

Impact of Seasonality in Tourism Demand in Sri Lanka

Herath Madana Bandara¹

Seasonality means the concentration of tourism demand in a certain period of time in a destination. It is the result of regular variation in natural conditions like weather and institutional factors like holidays both in generating countries and destinations. As these situations can be altered little it impacts on all aspects of supply side behavior in tourism. Therefore impact of seasonal demand is one of the dominant policy considerations. The objective of this study is to examine the impact of seasonality of tourism demand and to find some management proposals to minimize problems created by seasonality demand in Sri Lanka. The flow of overseas tourists to Sri Lanka is highly seasonal. The main season is from November-March with December being the peak month. The secondary peak is from July- August; the shoulder period is from September-October; and the low season from May-June. This situation may affect social patterns in tourism and means that residents need to make continuous adjustments. It causes under utilization of capacity of hotels and a high level of seasonal unemployment. Investment decisions, marketing, finance, stakeholder management are also affected by seasonality. Introduction of more active and special interest tourism, introduction of different price schemes for different seasons and promotion of inter regional tourism and domestic tourism are some of policy measures.

Keywords: seasonality, special interest tourism, interregional tourism, domestic tourism