

TOURISM AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION; SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE HEELOYA COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

Since ancient times man has used to lead a nomadic life. They wandered from place to place looking for food, shelter and then for trade or war. Later man used to lead a settled life. But man continued to travel for pleasure, to visit other countries as well. Tourism started as an industry when Thomas Cook introduced it in 1841. Now this has become the world's biggest profitable industry. Therefore, most of the countries have focused their attention towards tourism. This research tries to examine the impact of tourism on poverty alleviation. Questionnaires were used to collect data. By means of graphs, chart and grid data has been depicted. Results of the analysis reveal that tourism positively impact on poverty alleviation in Heeloya Community.

Keywords: Poverty Alleviation, Tourism, Heeloya Community

Introduction

In Sri Lanka, tourism is the third largest export earner in the economy, after remittances and textiles and garments. In the past five years, growth in visitor numbers has been unprecedented, averaging more than 22% year on year, of which 80% to 90% was visitors coming to Sri Lanka on holiday. In 2015, 1.8 million international visitors came to Sri Lanka, stayed an average of 10.1 days, and generated an estimated us\$2.98 billion¹. In 2016, international visitor arrivals reached over 2 million and revenue generated was approximately us\$3.5 billion². Therefore it is essential for the health and sustainability of the country community that new cash is consistently introduced to the economy to replace cash spent outside the community by residents and businesses, to offset inflation, and to provide for the needs and increasing expectations of a growing population. Tourism presently offers the most significant opportunity to introduce new cash to the country. Policy Makers belief that tourism is the most important industry in local and national economy and that without it the community would be unable to sustain its lifestyle or vitality. Businesses would fail. The population would decline and unemployment would increase as jobs would not be available elsewhere in Heeloya Community. Tourism is thus an economic driver. It provides money to fuel the economy and it supports and sustains the values and lifestyle of a country residents and businesspeople. This is vitally important as Heeloya strive to adjust to new economic realities And its population seeks jobs and income from new sources. Visitors come tour countries, they spend money, and they leave. As the visitors spend their money, they facilitate the opportunity for our countries to put in place the infrastructure, opportunities, and services that makes the country lifestyle so attractive to the local population. The proceeds of visitor spending provide revenue and create opportunities for existing and new businesses. This process generates new employment, which is essential to accommodate the growing population. The tourism employees and tourism businesses spend money in the community. Tourism is a fiber of Heeloya that is woven throughout the lifestyle and economy of the community and its population. It contributes to incubating other business sectors that are targeted for growth and also Helloya is the best tourist destination among the other tourist destinations in the Sri Lanka. Many of tourist come in heeloya Village for Tourist Activities. There for This research examined the "how to impact tourism for poverty alleviation in Heeloya Community" Panoramic small village Heeloya, is situated in Dumbara Valley a famous luxuriant land extent in ancient Up Country. Dumbara Valley was the most attracted by the king since this valley covered by green forests and encircled with Green Mountain with green mountains was the best defensive area for kingdoms. The fertile soil of the valley is miraculous Oasis for agricultural lively hood of the nation. This village in fertile Dumbara valley is surrounded by range of mountains has resource full aqueous deep valleys and cascading waterfalls for paddy cultivation. Which can be easily access and a place where foreign and local tourist can be experienced the authentic Sri Lankan up country traditional resources. Resource full village consist of Actual terraced green paddy fields in the mountain slops, waterfall, Aquatic and terrestrial Wild life, Traditional Industries, chena Cultivation, Mountains, heritage sites, Irrigations system, Food culture, Rituals, Folk Music and dances, Ancient Agriculture practices,

equipment, rituals, herbal pesticides, pest management, Seasonal food and food preservation methods, environmental friendly life style.

Literature Survey

International tourism is of very much importance because it brings foreign exchange for the third world countries. In addition there are direct and indirect profits. Presently every country seeks the possibility how tourism industry can be adapted to long lasting development (Tao & Wall; 2010) Most of the countries have focused their attention towards tourism. World gross production growth rate was 2.9 per annum from 1990-2010. It was 3.2 % from 2000-2008 International tourist arrival is 3.7% the received income was 6.3% more. (Agarwal; 2010) .This indicates tourist expenditure rises day by day. Most of the countries have understood the inter relationship of the tourism and the growth rate of economy. Therefore they have adopted strategic devices to promote tourism. Due to the tourist industry local products, i.e. cottage industries, handicrafts are improved. Aramberri (2009) grouped the countries into four divisions measuring the contributory percentage of tourism. Namely they are,

- **Highest contribution (Top producer) Maldives Island too are included in this.**
- **Successfully developers.**
- **Developed Countries.**
 - a) Rising Stars (Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia etc.)
 - b) Rising & Falling (Sri Lanka, Nepal)
- **Laggards**
 - a) Contribution to the Gross national products 8-6.6% (Philippine, Russian, Vietnam, Mexico,)
 - b) Less contributes to gross national products.6.6%(South Africa, Pakistan)
(Argawal, 2009)

Statistics reveal that 9% of the world products generate in 2013 while 235 million have got employments. It has been forecast that by 2019 there will be 266 million job opportunities. The contribution made in 2013 was 3.2. (Silva; 2012)It is therefore impossible to find a country where there is no tourism Industry. In ancient tourism was in a very small scale. In 1966 parliamentary act no 10, 1996 established Tourist Board. Thereafter little by little tourism deeply rooted in Sri Lanka and now it has gone a long way.

Methodology

This research was done to find out how to impact Tourism for Poverty Alleviation in Heeloya Community achieve the study objective. In the meantime, to enhance the ethical nature and quality of the research, several steps are taken giving details of, Study design, Study setting, study population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments, Questionnaire design, Questionnaire design, data collection, data analysis.

Study design

Cross sectional study design was used to explore “Tourism & Poverty Alleviation Special Reference to the Heeloya Community.

Study Setting

My Study setting was Heeloya Village.

Study Population

The study population was the Heeloya house holders. Inclusion criteria: Able to read and write and house holders.

Sampling procedure

Sampling procedure was 100 house holders in Heeloya Community Village.

Data Collection Instruments

The self-administered questionnaire was used as the study instrument.

Questionnaire Design

Questionnaire included education level, household size of the local people, household source of income, type of economic activity, perception of local people on tourism, gender, age and the household level of income per month.

Data Collection

The survey was taken place in a day (22nd February 2019) with in the time between 9.00 a.m.to 5.00 p.m. The questionnaire was distributed to Helloya householders setting (3.5). Before producing the questionnaire verbal consent was received.

Data Analysis

Data were entered into the Excel spread sheet and analyzed using the descriptive statistics (percentage).

Result and Discussion

Response rate was 100% to the survey. In general the results found that the most economic activities which were practiced by the population sample in the area of study mainly were occupied by the activities related with tourism sector; it was found that about 50 percent of surveyed population was employed from Eco lodge, Home stay, Cabanas, tour operators, diving centers and retailers of handcrafts. Moreover it was found that the Agriculture 35 percent teachers/civil servants were about 10 percent and others economic activities were about 5 percent that include petty business and hunting. The study revealed that about 55 percent of respondents were access the market for their agriculture products on Homestay/Eco lodge, Cabana the market for local spices to tourists were about 35 the market for their handcrafts were 10 percent. It was found that the households who were accrued their income from the tourism related activities were significance efficiency compared to those who were depended their income from others source. The result have shown that about 74 per cent of local people who were asked about the income efficiency, they said that the income from the tourism related activities were more efficiency towards the supporting their livelihood and have the significance difference with income from others sectors. Moreover others local people with 20 percent have said that income from others sectors such as agriculture, and only 6 percent said that both income from tourism related activities and income from others sectors were efficiency together. It was found that 57 percent of the local entrepreneurs got their initial capital from the support of pro poor projects in that areas, the existence of the pro poor project/programed have influenced on the growth of others local community economics sectors, however only 43 percent of local entrepreneurs got their initial capital from their own means of business formulation for the growth of other sectors.

It was found that when the surveyed population was asked about the impact of the tourism sector on the growth of the social services on that area of study, most of them have realize the positive perception on tourism sector towards the growth of others service and communities development.

The study have shown that about the 88 percent of respondents have denoted that the massive flow of the tourism investors in that area also influenced the economic and social transformation in that areas. The services which have been developed due to the existance tourism investors are; growth of the small trading, increasing of the market chain, development of communication and transportation system, accessibility of network system, availability of water supply and increasing of education level. Moreover it was found that only 22 percent have provided the negative perception on the tourism sectors towards the growth of the social services. In additional to that the local community who were aware about the idea of poverty situation in that area was about the 67.0 percent of total respondents and only 33.0 percent they don't have any idea of poverty situation in that area.

Traditional Agriculture is the main aid economic of this area. But increased the Tourism and hospitality industry most of people are referred towards this. Currently most of young people are working in Homestay, Eco lodge, Cabanas etc. It very valuable for reduce unemployment in this area and also most of women are working as receptionist as well as Gardens wardens. We can conclude the tourism industry help for the empowering for women in this area. The traditional farmer preferred to sell their agriculture products to the homestay/Cabanas, Eco lodge rather than to sell to the local people due to the higher price which they received that are subjective for the marginal change on their better livelihood of local community and also traditional farmers sell their agriculture products to the tourists. Such as: El Wee, Ma Wee, Kuru Ma Wee, Beheth Heenati (Those All include medicinal value) as well as local Yams (Buthsarana- Cana discolor) Mahatha egili Ala (Dioscorea alata) etc..Other than heeloya community selling Bee honey, Kithul honey, Toddy to the tourist. Through this process help to strong their economy. Not only most of tourist like to buy local species in this area. Tourist buy Handicrafts as a Souvenir. It helps to revival their traditional handicraft industry. Providing facilities for tourists such as: Accommodation

facilities, Food & Beverage, Accessibility facilities as same as guidance services help to earn lot of money in heeloya community.

Foreign exchange circulates through tourist as a result the government has launched various projects to promote tourism. These projects will helps to improve the facilities in this area. Such as; Accessibility, Electricity, Telecommunication, Drinking water supplies etc. This makes it possible for the local Population to enjoy all of these. This will makes their living condition better.

Conclusion

The major intention of study was assessing the contribution of tourism on poverty reduction at Heeloya. The response to the question “Perception of local community on tourism for the growth of services sectors” bring positive result 74% this means that due to tourism has a positive impact on poverty alleviation.

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