

BARRIERS TO RECRUITING AND RETAINING YOUTH, INCLUDING WOMEN, TO THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN SRI LANKA



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The tourism sector in Sri Lanka demonstrates rapid growth, after suffering from a sluggish decline, resulting from a protracted war, becoming the third largest foreign exchange earner to the country. It is expected that the increase of tourist arrivals will generate approximately 613,600 direct and indirect employment opportunities by 2020.

If Sri Lanka is to develop the tourism and hospitality sector as part of its economic strategy, it needs a skilled human resource for its upkeep and maintenance, as it is a service oriented industry. The main challenge the sector faces is the retention of its skilled human resource, especially the youth and women. This research endeavours to scope the gravity of labour shortages and identify the main reasons behind the lack of motivation of potential young recruits, both men and women. Specific objectives of this report are:

- 1) To identify the position of the Hospitality Industry within the country's socio-political and economic context;
- 2) To ascertain the immediate human resource related issues faced by the industry, with special reference to the recruitment and retention of young men and women;
- 3) To provide a set of recommendations to address the human resource related issues in the context of choice, training offer, recruitment and retention.

Through the interviews conducted with industry specific stakeholders, this report aims to provide sufficient information for policy makers, planners, government and private sector to consider the underlying issues affecting the human resource they work with.

FINDINGS OF THIS REPORT

The enabling environment created by the government through physical and policy infrastructure development of the tourism sector resulted in a tourist boom in the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, after the introduction of open economic policies, the sector had to face competition in terms of demand for human resources from other growth sectors such as telecommunication, banking, construction and manufacturing that attracted both urban and rural youth. The sector faced a setback from the riots of July 1983, as Sri Lanka became unsafe, losing its skilled workers and trainers which contributed in creating a dissatisfied client, and low revenues leading to low pay. At the same time, 'job security' and retirement benefits offered by the government sector increased the expectations of the rural masses. The perception towards English language as an "invader's language" and the gradual decline of English teachers impacted on language ability, thus widening the gap between potential employees and the expansion of the hospitality sector in post war Sri Lanka. These contextual factors played a pivotal role of pushing away young men and women from deciding on a career in the hospitality sector.

Several factors affect an individual's decision to choose a career in the hospitality sector in Sri Lanka. Perception of the sector, the term hotel and degrading attitude towards certain ground-level occupations influence anyone who wants to join the sector, and are the main reasons that prevent young people entering the sector. With the noun '*hotel*' in Sri Lanka being misused, and hotels seen as alien territories for most trainees from lower middle class families, the fear and unfamiliar nature of the hotel sector has distanced locals from finding employment within the sector. With the misuse of the term, the functions of hotels too were misunderstood too. Local language newspapers have

often used harmful expressions to shame hotels as *'places of disrepute'* naming them as *'brothels'*, with popular cinema, television and radio not helping control the damage. Youth and parents alike tend to seek better titles, especially those that are acceptable and relevant. Hence, the dignity of labour in the choice of employment plays a vital role for youth trying to decide on a career.

The newly emerged lower and upper middle class families that were not directly affected by the protracted war created a space where women are controlled, re-emphasizing the sensationalised position as a 'wife of a war hero', and expecting substantial remuneration packages. This notion, inculcated in society to demean the employment opportunities in the emerging tourism and hospitality sector, restricted women from making independent choices with regard to their careers. This further stereotyped women into more governmental occupations and towards nursing and caring occupations, hindering them from entering the job market in the tourism and hospitality sector. While there is no specific data regarding sexual harassment in the workplace and whether women dropout for these reasons, our interviews found that the sector is difficult for a woman to remain in and sexual harassment at the workplace, although unspoken, is an issue, as the sector is perceived as being male dominated.

With a State-centric operational mechanism, the hospitality industry in Sri Lanka includes six subsectors: 1) **tourism governance** which is the State mechanism; 2) **hospitality** which is the centre of tourism comprised of hotels and other lodging facilities; 3) **leisure** to provide entertainment activities; 4) **tour operators** that deliver travel services; 5) **informal sector** comprised of small businesses; and 6) **skills development** sector which includes State and Non-State actors that produce necessary human resources for the sector. Although these different actors operate separately, in reality they work across boundaries, frequently complementing each other.

The State is the main vocational skills provider, and is responsible for policy development and implementation in the area of skills enhancement. The majority of key vocational educational and training institutes come under the Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training (MSDVT), and Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs (MTDCRA). The Vocational Training Authority (VTA), National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA), Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET) and National Youth Services Council (NYSC) which operate under MSDTV and Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM), which is a part of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) that comes under the MTDCRA and are the key vocational training providers in the hospitality sector. There are number of private institutions which have or have not been registered under the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC), as well as private hotel schools and in-house training provided by leading hotel chains.

The current training offer in the hospitality sector does not meet the industry standards due to the fact that these courses have failed to maintain the quality and relevance. The repercussions could be that these graduates will not be absorbed into the hospitality sector at the expected level due to poor performance, lack of qualification, lack of required skills and professionalism. When the industry discovers there is a mismatch of what the training providers produce, and what the industry expects in terms of appropriate knowledge, skills and professionalism, the industry steps in to produce the human resource they need. A discrepancy in the current training offer on hospitality is that it does not address the professionalism and interpersonal skills that a ground level employee should have.

The hospitality sector uses diverse methods to select and recruit the necessary human resource. As the hospitality sector is service oriented it looks for candidates that have a professional attitude, therefore recruitment has been low. Though educational qualifications are not a strict criterion, what matters is the right attitude of the individual. None of the hotels consulted for the research

had an employment strategy. Once they are recruited, retaining them in the sector is dependent on experience gained during the probation period, remuneration package and facilities provided, skills enhancement opportunities provided by the employer, opportunities used by the employee to enhance their skills and lastly language skills, especially English language, to enter and climb the career ladder in the industry.

CONCLUSION

It is essential to develop strategies to mobilise the labour force from the rural areas to meet the government plans for an inflow of 4.0 million tourist arrivals by year 2020, since the hospitality and tourism industry suffers from a lack of skilled human resources. To make the planned development of tourism a reality, the industry needs a workforce of specialised, skilled and semi-skilled human resources to serve people and contribute to the supply chain in the sector. Though the current vocational training offer has the potential to produce the necessary human resource, the trained human resource is prevented in entering and being retained in the sector due to the mismatch of industry demand by the skills development sector and the socio-cultural barriers of the family, community and workplace.

This report provides an in-depth analysis of some of the barriers to recruitment, employment and retention within the hospitality sector, along with recommendations that can contribute towards improving the human resource recruitment and retention.

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Hashitha Abeywardana & Inoka Priyadarshani

ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASMET	Association of Small and Medium Enterprises in Tourism Sri Lanka.
CHC	Ceylon Hotels Corporation
CHS	Ceylon Hotel School
CINEC	Colombo International Nautical and Engineering College
CoC	Chamber of Commerce
CTB	Ceylon Tourist Board
DACUM	Develop a Curriculum
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DTET	Department of Technical Education and Training
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GOSL	Government of Sri Lanka
HSBC	Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited
ICT	Information and Communication Industry
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
IT	Information Technology
JYDP	Jetwing Youth Development Project
KVTC	Kavantissa Vocational Training Centre
LOLC	Lanka Orix Leasing Company
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MSDVT	Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training
MTDCRA	Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs
NAITA	National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
NYSC	National Youth Services Council
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OJT	On the Job Training
PPP	Public Private Partnership
SLAITO	Sri Lanka Association of Inbound Tour Operators
SLITHM	Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management
SLTDA	Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority
TAASL	Travel Agents Association of Sri Lanka
TDA	Tourism Development Act
THASL	The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka
TVEC	Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission
TVET	Tertiary Vocational Education and Training
UGC	University Grants Commission
VT	Vocational Training
VTA	Vocational Training Authority
VTASL	Vocational Training Authority Sri Lanka
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Tourism Organisation

“On leaving the Island of Andaman and sailing a thousand miles, a little south of west, the traveller reaches Ceylon, which is undoubtedly the finest Island of its size in the entire world.”

MARCO POLO

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE EVOLUTION OF TOURISM IN SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka is a competitive tourist destination offering a plethora of alternatives for tourists, in terms of beaches, climate, national parks and wildlife, historic and cultural attractions, and eclectic cuisine. In post war Sri Lanka, attention on the tourism and hospitality sector increased, resulting from a record 1,798,380 tourist arrivals in 2015, a 17.8 per cent increase compared to arrivals in 2014 (SLTDA 2015). The number of tourist arrivals at the end of 2016 (2,050,832)¹ is an indication that this year's arrivals were closer to the forecasted number of 2.25 million tourists². This increase marks a significant progress in a sector that experienced a collapse, owing to a thirty year protracted conflict.

Sri Lanka has been a tourist destination for centuries due to its strategic geographical position in the Indian Ocean, located on major air and sea routes. Before international tourism commenced in the 1960s, there was domestic tourism focused mainly on religious places, on a seasonal basis. International tourism had been mainly to provide transit facilities for passengers who sailed from West to East. In 1937, the first Tourist Bureau was established to provide services to transit passengers. However, the functions of the Tourist Bureau ceased owing to World War II and, during colonial and post independent periods, there was little emphasis on tourism development as a strategy for the country's economic development, since the economy depended on three major plantation crops (tea, rubber and coconut).

With the rapid growth in international tourism (Fernando et al. 2013), in 1966 with funding from USAID, the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) developed a Ten Year Master Plan for Tourism, as a means to diversify the existing export economy and earn foreign exchange (Guruge 2009b; Guruge 2009a). Two acts were passed, namely the Tourist Board Act No. 10 of 1966 and Tourist Development Act No. 14 of 1968 (Fernando et al. 2017), which facilitated the establishment of important infrastructure, such as the Ceylon Tourist Board (CTB), the Ceylon Hotel School (CTS) and the Ceylon Hotels Corporation (CHC), whose mandate was to attract tourists and aggressively engage in tourism promotion and development work. The first tourist boom occurred in the latter part of the 1970s as a result of the incentive package offered by the government to the private sector in the mid-1960s, and opportunities created by the liberalization of the economy in 1977 (See **Table 1**, for an explanation of key economic policies focused on tourism development in Sri Lanka). The trend lasted until 1982, recording an increase in tourist arrivals from 153,665 in 1977 to 407,230 in 1982 (SLTDA 2014).

With the outbreak of violence between the GOSL and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 1983, the tourism industry in Sri Lanka saw a fluctuation of tourist arrivals (See **Figure 1**). The decline from 1983 to 1989 was significant, as the country faced 'twin episodes of violence' - in the North between the GOSL and the LTTE, and in the South with the youth uprising (Silva 2011b; Fernando et al. 2013; Fernando et al. 2017). Although tourist arrivals declined in comparison to years prior to the conflict, and despite 12 major bomb blasts occurring from 1983 to 2008, tourist arrivals exceeded 400,000 in 1994, 1995, 1999 and 2000, as the government carried out immediate damage control measures to restore normality (Samaranayake et al. 2013). The post-tsunami period too marks an increase of tourist arrivals due to the humanitarian and developmental assistance from the international community. However, the decline of tourist arrivals played a negative role in pushing trained and experienced human resources to seek opportunities in the Middle East and West, resulting today, in a lack of human resources to revive the industry.

¹ <http://www.sltlda.lk/statistics>

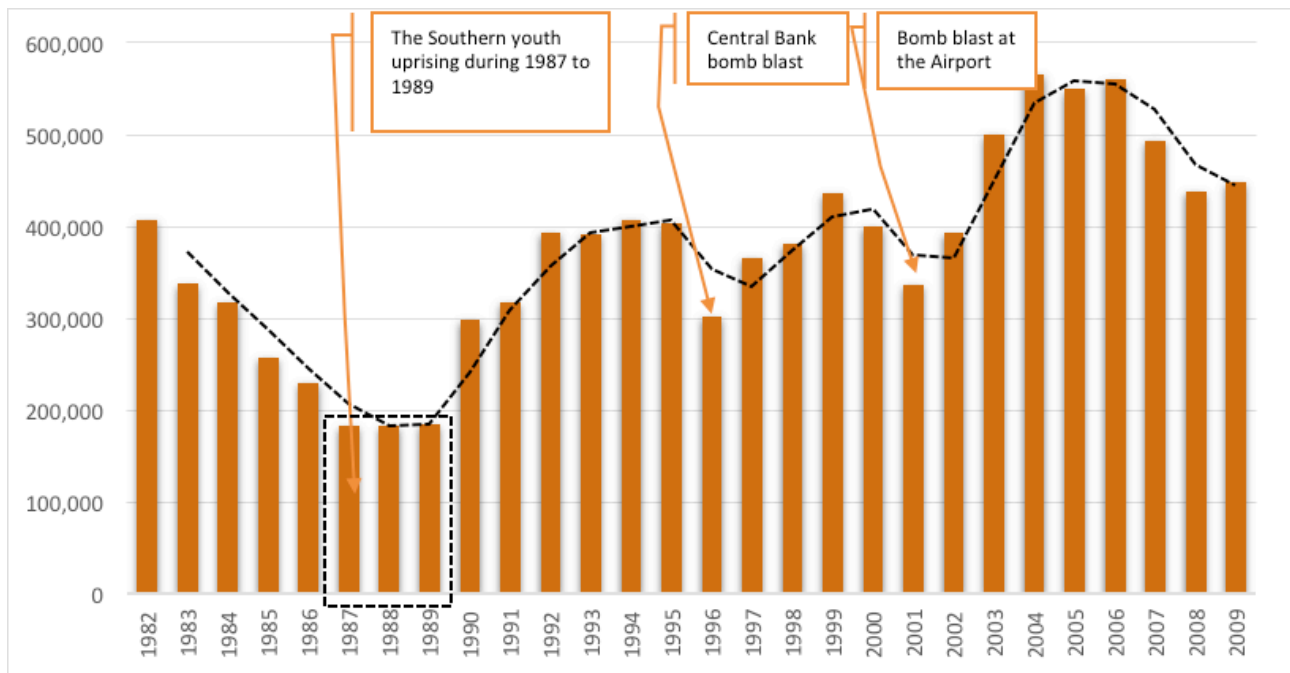
² This forecast is according to *Tourism Industry Forecasts 2016-2020*, prepared by C. Embuldeniya for the Human Resource Council in 2016

Table 1: A timeline of Economic Policies and Tourism Development Strategies in Sri Lanka

Period	Economic Policy	Tourism development strategy adopted	Main features of the strategies
Pre 1948	Pre-independence open economic policy	1937 – First Tourism Bureau established. 1940 – Tourist Bureau ceased its operations during the 2nd World War.	Provision of services for transit passengers who sailed between the West and the East through Colombo port.
1948 - 1956	Liberal economic policy	1948 – Revival of the Tourist Bureau.	Implementation of tourism marketing and promotional strategies.
1956 - 1965	Closed economic policy with import-substitution strategy	Tourism did not play an important role in the national economy.	No tourism promotion and marketing activities.
1965 - 1970	Partial departure from a closed economy	1966 – A government legislative body was established for the tourism sector.	Revival of tourism promotion and marketing strategies under the Tourist Board Act No. 10 of 1966, the Ceylon Hotel Corporation Act No 14 of 1966, and the Tourist Development Act No. 14 of 1968.
		1966 – Introduction of the first Ten Year Master Plan for tourism.	The country witnessed a first-wave of new hotel construction with five resort development zones and experienced the first tourism boom.
1970 - 1977	Closed economic policy	No new government initiative to develop tourism.	Rate of investment growth in tourism fell due to the re-establishment of import control measures. However, tourism grew rapidly as a result of previous promotional activities and peaceful environment.
1977 onwards	Open economic policy	1977 – Introduction of trade liberalization, exchange rate reforms and incentives for Foreign Direct Investments.	Sri Lanka attracted a large number of tourists mainly from Europe through its tourism promotional activities. However, tourism was heavily impacted by the war from 1983 onwards.
	The second wave of economic reforms in 1989	1992 – Introduction of the second Ten Year Tourism Master Plan.	Temporary recovery in tourism sector with increased tourist arrivals.
		The New tourism Act No. 38 of 2005 and introduction of the Third Tourism Master Plan in 2008. Launching a new tourism promotion strategy and implementation of the Tourism Development Strategy in 2011.	An integrated approach to tourism to promote a collective effort of public and private sectors. A five year master plan aimed at creating an environment conducive for tourism.

Source: adopted from Fernando et al. 2017, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority 2011 and GOSL 2005

Figure 1: Tourists arrivals from 1982 to 2009

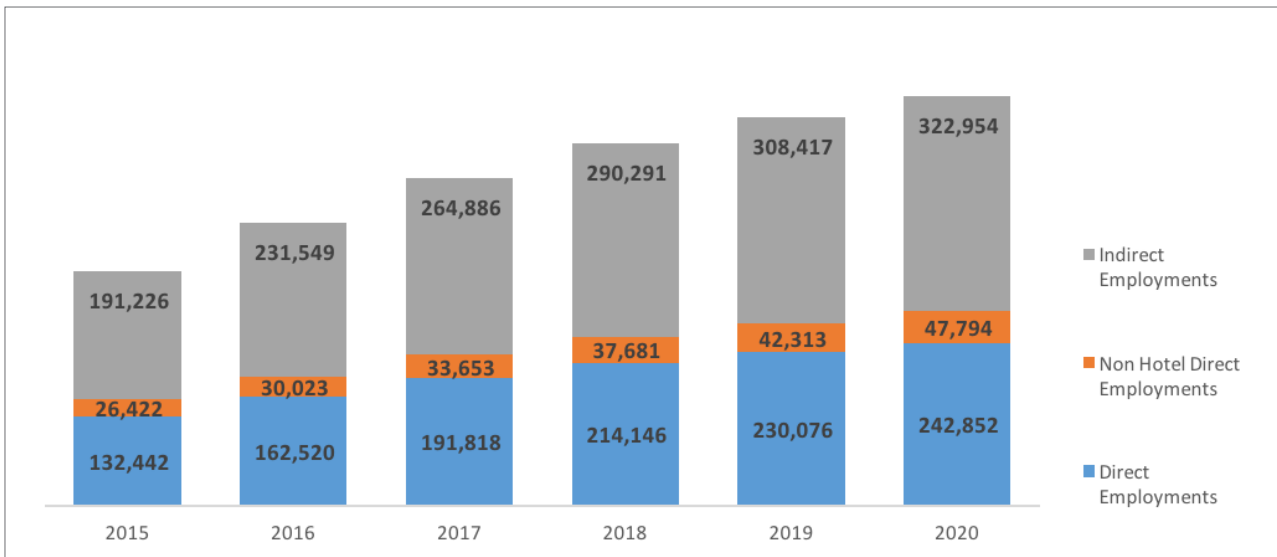


Source: Tourism Growth Trends - 1970 to 2014, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, www.sltda.lk

As a sector that shows rapid growth, the tourism and hospitality industry in Sri Lanka is presently the third largest foreign exchange earner (Rs. 405,492 million), after foreign remittances (Rs.948.95 billion), and textiles and apparel exports (Rs.654.79 billion) (SLTDA 2015). Sri Lanka forecasts that 4.00 million tourists are to arrive in Sri Lanka by 2020, which will be a 10 percent growth in tourism. To cater to this number, 197 hotels have been planned for completion by end 2018. This will add 11,645 rooms out of which 10,973 rooms (179 hotels) will be graded at “class” levels (Embuldeniya 2016). This will invariably create employment opportunities for both women and men. As shown in **Figure 2**, it is expected that the increased tourist arrivals, will create a total of 613,600 employment opportunities by 2020. The figure includes:

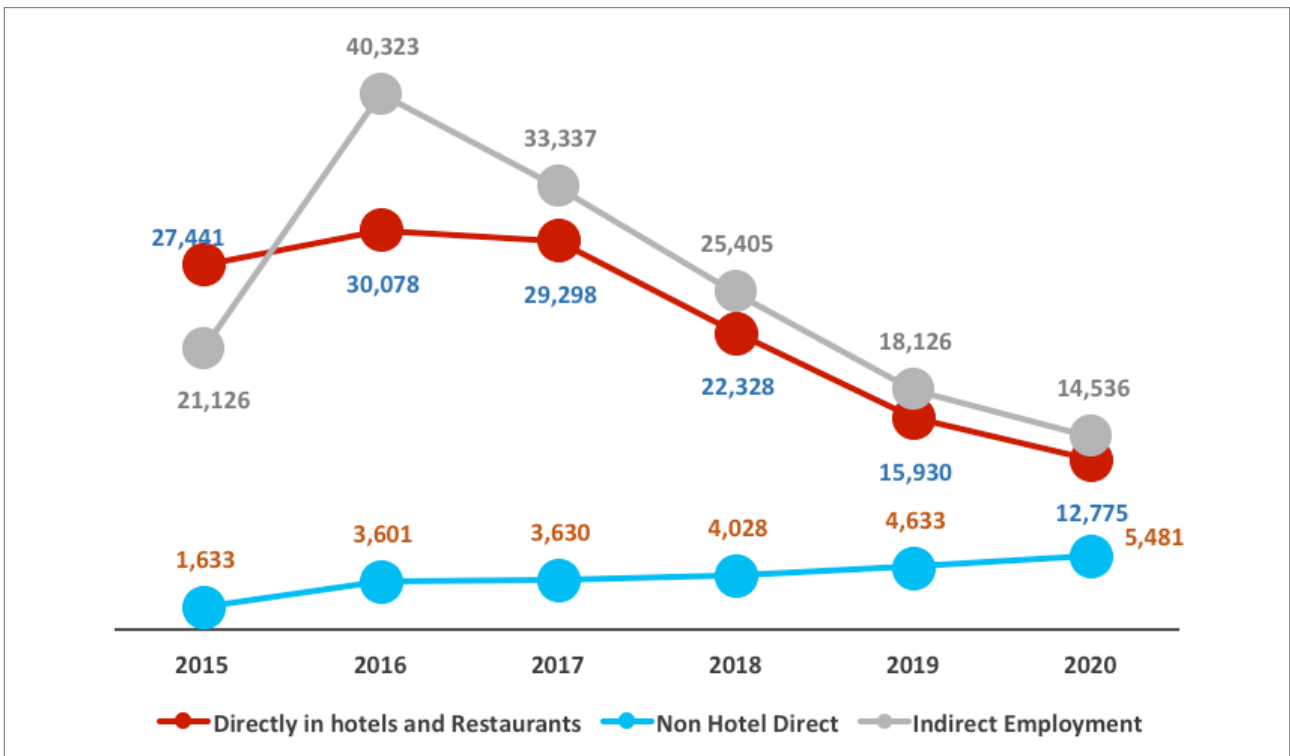
- Direct employment for 242,852 persons,
- Non-hotel direct employment for 47,794 persons, and
- Indirect employment for 322,954 persons.

Figure 2: Forecasts of Employment in Hospitality Sector



If Sri Lanka is to develop the tourism and hospitality sector as part of its economic strategy, the challenge it faces in the hospitality sector is the growing labour market demand for direct and indirect employment. As shown in *Figure 3*, the arrivals based trainee intake forecast indicates that a higher number of trainee intake is foreseen for the first four years (2015 to 2018) for direct and indirect employment segments. The Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM), whose lead role is capacity building to ensure sufficient industry professionals, reported in their annual report submitted to Parliament in 2013 that only 1960 graduates were produced in that year (SLITHM 2013), a number far below the actual requirement.

Figure 3: Forecasted Trainee Intake in Hospitality Sector



Source: Tourism Industry Forecasts 2016-2020 (Embaldeniya 2016)t

1.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The hospitality industry is a service oriented activity and relies on its human resources for its upkeep and maintenance. While in practice there are differences in serving different types of tourists, the tourism and hospitality industry as a whole is currently facing stiff challenges in providing the level of service and accommodation that tourists demand. The sector is in dire need of a skilled and semi-skilled workforce with specialised expertise to serve people with love, care, enthusiasm, and a smile. To cater to this need, in 2012, CARE International Sri Lanka initiated a capacity enhancement programme together with Jetwing Hotels and Kavantissa Vocational Training Centre (KVTC), a rural vocational training centre belonging to the Vocational Training Authority Sri Lanka (VTASL). The goal was to increase employment opportunities by training 200 youth, specifically women to enter the hospitality sector¹. Building on the success of the first project, the training was extended to other geographic areas in partnership with Cinnamon Hotels and Aitken Spence Hotels, with the aim of providing more opportunities to rural youth and women to join the hospitality sector. However, it was found that the trained youth seldom stayed in the chosen occupation. Furthermore, women were reluctant to join the hospitality sector, even though they obtained specialized skills relevant to the sector. Once recruited, the challenge has been to retain them in the sector.

Numerous studies (Hettiarachchi et al. 2015; Mohotti et al. 2013; Nanayakkara 2015; Fernando et al. 2017) have highlighted the human resource challenges faced by the sector in professionally catering to the high demand of its customers², and the reluctance of young people joining the industry (Verite Research 2016). Retention of young recruits in the hotel industry is an area identified as affecting smooth operation of hospitality service providers, including major hotel chains. However, there is a dearth of information and research on the reasons behind the difficulty of recruitment and more specifically retention of youth in the sector. Therefore, this study aims at scoping the gravity of labour shortages, and identifying the main reasons behind the lack of motivation of potential young recruits, both men and women. Specific objectives of this report are:

- 1) To identify the position of the Hospitality Industry within the country's socio-political and economic context;
- 2) To ascertain the immediate human resource related issues faced by the industry, with special reference to the recruitment and retention of young men and women; and
- 3) To provide a set of recommendations to address the human resource related issues in the context of choice, training offer, recruitment and retention.

By addressing the above, this study attempts to contribute to uncovering the barriers to recruiting and retaining young men and women to the hospitality sector in Sri Lanka. It will also provide an insight to the human resource issues based on ground realities, with the hope of contributing to the efforts of the GOSL in developing an inclusive tourism vision for 2025.

¹ Project Proposal – Diageo on Women Empowerment by CARE International Sri Lanka in 2013

² Sri Lanka's tourism and hospitality industry became the theme of the recent issue of the journal 'Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes'. The special issue's theme was "How might post-war Sri Lanka develop inbound tourism?" - see Volume 5 Issue 5.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The study was based on a desk review and interviews with key informants. Information was gathered from available documents and professionals in the tourism industry, including tourism dependent industries, and public and private sector organisations that provide training and employment opportunities in the sector.

Using a research framework (Appendix 1), five key questions that this study attempted to answer were: (Refer *Appendix 1* for the research framework and the guiding questions for interviews identified for each question below).

- § What is the current context of the Hospitality Industry?
- § Who are the key actors and what are their roles?
- § What are the present and future strategies adopted by the key actors?
- § What are the key recruitment drives?
- § How can we improve the industry in general?

Thirty-one (31) individuals, directly linked to the objectives of this study were interviewed. They were either in organizations related to hospitality or in an establishment that provides support services to the industry. The organisations fall into six categories: Government sector, Non-Government Organizations (NGO) and International Non-Government Organizations (INGO), Hotel Industry, Industry experts, Private sector, and Bi-lateral Donors.

Category	Interviewed Organisations / Person
Government sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management 2. Vocational Training Authority 3. Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority
NGO & INGO sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. World University Services Canada 2. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Hotel industry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jetwing Hotels 2. Aitken Spence Hotels 3. Galle Face Hotel 4. Renuka City Hotel 5. Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts 6. Kandila Restaurant, Malwana 7. The Blue Water Hotel, Wadduwa 8. Ranveli Hotel, Waikkal
Industry experts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expert in career guidance and human resources. 2. Association of Small & Medium Enterprises in Tourism. 3. The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.
Private Sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colombo International Nautical & Engineering College (CINEC)
Bi-Lateral Donor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Australian High Commission

See *Appendix 2* for list of interviewees.

As part of data collection, two researchers conducted focus group discussions with 55 students enrolled at the Hotel School in Ahungalle managed by Aitken Spence Hotels, in two separate training workshops. These workshops were organised by CARE International Sri Lanka in partnership with The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (HSBC) to train youth undergoing hospitality training on gender and diversity, with the aim of supporting them to move in to the working environment of the industry on completion of their training¹. The purpose of the discussions was to gather their perception on career prospects in the hospitality sector, perceived obstacles within themselves and from the environment they live in, and their experience in following the training course. Information gathered from nine hospitality industry related organisations were also included in the analysis. Information was coded, memo tabulated and analysed using Nvivo 9 and MS Excel software.

1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the research has reached its objectives, there are limitations to this study. To generalize the results for a larger group, the study needed to involve more participants with a larger sample selected through randomization. However, given time constraints and the nature of inquiry which was qualitative, a small sample size of population applying *purposive sampling method* was used. The present study does not examine in detail the perceptions of parents, and how they feel if their children join the hospitality industry. The lack of previous research on this subject left the researchers without any established framework to work on when it came to how human resource constraints impact the industry. The researchers were tasked with initiating the ground work using the findings of this report. Therefore, interesting areas of this study that require further research and analysis include:

- Identifying the parental influence on youth's career choice, and retention in the chosen career path, specifically in line with occupations in the tourism and hospitality sector.
- Challenges that women face, specifically sexual harassment at the workplace and approaches to create a dignified work environment.
- Introduction of human resource approaches to retain staff such as grievance handling mechanisms and its impacts.

1.5 INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

This report has seven main sections to guide the reader in a process of awareness of the subjects discussed, all the way to the recommendations for any future follow up initiatives. **Section 1** provides a background to the research and overview of the methodology followed with definitions of key terms used. **Section 2** provides an overview of the actors involved in the hospitality sector broadly positioning them under the umbrella term of tourism. **Section 3** covers the context and factors that influence young women and men to decide on their career path. **Section 4** elaborates the skills development offered in Sri Lanka with special reference to hospitality training, addressing government, non-government and private sector training. **Section 5** discusses how recruitment to the sector is carried out and issues faced during the recruitment process, followed by **Section 6** which covers issues in retaining employees in the sector. Finally, **Section 7** outlines the key recommendations based on the research findings to improve the training offer, recruitment and retention in the sector.

¹ Training completion report "Diversity training for Hospitality students" available at CARE International Sri Lanka.

1.6 DEFINITION OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

The International Definition of Tourism and Hospitality:

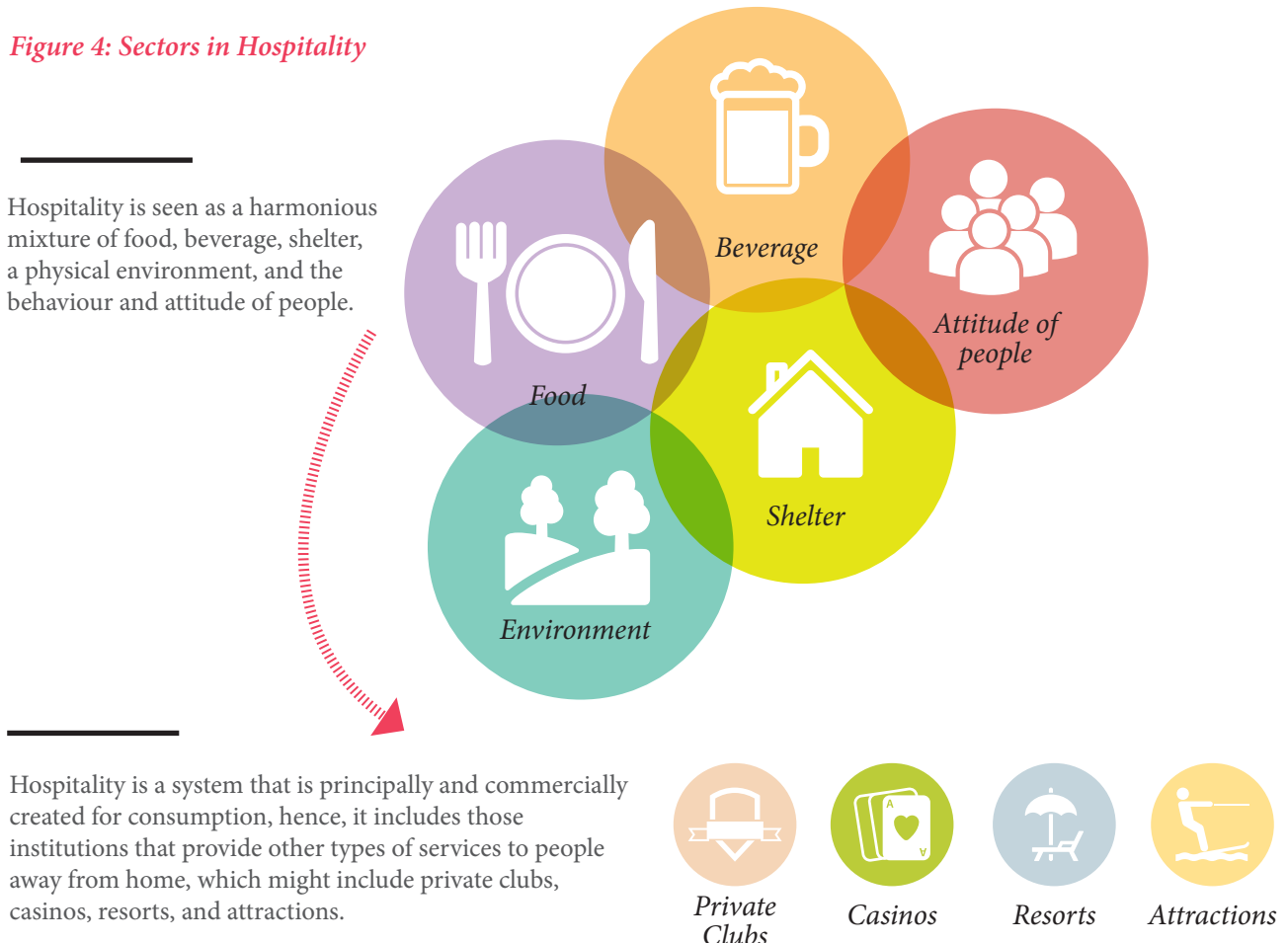
Tourism as defined by World Tourism Organisation (WTO), is “a subject of travel and mainly comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for leisure, business and other purposes” (World Tourism Organization 1995). Thus, an **international tourist** is “a visitor who travels to a country other than the one in which he /she has his / her usual residence for at least one night, but not more than one year, and whose main purpose of visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the country visited” (United Nations Economic and Social Council 1991).

The meaning of hospitality is much broader in scope and not only includes hotels and restaurants, but also refers to other kinds of institutions that offer shelter, food or both to people who are away from their homes. Therefore, hospitality is seen as a harmonious mixture of food, beverage, and/or shelter, a physical environment, and the behaviour and attitude of people (Wood & Brotherton 2008). This definition assumes the fact that hospitality is something that is principally and commercially created for consumption. When this definition is further expanded, it includes those institutions that provide other types of services to people away from home, which might include private clubs, casinos, resorts, attractions, and so on (Barrows & Powers 2009).

Sri Lankan definition of tourism and hospitality:

In the Sri Lankan context, both tourism and hospitality are used together or interchangeably due to the inter-relatedness of both concepts and industries. In this study, we use the term hospitality industry to mean organizations which provide food, beverage and accommodation to individuals who travel to another destination and are away from their homes.

Figure 4: Sectors in Hospitality



2 HOSPITALITY SECTOR ACTORS

2.1 SCOPE OF HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN SRI LANKA:

This research revealed information which helps to draw the scope of hospitality and tourism industry in Sri Lanka. The operational mechanism remains State centric with the involvement of a number of private sector partners. Non-government agencies also play a key role alongside multilateral and bilateral development agencies.

During the study, six subsectors with similar objectives and mandates emerged as follows:

1. **Tourism Governance**¹: The State mechanisms to promote Sri Lanka as a ‘prime’ tourism destination and regulate functioning of the trade by setting up standards and compliance mechanisms.
2. **Hospitality**: The centre of tourism in Sri Lanka comprises of hotels and other lodging facilities.²
3. **Leisure**: comprises of additional leisure, hobby and adventure sections of the tourism industry. Hotels and individual companies alike operate in this sector to provide services.
4. **Tour operators**: Tour operators are businesses that combine two or more travel services (e.g., transport, accommodation, meals, entertainment, and sightseeing) and sell them through travel agencies or directly to final consumers as a single product (called a package tour) for a global price.³
5. **Informal Sector**: These are small businesses operated by individuals and small business operators, providing direct services to tourists and other service providers like hotels. They are larger in number but small in scale. These are not systematically registered and there is limited oversight on their operations. Therefore, it is difficult to quantify their volume and contribution.
6. **Skills Development Sector**: State, Non-State and private sector agencies have established schools and vocational training institutes (NVQ Level 4), while non-government agencies are supporting skills development of youth and women.

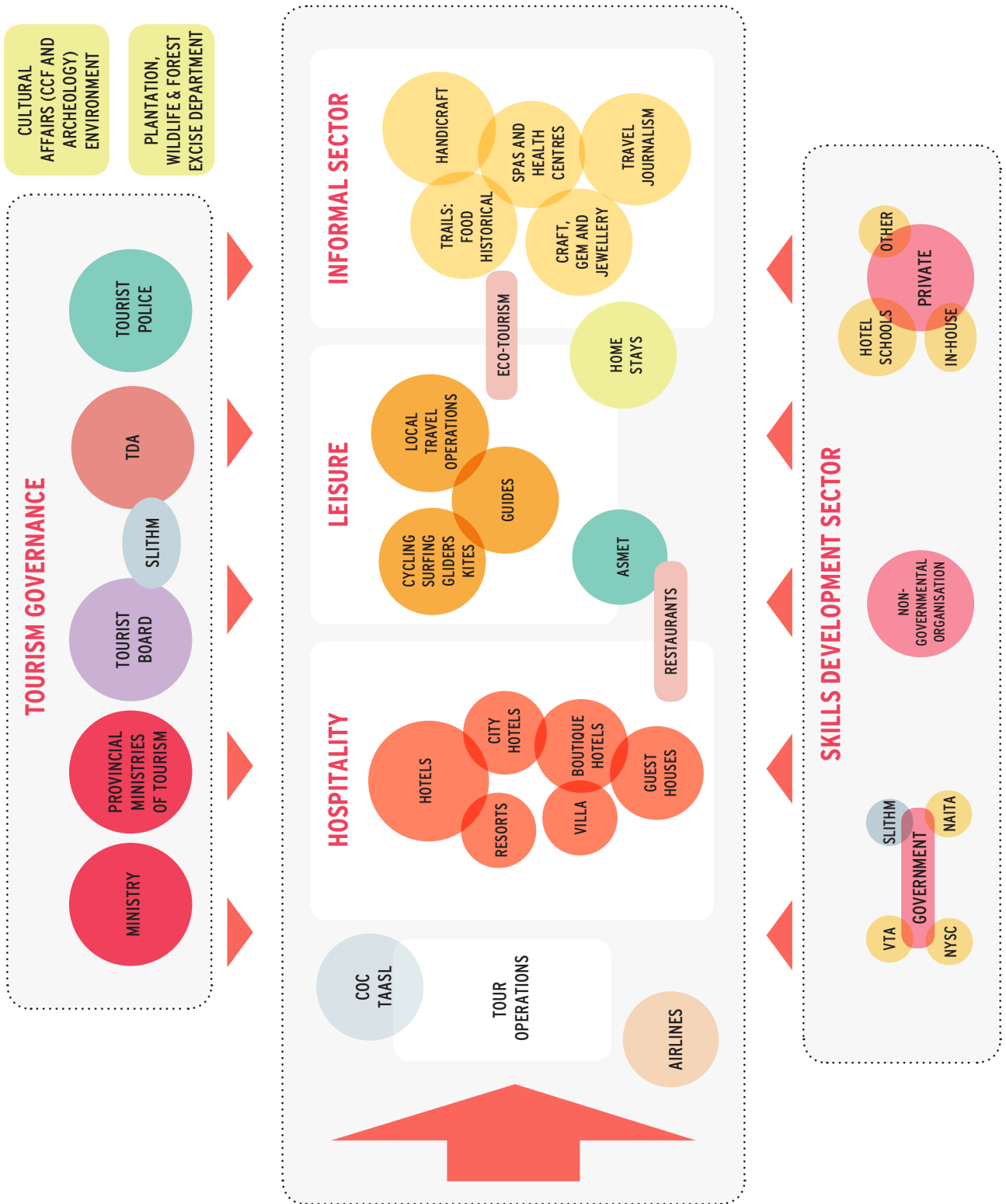


¹ The term and category ‘tourism governance’ emerged as the study started to gather information about the state agencies and their role and expectations in tourism development. OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) has used the term tourism governance since 2012 to identify national and sub national level arrangements to ensure good governance in tourism. It includes ‘The development of human capacity at national and sub-national levels.’ <http://www.cabi.org/leisuretourism/news/24428>

² For details on scoring and categorization of hotels please see the gazette on Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka issue No. 1963/28 – Wednesday, April 20, 2016; http://www.slttda.lk/sites/default/files/Gazzete_2016_04_20.pdf

³ <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=2733>

Figure 5: Tourism sector actors



The five sectors mentioned above in liaison with many other individuals and organizations were operating in an environment hosting 2 million tourists in 2016, showing a 14% increase compared to 2015.¹ As forecasted in February 2016, an estimated number of 162,520 (Embuldeniya 2016) individuals could be directly employed by tourism industry while a total of 424,000 individuals benefited through direct and indirect employment.

The diagram above is an attempt to understand the scope of the tourism sector and its subsectors through secondary data and field interviews, to furnish a long felt need to illustrate how each group of actors are interrelated and operate. This diagram is not a proportionate representation of each category, but illustrates how each stakeholder operates, based on empirical evidence.² Although this diagram separates out different actors, in reality they work across boundaries, frequently complementing each other. To maintain clarity, suppliers to the hotel sector, three wheelers and cabs, retailers³ who add beauty to waysides are excluded from this diagram.

The following section describes each group.

2.2 TOURISM GOVERNANCE

In 1966 the government passed the Tourist Board Act and started to regulate the industry, following it with the Tourism Development Act (TDA) in 1968. The TDA authorizes the Ceylon Tourist Board (CTB) to obtain State and private land⁴ (through compensation) for development purposes. Lending institutions who advanced money for tourist development and construction programmes were given guarantees for securing their credit. The legislation also covered the establishment of a national holiday resort company, which planned various types of accommodation and resort areas. Moreover, it included the setting up of an authority under the Tourist Board to manage and administer each resort. The Act conferred powers for the Protection of Highways and Places of Scenic Beauty, and vested authority in the Ceylon Tourist Board for the Registration and Classification of Tourist Hotels, including all other tourist services such as travel agencies. The TDA of 1968 provided the Ceylon Tourist Board with the statutory authority to develop tourism on a planned and controlled basis⁵.

Although tourism and governance were not used together for a very long time, recent studies of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have referred to State mechanisms and institutions involved in registration,

Box 1: Tourism governance in OECD countries: Seven areas of good governance practices in tourism sector

1. A clear definition of the roles of various levels of government in tourism as well as definition of the roles and functions of the various organizations involved in tourism policy.
2. A trend to the development of one peak industry association at national level. At a sub-national level, a variety of different organizations may be found in a particular destination, and some form of sub-national coordination amongst these organizations is good practice.
3. Development and communication of an effective tourism strategy.
4. The development of human capacity at national and sub-national levels.
5. The implementation of sub-national management structures such as DMOs, appears to be good practice for larger countries with larger tourist visitor volumes.
6. In developing policy and responses to crises, it is good practice for governments to include tourism representatives in decisions due to the horizontal characteristics of the tourism sector.
7. Relevant data and analysis are available to support tourism policy decisions; decision making is longer term, transparent, and outcomes are evaluated.

<http://www.cabi.org/leisuretourism/news/24428> [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

¹ <http://www.sltda.lk/node/745> [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

² A list of tourism sector stakeholders prepared by SLTDA provided basic information.

³ Way side vendors of fruits, sweets king coconut and fresh juice are some examples.

⁴ During the Government of Mahinda Rajapakse, the SLTDA had extended powers to alienate State land on a 99 year lease.

⁵ Extract from http://www.sltda.lk/about_us. [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

classification, standardization, quality control and coordination of various actors involved in tourism industry as ‘tourism governance’.

As indicated above, the Ministry of Tourism, Tourist Board and Tourism Development Authority are the central actors who define a vision, policies and programming for the tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Provincial Councils have their own devolved Ministries of Tourism that have the power to define regional plans and programmes. While there is greater opportunity for coordination and planning between central and provincial ministries, at present this does not happen.

Key stakeholders from other sectors who play a pivotal role in tourism include, Tourist Branch of Sri Lanka Police Department for protection and law enforcement; Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Central Cultural Fund and Archaeology Department to develop tourist programmes and conservation of sites; Forest Department and Department of Wildlife and Conservation for protection and management of national parks and services.

2.3 HOSPITALITY SECTOR

The lynchpin of the tourism industry in Sri Lanka is the hospitality sector. It remains large, as the ability to provide accommodation is the key service. In 2014, 2040 hotels and restaurants provided employment for 105,000, while an estimated number of 2196 hotels and restaurants employed 109,500 in 2015.¹ It employed 81% of total industry employees in 2014, with the percentage remaining a constant over 2015. The estimated employee to room rate is 7.

In Sri Lanka there are city and resort hotels which are graded with stars according to the revised gazette notification of 2016 (*Figure 5*). For 2015, 334 establishments were registered. At the same time, there were 1265 supplementary establishments reported in the same year (*Table 3*).

Table 3: Accommodation capacity by type of establishment

Category	Number of establishments	Rooms
Tourist Hotels (Classified, Unclassified and Boutique Hotels)	334	18,510
Supplementary Establishments (Boutique villas, Guest houses, Home stays, Bungalows, Heritage Homes and Bungalows, Rented apartments and rented houses)	1,265	9,916

Source: *Tourist Board Annual Report 2015*

This categorization is important to the sector as the projections are made based on the available data. Among the tourist hotels, there are larger operators (hotel chains) such as Aitken Spence, Amaya, Cinnamon, Jetwing, Tangerine, Lanka Orix Leasing Company (LOLC) etc. There are proprietor hotels and public-private partnerships like the Ceylon Hotel Corporation (CHC) as well. Boutique hotels are exclusive and cater to an exclusive clientele. The average tourists are likely to stay in star grade hotels, while young tourists prefer budget accommodation provided by unclassified and supplementary establishments.

¹ Tourist Board Annual Report 2015, http://www.slttda.lk/sites/default/files/Tourist_Board_Annual_Report_2015.pdf [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

Table 4 shows the availability of rooms by different resort regions. It shows that populated regions have a larger number of rooms, while potential regions like North and the East have a lesser number of accommodation facilities. This also indicates availability of employment in each region based on the number of facilities available.

Table 4: Accommodation capacity by resort region

Resort Region	Accommodation Capacity (Rooms)
Colombo City	3,966
Greater Colombo	3,041
South Coast	6,787
East Coast	895
Upcountry	1,035
Ancient Cities	3,601
Northern Region	51
Total	19,376

Source: Tourist Board Annual Report 2015

Figure 6: Classification of hotels in Sri Lanka (Schedule 1 of Gazette 1963/28, Wednesday April 20th 2016)

"Tourist Hotel" means an establishment or place which provides or holds itself out as providing to tourists for fee or reward sleeping accommodation with or without food has not less than ten bedrooms

SCHEDULE I

(Regulation 9)

Classification of tourist hotel	Minimum marks	Maximum marks
Column I	Column II	Column III
(a) 5-star Hotel	4,000	5,000
(b) 4-star Hotel	3,500	5,000
(c) 3-star Hotel	3,000	5,000
(d) 2-star Hotel	2,500	5,000
(e) 1-star Hotel	2,000	5,000

Schedule 1 of the Sri Lanka Gazette 1963/28, issued in 2016 (Figure 6), shows the scoring system for classification of tourist hotels. The scoring system is extensive and covers all aspects of hospitality, service quality, sanitation, safety and security. In order to remain a classified hotel, an establishment requires complying with national and international requirements.

2.4 TOUR OPERATORS AND SRI LANKA HOTELS ASSOCIATION

Tour operators provide the first interface between the destination and tourists. Tour operators, including airlines currently hold the capacity to promote tourist destinations and market user values¹ of specific destinations. Over the past 3 decades, Sri Lanka remained a tourist destination resulting from extensive promotion by tour operators. In 2014, 678 travel agents and tour operators, and 29 airlines were operating from Sri Lanka (Embuldeniya 2016).

The Sri Lanka Association of Inbound Tour Operators (SLAITO) has 90 tour operators registered as members. This includes all sizes of tour operators from small scale to corporate. They organize leisure packages for tourists from various origins according to fragmented market segments. Although, there is limited access to information available on their services and the volume of inbound tourists they bring, a lot of resort hotels depend on their services. According to some key informants, the underlying factor for sustainable tourism industry depends upon tour operators.

SLAITO markets Sri Lanka as a prime tourist destination through international conventions and trade fairs. In 2016, they participated in 23 international fairs/conventions across the globe with a focus on Europe, Asia and Australia. Their main objectives are to promote Sri Lanka as a prime tourist destination, and lobby internally for better systems and concessions from State regulatory mechanisms to improve the industry.²

The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) operates from the same location as SLAITO (at the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, Colombo 02). Established in 1967, the Hotels Association presently works as the apex body of the hospitality industry in Sri Lanka. It commands room strength of hotels, as members of the Association include small, medium and large hotels ranging from 5 Star to unclassified.³ There are 13 regional associations and 145 members listed under its membership. Perhaps the most influential tourism lobby in Sri Lanka, the SLAITO holds the potential to shift norms and good practices across the board. Anyone wanting to develop the tourism industry in Sri Lanka, needs to consider tour operators and THASL as key stakeholders.

Over the past decade online travel operations have increased. Airline ticketing, hotel bookings, restaurant reservations were shifted partially to web based systems. In contrast to the past, the services were also subjected to review through customer feedback on services and facilities. It has become a general practice to make prior checks of the service providers before making reservations. Although it is too early to determine how online systems impact on tour operators, there is a definite correlation between the two, and requires further exploration which is beyond the scope of this report.

2.5 LEISURE

Leisure is part and parcel of the hospitality industry. Leisure requirements of different tourists vary, but broadly fall into sightseeing, physical activities, information seeking and environmental excursions. 138,000 tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka in 2014 were estimated as excursion tourists (SLTDA 2015).

Sri Lanka is known for its natural beauty, it is one of 25 biodiversity hotspots in the world, and offers historical sites, including Heritage sites to tourists who arrive with high expectations, and are looking for quality facilities and services. Trekking, hiking, white water rafting, surfing are becoming popular, as there are quite a number of new facilities that have emerged over the last decade. For example, Kitulgala which used to be an isolated area, is now used extensively by both local and international tourists for white water rafting. Surfing is also an emerging excursion among tourists with the opening

1 User value includes quantifiable (costs, services) and unquantifiable (scenic beauty, enjoyment) values for tourist destinations.

2 http://www.slaito.net/about_slaito.php [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

3 <http://www.thasl.lk/about.php> [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

of the Eastern Coast for tourism. There is no account of operators in this sector, but according to the 2015 Annual Report of the Tourist Board, 71 establishments with 818 employees were recorded.

The Association of Small and Medium Enterprises in Tourism Sri Lanka (ASMET)⁴ is the umbrella organization which brings different small and medium tourism operators together. These operators as discussed below are emerging, and aspire to link up with bigger organizations and international networks as service providers within Sri Lanka.

Tourist guides are an important category of employees in the leisure sector of tourism. In 2014, 4420 tourist guides were registered with SLTDA. They operate extensively throughout the country, providing travel and guidance to international tourists.

Local travel operators are another category who work as guides or with guides by hiring vehicles, arranging local budget accommodation etc. Although eco-tourism is considered to be an emerging sub sector, there is limited information about operators and operations.

2.6 INFORMAL SECTOR

Although the leisure component briefly discussed the SME sector within tourism and their association, there are a number of small and medium service providers that are categorized in the informal sector of tourism industry, and have the potential to provide services and earn revenue for the country.

There are emerging sub-sectors that include home-stays, food trails, historical trails, and farm stays, which are not recognized by the industry as significant areas.

Similarly, handicrafts of various kinds, once most sought after among tourists, are regaining momentum, and require attention. For example, handloom material woven by war affected women is a niche market and has the potential to be a tourist attraction if properly packaged and marketed to tourists. Gem and jewellery craft is also among the top list of tourist attractions. For example, Barefoot Gallery and other such niche initiatives which are selling craft and handloom items as branded quality products, demonstrates that there is scope to promote crafts as 'destination specific' to Sri Lanka. Proper branding, packaging and marketing of these sub-sectors are required.

Ayurveda and herbal medicine are areas informally operating below the radar. Regularization, staff training and promotion of wellness centres among specific target groups like geriatric wellness, handicap wellness has scope for growth. However, this study did not specifically explore these sectors as the focus was on the hospitality sub-sector.

Travel journalism is not developed in Sri Lanka, although a number of tourism related publications are available. As we enter a digital age, travel websites, blogs and social media are useful tools in promoting Sri Lanka as a prime destination.

2.7 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

The skills development sub sector was specifically recognized because of its significance in providing sector-wide human resources. The State, being the main skills development provider in the hospitality sector, owns the majority of skills development training centres, while the private sector and non-governmental organisations complement the government's efforts. *Section 4* of this report - Hospitality Skills Development in Sri Lanka provides a useful account of the sector.

⁴ <http://asmetsrilanka.com/AboutUs.html> [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

3 MAKING AN EMPLOYMENT CHOICE IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR

3.1 EMPLOYMENT UNDER CHANGING CONTEXTS

Sri Lanka was a choice tourist destination for a few decades after its independence in 1948. Over that period of time, local hospitality, kindness and smiles, mingled with natural beauty, were the key attractions. Long serene coastlines, stilt fishing (*'riti-panna'*), green tea gardens, gem and jewellery, handicrafts, a variety of food and the colonial past were highlighted as specialities. The tourism sector dominated the development scenario with State support, marked by a peak in 1976 during the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit in Colombo. Despite changes in Government, the drive to develop tourism remained over the three decades post-independence. To date, it still remains a priority sector with the potential to grow. The development of Katunayaka International Airport in 1965, was an important step, as was the conversion of some colonial buildings to international hotels. The establishment of the Ceylon Tourist Board, the Hotels Corporation, and Hotel Training Schools in 1966 were also important milestones in the development of tourism in Sri Lanka in the 1960s. The tourism industry in Sri Lanka was officially institutionalised after the establishment of the Ceylon Tourist Board (Silva 2011a). Since the mid- sixties consecutive governments of Sri Lanka and its development partners have seen tourism as a driver of development, and designed their strategies accordingly.

Since the introduction of open economic policies to Sri Lanka in 1978, economic growth has created opportunities for growth. New sectors were introduced, such as free trade zones. Foreign employment opportunities that opened up in the Middle East grew rapidly, giving priority to women. The urban sector grew as construction and manufacturing were scaled up. City Hotels that comprised of a few levels, became multi-storey establishments. This rapid change demanded a larger skilled and unskilled workforce. Competition from construction and manufacturing sectors escalated, while telecommunication and banking sectors also expanded; changing employment expectations of youth. At the same time, competition from evolving sectors has created a practical issue of 'availability' of labour for the hospitality sector. As a result, the once dominant and lucrative tourism and hotel sector has faced a major setback in human resources. The preferred employees for hotels were urban youth who communicated in English and were versatile in their disposition, but they started to move into managerial roles in other emerging sectors, while there was growing demand from within the hospitality sector. Human resources demand did not match supply, impacting the sector negatively.

The major drawback to tourism in Sri Lanka happened with the racial riots of July 1983. The once, serene and hospitable tourist destination became an unsafe territory. Most of the choice local beaches in the North and the East became inaccessible. Tourist resorts faced a number of issues that included retaining trained staff during the off season, and even during seasons with dwindling revenues caused by low tourist arrivals. Trained staff of star grade hotels found employment in the emerging tourist destinations in the Middle East or elsewhere depending on their skills and targets. Subsequently, there was a 25 year 'exodus' of skilled hotel workers in search of better jobs, affecting tourism in three ways:

- Loss of skilled workers and trainers to develop future generations,
- Dissatisfied clients and bad reviews of hotels resulting from poor service, affected by the lack of diversely skilled workers, and
- Low revenues resulting in low pay that attracted potential employees to other sectors.

From 1994 to 2014, consecutive Governments expanded (except 2000-2004)¹ the State sector by employing graduates under various schemes. This led to 1.4 million employees (nearly 6% of the

¹ One of the main reasons lined up against 2000-2004 government was, that they did not provide government employment.

population) currently in the State sector. Attractive incentives of ‘job security’ and ‘government pension’, rather than the competitiveness and performance-based incentives of the private sector have contributed towards changing the expectations of rural lower middle class youth.

The negative attitude towards English as the ‘invader’s language’ did not change till the late 1990s. This attitude towards the English language alienated rural youth from learning English, and skilled English teachers gradually declined, resulting in the gap between potential employees and the hospitality sector widening.

The political, economic and social impacts mentioned above, led to young job seekers and school leavers demoting the hotel and tourism sector to a ‘lower level’, when it came to selecting a career.

3.2 MAKING A CHOICE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Perceptions and Attitudes

“What is a hotel?” is a question that might come into the mind of anyone who thinks of a career in the hospitality sector. The term hotel has been misused in Sri Lanka over decades, as any eatery or roadside restaurant displays signboards with the title ‘hotel’.

As a result, there are particularly degrading attitudes towards, waiters, cleaners and washers who work in wayside restaurants. For a very long time, clients of these establishments would call them ‘boy’. In 1969, the first generation of hotel school graduates took action to stop being called ‘boys’ by customers. Although the situation changed within larger establishments, the scenario for those working in the informal sector who did not have a uniform and were unrecognized and underpaid has remained the same.

When a young person decides on their career, this phenomenal down grading against the concept of a ‘hotel’ is not conceivable to parents and youth alike. According to youth who were interviewed in two workshops held in Ahungalla, one of the key issues identified as resisting employment in the hotel sector were parents. The trainees highlighted that ‘convincing their parents was the most difficult thing they came across, before joining a training course’. Further exploration of this response revealed that parents feared for the safety of their children, even though they are adults. Parents also lacked exposure and knowledge to understand the mechanics of the

65 percent of youth recruited to training courses saw the inside of a hotel for the first time, only during the practical course.

DEFINITION OF HOTEL

In general a hotel is ‘A commercial establishment providing lodging, meals, and other guest services’. To be termed a hotel, an establishment must have a minimum of six letting bedrooms, at least three of which must have an attached (en-suite) private bathroom facilities.

CONVINCING PARENTS WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT THING THAT TRAINEES CAME ACROSS, BEFORE JOINING A COURSE RELATED TO THE HOTEL SECTOR.

hotel sector. Our research found, that 65% of the youth recruited for the course, saw the inside of a hotel for the first time only after they were given a practical course.¹

with the noun ‘hotel’ in Sri Lanka being misused, and hotels seen as alien territories for most trainees from lower middle class families; the fear and unfamiliar nature of the hotel sector has distanced locals from finding employment within the sector. This originally started when

¹ Workshops with hotel school trainees – Ahungalle, All the young interviewees, males females alike confirmed this fact and said ‘they would never find a job in a hotel unless there in a known person (family, friends) encouraged them and helped getting employed as trainees.’

Aitkin Spence and Confifi groups opened resort hotels along the Southern coast in the early seventies. One expert interviewee stated, that there were public protests held in front of new hotel sites and the term ‘brothel’ was clearly a part of the slogans they used. Each company handled these public relations issues by developing better relationships with the host community by setting better prices for their produce, obtaining their services, providing

employment and developing careers of selected youth who wanted to join the sector. Yet, these were localised initiatives. While the context in the vicinity of the hotel belts have changed, unfortunately broader perceptions remained intact.

Youth and parents alike tend to seek better titles, especially those that are acceptable and relevant, with the idea of social mobility of lower middle class families. The real pressure occurs with low paid, low skilled jobs in the sector such as cleaners/janitors and washers. The highest number of employees are required in this category called ‘others’, and they are not even sub categorized and titled.² The negative idea of doing a non-specified job is a major disincentive for youth to seek employment in the hotel and tourism sector. Similarly, this same phenomenon occurred in the garment sector, which generalized the work floor employees as ‘children’, thus down grading adults to a level of non-specific roles (Lynch 2002).³ The dignity of labour in the choice of employment, plays a vital role for youth trying to decide on a career.

According to one interviewee, who was an expert in the Vocational Training (VT) sector, the choice of blue collar jobs was based on parents’ decision to have fewer children, with the hope of giving them a better future. Observations made by experts in the sector and confirmed by interviews were that the relative status of income and drive for higher education elevated the way parents perceived the future of their offspring. The effect was three fold: firstly, parents pushed for higher education in whatever form they could afford and thus directed their children; secondly, parents encouraged voluntary unemployment of their children until their late 20s; thirdly, when overly dependent children complained of their work place discomfiture, they were encouraged to leave their posts and come home.

Interviews further confirmed that no matter the advertisements and other publicity work done (which is still inadequate), the ability of the hotel sector to attract youth remains low. Training instructors interviewed during this exercise expressed the view that *‘parents were strongly intervening in their children’s career decisions and place of work’*. The first level of drop outs occur when young recruits were sent to different destinations after the training as *‘parents want to keep their children close’*. The second level of drop outs occur within a few weeks of recruitment, as new recruits start to complain to their parents about the work load, and strenuous hours of work. Parents often complained *‘we have not brought up our children to be worked as labourers and they are not used to hard work like what you give them in hotels.’*

Since 1983, the rise in either racist or nationalist ideas has been detrimental. Anything foreign was considered as bad, although external technology and food was generally adopted. For example, garment workers were discriminated as *‘sewing underwear for foreigners’*, which was further politicized. Similarly, the unknown territories of hotels were considered *‘unholy’*, and often associated with *‘illegal’* activities. As C. Lynch highlighted in his paper in a footnote *‘the vast majority are Europeans, and that the notion of a white woman as immoral is fed by the presence of white female tourists who ‘smoke, drink, wear bikinis and shorts and travel with men who are not their husbands’* (Lynch 2002). This is also

² 2035 managerial staff (9%), 3,135 supervisory staff(13%), and 18, 190 others (73%) are required to be trained by the end of 2018 to meet the demand (Embuldeniya 2016)

³ C Lynch in her paper titled “The Politics of White Women’s Underwear in Sri Lanka’s Open Economy” shows how society refers to female employees of Free Trade Zones called Juki Girls and employment in Garment sector entirely demeaned by media, politicians and society alike.

linked with publicity on HIV/AIDS, STDs, beach boys, child prostitution, and drug use, which are often associated with tourists, and externalised as foreign evils. Local females, especially mothers who read women's weeklies are vulnerable to all sorts of myths ranging from exorcisms to urban myths built and fed by media, creating negative impressions of the sector. Success stories in relation to the sector are rarely published, i.e. *'It made my life difficult, but I had the courage to seek training, build rapport with tourists, went abroad on my own to be graduated. I am married, built a house and work as a manager.'*

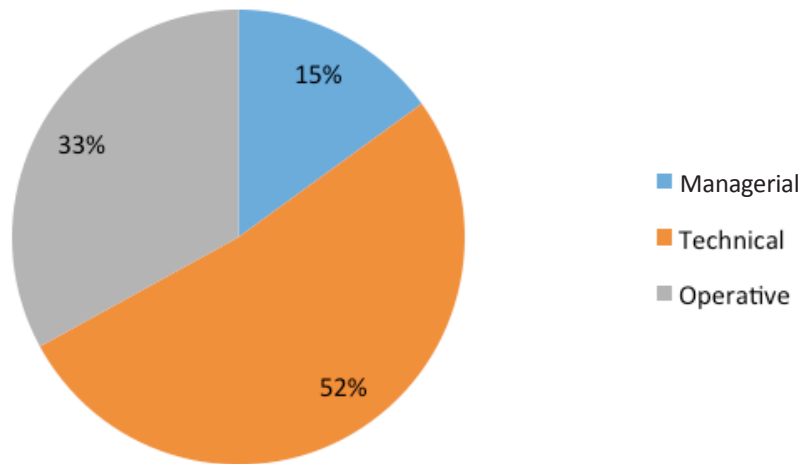
Since the term hotel is misused, the functions were misunderstood too. Local language newspapers have quite often used harmful expressions to shame hotels as *'places of disrepute'* naming them as *'brothels'*. Popular cinema, television and radio have not helped to control the damage, but worsened it by exaggerating those ideas out of proportion. This has led to the perception of the hotel sector as an unsuitable place for young females to work. Young men also drifted from the hotel sector after short spells of employment, complaining about stressful and intense work.

The current targets for employment to the hospitality sector are mainly from the rural sector, as the urban sector is saturated and strongly divided between trades.

Dignity of labour - Competing sectors and importance of titles

With non-specific, poorly recognized work, comes the competition posed by emerging State and private sectors. IT for example, has job titles of hardware engineer, software engineer, and network administrator etc. Contrastingly, the titles given to key sub categories are not so illustrious and address identity requirements of individuals who are hired for such non-specific jobs. According to the Tourism Industry Forecast (2016-2020), 81 % of tourism sector employees are working at hotels and restaurants. The ratio between managerial: technical: operative staff were 15%: 52%: 33% (*Figure 4*). By 2020 the total estimated arrivals will be 4 million tourists who require nearly 613,000 employees to be served. The non-descriptive nature of the trade is another major obstacle to attract young people to fulfill the high demand. While other sectors recognize their employees by socially satisfying titles, a *'bell boy'* remains a lower ranking description of an employee.

POPULAR MEDIA HAS CONTRIBUTED TOWARDS THE NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF THE HOTEL INDUSTRY, RESULTING IN THE RELUCTANCE OF YOUTH, SPECIFICALLY WOMEN TO SELECT A CAREER IN THIS SECTOR.

Figure 7: Composition of Hotel Staff

When Hotel and Tourism took off in the late 1960s, the majority of employees of hotels were called ‘boys’. The first few batches of youth who were from rich, Colombo schools were posed with a question of dignity when they were called ‘boys’ by clients, following an old colonial practice. There was a common agreement among the young staff to ignore such clients and they only responded when they were called ‘steward’. Later, they were given name tags to ease communication. According to a senior professional hotelier, they have changed the attitude of both insiders and outsiders, to create dignified work in the hotel sector. The drawbacks in the past few decades, have prompted a change of ‘norms’ around hotel employment, for both men and women.

The promise of government jobs created voluntary unemployment in the country by employing 1.4 million people, and giving false hope for many thousands over the past 20 years. The demand of unemployed graduates union is compelling others to seek government employment as a right. Within such a context and in combination with factors discussed above, there is less demand for hospitality sector employment. Although employment in the hotel sector is professional, adequate recognition is questionable.

Long term impacts of war

While the population of the country increased to 22 million, 9 million were considered as workforce in the third quarter of 2015. Youth (age 15-24) unemployment rate for the third quarter was 22.9 percent (20.3% for males and 26.8% for females).¹ The hotel and tourism sector fell short of hiring its required staff according to interviews conducted with key informants from the hotel sector. The youth interviewed during their training, also said they were unaware and not interested in working in the hotel sector as a priority employment sector. They were unsure where to start, and how to obtain information, including on their future development. Only one employee responded, saying that he looked at employment advertisements and identified hotels as a priority sector before joining. He followed a part time course on Food and Beverages and joined the sector leaving his previous employment. This clearly indicates that the hotel sector is yet to be recognized as a priority employment sector by youth and women after the end of the war.

¹ <http://www.lankabusinessonline.com/sri-lanka-labour-force-9mn-unemployment-5-pct-in-3q-census-dept/> [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

On the other hand, the protracted war generated employment for youth from rural areas, irrespective of their sex. By the time the war ended, total employment in Sri Lankan security forces was close to 500,000, which made military civilian ratio 1:40. In the meantime, there were families who received military pensions or maintenance on behalf of the personnel who died during service. The majority of those personnel who were men, made their spouse stay at home to look after domestic affairs. This created a separate layer of lower and upper middle class families in areas not directly affected by the conflict. The traditional role of women was re-emphasized as *'wife of a war hero'* (a similar phenomenon occurred in Northern districts after the end of the war), in case they were sought to nurture future generation of war heroes, or take care of war heroes and their family members. With the sensationalised position and remuneration, the new social strata legitimized un-sustainable short term heroism and anti-western ideology. The norms inculcated within society over three decades are still visible and in action, demeaning employment opportunities in an emerging hotel and tourism sector. As a result, women were mostly affected, and they were reluctant to make independent choices with regards to new ventures in rural areas, fearing their 'honour' was at stake.

As illustrated in this section, there was a lot of friction generated by emerging formal sectors. During the war, starting from 1983, there was a lot of emphasis on personal safety which also encouraged self-employment. Banks and financial institutions led by State policies to promote self-employment, opened up avenues and encouraged various forms of small and medium enterprises. The prominent ones were 'Chinese' fast food eateries and beauty salons. Retail shops for consumer goods, building material, motor spare parts, mobile phones and computer accessories also mottled the landscape. The intermittent nature of the public transport system, especially for short distances, also created another market for individual vehicle owners to become fare taxi drivers. As transport is an essential part of a vibrant society, coupled with access to credit through finance institutes,

this led to the unrestrained addition of three-wheelers, which provided a short term solution for males, especially youth seeking employment. The number of registered three wheelers in 2007 was a little over a 100,000 and by the end of 2014, the numbers soared up to 929,000.² With the addition of 10,000-12,000 three wheelers a month, by July 2015 this number had reached one million³. While it has led to boosting the public transport network, and encouraged local travel, it is absorbing essential productive human resources, and stifles people, specifically youth from becoming professionals.

In addition to the two key employment sectors identified above, Non-Government agencies (development agents including NGOs) absorbed a substantial number of individuals. These agencies, provided innovative youth with skills development opportunities, while setting higher salary standards. The NGO sector provided opportunities for social mobility in rural, under developed areas, including war affected districts. At one time, the NGO sector, equalled the State in providing employment in war affected areas. Currently, a number of agencies are downsizing, resulting from a decline in donor funding following Sri Lanka becoming a lower middle income country in 2011. In one way, it provides an opportunity for the hospitality sector to harness potential human resources who have already been trained as social mobilizers and soft skill trainers by the NGO sector, and are now seeking work in the target areas.

DURING THE 1970'S, WOMEN HELD 60% OF THE OPERATIONS IN THE HOTEL SECTOR, COMPARED TO THE CURRENT EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN WHICH HAS FALLEN TO 7%.

Women

Stereotyping further extended by confining women to government employment such as teaching, nursing and clerical work. When State agencies started to make structural changes by employing women as 'frontline officers', they asked for transfers to become teachers at the first

² http://www.economynext.com/Sri_Lanka_three_wheeler_population_tops_one_million-3-2814-.html [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

³ Ibid

chance they received. Females finding comfort zones based on their family wishes (marriage, raise children, husbands want housewives, elderly in-laws), has affected the hotel sector by reducing its female employment to a single digit of 7%. During the 1970's women held 60% of the operations, according to a senior hotelier. During this research, there were three females who were trained for 3 months, and recruited by a reputed hotel chain, but refused to take the jobs due to their parent's wishes. Twenty young women out of twenty four (20/24 - 90%) who were interviewed during a hotel school training, held the view that they will be forced to leave the job or find other employment once they get married or have children.⁴

While there is no specific data regarding sexual harassment in the workplace, and whether it is one of the reasons for women to leave the sector, from our interviews it was evident that women found it a tough sector to work in. While sexual harassment at the workplace is an unspoken issue, as the sector is seen as being male dominated, it is a subject that requires further research.

LOW REMUNERATION PACKAGES OFFERED BY THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR CANNOT ATTRACT TODAY'S YOUTH, WHO ARE ATTRACTED BY TODAY'S CONSUMER LIFESTYLE.

Remuneration and perks

There is a wider negative perception on most of the private sector employment. Job security and pensions offered by government employment are considered privileges.

Remuneration package of the hospitality trade (hotel employees) starts at 6000.00 LKR as an allowance to an intern. In reputed hotel chains, the salary after 6 months will be about 10,000.00 LKR, while some hotels pay on an individual basis as high as 15,000.00 LKR. Comparatively, this remuneration range cannot attract a lot of youth who are now drawn to a consumerist society.

The promising part of the remuneration package of the hospitality sector is the 'service charge'.

⁴ Workshops with hotel school trainees – Ahungalle

According to interviews conducted, it is often dependent upon the supervisor's discretion. Employees cannot take any action if they were paid a reduced share of service charge, and in most places there is no place to lodge a complaint. During the off season, resort hotels get a lower number of guests, and sometimes there is no service charge paid during such spells. Unfortunately, the basic salary on offer is not adequate according to most of the interviewees who are in service, therefore they rely on the service charge.

The once lucrative hotel industry maybe the most affected sector as a result of the war. Several studies and Central Bank statistics suggest an analogous pattern of the eruption of war and tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka.⁵ According to many expert interviews, even city hotels in Colombo had to lay off their staff. Service charges, the attractive part of remuneration declined. Starting from 1983, many trained, skilled staff left Sri Lanka. Hotel staff who had years of experience, values and practices left for better paid destinations, while the reduced remuneration and other incentives attracted only a few top skilled persons. Over the last five years there were different attempts to bring those skilled persons back to the country, but with little success, as those 'diaspora of hospitality professionals' established themselves abroad.

40 PERCENT OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS CITED ENGLISH AS A BARRIER TO EXCEL IN THE HOTEL AND TOURISM SECTOR.

Language Skills

Language skill is a key to success in any trade. Hotel and Tourism sector demands not only English, but any other international language. In order to climb the ladder of the hospitality industry, one needs at minimum, a strong command in English. This was evident through the accounts of professionals interviewed for this study. 40% of the participants of the focus group discussion highlighted English as a major barrier to excel in their employment in the hotel

⁵ See figure 1: Tourists arrivals from 1982 to 2009

and tourism sector. On average, English reading ability is adequate for many other professions, and at operational levels sometimes it may not be necessary. In contrast, hospitality industry demands a high quality of communication skills at least in English. Knowing that, many youth pick other avenues of employment as ‘comfort zones’.

Those who have excelled in the trade have either the school background or the courage to learn at minimum, one international language. International level hoteliers, general managers of local resort hotels, trainers and experts have a command of languages as a core competence. Although the skill level of the youth who were interviewed in Ahungalla were better than average, they still need to improve their communication ability.

LIFE SKILLS TRAINING IS IMPORTANT TO ENSURE YOUTH TRAINED IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR REMAIN IN EMPLOYMENT.

Life Skills:

After a life skill training course was conducted in Ahungalla, a comment made by hotel school trainees was that ‘*We could have better prepared for this course had we been given this kind of a training at the beginning*’.⁶ Seventy youth participated in this training and the first few hours were used to explore why they had decided to join the hospitality sector. They have clearly

demonstrated that they require further life skills rather than technical skills (i.e. communication, time management, interpersonal skills, money management, and relationship building etc.) to remain in employment.

50 out of 70 interviewed did not have a career goal or never saw the inside of a hotel (as cited before), and never had seen the workings of a hotel in their life. They had not made a choice on their own, but through the mobilization of a hotel company and an NGO, were brought for training. For 80% of the participants, this was their first training course after leaving school. They still are undecided as to whether they will stay in the hospitality sector or change to another career path.

There were several responses which highlighted that they had problems ‘mixing with fellow students’. This may have a number of connotations ranging from ‘personal fears’ to ‘fear of mixing with different caste groups (or people from other areas)’.

There is another set of responses probably coming from the same root, stating ‘*coming to the school*’. Distance, safety, age are a few factors that discourage participants to make clear decisions. Two respondents stated that they doubted whether they would get any employment after this training.

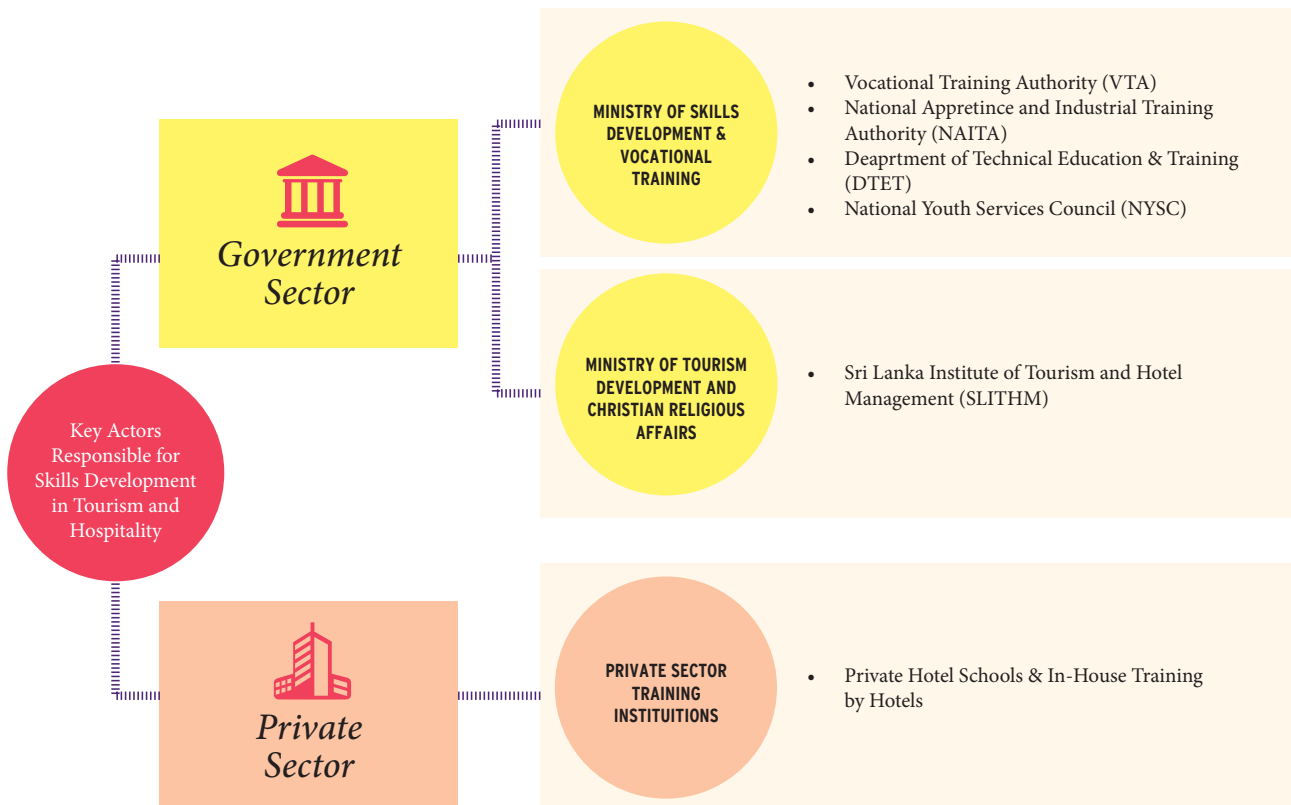
⁶ Workshops with hotel school trainees – Ahungalle

4 HOSPITALITY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN SRI LANKA

4.1 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONAL SET UP IN SRI LANKA

The Government is the main skills development provider in the hospitality sector in Sri Lanka, and owns the majority of vocational training infrastructure. The majority of key vocational educational and training institutes come under the Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training (MSDVT), and Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs (MTDCRA). There are a number of private training institutions which have or have not been registered under the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC). Key vocational training providers in the hospitality sector are Vocational Training Authority (VTA), National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA), Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET) and National Youth Services Council (NYSC) which operates under MSDVT. Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM) which is the main training institute that services the hospitality sector in Sri Lanka, and is a part of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) comes under the MTDCRA. The private sector oriented hospitality sector skills development is twofold: 1) skills development by private hotel schools, and 2) in-house training provided by the hotels.

Figure 8: Key Actors Responsible for Skills Development in Tourism and Hospitality



4.2 POLICY MAKING IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Generally, the responsibility of policy development and implementation in the area of skills enhancement at sub-academic levels lies in the hands of the MSDVT. In order to achieve the above, the Ministry embarked on two programmes: “Skills Sector Development” (2014-2020) and “Skills Sector Enhancement” (2014- 2016), with financial inputs from Asian Development Bank (ADB), The World Bank (WB), Korea and Germany. The programs aim at:

- (i) Improved quality of Tertiary Vocational Education and Training (TVET) provision,
- (ii) Enhanced industry partnership for TVET planning and provision,
- (iii) Increased participation and improved equity in TVET, and
- (iv) Improved sector management to implement policy, institutional, and operational reforms¹.

This programme looks at four prioritised industrial sectors that the Government of Sri Lanka has earmarked for long-term development: the information and communication industry (ICT), tourism and hospitality industry, light engineering, and construction. The program plans to invest a colossal sum of over USD \$ 1 billion over the next 6 years. The funding follows a reimbursement concept by the ADB based on disbursement-link indicators.

4.3 HOSPITALITY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM) was established in 1964 to develop the capacities of young men and women, to serve in the fields of hospitality and travel industry. SLITHM offers five courses as follows:

- Four-year management diploma in hotel and catering,
- Three-year management diploma in hotel and catering,
- Certificate level courses on hotel food production, hotel housekeeping and hotel front office,
- 3 months’ craft level course covering housekeeping, restaurant and bar service, and cookery,
- National & Chauffeur Tourist Guide’s Training.

While certificate and craft level courses are offered at SLITHM’s six provincial schools in Anuradhapura, Bandarawela, Pallekelle, Koggala, Ratnapura, and Kurunegala, management diplomas are offered at the main college in Colombo². Craft level and certificate level entry requirements are G.C.E. O/L with minimum 3 credits and 3 ordinary passes, including English and Mathematics in not more than two sittings. Age limit is between 17 to 45 years. Entry requirement for the diploma level is 2 Passes at G.C.E (A/L) in one sitting and a credit pass in English language at G.C.E (O/L), or ordinary pass at G.C.E (A/L). Age limit is between 17 to 24 years³. Though SLITHM ambitiously targetted 600,000

ALTHOUGH SLITHM PLANNED TO TRAIN 600,000 YOUTH IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR, THEY HAVE ONLY PRODUCED 555 ANNUALLY.

¹ http://www.priu.gov.lk/news_update/Current_Affairs/ca201405/20140530adb_assists_skills_sector_development_program.htm [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

² <http://www.slithm.edu.lk/> [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

³ Priyadarshani, I., & Seneviratne, J. (2011). *A Brief on Tourism Skills Development for Returning Migrants in Sri Lanka*. ASKE: Colombo. A research commissioned by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation.

youth to be trained⁴ they only produce 555⁵ annually.

Having the largest network of vocational training centres (with 224 rural, 22 district, and 7 national vocational training centres), **Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka** (VTA) is able to reach approximately 25,000 youth in 83 occupations in 18 trade sectors. VTA was established under the Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka Act No. 12 of 1995, with the intent of providing skills for youth to find employment⁶. VTA conducts four vocational training courses in cookery, room attendant, waiter/ steward, and fruits and vegetable processing. All of the above courses are six months in duration and conducted at National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 4. Their Ahangama rural vocational training centre offers three of the said training courses, namely cook, room attendant, and waiter/ steward.

The universities of Sabaragamuwa, Uva and Wayamba offer graduate level tourism degree programmes, while the University of Colombo in collaboration with SLITHM offers a master's degree programme in tourism. Among the government sponsored vocational training institutes, there are 59 institutes registered either under Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) or with the University Grants Commission (UGC). These training organizations provide 142 repeated courses, including 95 unique courses. These institutes are distributed across the country in 17 districts, with the highest number concentrated in Colombo and Gampaha (Embuldeniya 2016).

There are several **private sector institutes** that provide hospitality sector skills development; some have been registered at the TVEC while some have not. According to the Tourism Industry Forecasts 2016-2020, there are 59 institutes registered, the majority of them are from Colombo district (23). However, this same report does not indicate whether these are private sector institutions or government sector organisations⁷. On the other hand, the report highlights that there are fewer training offers where eco-friendly tourism is practiced in most

THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY FOUND, THAT SKILLS AND PROFESSIONALISM REQUIRED TO START AS A GROUND LEVEL EMPLOYEE AND SUSTAIN THEMSELVES THROUGH THE SYSTEM ARE INADEQUATE.

FROM 2006, JETWING HAS COMPLETED 12 TRAINING PROGRAMS ENROLLING 787 YOUTH, OF WHICH 57% WHO COMPLETED THE COURSE WERE ABSORBED TO JETWING HOTELS.

of the districts, as vocational training centres do not offer such courses.

The hospitality industry found, that skills and professionalism required to start as a ground level employee and to continue in the system are inadequate. To fill this gap, hotels which have the capacity to carry out their own capacity building programmes stepped in, providing skills training on hospitality. Tangerine Beach Hotel and International Hotel School of Mount Lavinia Hotel are training young professionals. Tangerine Beach Hotel started its own hotel school in 2008, offering a 6 months' craft level training course where the students recover their course fee before they pass out, by way of carrying out on the job training where they receive an allowance. International Hotel School of Mount Lavinia Hotel also offers a Diploma in Hotel Management and students receive a hands-on practical training under supervision, based on a curricular offered by Mount Lavinia Hotel⁸. The course is internationally recognised and has to date completed five batches with its two wings in the East and the South.

In-house training offer is a unique feature in the hospitality sector. Once a new recruit comes, he or she gets a chance to follow two weeks in-house familiarization training. On the other hand, it is also used to train and coach the required human resource.

A Colombo based city hotel said that they hire outside trainers to build the capacity of their existing staff in specialised training, the aim of which is to develop the professionalism of the employees to have a perspective of '*customer is king and listen to them*'. The same city hotel

⁴ <http://www.slithm.edu.lk/> [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

⁵ Embuldeniya, Chandra. (2016). *Tourism Industry Forecasts 2016-2020*.

⁶ <http://www.vtasl.gov.lk/> [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

⁷ See Embuldeniya (2016)

⁸ <http://www.mountlaviniahotel.com/about-us/international-hotel-school.html> [Accessed on 20th December 2016]

does not provide in-house training, but On the Job Training (OJT). In-house training is offered to anyone who has completed any form of vocational training hospitality, whereas OJT is offered to anybody who joins a hotel as a fresh recruit, without prior exposure to the hotel sector. The Manager stated that ‘rather than taking a half trained person from a hotel school’, he prefers training freshly selected persons on OJT, on a weekly basis. Often, the larger hotels that have their own in-house training are reluctant to adopt a new confined curricular.

Private Public Partnership is another approach adopted by the hospitality industry to build the capacity of the human resource they intend to recruit. One such initiative is Jetwing Youth Development Project (JYDP). The aim of JYDP is to provide those with entry level skills, and knowledge with adequate training, who would then be absorbed into Jetwing Hotels with a view of involving the community in tourism. The training covers four areas in the hospitality sector: food and beverage service, housekeeping, front office management and cookery. Under this programme, Jetwing partners with either one or two parties which provides financial, vocational training or other kinds of support. For instance, the recently completed training held in Jaffna aimed at building the capacity of the human resource that was required for Jetwing hotel in Jaffna. While Jetwing provides training expertise, with GIZ’s financial support and the use of VTA’s rural vocational training centre in Karainagar, the programme trained 64 youth and absorbed 43 into Jetwing Jaffna.

4.4 CONTRIBUTION BY DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

Currently, the main bilateral donor in tourism in Sri Lanka is Australia, under its Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) programme, which focuses on the East and Polonnaruwa district. Its assistance towards Sri Lanka is to support the State to set up its growth strategy, to graduate to an upper middle income category. The hospitality and tourism sector has been identified as a key growth sector. GIZ to a lesser extent, focuses on skills enhancement, and

Box 2: CARE International Experience:

CARE International Sri Lanka initiated a skills development training together with Kavanthissa Vocational Training Centre and Jetwing Hotels in the hospitality sector. The objective of the intervention was to increase employability and employment of 200 youth specifically focusing on women in the district of Hambantota in the hospitality industry. As part of the initiative, CARE supported the installment of the most up to date equipment at KVTC to support the training. The skills enhancement focused on areas such as Restaurant Management, Culinary, Housekeeping, Food and Beverage. The following phases of this “Skills for Youth” programme partnered with Cinnamon Hotels and Aitken Spence Hotels to conduct training in multiple locations with varying modalities: in-house training and hotel-owned hospitality school. The initial model, partnering with and capacitating an existing VTC was also replicated in Batticaloa with the Miani Technical Institute. The programme trained 9 batches of youth and women over 3 years, enrolling a total of 612 youth (74 per cent of men and 26 per cent of women). However, despite 492 (80%) completing the training and 453 going on to take on employment for three months after graduating, the majority of women did not take up employment and the large majority (exact numbers yet to be confirmed) of trainees did not remain at the jobs beyond the 6-month OJT period. The main issues CARE faced, were the recruitment of both young men and women for the programme as they were not interested in gaining skills in the hospitality sector and faced opposition from family and community. In addition, those that did enter the industry, tended to quit due to heavy workload, familial opposition and insufficient pay, making retention a serious challenge.

85 PERCENT OF TRAINING COURSES IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR HAVE NO NATIONAL CERTIFICATION.

recently completed training of a batch of young people in hospitality, under a private public partnership with Jetwing hotels.

CINEC which is a primary maritime institute commenced training in tourism, foreseeing the potential for the training business, based on the demand in the sector and based on the assessment that the current training offer does not match the industry’s requirement. The first training,

the High National Diploma in tourism however, was a learning exercise for the institution which enrolled 10 students. These students were from the industry who wanted to pursue higher studies in the same sector. However, almost all of them stopped the course half way as they could not balance work and study. Presently, CINEC plans to commence a Hotel School using existing infrastructure in partnership with Aitken Spence, with GCE Advanced Level as the entry qualification.

Under its two programme components, WUSC expects to bring down 40 volunteers to assist different organizations' in tourism development, with the aim of training and finding employment for 4000 youth in the hospitality sector. As part of creating an enabling environment for the above two components, WUSC recently assisted 20 government and private sector stakeholders visit the Philippines' to learn how Public Private Partnership (PPP) in tourism works. WUSC has also set up stakeholder forums at district and regional levels in 11 districts, which is comprised of tourism sector actors, public sector, training providers and CSOs. The forum faces difficulties when they try to link with the national tourism plan. The national tourism plan and its targets have not been communicated with the district or the regional level actors. WUSC's role is to facilitate linking of these various actors and national plan with regional actors and plans.

4.5 ISSUES IN THE TRAINING OFFER

According to the *Tourism Industry Human Resource Forecasts Report 2016* (See Table 5), there are 141 courses conducted with 359 iterations per year. The Annual capacity is 8599 students, of which the vast majority are with non-NVQ qualifications. The consequence is that these students will not have an internationally recognized or nationally standardised qualification. Another way to look at this data is that 85 per cent of the training courses are not nationally certified, and they produce an uncertified standard of human resource. The repercussions could be that these graduates will not be absorbed into the hospitality sector at the expected level due to poor performance, lack of qualification, lack of required skills and professionalism. This brings out a special aspect of the **quality** and the **relevance** of the skills development offer in the hospitality sector.

Table 5: Summary of programmes status and their capacity

Level of Qualification	Count of Course Name	Sum of Courses per Annum	Sum of Students per Annum	Sum of Annual Training Capacity	Sum of Students Present
Not NVQ	118	305	3050	7574	1864
NVQ Level 3	11	26	220	520	147
NVQ Level 4	12	28	205	505	151
Grand Total	141	359	3475	8599	2162

Source: Embuldeniya, Chandra. (2016). *Tourism Industry Forecasts 2016-2020*

Our consultation with stakeholders brought to light several issues that influence the quality and the relevance of the present hospitality skills development in Sri Lanka. Stakeholders interviewed were sceptical about the quality of the product provided by the mushrooming hotel schools around the country, though they issued National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) certification.¹ A few stakeholders consulted, had a perception that the Ceylon Hotel School provides a standardized training, as it is delivered by ex-hoteliere. Usually, a hotel school charges about Rs. 150,000 per head for a basic level six months' course on hospitality.

The training offer in the hospitality industry in Sri Lanka has a deficit, as it has failed to maintain the quality in training delivery and meet the industry relevant requirement. Quality becomes a problematic issue when the courses are still focused on four traditional areas (Food and Beverage Operation, House Keeping, Front Office Management and Professional Cookery), while the sector itself has changed in line with the application of modern technology and practices. When the industry discovers there is a mismatch of what the training providers produce, and what the industry expects in terms of appropriate knowledge, skills and professionalism, the industry steps in to produce the human resource they need (*Figure 6*).

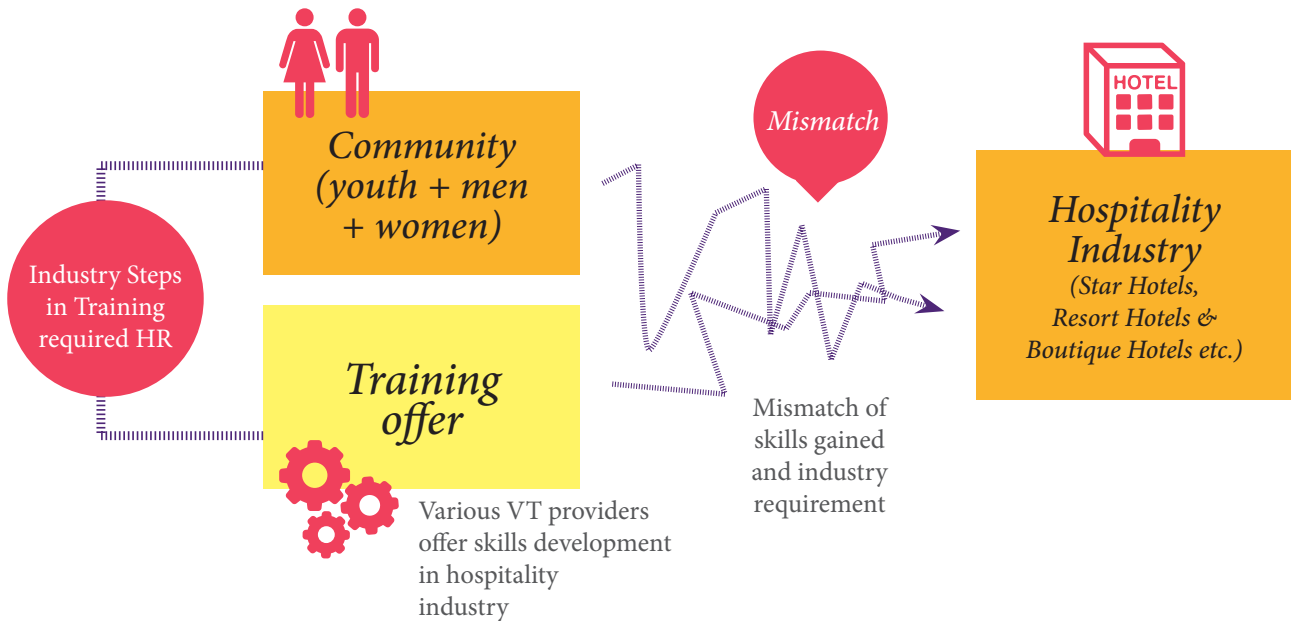
A discrepancy in the current training offer on hospitality is, that it does not address the professionalism and interpersonal skills that a ground level employee should have. Our consultation with stakeholders brought to light several issues that influence the quality and the relevance of the present hospitality skills development in Sri Lanka. Stakeholders interviewed were sceptical about the quality of the product provided by the mushrooming hotel schools around the country, though they issued National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) certification.² A few stakeholders consulted, had a perception that the Ceylon Hotel School provides a standardized training, as it is delivered by ex-hoteliere. Usually, a hotel school charges about Rs. 150,000 per head for a basic level six months' course on hospitality.

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¹ The NVQ is a certification system that provides recognition for vocational training. It is a work based qualification which recognises the skills and knowledge a person carry to a job. The candidate demonstrates that skills and knowledge in front of an assessor to prove the competency in the chosen career (see http://www.tvec.gov.lk/nvq/description_of_nvq.htm for more details).

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Figure 9: Mismatch in Current Hospitality Training Offer



The quality of the skills development provision in the hospitality sector and its relevance to the industry depend on the curriculum that training providers use. A vocational education and training expert commented that in developing a curriculum, trade standards has to be determined through a process termed Develop a Curriculum (DACUM). Trade or skills standards are determined by facilitating a discussion with relevant experts from the intended industry. In this case, it is the hospitality industry. However, according to a stakeholder from the vocational education and training sector, higher level executives or administrative officers who attend the DACUM are unable to identify the required skills needed for the identified tasks, thereby resulting in a curriculum, which in practice does not match with industry needs.

While the end of the war marked a high demand for the hospitality trade and the Government approved and promoted the establishment of new hotels, the development of human resources for such establishments progressed at a slower pace than anticipated. This was mainly due to the vocational education and training sector not being able to launch the training in full swing. Similarly, most of the higher level officers in the vocational education and training sector in Sri Lanka are only interested in delivering the trained output, not the outcome (the actual number engaged in jobs). As a result, the training delivery is highly focused on producing numbers, not the human resource with adequate skills, knowledge and professionalism required, by providing guided practices and applying them in real life situations. At times, to make a change in the system is seen as taking a risk of losing the occupation, as innovative ideas are treated as alien concepts that disturb the existing system. An example provided by a Vocational Education and Training specialist is, that they were engaged in planning a hotel training for Polonnaruwa with an integrated mini restaurant. It took a long time to obtain approval as it was difficult to convince people of the concept. The concept was, that while trainees obtain knowledge and skills through classroom sessions on hospitality, the mini restaurant would provide the necessary on the job training and associated development of attitude and professionalism.

5 RECRUITMENT DRIVE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

In recruiting the necessary human resource into the hospitality sector, the sector itself uses a wide range of methods, because the traditional newspaper advertisement does not bring an adequate number of applicants. A manager from a Colombo based city hotel said that they use 1) advertising on both print and online media; 2) negotiate with recruitment agencies; 3) have a conversation with hotel schools and spread the word through their existing employees. Even with these methods the recruitment is most often less than 10 persons. Our consultation analysed the reasons for such a low level of recruitment.

5.1 REASONS FOR LOW RECRUITMENT

As elaborated in the section on choice, young people and women are reluctant to join due to their negative perception of the sector. Adding to this is the demand made by the hospitality sector itself on choosing and filtering the person with the ‘right attitude’, which is invariably linked to the individual personality resulting from the socialization process everyone undergoes. However, a hotel school commented that during a limited time period, they are not in a position to change the personality, as the course structure is heavily focused on skills capacity building given the existing curriculum. They further stated that when it comes to the physical appearance of an individual, which is an area that the hotel school cannot change, the hotel industry tends to select those who look ‘good’. A human resource manager from a group of hotels elaborated, that during the on the job training or trainee period, employees are closely monitored to determine their right attitude. He defined right attitude as service mindedness or service oriented attitude. They also prefer youth from the rural sector because the rural community is perceived to have been brought up with a service oriented mind-set.

5.2 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

An interesting finding is, the hospitality sector employers do not heavily rely on educational qualifications when ground level employees are recruited. After reviewing the application furnished by the applicant during the interview process, applicant’s knowledge and skills are tested to see if they have followed a hospitality industry related vocational training. A professional at a Colombo based city hotel said, that they look at four aspects when selecting an employee: 1) Appearance; 2) Background and education; 3) Family background and 4) Grama Niladhari’s certificate. The human resource department checks the family background through the referees provided by the candidate. On the other hand, whoever looks good in appearance, has a down to earth attitude, but maybe weak in language is given preference, as the knowledge and skills can be imparted during the on the job training process. They further said, they do not recruit anybody who exhibits “arrogant behaviour”, because at the end, the reputation of the hotel is at stake.

Once an employee is recruited, he or she has to undergo a probation period of 06 months. During the probation period, a set of dropouts can be observed, resulting from a mismatch of career aspirations, work load and stress, harassments by the senior team members, mismatch of perception on the type of work involved and parental and peer influence in dealing with difficult situations at the workplace. Once an employee passes the first year of service, he or she is then entitled to general entitlements and promotions. For promotions, one has to demonstrate willingness to be in the sector, performance to the management in terms of building language skills (English and another language), and professional qualifications such as obtaining a degree in the relevant field.

According to a human resource manager from a reputed hotel in Colombo, they do not look into educational qualifications when they recruit for the beginner level (ground level) staff, it is only the attitude that is considered. However, the company has opened career laddering opportunities for everyone who is interested. It takes 15 years to make a general manager who is selected with aforementioned qualifications. If the person is conversant in technical, tactical and strategic aspects of hotel management, he or she is considered as an ideal candidate for a managerial position. Technical means everything related to hotel management from ground to the top. Tactical is situational knowledge, which means handling situations for the best interest of the customer and company. Strategic is planning the work and visionary thinking. They have three such managers now who have started their career as ground level employees. Though the above is a promising note for a beginning level hotelier to start a career in the sector, for rural youth who are sceptical about the sector, invisibility of career prospects would discourage them from considering the sector.

5.3 EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

Of a total seven hotels interviewed, none had an employment strategy. Nevertheless, it depends on the human resource requirement. Jetwing Hotels said that their employment strategy depends on the requirements of the hotels that Jetwing has. By the end of 2016, Jetwing will have a total of 2100 employees, of which 15 per cent are women. Jetwing conducts in house training, so that the required human resource can be absorbed into their hotel chain. When analysing the 12 training programmes conducted under the JYDP, a total of 503 youth were selected, of which only 69 per cent completed the training, while only 57 per cent were absorbed into Jetwing Hotels. The balance joined hotels outside of the Jetwing hotel chain. However, Jetwing believes that if the trained person is still in the hospitality sector, the cost (approximately Rs. 50,000 per head) associated with training will be a valuable investment for the sector.

CAREER GUIDANCE COUNSELLING THAT RELIES ON UPDATED INFORMATION ON LABOUR MARKET DEMANDS AND TRENDS IS CRITICAL TO ENSURE THAT YOUTH SELECT CAREERS THAT MATCH THEIR EXPECTATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS.

5.4 CAREER GUIDANCE COUNSELLING

The recruitment process should follow career guidance counselling, in which the individual is assisted by an external person to identify his or her true ambition, career aspiration, and abilities to match them with the labour market demand. The career counsellor should be well informed about the industry and its requirements. However, a counsellor based in a training institute tries to promote the course, and not to assist the counselee in making an informed decision about his/her career. The presently practiced career questionnaire, is regarded as an outdated tool that does not identify the career choice correctly. In order to assist a counselee, the career counsellor must have information on labour market demand readily available. Job market analysis has to be done to find out the labour market demand. TVEC does labour market analysis, however, the quality of such analysis is not guaranteed. Such labour market analyses does not explore the opportunities available with micro level enterprises, such as village level small vehicle repair places and ongoing construction sites. Our interaction with the participants from the Ahungalla Hotel School revealed, that they had not given a thought, or been sufficiently advised about making an informed decision about matching their aspirations with abilities they have and the labour market demand. Almost all stakeholders consulted, agreed to the fact that when aspirations are not matched, people tend to leave the job. When they enter the industry, there is a tendency for youth to leave the job when their expectations are not met.

6 RETENTION OF YOUTH AND WOMEN IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Retention of youth and women in the hospitality sector is not a well-researched area that can provide secondary data to verify the findings of this report. Therefore the evidence collected and presented in this section is based on interviews conducted and is categorized as follows.

REMUNERATION PACKAGES AND SALARY SCALES WITHIN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR IS A KEY DETERMINANT OF WHETHER AN EMPLOYEE STAYS OR LEAVES.

Retention and probation period.

The first six months of new employees is critical to become established in the hotel sector. Most of the dropouts occur during this period, due to various reasons including workplace pressure. The generational gap between old and new staff causes high friction and impedes new recruits adapting to the trade.

After the trainee period, the new recruits are expected to work in different departments, including the major operational areas such as, food and beverages, kitchen, housekeeping and front office. Extensive hours of standing, walking, serving, lifting, room/table arrangements, cleaning, handling multiple requests (or rather demands), are some of the difficult tasks that young recruits experience during this period. In some ways, it is like passing a military drill. Those who have the career aspiration and skill, will only endure such a trying period to reach a permanent posting in the hotel trade. One interviewee said, *“during in service training, we also faced challenges from the old employees who thought that we were trying to take their positions / places. They treated us harshly on occasions.”*

Salary, remuneration and facilities.

The hospitality industry faces a challenge in retaining its human resources when it comes to salary remuneration and facilities, as it was found to play a critical role in an employee’s decision to remain in the sector or leave. There is no accepted standard for basic salary. It ranges from Rs. 10,000 to 15,000, with service charges added. A reputed group of hotels add 50 per cent of service charges in addition to food, uniform and accommodation. However, not all hotels are in a position to provide an attractive remuneration package. Furthermore, the sector itself has not been able to maintain a competitive and appealing salary scale. Since the remuneration seems to be insufficient, hotel employees have a tendency to leave for overseas jobs, after a few years of experience. Due to this high turnover of staff, the hotel sector is constantly in need of fresh recruits who are well trained and competent.

Similarly, the operational level staff complain that they do not get benefits such as bank loans. The lower basic salaries of operational staff and lower ranks of technical staff, reduce their eligibility to housing and personal loans or result in reduced loan amounts. On the other hand, banks do not consider service charges as part of the salary. Therefore, many young people decide to move away from the hospitality sector within a short period of time.

FAMILY COMMITMENTS PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN AN EMPLOYEE'S DECISION TO REMAIN IN THE SECTOR OR LEAVE, ESPECIALLY IF THERE ARE STAFF TRANSFERS.

As discussed in Section 3- *making hotels an employment choice*, family duties and being close to home play a role in a person deciding to stay or leave the sector. Another reason for those employed in the sector to leave the job occurs when there are staff transfers. An increase in

drop outs occur when employees want to stay with their elderly parents or to raise a young family. Although this happens only in larger hotel chains, in the short term, they are the most affected by staff shortages. Boutique hotels, villas and guest houses keep minimum staff and sometimes do not provide staff with statutory commitments such as Employee Provident Fund (EPF) and Employee Trust Fund (ETF) benefits. While larger companies are able to practice human resource (HR) compliances, smaller and medium enterprises face pressure under limited working capital. Similarly, larger operators can provide facilities, like accommodation to make transfers feasible, but yet, there is voluntary underemployment recorded due to family commitments. *“I was working at Hotel Blue Waters, but moved here since I got married and had a baby. My salary is lower now, but there is no other way to stay with my family”* was a comment from a steward cum cashier in a roadside restaurant in Biyagama. This was confirmed by a training manager of a larger hotel chain. He said *“People in the village are unwilling to be transferred to other parts of the country due to reasons like parents’ wishes, elderly parents, new families and schooling children. Sometimes, these reasons are unbelievable.”* On such occasions, visibility and recognition of staff by giving uniforms, does not mean much.

Language and skills development

As described in Section 3, English language skills decide entry and career advancement in all sub-sectors within the hotel and tourism sector. That coupled, with short term financial ambitions, negative attitudes of both older and younger generations alike regarding hard work, reduce their potential for retention and advancement. A hotel manager corroborated this by saying, *“10 years ago, there were people to be hired with a better command of English. Now we receive lesser numbers of candidates with language fluency. Their ambition is to get 6 months’ training and experience and go abroad. Nowadays, people do not like to work hard. When I complained to my mother about my leg pain, as I was standing and working, she shouted, ‘Youjolly well get back to work’”*. Nowadays, parents would ask their children to stay at home. Similarly, to improve

‘I WAS ASKED TO LEAVE MY JOB BY MY IN-LAWS, AS THEY VIEW HOSPITALITY AS AN ILL REPUTED SECTOR, SINCE THEY DON’T UNDERSTAND THE WORKINGS OF A HOTEL’- COMMENT BY A SINGLE FEMALE PARENT, HOTEL EMPLOYEE.

the scope for career development, soft skills such as negotiation and communication, developing a personality and interpersonal skills are required. For city hotels, a higher level of educational qualification is required, as the role of a hotel employee requires academic skills.

Local hotel operators are also used by new recruits to obtain experience, in the medium term. Once they reach the level of experience required to find employment abroad, especially in the Middle Eastern region, where the remunerations are better, they leave. Although there are no proper records, each year, several thousand leave the country for such purposes. An HR director of a leading hotel chain said *“they do not worry if the employee is within the hotel industry. The retention can be maintained if the employees are better paid and if there is a career ladder for employees to gain better positions.”* However, this trend which started during the 1980’s continues to occur, affecting local projections and quality of service.

Improved Human Resource Practices

Larger hotel chains, and mid-range hotels have setup grievance handling systems as one way to uplift staff wellbeing, increase retention and ensure quality service delivery¹. (One manager stated that, *“anybody in their staff can access the manager or any board member including the chairman, but certain big hotels do not have accessibility to management; therefore, individual attention has not been given, and is one of the main reasons for high staff turnover. Respect to diversity and individual skills is important to manage a healthy performing human resource bank. We carry out weekly briefings where we address those attitudinal and performance related issues.”*

¹ To understand how HR practices such as introducing grievance handling mechanisms impact on retention of staff, requires in-depth study and analysis that was beyond the scope of this report.

Retention of Women in Hospitality Sector

As described under *Section 3*, there was a drastic reduction of women in the hospitality sector over the years. In the late 1970s and early '80s female employment within the sector was nearly 60%, with front office and housekeeping being predominantly occupied by females. They were headhunted from Colombo Schools. Currently female employment is 7% or lower and there is no regularity within the sector.

Both women and men interviewed for this study held similar views and opinions regarding the reluctance of female employment within the sector and lower retention. The following reasons were given:

1. Although young school leavers join the sector, there is resistance from their families especially the men in their lives including boyfriends and husbands as described in sections above. Therefore competent women who have become experienced staff either become unemployed voluntarily or a very few change their occupation. The majority of changes occur when females decide to get married.
2. *"The tough work environment in hotels is not for women"*, was a comment from another female employee who became a manager through her education and experience. The structure was more like plantations, but without necessary safeguards unless someone is in a reputed hotel chain, even though the control of department heads are enormous when it comes to career advancement. Therefore, only a few women decide to remain. By the time someone gets promoted, the psychology is that pressure and tension is part of the job and they unconsciously exert that tension over the new recruits, especially women. The way respondents attributed the tough nature of employment in the hospitality sector was notable across the board. Pressure on time, deliverables and from supervisors were highlighted. The role of Human

Resources Departments was referred to as possible change agents of organizational culture.

3. Women were not seen as possible employees by the hotel sector, due to their long term absence in the sector to demonstrate their potential. With only 7% of females employed in the sector and that too in traditional housekeeping department, does not give them adequate visibility. Similarly, the front office is also a stereotypical place for women. Although they are professionals, their social position was not elevated to challenge stereotypes, as they were seen as 'receptionists' and 'sales girls'. While there are female chefs (*See Figure 7*) they get less visibility. So the general perception is that women cannot thrive in the hospitality sector. If they have reached reasonable positions that too is attributed to stereotypical male traits such as being a 'tough woman'.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENTS WITHIN HOTELS CAN PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN CHANGING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE WHEN IT COMES TO WOMEN.

4. There are particular insensitivities to female needs within the sector as highlighted by almost all women who were interviewed for this study. Female rest rooms, female employee toilets, female quarters are overlooked by many operators, except a few. *"Females are not weak, but there are requirements for their wellbeing, during menstruation some females go through difficulties. If there are female rest rooms which accommodate those difficulties, they will pay back with more productive hours"* was the general feedback. Most hotels employ a practice of not allowing women to work after 7.00 pm. In one way this was referred to as a safety precaution and family life of females. Yet on the other hand, this was used against them by fellow employees and supervisors when it comes to promotions, service charge dividend and other benefits. Certain affirmative actions like transport

and accommodation have de-motivated male employees as they perceive “women’s weakness” as giving privileges to women.

MENTORING OF YOUNG RECRUITS CAN CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS RETENTION, ESPECIALLY OF WOMEN.

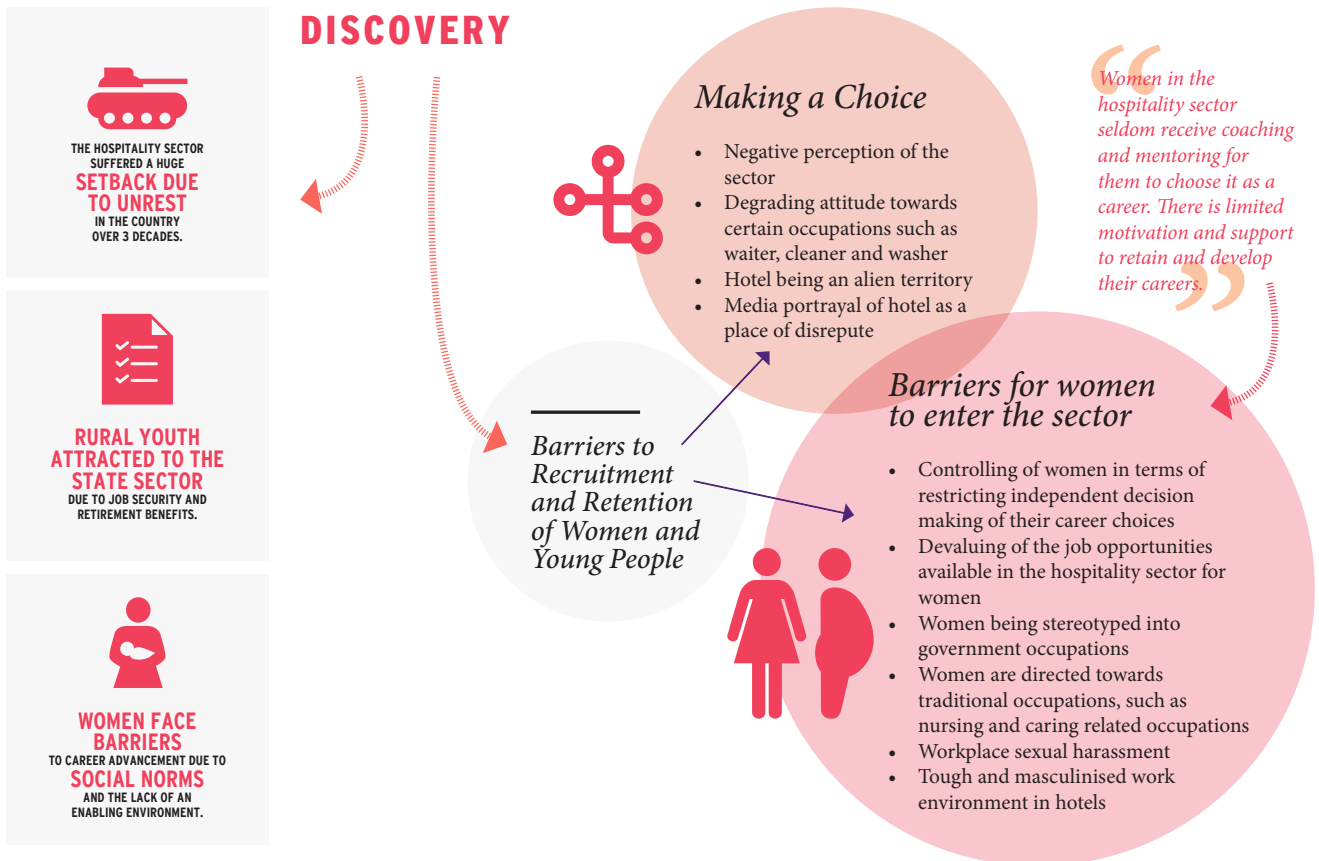
5. In many successful cases, those women who have thrived in the sector were recruited through a known party. A family relation, family friend, or sibling was the motivational factor for young females to join the sector and quite often they were mentored by that known party throughout their career. Some have entered as unskilled labour and later followed different professional programmes due to influences from the mentors.

“If there are mentors in this sector you would see many successful women like me. I was so lucky, I had mentors, most of them females, from the hotel school to date. I am convinced that I can reach my career objectives as this process of mentoring supported my progress of 15 years.”

Visibility and gender

Visibility for women in the hospitality industry in various capacities, is encouraging women to join and work with long term objectives in mind. Commercial Bank PLC, has recently started special bank accounts for professional women. Among the four women in the advertisement, a woman with a chef’s uniform is a positive sign for other sectors recognizing professional women in the hospitality industry.

Figure 10: Women’s employment in hospitality



7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The tourism and hospitality industry is a service oriented industry with 365-day operation. It is heavily dependent on its human resources for its daily function and maintenance. With the end of the protracted war, the sector has gained enormous attention of State and private sector organisations due to its potential to earn foreign exchange for the country. A direct and immediate need is accommodation for tourists and the human resources to provide the necessary services to a labour intensive industry. With a State centric operational mechanism, which we call tourism governance; the tourism and hospitality industry is heavily dependent on contributions made by the private sector that owns the major hotels and leisure activities.

If the government of Sri Lanka realises the plans for an influx of 4.0 million tourist arrivals in the year 2020, the demand for new labour from local towns and villages will have to multiply, to maintain this new tourism scenario. The skilled human resource needs in the tourism industry are currently not met and if planned development described in growth prospects of tourism becomes a reality, there will be a substantial need for a workforce of specialised, skilled and semi-skilled human resources to serve people and contribute to the supply chain in the industry. The government-led vocational skills development offer in the hospitality sector has the potential to step in to produce the necessary human resource, through its network of Vocational Training (VT) centres and regional schools, as the private sector training providers are based mainly in the Western, North-Western and Central Provinces. There is a shortage of VT centres providing hotel industry related training in other provinces, from the government and private sectors. However, the mismatch of industry demand by the current skills development offer, and the socio-cultural barriers of family, community and workplace hinder the trained human resource from entering and being retained in the sector.

The following recommendations aim to improve the skills development offer, recruitment process, and retention of the trained human resource in the hospitality sector. Recommendations are grouped into four key areas which are mutually reinforcing: recruitment, training and retention with a long-term aim of building an image of the sector.

Training Offer

- § In improving the hospitality **training** offer, a dynamic relationship in terms of constant dialogue between the employer and the training provider is a must. This will help revise the curricula based on industry requirements; thereby addressing the quality and relevance of the course.
- Coordination and communication between government and the hospitality sector is required to design curriculums that meet industry requirements, which means DACUMs need to be attended by hands on professionals within the sector who can provide required information.
 - Integration of life skills as part of the vocational training course, will produce a human resource with the interpersonal skills required to deal with issues faced on the job.
 - English language and other international languages should be provided as courses, as part of the hotel sector curriculum.
 - Training providers and TVEC should be encouraged to establish a feedback system from hotels (employers) on their products (graduates) that follow training based on an approved curriculum.

Recruitment

- § **Recruitment** of human resources to the hospitality sector must take a holistic approach, where the employer and the community work hand in hand.
- § In recruiting the necessary human resource, a comprehensive awareness programme that targets the wider community and potential recruits (mainly young people –both women and men) about the hospitality sector is recommended to be conducted from the start. Awareness programmes are recommended to include:
 - Information on the hospitality industry and hotels,
 - Benefits one gets when joining a hotel,
 - Education on code of ethics, sexual harassment policies and compliance procedure.
- § Awareness creation can be arranged by organising public days for the general public, facilitating an exposure visit to a hotel, and utilising an ‘open day’ concept to overcome the negative perceptions that the community may have about the hotel industry.
- § Hotels and training providers are recommended to develop an outreach strategy, whereby the community at large is addressed.
- § Create opportunities for young adults, specifically school kids who are expected to complete their education, to work in hotels during school holidays for a short period, to gain exposure and break the fear psyche, aimed at reducing their fears of the industry and changing perceptions.

Conduct career guidance counselling when selecting trainees, and guide them to identify their true aspiration and abilities, to match with labour market demand as part of the selection process. This will help reduce the number of drop outs.

Specific recommendations to the government sector on recruiting human resource:

- § Use job fairs to promote the hospitality sector;
- § Promote hospitality sector as a sector that has scope for employment, while promoting recruitment of well-trained youth to this sector, and reduce recruitment to the public sector.

Specific recommendations to the private sector on recruiting human resource:

- § Use women and youth who have become successful in the industry as champions to promote the sector. Enable them to visit TVEC, Universities and conduct presentations and discussions on what to expect, the challenges, difficulties and rewards.
- § Improve advertising and marketing of the sector to make it appealing.
- § Use competitions and programmes similar to cooking competition formats, but customized for local audiences to attract youth to this sector, and demonstrate the professionalism and dignity of labour of the profession.
- § If hotels are located in a rural area, actively work to recruit a percentage from surrounding communities, build a relationship with rural communities to break the stigma attached to the industry.

Retention of Human Resources

- § To ensure that existing staff and new recruits are retained within the sector, the following are recommended to improve retention rates:
 - Support personal development by assisting with further education of staff who demonstrate interest, talent and a drive to excel in the field,
 - Support staff in providing accommodation and transport, specifically for women who travel long distances,

- Provide in-house training on language skills, leadership and other subject matter relevant to the trade,
- Provide training and awareness to existing staff – team building etc., to reduce animosity and ragging,
- Raise awareness amongst the whole staff of the hotel about employment rights and how such rights can be utilized positively to create a positive, healthy and productive working environment that will impact on the work place itself and the wellbeing of any organization and its employees. Recommended themes to include in training are gender mainstreaming and masculinity,
- A Zero tolerance policy to ragging and sexual harassment is recommended,
- Provide grievance handling mechanisms that are confidential, proactive and neutral,
- Design Mentoring programmes – identify those who have potential within the sector, and provide mentors who can guide and advice,
- Counselling facilities and career guidance within the sector – can be done through HR, where youth are given career guidance during their training period,
- In order to retain the trained and experienced workforce including women, promotions should be done on merit and in a timely manner,
- Create equal opportunities for both women and men to participate in career development aimed capacity enhancement programmes, and

- Provide rest room facilities and breaks for women employees to rest during their menstruation period, especially for those who work long hours standing.

Policy level Recommendations:

- § The sector needs a proper management of data in terms of data collection and analysis to make informed decisions. This will contribute towards strategically planning the future direction of the sector.
- § Make service charge mandatory, and provide a minimum percentage of how service charges are distributed among staff.
- § Frequent revision and upgrading of curriculums that are standardized across the board integrating practical application.
- § Recommend University curricular to be standardized to meet industry requirements, and be of international standards that integrates practical application.

Recommendations on further research:

- § The parental influence on youth's career choice making, and retention in the chosen career path specifically in line with occupations in the tourism and hospitality sector.
- § A larger study of workplace harassment faced by both men and women with special reference to the hospitality sector.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Research Framework for Scoping the Hospitality Industry for its current issues

Objective	Research Question	Information needed	Questions	Date collection method
1) Identify the position of the Hospitality Industry within the country's socio-political and economic context.	1.1 What is the current context of Hospitality Industry?	<p>1.1.1 Targets</p> <p>1.1.2 Government's commitment</p> <p>1.1.3 Policies by the government to uphold the industry</p> <p>1.1.4 Volume of the trade (tourist arrivals, rooms, total revenue, GDP contribution)</p> <p>1.1.5 Emerged and emerging patterns</p> <p>1.1.6 Categories of hotels/any other forum</p> <p>1.1.7 Employment priorities (class, grades, pay, numbers, gender)</p> <p>1.1.8 Sub sectors of hotel industry</p> <p>1.1.9 The issues with hospitality industry (trends, relations and volumes/SWAT)</p>	<p>§ What are the short terms and long term targets of the industry? (1.1.1)</p> <p>§ How has the government committed to uphold the tourism sector in Sri Lanka? (1.1.2)</p> <p>§ How has the State supported the hotel industry to cater to the current or the growing demand? (Monetary and otherwise) (1.1.2)</p> <p>§ What are the policies developed by the government to improve the hospitality industry? (1.1.3)</p> <p>§ How has the industry contributed towards the GDP? (1.1.4)</p> <p>§ What is the tourists' arrival so far? (1.1.4)</p> <p>§ What is the total revenue by tourism industry? (1.1.4)</p> <p>§ What are types or classifications of hotels? (1.1.6)</p> <p>§ What are the trends in the places of stay, arrivals, transportation, and food? (1.1.5)</p> <p>§ What is categories of employees are required? (1.1.7)</p> <p>§ What are the sub sectors and / or tourism dependent industries? (1.1.8)</p> <p>§ What are the issues and problems faced by you?</p> <p>What are the opportunities? (1.1.9)</p>	Literature Review and KIIs

	<p>1.2</p> <p>Who are the key actors and their roles?</p>	<p>1.2.1 Actors involved in strategic decision making</p> <p>1.2.2 Associations</p> <p>1.2.3 Training providers</p> <p>1.2.4 Recruitment agencies</p> <p>1.2.5 Trade unionism</p> <p>1.2.6 Any other actors</p>	<p>§ Who are the key actors involved in operationalizing the hotel industry? (1.2.1)</p> <p>§ Are you are part of any association related to tourism? What is the main objective, key partners and members? What is the structure? (1.2.2)</p> <p>§ Who are the training providers in the hospitality sector? (1.2.3)</p> <p>§ What are the training offers available for those entering the tourism industry, particularly hospitality sector? (1.2.3)</p> <p>§ What are the tourism training institutes in SL and their current position? Also what are the geographical locations? (1.2.3)</p> <p>§ Who are the main donors and actor for such trainings? (1.2.3)</p> <p>§ What are the GOSL led training available? (1.2.3)</p> <p>§ What are the general entry qualifications in tourism industry? (1.2.3)</p> <p>§ What is the general job demand for those qualifying the tourism industry in SL and abroad? (1.2.3)</p> <p>§ What are job qualification systems available particularly in this industry? (1.2.3)</p> <p>§ How do you recruit employees? Do you recruit employees through employment agencies? If so, who are they? What is the procedure followed? (1.2.4)</p> <p>§ Have you tried any innovative method to recruit? If yes – what? (1.2.4)</p> <p>§ What is the role of development agencies in the sector (WB, ADB, WUSC, DFAT, UNDP, OXFAM, GIZ, JAICA) – their contribution to improve the sector (1.2.6)</p> <p>§ Whether you are part of a trade union? If so, the role of it. If not why? (1.2.5)</p>	<p>Desk review (look at the stakeholder list)</p>
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	<p>1.3</p> <p>What are the present and future strategies adopted by the key actors?</p>	<p>1.3.1 State master plans</p> <p>1.3.2 Employment strategies</p> <p>1.3.3 Promotion programmes</p> <p>1.3.4 Media connections</p>	<p>§ Have you developed any plan to develop tourism industry in Sri Lanka? What is the content? (1.3.1)</p> <p>§ Do you have an employment promotion strategy? (1.3.2)</p> <p>§ Do you conduct recruitment promotion programmes? (1.3.3) What is the content of it? (1.3.3)</p> <p>What media connections do you have? (1.3.4)</p>	<p>Desk review and KIIs</p>
<p>2)</p> <p>Ascertain the immediate human resources related issues faced by the industry with special reference to young men and women's recruitment and retention.</p>	<p>2.1</p> <p>What are the key recruitment drives?</p>	<p>2.1.1 Employment opportunities for youth</p> <p>2.1.2 Employment opportunities for women</p> <p>2.1.3 Career development prospects for women and youth</p> <p>2.1.4 Challenges faced by both the employees</p> <p>2.1.5 Challenges in the recruitments process (recruiting both men, women and youth)</p> <p>In house enabling factors to employ and retain women and youth</p> <p>2.1.6 In house factors that promote women's employment in the hospitality sector</p>	<p>§ What are the occupational opportunities created by the hotel industry for youth – both within and outside the sector? (2.1.1)</p> <p>§ What are the employment opportunities available for women? Why do you think women don't join? (2.1.2)</p> <p>§ What are the pushing and pulling factors for women to join in the hospitality sector?</p> <p>§ What are the career development prospects for women and youth in the hospitality industry? (2.1.3)</p> <p>§ What are the challenges faced by the employees? (entering into the industry, continue in the industry) (2.1.4)</p> <p>§ What are the challenges faced by the industry actors during the recruitment process (both women, men and youth)? (2.1.5)</p> <p>§ How do you capture retention issues? (2.1.5)</p> <p>§ What are the in house enabling factors for women and youth to stay in the industry? (2.1.6)</p> <p>§ What are the factors that promote women's engagement / entrance to the sector? (2.1.6)</p>	<p>Desk review and KII</p>

	<p>2.2</p> <p>How can we improve the industry in general?</p>	<p>2.2.1 Improve the HR policies and practices</p> <p>2.2.2 Improve the wellbeing of the employees</p>	<p>§ What are the human resource requirement by each actor interviewed? (2.2.1)</p> <p>§ How do they plan to recruit the required human resource? (2.2.1)</p> <p>How many employees have quitted during last 12 months? What are the reasons for leaving the jobs? (2.2.2)</p>	
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APPENDIX 2: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Interviewee / Organisation visited	Expertise	Organisation
D. M. Yahampath	Government Sector	Vocational Training Authority
Chandra Mohotti	Hotel Industry	Galle Face Hotel
Ushendrini Amarasinghe and Dhara Wijayatilake	Industry Experts	The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce
Deepal Gamage	Hotel Industry	Aitken Spence Hotel School, Ahungalle
Jay Seneviratne	Industry Experts	ASKE
Kanchana Nanayakkara	Hotel Industry	Jetwing Hotel
Mahina Rathnayaka	Industry Experts	Association of Small & Medium Enterprises in Tourism
Nalaka Jayakody	Private Sector	Colombo International Nautical & Engineering College
Sajeewa Perera	Hotel Industry	Renuka City Hotel
Sunil Dissanayake	Government Sector	Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management
Esther M. McIntosh and Deepthi Lamahewa	NGO/INGO Sector	World University Services Canada
Charlotte Blundell and Dulani Sirisena	Bi-Lateral Donor	Australian High Commission
Binoli Barsenbach and Patrick Pereira	Hotel Industry	Cinnamon Hotels
Kumuduni Rosa and Ganeshamurthy Jegan	NGO/INGO Sector	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Ishara Naufal	Hotel Industry	Cinnamon Hotels
Rashmini Mather	Government Sector	Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority



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