Problem and motivation

Tourism is a significant industry in Sri Lanka, with many visitors coming to explore the country's rich culture, breath-taking natural beauty, and historical sites. However, one of the challenges that tourists face when planning their trip to Sri Lanka is the lack of a centralized platform to book everything in one place. Unlike some other destinations, Sri Lanka does not have a single website that provides a comprehensive booking service for accommodation, transport, activities, and tours.

Instead, visitors must surf numerous websites or get in touch with numerous service providers directly, which can be difficult and time-consuming. This could make vacation planning to Sri Lanka more difficult and ineffective than it needs to be. Also, without a centralized platform, travellers might not be able to compare costs and offers from various providers, making it more difficult to find the greatest offers or the most appropriate choices.

Some firms and groups have been attempting to develop online platforms that offer a variety of travel services in one location in an effort to address this difficulty in recent years. To build a completely integrated platform that addresses all part of a visitor's journey in Sri Lanka, there is still some work to be done. Further attempts to address this issue are probably going to develop as Sri Lanka's tourism sector continues to expand, making it simpler for visitors to plan their vacation and take advantage of all the nation has to offer.

When it comes to market opportunity in tourism , Tourism is one of the important sectors in terms of foreign exchange earnings to the country. Currently the island nation experiencing a huge deficit in foreign exchange trades. Government of Sri Lanka keen on promoting the country as Best Tourist Destination in the world and earn more foreign exchange. There was an adverse impact on tourism sector in 2020 and 2021 due to the outbreak of Corona Virus. Hence the records and statistics of tourism industry shows that those two years were not promising. But in 2019 Sri Lanka was recorded excellent number of tourist arrivals. Total earning in 2019 from tourism sector was USD3,606Mn and it was 4.3% direct contribution to the Gross Domestic Production of the country. The following table shows the tourists arrivals during past five years.

**Tourists Arrivals during past five years**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Year | Number of Tourists |
| 2018 | 2,350,000 |
| 2019 | 1,913,702 |
| 2020 | 66,500 |
| 2021 | 194,495 |
| 2022 | 628,017 |

*Source:* Annual Statistical Report – Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

The total number of worldwide tourist arrivals in 2019 was 1.5Billion and the following table shows the major source markets and market shares.

**Major Source markets**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Geographical area | Number of tourists | Market share |
| America | 220Mn | 15% |
| Europe | 742Mn | 51% |
| Africa | 71Mn | 5% |
| Middle East | 64Mn | 4% |
| Asia & The Pacific | 364Mn | 25% |

*Source:* Annual Statistical Report – Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

The following table shows the top ten source markets of tourist in 2019. The analysis shows the India represented the largest number of international arrivals. United Kingdom recorded the second largest tourist arrivals with a share of 10.4% during 2019.

**Top ten Tourist Source Markets**

*Source:* Annual Statistical Report – Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

India recorded the highest number of tourists to the country while United Kingdom and China recorded second and third places. Asian and European regions represent the major component of tourists visited Sri Lanka during the under review.

Tourists arrive to the country varies from month to month and peak months are January, February, March, April, November and December. All the other months can be considered as off-peak months. According to the statistics of 2019 we can identified that 83.2% tourists visited the country for leisure activities such as holiday, recreation while 10.48% of tourists had come for visiting friends and relatives. All the other came for sports, health and education purposes.

Purposes of Visiting Sri Lanka

And also, statistics shows that the age wise analysis of the tourists arrived to the country in 2019.

**Age Group Analysis**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Age group | Percentage |
| 3-19 | 10.23% |
| 20-29 | 17% |
| 30-39 | 22.57% |
| 40-49 | 16.83% |
| 50-59 | 15.81% |
| 60 & above | 17.50% |

*Source:* Annual Statistical Report – Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

At times of economic crisis, it is more crucial than ever for young people to actively participate in fostering the economic growth and development of their nation. as Youth we can play a critical role in assisting small enterprises, generating employment opportunities, and stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship as responsible members of society.

Starting our own enterprises is one way for young people to support the economy. Young entrepreneurs can create new employment, produce revenue, and stimulate economic growth by discovering market gaps and coming up with creative solutions to suit consumer wants. Additionally, young business owners may support the growth of a more inclusive and fair economy by implementing sustainable and socially responsible business practices.

In addition to entrepreneurship, young people can help neighborhood companies and communities to boost the local economy. Youth may contribute to boosting local economies and building a more sustainable and resilient future by making the decision to use local goods and services and by getting involved in community-based projects and activities.

In conclusion, it's critical for us as responsible youth to understand how we can contribute to the economic growth of our nation, especially