in the year 2006. From secondary data analysis and literature review, research problem exists on two important variables such as period (year) and tourist (number of tourists' arrivals to Sri Lanka). Objectives of this research are to know the relationship between years and number of tourists' arrivals and to forecast number of tourist arrivals during the next five years. Target population are those who visit to Sri Lanka as foreign tourist. Number of foreign tourists is known from secondary data. Since the study involved entire target population there was no need to select sample of foreign tourists visiting Sri Lanka. Researcher concentrated on all foreign tourists as a target population study. Data were collected using secondary source. SPSS with the version of 16.0 and Excell 2007 were used as an analytical tool for data presentation & analysis. Scatter plot showed that number of tourists who visited to Sri Lanka have increased from early 2001 to 2004. There were a slight declined number of tourists in the year 2005 than year 2004. A further decline started from 2006 to 2008. Number of tourists increased from 2009 onwards. Minimum and maximum tourists who visited to Sri Lanka were 336800 and 654477 during the last decade. Totally, 5,340,977 tourists have arrived Sri Lanka. 486,000 tourists have come to Sri Lanka on an average basis. Pearson Correlation indicates the value of 0.594. This refers to number of tourist increases from 2000 to 2011. A three year simple moving average was calculated for finding the forecasted data from 2011 to 2015. Forecasted number of tourists' arrivals (Dt) during 2011 to 2015 would be more than 510, 000. It would be a positive sign for the growth of tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Peace has helped in increasing number of tourists' arrivals during the last decade. Since forecasted number of tourists' arrivals (Dt) shows a bonafide. Policy makers have to make much more popular Srilankan Tourism for attracting foreign tourists by international promotion along with local infrastructure developments so as to achieve the goal set by His Excellency.

Author α : Senior Lecturer in Management, Department of Management, Faculty of Management & Commerce, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. E-mail : Ouvil, mbmismail@seu.ac.lk

Author σ : Professor and Dean/Management Studies & Commerce, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka. E-mail : tvnampy@yahoo.co.in

Author ρ : Senior Lecturer in Management, Department of Management, Faculty of Management & Commerce, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Ouvil. E-mail : mustafa@seu.ac.lk

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I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is travel for recreational, leisure or business purposes. Tourism has become a popular global leisure activity. Tourism industry should be redefined as an export commodity and should be given equal status of export development incentives and inducement, since tourism earns much needed foreign currency for the country, thus induce greater investment in the industry (Source: <http://www.tops.lk>). In 2008, there were over 922 million international tourist arrivals, with a growth of 1.9 percent as compared to 2007. International tourism receipts grew to US\$ 944 billion (Euro 642 billion) in 2008, corresponding to an increase in real terms of 1.8 percent. As a result of the late-2000s recession, international travel demand suffered a strong slow down beginning in June 2008, with growth in international tourism arrivals worldwide falling to 2 percent during the boreal summer months. This negative trend intensified during 2009, exacerbated in some countries due to the outbreak of the H1N1 influenza virus, resulting in a worldwide decline of 4 percent in 2009 to 880 million international tourists' arrivals, and an estimated 6 percent decline in international tourism receipts. Sri Lanka Tourism Authority Chairman, Dr. NalakaGodahewa and Sri Lanka Tourism Bureau Managing Director, MalrajKiriella were welcoming the 600,000 tourist coming to the island who is Mr. Nick Davis, the Chief Executive Officer of Merchant Maritime Welfare Centre of the United Kingdom and his partner LaylaDayani at the Bandaranaike International Airport. A religious ceremony was held on this occasion to mark the second term in office and Dr. NalakaGodahewa, Chairman Sri Lanka Tourism addressed all staff present and requested for their fullest corporation to work towards achieving H.E. the President Rajapake's goal of achieving 2.5 million tourists by the year 2016 (Source: www.sltda.gov.lk). This research is organized into outline of Srilankan tourism, statement of the problem, research gap, research question, research objectives, significance of the research, literature review, research framework, operationalization, research design & methodology - RDM-, data presentation & analysis -DPA-, findings and conclusions, limitations and avenues for future research, policy implications, originality and references.

Outline of Srilankan Tourism: The top international destinations in 2009 are, out of a global total of 903 million tourists in 2007, there are the 58 most visited, as of June 2008. A large majority of tourists come from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Germany, France, Maldives, Japan, The People's Republic of China, and India. In addition to above mixed (culture and nature) sites the ancient cultural site of SeruwilaMangala Raja MahaVihar at the village of Toppur, KoddiyarPattu of Trincomalee District of Eastern Province of Sri Lanka was submitted to UNESCO by the government of Sri Lanka on 30 October 2006. Srilankan tourism has beaches, Archeological Sites, National Parks, Elephants, Adventure Sports and Precious stone mining. Sri Lanka has 39 tourist attractions all over the island. They are Anuradhapura, Arugam Bay, Adam's Peak , Batticaloa, Bentota, Beruwala, Bundala National Park, Colombo, Dambulla, Ella, Galle, Hambantota, Hikkaduwa, Horton Plains, Jaffna, Kalkudah, Kalpitiya, Kandy, Katunayake, Kitulgala, Knuckles Range, Mannar, Matara, Minneriya, Negombo, Nilaveli, NuwaraEliya, Pasikudah, Pinnawela, Polonnaruwa, Puttalam, Ratnapura, Sigiriya, Sinharaja, Trincomalee, Unawatuna, Weligama, Wilpattu National Park and Yala National Park. Today, Sri Lanka offers leisure and business travellers a spectrum of attractions. The commercial cities, Colombo, Kurunegala and Kandy offer business travellers an array of business opportunities and trade options. The sandy white beaches and attractive underwater life that surrounds the island, gives its visitors a chance to unwind and relax in a warm and comfortable setting. The beautiful rain forests, mountain ranges and scenic plantations can be visited within a few hours (approx. 4-5 hours travel time), and visitors can also visit the wildlife sanctuaries that are located in this small miracle.

Statement of the Problem: The International media reports published about the improvements in tourism industry of January 2008 by 0.6%,[13] March 2008 by 8.6%[14] when comparing to last year's (2007) figures. The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami[11] and the past civil war have reduced tourist arrivals but Sri Lanka received over half a million tourists in 2006.[12] Number

of tourists' arrival was 559600 in the year 2006 (Source: www.sltda.gov.lk/statistics accessed on 24. 08. 2011). Tourist arrivals have been gradually picking up at a healthy pace. In the first three months of 2010 tourist arrivals increased by 50.3 percent over the corresponding period in 2009. The Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) described that the first three months as quite positive for tourism with arrival standing at 160,409 while tourism earning for the same period increased by 69 percent to US\$141.2 million compared to US\$ 83.3 million last year. This is definitely an indication of potential accrual of higher yields in the industry. Tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka reached a new high in 2010 registering a growth of 46.15 % to 654,476 arrivals from the previous year's figures of 447,890. In absolute terms, this amounted to an increase of 206,586 tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka during one single year, which is again unprecedented in the history of tourism in Sri Lanka. Tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka surged to 67.7%, approximately 57,300 arrivals, in February 2010, as compared to 447,890 in 2009 and 44,551 in 2008. Moreover, there has been a steep increase of visitors, namely from India, the United Kingdom, and Germany. In February 2010, visitors from India rose 94.9% (8,383 arrivals), the UK to 46.3% (10,703 arrivals), and Germany to 121.9% (5,656 arrivals). In addition, visitors from Western Europe rose 71.7%, Pakistan up to 34.4% (609), and Japan 50.6% (1,306). This increase is further reflected in the hotel industry, with hotels reporting booked rooms until at least the end of March. This is a positive outlook for Sri Lanka Tourism, one which will bring new opportunities for product development and employment generation. Tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka during the period of January to November was 497,598 a 43.5% marked increase over the same period of last year. It exceeds the last year 's total arrival of 447,890 tourists to Sri Lanka. The total estimated arrival of tourists for this year is 600,000. India continues to be the highest generator of tourists to Sri Lanka this year too. During the month of October this year, tourist arrivals from India were 13,237 an increase of 43.6 % as against October last year.

Research Gap

Task	Example	Symptoms	Year	Nation- wide	Source/Reference
Secondary data	Website	Increased number of tourists	2010 (654,476)	Sri Lanka	www.sltda.gov.lk
Secondary data	The international media report	Improvements in tourism industry	2008 (8.6 %)	Worldwide	12
		Reduced tourists' arrivals due to Indian Ocean Tsunami &the past civil war	2004	-do-	13
		Number of tourists' arrival	2006 (559, 600)	Sri Lanka	14

Table 1 : Research gap

II. RESEARCH QUESTION

From secondary data analysis and literature review, research problem exists on two important variables such as period (year) and tourists (number of tourists' arrivals) to Sri Lanka. Researcher raises "is there relationship between year and number of tourists arrivals"?

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

From the above two research questions, researcher sets two objectives for the study. Objectives of this study are to:

1. know the relationship between years and number of tourists arrivals
2. forecast number of tourist arrivals during the next five years

IV. SIGNIFICANCES OF THE RESEARCH

This research signifies in several ways such as tourism establishments, increased performance of Sri Lanka Tourism, attraction of merchants and explorers, profitability, high demand for hotel rooms, increased foreign exchange earnings, development of hotel infrastructure & increased workforce. The Sri Lankan Government together with the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) is committed to the development and growth of the local tourism industry. The country's Board of Investment (BOI) offer potential foreign investors lucrative incentives to start up with tourism establishments. The performance of Sri Lanka Tourism in terms of tourist arrivals, foreign exchange earnings, creation of employment opportunities and hotel: occupancy rates is assessed and reported, regularly (Source: Sri Lanka Tourism-Colombo). Sri Lanka is an island to be explored and wondered. Discover its natural beauty and uniqueness so you may enjoy an experience of a lifetime. Sri Lanka has always been a tourist destination. In the past, due to its strategic location, Sri Lanka attracted many merchants and explorers. An overall annual hotel room occupancy rate increased too to an unprecedented level of 70.1 % from the 48.4 % occupancy rate. In US dollar terms, this amounted to an earnings figure of US \$ 497.4 million in 2010 as compared to US \$ 326.3 million in the previous year; an increase by 52.4 %. Thus, tourism in Sri Lanka was able to regain its position in 2010 as the fourth highest in terms of foreign exchange earnings that was coming into the country. The service sector is the largest of the Sri Lanka economy, employing 45 percent of the workforce and contributing roughly 60 percent of GDP. Tourism, banking, finance and retail trade are the major components of the service sector (Source: HSBC Economic update -2009 report

V. LITERATURE SURVEY

Foreign visitor opinion and expenditure survey was conducted to know the foreign visitor opinion and expenditure which was carried out at the departure lounge of the Bandaranaike International Airport on departing foreign tourists and transit passengers which commenced in September 2008 (Source: Sri Lanka Tourist Development Authority). Jill Crawshaw, a travel writer for The Times, quotes Marco Polo's description of Sri Lanka as a "jade pendant in the Indian Ocean". Crawshaw and Lyn Hughes, Editor of Wanderlust Magazine, highlight the number of products offered by the island; beaches, wildlife, historical places, world heritage sites, forests, waterfalls, and river rafting (Source: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-WfXSacm84&feature=youtube_gdata to see a clip from the National Geographical Channel). The Domestic Tourism and Resort Management Division of the SLTDA organized a training program for facilitators on October 11th and 12th, 2009. The program was held at the Suisse Hotel Kandy with 120 participants in attendance. Lectures delivered toward on 'Tourism: Past, Present, and Future' by Mr. U.P.S. Pathirana, Former Director, SLTDA; 'Impacts of Tourism' by Mr. P.U. Rathnayaka, Director DTD & RM, SLTDA; 'Personality Building and Positive Attitude' by Mr. W.P. Dayarthne, Former DIG, Sri Lanka Police; 'Role of the Tourist Police' by Mr. NayanapriyaEdirisinghe, OIC, Sri Lanka Tourist Police & 'Combating Child Sex Tourism in Sri Lanka' by Mr. DheeraHettiarachchi, SLTDA. School awareness programs were organized in Galle and Kandy with lectures delivered by the Domestic Tourism and Resort Management Division of the SLTDA in 2009. Lecturer were on 'Tourism: Past, Present, and Future' – Mr. P.U. Rathnayaka, Director DTD&RM, SLTDA & 'Learn to Travel – Travel to Learn' – Mr. DheeraHettiarachchi, SLTDA. Optimizing è Future 2009 – Sri Lanka's first Online Marketing Conference was organized by eMarketingEye. A tourist visitor survey was conducted by the Research Division of the SLTDA in Kandy during EsalaPerahera Session during the 1st week of August 2009.

VI. RESEARCH FRAMEWOR

This research was approached in two vital ways such as empirical evidences and previous literatures. Two variables have been identified such as period and Tourists.

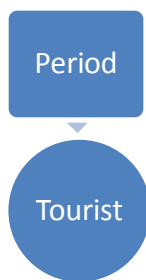


Exhibit 1 : Research framework

VII. OPERATIONALIZATION

The World Tourism rankings are compiled by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as part of their World Tourism Barometer publication. In the publication World tourism is ranked both by number of visits and by tourism revenue generated.

Construct/ Variable	Indicator	Measures
Dependent	Tourist	Number of tourist arrivals
Independent	Period	Year

Table 2 : Operationalization

VIII. RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

a) Exploratory research design (ERD) and causal research design (CRD)

Research is designed by exploratory research design (ERD) and causal research design (CRD). Research problem is qualitative in nature. In order to state research problem, researcher used a secondary data and brief literature review. This qualitative research problem was quantified using conclusive research design. Causal research has been designed to know the relationship between two variables.

b) Population & sample

Population refers to target population. Target population are those who visit to as foreign tourist to Sri Lanka. Number of foreign tourists is unknown. It is easy to gather actual and updated number of foreign tourists o visit to Sri Lanka. Sampling frame or list of local tourist

is not accessible. But, researcher had access to collect the number of tourist to Sri Lanka. Since the study involved entire target population there was no need to select sample foreign tourist visiting Sri Lanka. Due to this situation, researcher has no need to select sample size and sampling technique. Therefore, researcher concentrated on all number of foreign tourists as a target population study.

c) Data collection method

Data were collected using secondary source. Collected secondary data is tabulated below with source.

Year	Tourist arrival to Sri Lanka
2000	400410
01	336800
02	393170
03	500640
04	566200
05	549310
06	559600
07	494010
08	438470
09	447890
10	654477

www.sltda.gov.lk/statistics accessed on 24. 08. 2011
Source: Sri Lanka tourism

Table 3 : Tourist arrival to Sri Lanka

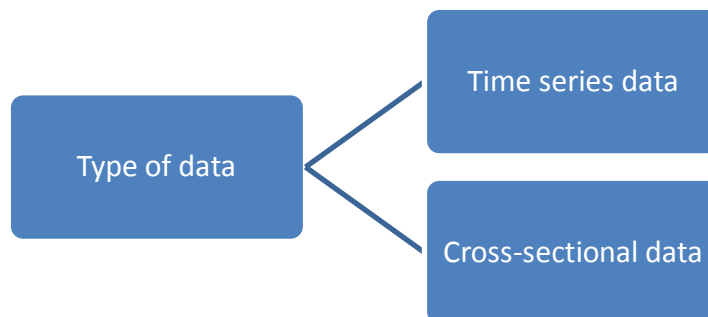


Exhibit 2 : Types of data



Tourists to Sri Lanka are time series data. Time series data are observations on a variable of a given population over time. Population is tourists to Sri Lanka from all parts of the world. Frequency of data refers to data are collected annually. Data have been recorded in order starting from 2000 to 2010.

IX. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Objective Number	Objective	Data presentation	Data analysis
1	To know the relationship between years and number of tourists arrivals	Scatter Plot Line graph	Descriptive statistics Pearson Correlation Simple regression
2	To forecast number of tourist arrivals during the next five years	Scatter Plot Line graph	Descriptive statistics Pearson Correlation Simple regression

Table 4 : Data presentation and analysis -DPA-

Data presentation & analysis: SPSS (SPSS) with the version of 16.0 and Excell having the version of 2007 were used for analytical tools.

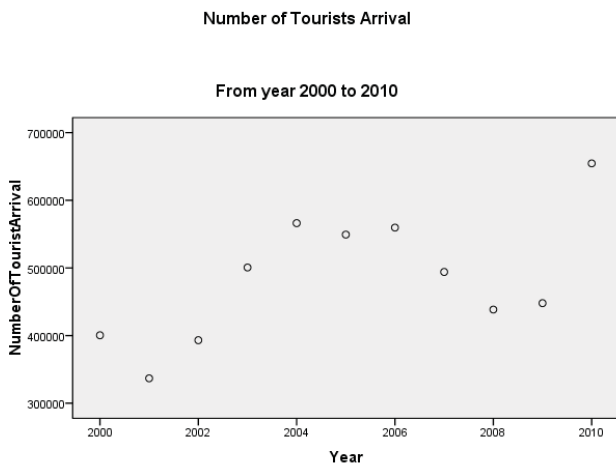


Exhibit 3 : Scatter plot for number of tourists' arrival (2000 to 2010)

a) Descriptive statistics

Minimum and maximum tourists who visited to Sri Lanka are 336800 and 654477. Totally, 5,340,977 tourists have arrived Sri Lanka during the last decade. 486,000 tourists have come to Sri Lanka on an average basis.

Correlation s

		Year	Number Of Tourist Arrival
Year	Pearson Correlation	1	.594
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.054
	N	11	11
Number Of Tourist Arrival	Pearson Correlation	.594	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.054	
	N	11	11

Table 5 : Pearson Correlation

Pearson Correlation indicates 0.594 between the year and number of tourists who visited to Sri Lanka. This refers to number of tourist increases from 2000 to 2011.

b) Hypotheses testing using Pearson Correlation test

Null hypothesis: Year is not related to number of tourists visited to Sri Lanka i.e (H0: p = 0)

Alternative hypothesis: Year is related to number of tourists visited to Sri Lanka i.e (H1: p ≠ 0)

Test Statistics Calculated should be greater than the Critical Value of Test Statistics Calculated. In other words, Sig. (p) value should be less than significance value. P value is 0.054. Significance value is 0.05. Since p value is less than 0.05. Researcher rejects Ho and accepts alternative one. This indicates that Year is related to number of tourists visited to Sri Lanka. This refers to number of tourist increases from 2000 to 2011. Hypotheses testing using regression t test & F test also revealed the same results.

Forecasting

Year	Number of Tourist Arrivals (D)	3 Year simple smoothing – step one- (S1)	3 Year simple smoothing – step two- (S2)	3 Year simple smoothing –step three- (S3)	3 Year simple smoothing –step four- (S4)	3 Year simple smoothing –step five- (S5)	Method	Final forecast
2000	400410							
2001	336800							
2002	393170							
2003	500640	396793						
2004	566200	410203						

2005	549310	486670					
2006	559600	538716	431222				
2007	494010	558370	478530				
2008	438470	534307	527919				
2009	447890	497360	543798	497223			
2010	654477	460123	530012	516749			
2011		513612	497263	533910		$(S1 + S2 + S3) / 3$	514928
2012			490365	523691	515961	$(S2 + S3 + S4) / 3$	510006
2013				505880	524783	$(S3 + S4) / 2$	515332
2014					521160	S4	521160
2015						S5	520635

Table 6 : Forecasting

3 year simple moving average was calculated for finding the forecasted data from 2011 to 2015. It has been done in five steps. Actual data from year 2000 to 2010 have been used to find out for first step tourist forecasting. Forecasted data from 2003 to 2011 have been used to find out second step tourists forecasting. Latter has been processed until the year 2015.

year 2004. A further decline starts from 2006 to 2008. Increase starts from 2009 onwards.

Descriptive statistics : Minimum and maximum tourists who visited to Sri Lanka are 336800 and 654477. Totally, 5,340,977 tourists have arrived Sri Lanka during the last decade. 486,000 tourists have come to Sri Lanka on an average basis.

Data analysis using Pearson Correlation : Pearson Correlation indicates 0.594 between the year and number of tourists who visited to Sri Lanka. This refers to number of tourist increases from 2000 to 2011.

Hypotheses testing using Pearson Correlation test : Test Statistics Calculated should be greater than the Critical Value of Test Statistics Calculated. In other words, Sig. (p) value should be less than significance value. P value is 0.054. Significance value is 0.05. Since p value is less than 0.05. Researcher rejects Ho and accepts alternative one. This indicates that Year is related to number of tourists visited to Sri Lanka. This refers to number of tourist increases from 2000 to 2011. Hypotheses testing using regression t test & Hypotheses testing using F test also reveals the same results as at the correlation hypotheses tests.

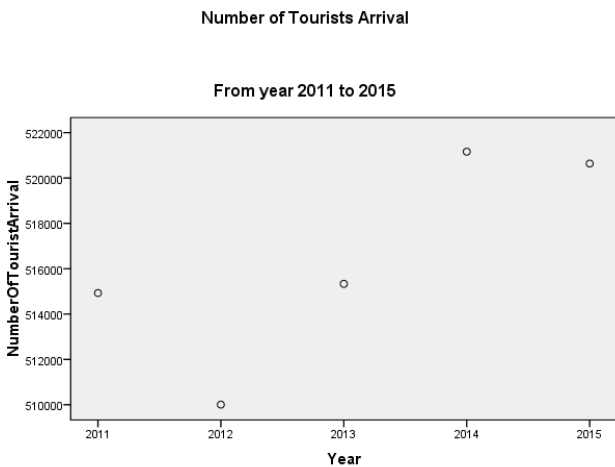


Exhibit 4 : Scatter plot for number of tourist arrival (2011 to 2015)

c) Descriptive statistics

Minimum and maximum tourists who visit to Sri Lanka would be between 510006 to 521160. Totally, 2,582, 061 tourists will have to arrive at Sri Lanka within next five years of the time (2011 to 2015). There would be potentiality of 516,000 tourists who would arrive to Sri Lanka on an average basis.

Objective two : to forecast number of tourist arrivals during the next five years

Forecasting : 3 year simple moving average was calculated for finding the forecasted data from 2011 to 2015. It has been done in five steps. Actual data from year 2000 to 2010 have been used to find out for first step tourist forecasting. Forecasted data from 2003 to 2011 have been used to find out second step tourists forecasting. Latter has been processed until the year 2015. Forecasted number of tourist arrivals (Dt) during 2011 to 2015 would be more than 510, 000. It would be a positive sign for the growth of tourism industry in Sri Lanka.

X. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Objective one : to know the relationship between years and number of tourists' arrivals

Scatter Plot : It shows that number of tourists who visited to Sri Lanka have increased from early 2001 to 2004. There is a slight decline in the year 2005 than

XI. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Objective one : to know the relationship between years and number of tourists' arrivals

Totally, 5,340,977 tourists have arrived Sri Lanka during the last decade. 486,000 tourists have come to Sri Lanka on an average basis. Pearson Correlation indicates 0.594 between the year and number of tourists who visited to Sri Lanka. This refers to number of tourist increases from 2000 to 2011. Peace has helped in increasing number of tourists' arrivals during the last decade.

Objective two : to forecast number of tourist arrivals during the next five years

Forecasted number of tourist arrivals (Dt) during 2011 to 2015 would be more than 510, 000. It is a positive sign for the growth of tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Totally, 2,582, 061 tourists would arrive at Sri Lanka within next five years of the time (2011 to 2015). Policy makers have to make much more popular Sri Lanka for attracting tourist by international promotion and infrastructure development for tourism so as to achieve the goal set by His Excellency.

Limitations and future research avenues :

Number of tourist arrival during next five years has been forecasted. Forecasted number would be more than 510, 000 tourist arrivals. This figure would be higher than in future. Researcher allows other researchers to improve this research area further.

Originality : Secondary data are used to forecast the number of tourists' arrivals. Two regression models have been generated using 10 year actual data and 5 year forecast in tourism industry of Sri Lanka.

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