

Employment Opportunities and Challenges in Tourism and Hospitality Sectors

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Abstract

Tourism is one of the main economic engines for nations with total contribution of 9.5% to global GDP and 8.9% of total employment in 2013. Tourism can only flourish if the industry can employ qualified staff or sustainable workforce which is the heart for excellent and prompt service delivery system. Thus, this review made to give summarized information about challenges and opportunities of tourism and hospitality employment. Narrative review was used where selected and related articles, reports and studies of the topic are compared and summarized. Tourism and hospitality creates diversified employment opportunities in different sectors like accommodation, food and beverage establishments, transportation services, travel agencies, tour operation companies, natural and cultural attractions sites. The challenges are poor pay and working conditions, sexual harassment, discrimination, unequal treatment, low education and training, undemocratic and rigid corporate culture, seasonality and political instability which drastically reduce the number of visitors which in turn brings high employees' turn over. Concerned stakeholders including, academicians, policy makers and business owners of tourism and hospitality shall take actions to bring sustainable work force for the development tourism and hospitality sectors.

Keywords: Employment; Challenges; Opportunities; Tourism and Hospitality

Abbreviations: ETB: Ethiopian Birr; EU: European Union; GDP: Gross Domestic Product; HCT: Hotel Catering and Tourism; ILO: International Labor Organization (of the UN); ISO: International Organization for Standardization; IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature (The world conservation Union); MoCT: Ministry of Culture and Tourism; NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations; OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; UK: United Kingdom; UNDP: United Nations Developmental Program; WNWTO: United Nations World Tourism Organization; WTTC: World Travel and Tourism Council

Introduction

Tourism is one of the world's largest and rapidly growing industries. In the 21st century, global economy is driven by three major industries includes technology, telecommunication and tourism [1]. Tourism is the collection of activities, services and industries that deliver a travel experience including attractions, transportations, accommodations, eating and drinking establishments of retail shops, entertainment, business and other hospitality services provided for individuals or groups of travelling away from home [2].

In 2013, Travel and Tourism's total contribution to the global economy rose to 9.5% of global GDP. In total, nearly 266 million jobs (8.9% of total employment) were supported by Travel and Tourism in 2013 (1 in 11 of all jobs in the world) [3]. According to ILO Global Dialogue Forum on New Developments and Challenge [2] report, even though international tourism is affected by the global economic and social crisis, it is anticipated that the tourism sections global economy to provide 296 million jobs by 2019 so that tourism has the potential to become a major generator of job.

Tourism is extremely labour intensive and a significant source of employment. It is among the world's top creators of jobs requiring varying degrees of skills and allows for quick entry into the workforce for youth, women and migrant workers [4]. In some countries, the contribution of tourism for employment is indispensable; for instance, India is the second largest employment generator in the field of tourism

as large as 25 million jobs Chandrakanta Sahoo's cited in Dayananda, [2]. In Ethiopia, the total contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP was ETB 91, 898.4 million (9.3% of GDP) and there was 2,291,500 jobs in 2014 (8.5% of total employment) [5].

Tourism and hospitality industries create many employment opportunities in different areas like accommodations, transportation, attractions sites. Therefore, the availability of skilled and trained manpower is a crucial element in the success of any tourism development plan or programme, hence employees is a sine qua non of tourism industry. However, the constraints of employment in tourism industry are unstable employment, low job status, long antisocial working hours and low pay. The immediate and most obvious consequences of such a situation is the difficulty of recruiting suitable staff and high staff turnover, these are costly to the success of the industry.

Indeed, less due attentions have been giving to employees working in tourism and hospitality sectors. However, staffs are the heart for excellent and prompt service delivery system. Thus, such staffs are arguably the most indispensable assets of the organization. The relationship between human resources and tourism can be expressed in two main aspects. First, tourism can only flourish if the industry can employ an adequate supply of good quality staff or sustainable workforce. The other issue is that the way in which staffs are treated by both managers and customers and vice versa should be in line with social equality and justice. Equally important, the quality of tourists' experiences and images in a destination is highly depending

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on employees' professionalism. Therefore, this review paper is aimed to give summarized information on the issues of employment opportunities and challenges of tourism and hospitality and indicated the implication of the findings to concerned stake holders including, academicians, policy makers and business owners of tourism and hospitality so as to take actions to bring sustainable work force in the industry.

Methods

In this review, the findings of different studies related to employment opportunities and challenges of tourism and hospitality sectors were seriously reviewed that address the question: what are the challenges of employment in tourism and hospitality? And what are the employment opportunities of tourism and hospitality sectors? Academic articles, grey literature, and media sources were gathered in a comprehensive fashion in order to answer this question.

Philip Mayer [6] guideline for a review article was adopted mainly narrative review of methodological approach. Status quo review will be employed, which adopted from cited in Mayer, [6] to present most current researches, reports and articles conducting during the last 10 years having issues related with challenges and opportunities of employment diversification of tourism and hospitality sectors. Since, the review paper presents a summarized comprehensive topic, readers who haven't read original articles, reports and studies, they will get brief key points of issues.

Moreover, questions relating to employments in tourism and hospitality sectors and challenges and opportunities were identified. Then relevant academic articles and journals were identified. In the review, more than 50 articles and journals were identified and 16 of them were critically reviewed to address the formulated questions then reviewed. Finally, by charting the data and assembling, summarizing and reporting the results on the basis of the author's experience, existing theories and models. It also incorporates some statistical data, reports and proceedings published by World Tourism Organization, World Travel and Tourism Council and Culture and Tourism Minister.

Summarized Results

Employment opportunities of tourism and hospitality sectors

Based on the involvement or contribution tourism supply side, employment opportunities in tourism and hospitality sectors can be created either directly or indirectly [2,7]. Direct Employment opportunities are the total number of job opportunities supported by directly in travel and tourism. For example employment by hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, tourism information offices, museums, protected areas such as national parks, palaces, religious sites, monuments, aircrafts, cruise lines, resorts or shopping outlets, souvenirs, photography, sightseeing tours, farmhouses, bed and breakfast, rural inns, and guest houses local transportation (state owned airlines and railways, private transport facilities), Guides, cooks and scouts.

Tourism and hospitality also supports indirect employment in activities like restaurant suppliers, construction companies that build and maintain tourist facilities, as well as necessary infrastructure, aircraft manufacturers, various handicrafts producers, marketing agencies, accounting services, which are more or less dependent on the companies providing direct employment for their revenues [8].

The economic impact of tourism is measured in terms of its effect on: income, employment, investment and development; and balance

of payment [5,9]. In a labour intensive industry such as tourism and hospitality the greater proportion of income is likely to be derived from wages and salaries paid to those working in jobs either directly serving the needs of tourists or benefitting indirectly from tourists' spending [3]. Income will be high in tourist destinations which attract large numbers of visitors; where visitors length of stay is maximum, customer spending of money is very high provided that multiple opportunities and activities are existing for customers to participate [7] (Figure 1).

The other reasons that employment opportunities are diversified ever before, are tourism and international travel become popular all over the world and people themselves considered that travel is human rights; destinations are worried much to meet the needs and wants of tourists to offer high standard of services in the destinations; tourists have wide choice of holidays; international standards and quality assurance system are being set by national and international tourism and hospitality organizations to provide standardized and quality customer services thereby this is resulted for ensuring sustainable development in the sectors; the continuous decline of international oil price is also reduced the cost of travel. All the aforementioned cases are the main reasons for the growing number of tourist flow in the destinations. Therefore, high number of workforces are required to provide services for the tourists. Due to this facts, tourism and hospitality sectors with supporting industries provide a diversified employment opportunities.

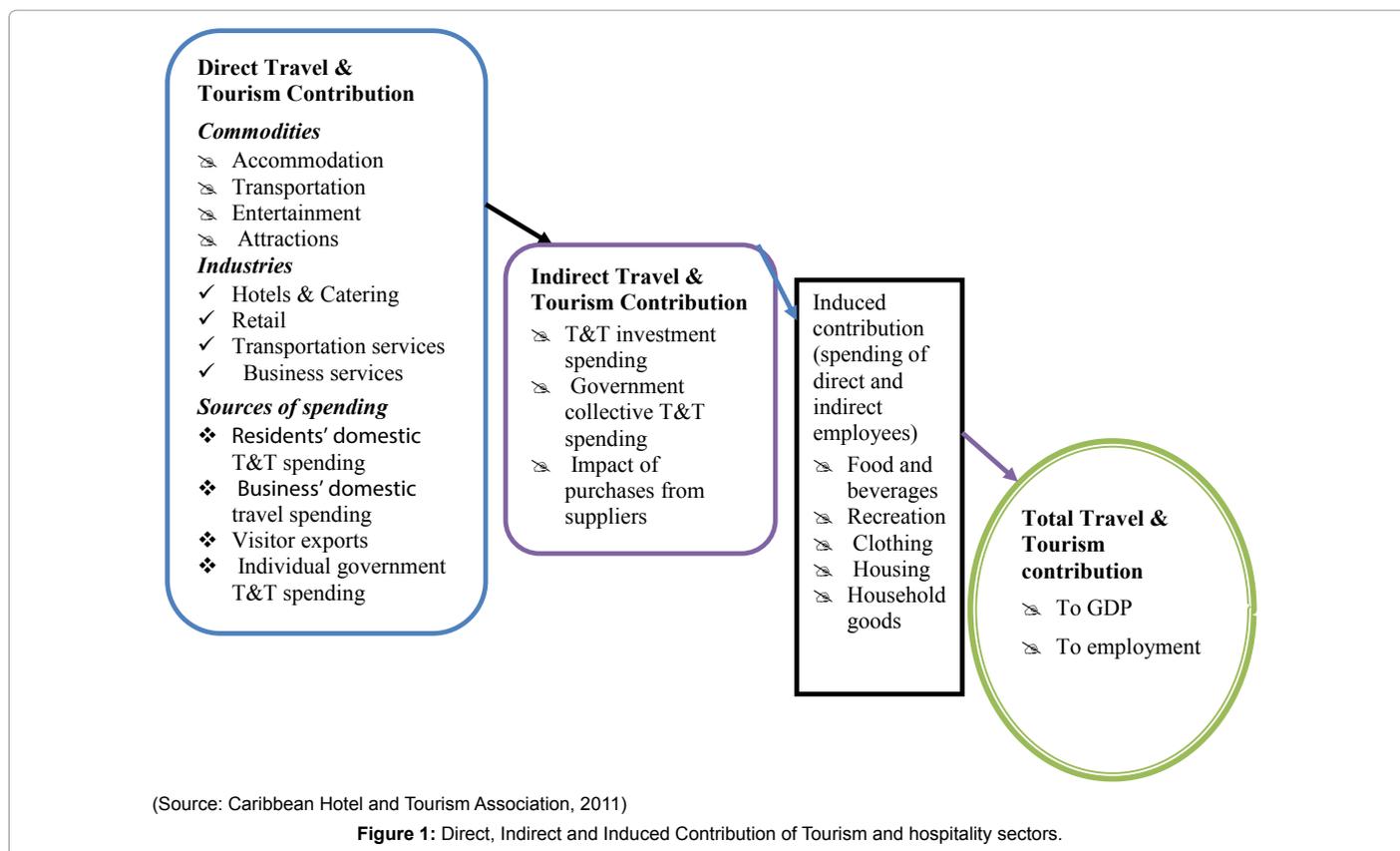
Challenges of employments in tourism and hospitality

Most research findings identified the major challenges of employment in tourism and hospitality, which are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Unequal treatment: There is no equal treatment for all type of employees. For example, according to ILO-UNDP, cited Thomas [10] gender inequality is manifested in the sectors. Women perform 66 percent of the world's work, produce 50 percent of the food, but earn 10 per cent of the income and own 1 per cent of the property. Such circumstances are avail due to the fact that women have lower access to land, capital and education than men women tend to work at home or family enterprises unprotected by law, and women face discrimination and overload of work at business enterprises and family life.

As per UNWTO report on the assessment of the opportunities and challenges which face women with respect to employment in tourism conducted in 2011 noted that unskilled or semi-skilled women tend to work in the most vulnerable jobs, where they are more likely to experience poor working conditions, inequality of opportunity and treatment, violence, exploitation, stress and sexual harassment. In developing countries, additional factors such as low level of education and training, widespread poverty, poor maternal health and lack of sex education together with socio-cultural factors have prevented women from being empowered as economic actors. Businesses can be located at some distance from residential areas, particularly in poorer countries and communities, imposing both travel and time costs on women who frequently have limited access to both financial and time-flexibility resources [11].

The other issue is that lower levels and occupations with few career development opportunities being dominated by women while key managerial positions are dominated by men (Vargas, N.d). Women are under-represented in managerial and senior positions. For example, women represent only 32 per cent of managers in companies within the EU, 10 percent of members of management boards of the largest companies, and 29 per cent of scientists and engineers across Europe.



Family and care responsibilities are still not equally shared. The task of looking after dependent family members is largely borne by women. Far more women than men choose to take parental leave. This fact, together with the lack of facilities for child care and elder care, means that women are often forced to exit the labour market: the employment rate for women with dependent children is only 62.4 per cent compared with 91.4 per cent for men with dependent children [12]. Vergas had also noted that in contrast to other industries, employment in Hotel Catering and Tourism tends to be oriented towards people under 35 years of age. In Spain 43.4 per cent of workers in the sector are aged 25-34. Swarbrooke had emphasized that Employers frequently reject women applicants who are over a certain age (usually 35 age limit) and demand photos of female applicants for jobs. The tourism industry also has a poor record on the employment and promotion of people with disabilities.

Poor pay and working condition: A European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) report states that the average payment rate in the hotels and restaurants is low when compared to average wages in almost all EU member states [13,14]. Generally speaking, the tourism and hospitality sector is recognized by Low hourly rates of pay, over time work without extra money, long working hours of 50 hours per week, little or no adequate breaks during peak season periods.

The other challenges are inappropriate management style/corporate philosophy and leadership style such as unplanned recruitment, little due attention for staff turnover, imported workforce, considering staffs as cost rather than asset, rigid leadership which is against the concept of democracy, inadequate trainings, and many tasks, such as making computer bookings and working theme park rides are monotonous

[13]. The reason being that tourism employment is often challenged by one or more of the following factors: seasonality (during some months of the year the number of tourists is very low so that tourism and hospitality business sectors cut staffs. A very good example is tourists come to Ethiopia from September up to February, and the rest months their number significantly reduced) part-time and/or excessive hours of work; Low-paid (or unpaid) family labour; and informal or sometimes illegal labour where measurement is notably more difficult.

Furthermore, employment opportunities in tourism and hospitality are affected by different difficult situations that the industry faced. For instance, terrorist attacks are happening in different tourist destinations for example ISIS, Bokhara, Alishavave, etc. prevalence of new contagious disease such as the so called Ebola and Zika virus; world economy crises and technological advancement in tourism and hospitality sectors such as the application of e-business, e-marketing and virtual tourism. Due to this reasons, many tourism and hospitality sectors are being loss their business. This is the main reason that employers are firing out the workforces, which give rise to unemployment rate.

Best practices

The Euro Zone and some western countries can be taken as best practices in Hotel, catering and Tourism since these sectors are very large and growing rapidly with an average female participation of 50-70% (more than 60% in UK, Portugal and Austria, as well as 70% in Finland). More importantly, Euro zone as well as Croatia, Serbia, Norway and Switzerland can be taken as an exemplary for higher women's share with attractive pay and working condition in both the food, catering and accommodation industries than in the economy as

a whole. In other countries such as Bahamas, Canada, Australia; the share of women in accommodation sector is more than 55%. Canada, Dominican Republic, India and Jamaica best practice for tourism human resources management. However, in Egypt women represent only 25% of the total tourism work force [14].

Implication of findings and the way forwarded

To bring excellent customer satisfaction, according to OECD, 2000, labour should not be treated simply as costs, but as human capital or assets. A high-quality skilled workforce will ensure greater competitiveness and innovation, improve job prospects and ease the process of adjustment in changing markets. Given that, employment and human resource issues should be key topics for research and analytical studies in the tourism industries.

As per the report of UNWTO of 2010, tourism is an engine to mitigate extreme poverty which can also help poor women to break the poverty cycle through formal and informal employment, entrepreneurship, training, and community betterment. Not all women are benefitting equally from tourism development, however. In some cases, lack of education and resources may prevent the poorest women from benefitting from tourism development. While in some regions tourism helps empower women, in other regions, tourism negatively affects the lives of women and perpetuates existing economic and gender inequalities.

Thomas [10] emphasized that the collaboration of all stakeholders including governments and intergovernmental bodies, local government sector, trade unions, local communities and their different member groups, NGOs, community based tourism initiatives through social dialogue and discussions can encourage equality of opportunity and treatment; reduction of wage and salary gaps between men and women for jobs of equal value; increased women's participation in decision making for higher female representation in managerial positions, and accommodating the cultural customs, traditions and practices of employees. Through regular meetings and discussions among various stakeholders with ILO, we have to strive for enhancing good pay and working conditions which is free from sexual harassment, discrimination and exploitation as well as creation of jobs that are stable, permanent and full-time that provide fair salaries and benefits as well as ensuring and enforcing relevant labour regulations which reflect basic human rights, the prohibition of forced labour and exploitation of child labour, eliminating any discrimination based on race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.

Most importantly, in order to have effective work forces in tourism and hospitality industries much should be devoted to build democratic, participative management cultures; emphasis for human resource management to bring quality, recognizing employees as assets, rewarding staffs with best performance, strengthen linkage with educational institutions to provide courses which are more closely geared to the needs of the tourism industry, in terms of both course content and the mode of delivery, such as the use of open and distance learning. This is the only way by which the majority of the staff in the industry can gain access to educational opportunities [14].

United Nations Environment Programme and ILO gives due attentions for standardization and certification which have a central role to play in promoting environmental and social performance and satisfying consumer demand for responsible travel. Certification schemes may be applied to tourism enterprises such as hotels, resorts, marinas, travel agencies, tour operators, and transportation services. They may also be used to certify the environmental soundness of tourist

destinations and natural resources at these destinations [15]. Various standards of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) have been used in the tourism sector to improve the overall quality of service. These include ISO 9000 for quality management and ISO 14000 for environmental management [16-22].

To overcome the effect of seasonality, according to Griffin and DeLacey [13], it needs clear policies to such as: targeting markets most likely to travel in the offseason; discounted seasonal offers; organizing events at less busy times of the year; encouraging attractions to stay open longer; and where year-round full-time employment cannot be achieved, alternative solutions may prove possible. For instance, working hours could be adapted to suit seasonal patterns while maintaining benefits or seasonal workers could be ensured jobs with the same employers each season.

National and local governments should strive to provide the best possible wages and benefits that can be extended to include contributions to health care, disability, maternity, education and retirement, where these are not legally mandated. Amenities such as housing, food and medical care should be provided where needed and should be of a good standard. Service charge distribution should be a well-documented and transparent process [14].

Conclusion

Today, Tourism and Hospitality sectors are the foremost sectors of the world economy. It improves balance of payments as well as income creation and employment opportunities. Recent data showed that tourism and travel creating over 276 million jobs and generating 9.8% global GDP in 2014. Besides, tourism can be also nurturing socio-cultural amplification of the people, empowering women and disabled communities by creating favorable job options. Due to this, both developed and developing countries give due attention for creating quality staff for quality tourism and hospitality industries to step on the sectors contribution for the country's development.

Based on the review, tourism and hospitality industries have creating many job opportunities for millions of people in the world in different areas like accommodation, food and beverage (restaurants, dining rooms, cafes, fast food outlets, pubs, nightclubs, bed and breakfasts, motels, hotels, resorts, lounges, catering operations; airlines, airports, aircrafts, ships, boats, cruises, land transportations like trail, bus, travel agencies, tour operation companies), natural and cultural attractions such as national parks, caves, monuments, museums and galleries, theatres, concerts, festivals, carnivals, conferences, trade shows, and exhibitions). Political stabilities, reduced working hours, technological advancement, increased income and conducive climate are the major favorable conditions for the development of the stated tourism and hospitality establishments to create millions of jobs.

Unfair treatment among men and women employees; untrained workforce, poor working condition, seasonality of the sectors, sexual harassment and stress; high working hours without overtime payment, the sector is low paid salary payer and other socio-cultural related factors are some to be noted as challenges for employment condition in tourism and hospitality business.

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