

Role of the Public Library in Promoting Tourist Information Services with a Support of Formal Online Information Service

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Abstract

The foreign industry, which is a skillfullabor business that holds the third place in the national and international economy has already, became the most prominent foreign exchange earner in the world. This study focusses to investigate the feasibility of launching an online foreign information service for tourism. It was aimed to use the public library system in order to improve the local tourist industry, which is one of the economic booms of Asian tourism. Since the study is limited in influenced public libraries of Colombo, Nuwaraeliya and Hikkaduwa maintaining an online tourist information center establishing website recognizing tourist attracting points and monuments directing the tourist community towards them and improving the information services by the use of the second generation web 2.0 on the internet. The primary data was collected by a questionnaire focusing on tree librarians of three public libraries involved in the research process and a structured questionnaire for thirty tourists ten from each of the public library domain area. The conclusion is that the three public libraries do not operate any online information service at present. It was found that adequate tourist information management is not in operation and therefore there is an acute demand and a need for tourist information management for public libraries particularly in tourist dominant areas. It is a highly requirement that the public library should conduct tourist information service for both local and foreign tourists. Building mutual relationship between tourism and libraries is a dire need. This will be beneficial for shelf- help and the cooperation between tourist industry and the public libraries. This will help marketing the information service, revealing unrecognized tourist destination and adding the foreign exchange income that flows into private institutions and multinational companies daily with proper management with a view to earn prospective national income. This will help to create more job avenues and the public libraries will become more user-friendly places with local and foreign tourists.

Keywords: *Public libraries, Tourism, Local Tourist, Tourist information, Information services*