

The Future of Travel Agencies in Sri Lanka

Thashila Yohani¹

A Travel Agency is an intermediary company between the producers of products and services of travel and tourism industry. More specifically, they sell organized travel packages and provide the guests with all necessary information that are related to tourism destinations, accommodations, tourist attractions, accessibilities, amenities and transport services which facilitate greatly consumers travel planning as travel intermediaries.

There are some researches studies done about the Travel agencies related to the travel and tourism industry. However, there are no proper studies done to reveal the future of travel agency. Especially there are no researches done about the future of travel agencies in Sri Lanka. Hence, the problem of study: how will the role of travel agents change in the future. This study undertaken to identify the significant role of travel agencies in Sri Lanka and The final fact is, nowadays consumers are even better experts in many incidents than the intermediaries like travel agencies. The aim of the study is to examine and analyze the drivers for change in the travel agents and tourism professionals' point of view and at identifying development areas that will help to travel agents to be prepared for the future challenges.

Employees and consumers of a travel agency and tourism professionals were the sample of the study and sampling method was stratified sampling. The responses were selected from a special leading, registered travel agency in Colombo, Sri Lanka. There were 02 questionnaires with 30 questions and 14 interview questions from different variables asked from the sample and primary data were analyzed by using Microsoft office Excel sheets. In this study five key variables were identified to help to find employees and customers view about role of a travel agency and to investigate how it will effect for the future of travel agencies in Sri Lanka. According to the research findings, factors like role and functions, level of customer satisfaction, issues, future challenges and development areas. The study has given an insight into the understanding about development areas that will help to be prepared for the future. However, study has identified that their challenges of travel agencies in Sri Lanka and researcher mentioned that the positive view about the new trends. Finally, study has mentioned some recommendations to increase the level of travel and tourism business in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Travel Agencies, Intermediaries, Travel and Tourism Industry, Tourism

¹ University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka;thashilayohani@gmail.com