



Exploring the Relationship between Beach Boys and Tourists Using Host-guest Theory: The Case of Bentota, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Beach boys in the informal tourism sector are often identified as sex workers whose behaviour affect the tourists' experience either positively or negatively. The relationships developed between the beach boys and the tourists constitute important phenomenon in tourism host-guest theory. Thus, the paper brings light to the relationship between beach boys and international tourists visiting Sri Lanka along with their contributions and hindrances towards the tourism development of the country. Further, the findings are compared with similar international cases to grasp a comparative standpoint. The sample consisted of eleven beach boys in Bentota National Holiday resort, whose interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed through qualitative content analysis method using NVivo 11 tool. The results indicate that the beach boys make diverse attempts to initiate relationships with the tourists by being sales persons, guides, companions and sex partners while some beach boys eventually become the life partners of the foreign female tourists extending the horizons of host-guest theory. The study further discusses the theoretical and managerial implications of the findings.

Introduction

Although many planning approaches have been adopted to plan a tourist resort, emergence of an informal sector is inevitable. The informal sector predominantly consisted of the locals living around the destination those who provide an array of services to the tourists visiting the destination and make a living. Beach boys are also known as one of the players in the informal tourism sector (Davidson, 2004). Much about the employment in the informal tourism sector is yet not known in developing countries (Snow & Wall, 1993). This has led to create new research avenues in identifying host-guest relationships in tourism literature.

Beach boys are among those men who make a living by providing different services to the tourists and they are commonly found in tourist destinations all over the developing world (Nyanzi, Rosenberg-Jallow, Bah, Nyanzi 2005). The beach boys are addressed in different names according to their culture and the language. Some of the common names found in the literature are: *Sanky Pankies* in the Dominican Republic (Herold, Garcia and DeMoya, 2001), *Kuta cowboys* / *Cowok* / *Gaidor* / *Casanovas* / *Gigolo* in Indonesia (Dahles, 1998; Jennaway, 2002; Wolf, 1993), *Bricheros* in Peru (Bauer, 2008), *Gringueros* in Costa Rica (Romero-Daza and Freidus, 2008), *Kamaki* in Greece (Kibicho, 2009), *jineteros* in Cuba (Cabezas, 2004), *Rastamen* in Kenya (Kibicho, 2009), *Bomas* in Gambia (Brown, 1992), *Beach Bums* in Barbados (Phillips, 2008). However, the definitions for the term beach boy are restricted to the sexual contacts they maintain with the tourists. For example, Miller (2002) defines beach boys as heterosexually identified young men who provide sexual and other services to tourists. Similar to Miller (2002), Jennaway (2008) also came up with a definition, i.e., beach boys are the young men who loiter about the beaches, bars

and cafes patronized by Western tourists, hoping to strike up a relationship with them. Both definitions imply that beach boys intend to initiate relationships which are more sexual in nature. Similarly, the researches on sexual relationships between female tourists and local males are in high demand among the researchers. For example, studies have been conducted in Dominican Republic (Herold, Garcia and DeMoya, 2001), in Barbados (de Albuquerque 1998; Karch and Dann 1981), in Jamaica (de Albuquerque 1998; Pruitt and LaFont 1995), in Ecuador (Meisch 1995), in Greece (Zinovieff 1991), in Gambia (Brown 1992) and in Indonesia (Dahles, 1998; Ford and Wirawan, 2000) exploring the sexual relationship between the host and the guest.

In Sri Lanka, as illustrated in Airport Survey Results – 2017, a majority of the tourists visiting the country are either starts or ends their journey from a beach destination (SLTDA, 2017). Thus, it is imperative to create long lasting first and last impressions with the tourists. It is common at tourist destinations that the tourists are frequently approached by the men asking whether they need any assistance (Herold, Garcia, DeMoya, 2001). Many researchers have concluded that the intention of such men is to initiate a sexual relationship with the tourists and to clear a path to migrate to a developed country (Herold, Garcia, DeMoya, 2001; Jennaway, 2008; Spencer and Bean, 2017; Weichselbaumer, 2012). Consequently, both Sri Lankan and international media reports illegal activities of beach boys, which are of harassments in nature, drawing a negative attention to Sri Lanka tourism (BBC, 2018).

Since the stakeholders involved with the tourism industry are highly varied, the literature demands for comprehensive studies in different aspects of tourist-host interactions (Zhang et al, 2006; Yoo & Sohn, 2003). The relationship between

hosts and guests can be explored in the context of beach boys, which is rarely explored in Sri Lanka. Followed by other international studies, the studies conducted in Sri Lanka, for instance, Beddoe (1998), Miller (2002), Miller (2011), Miller and Nichols (2012) are either about or come with arguments about the relationship between beach boys and tourists in providing sexual services. Whilst this is not a dispute, the literature is silent about some general information about beach boys and the nature of their relationship with the tourists in different perspectives which imply the different aspects of host-guest theory. As such, this paper not only explores the nature of relationship between the beach boys and tourists but also challenges the current notion that beach boys are predominantly sexual service providers to the tourists who are on vacation in Sri Lanka.

Literature Review

Informal Sector in the Tourism Industry

Modern economic turmoil in most of the developing countries have given a birth to an informal sector, or an informal economy. International Labour Organization (2004) refers the informal sector to those performing legitimate but non-observed economic activities which are not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, social protection or entitlement to employment benefits. In the developing countries informal economy is growing fast (Ford and Wirawan, 2000; Taylor, 2001; Williams, 1999). Similar to many other industries, tourism industry has also got its own informal sector (Oppermann, 1993) and some of the jobs in this informal sector are occupied with prostitutes and beach boys (Davidson, 2004), chauffeurs and tour guides, rurally based pieceworkers, beach-based hawkers and street vendors (Ranasinghe, 2017). Dahles (1998) identifies that unqualified and unorganized youths involved in the tourism industry are forming the informal sector. The informal sector in tourism provides a range of services to the tourists including selling clothes, ice-cream, toys, sunglasses, postcards, providing transport and guiding, running restaurants and hotels, sexual services and drugs (Dahles, 1998; Snow & Wall, 1993). Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka (2012) identifies informal sector as a very important employment generator that helps the economy by generating employment and income opportunities for the poor.

Host-guest Relationship

Host guest interaction is an important social contact phenomenon which is complex and multi-faced. Reisinger and Turner (2003, p. 37) defined social contacts in tourism as "the personal encounter that takes place between a tourist and a host". De Kadt (1979) identified three main tourist-host encounters. Firstly, when tourists purchase products from the residents. Secondly, when tourists and hosts find themselves side by side and finally, when tourists and hosts come face to face in order to exchange information and ideas. Reisinger (2009) further stresses that the social interactions between hosts and guests occurs more often at tourist attractions and when tourists purchase goods and services from the hosts. Knox (1982), as cited in Ap and Crompton (1998) states that the tourists' holiday experience may be either spoiled or enhanced by the social contacts with the hosts.

Beach Boys and Their Relationship with Foreign Tourists

Beach boys are also a part of the host community whose livelihood is depending on tourists. Certain illegal and unethical practices of beach boys leave the host-guest relationship vulnerable. In other words, if the tourism industry begins to bring in costs exceeding the benefits, the relationship between both parties would be at a great risk (Faulkner and Tidswell, 1997). For an instance, drugs, prostitution, sex work, sexual liaisons between tourists and hosts, both of a commercial and noncommercial nature turns the host-guest relationship into a fragile state (Spencer & Bean, 2017). Researchers including Connell (2005), Herold (1992) and Miller (2011) indicated that beach boys try to conquest their sex desires through the company of female tourists and to find better prospects in their lives. However, it is not only the beach boys seek for sex. According to Spencer and Bean (2017) travel motivated by sex desires has consistently been a key motive for the people to travel across the borders for a long time. As a result, different tourism typologies including sex tourism and romance tourism

are visible. When it comes to Sri Lanka, as early as 1980's sex tourism was in the front play. Tan (1999), in his research, quoted *Spartacus* (an international gay guide magazine in early 1980's), which named Sri Lanka as a famous destination for gays. Further, Beddoe (1998) also stated that romance tourism is observed in Sri Lanka with the involvement of beach boys. Whether it is romance tourism or sex tourism, giving a clear definition for sexual encounters between hosts and guests is not easy since the relationships are formed with mutual consent and economic motives are not involved at all the times (Willis, 2012). During most occasions, the relationships begin with friendship, later developed into intimacy and companionship and ends with sex (Spencer & Bean, 2017), which leaves the scenario more difficult to define or understand. However, such relationships often benefit the beach boys economically and allow them to tap a higher status in their lives which they have never experienced before (Connell, 2005). Further, not all sexual relationships take the form of commercial (Jereys, 2003). However, most of the researchers argue that it is nothing but commercial sex tourism that takes place with the involvement of beach boys. For instance, Albuquerque (1998), Davidson, 2004), Herold (1992) and Miller (2011) conclude in their researches that beach boys approaches the female tourists in different ways and offer sexual services in return of money while evaluating their chances to migrate to a developed country through a more established relationship with a foreign female tourist.

Beach boys use different strategies to approach the tourists and behave in a certain way to get their attention. According to Dahles (1998), in Indonesia, the informal sector beach boys ask many questions to understand the socio-demography and economic backgrounds of the tourists. Further, beach boys are commonly found around the tourist destinations and present themselves as guides, friends and boyfriends (Jennaway, 2008; Dahles, 1998). Although Tan (1999) notes most of the Sri Lankan beach boys are homosexual, Miller (2011) identifies them primarily as heterosexual. The contrasts in identifying the nature of the beach boys demands more deep investigations on beach boys in Sri Lanka. Beach boys provide an array of service to the foreign tourists. Many researchers including Espinal and Koenig (2002), Herold (1992) and Nyanzi et al. (2005) identified three types of beach boys according to the type of services they render. The first category, amateurs, provided nothing but becomes a harassment to the tourists. However, at the intermediate level, they help the tourists to find cheap and clean hotels, guest houses and restaurants, motor bikes for cheap rates and supply drugs. The third category tries to establish more concrete relationships with the tourists and start receiving them on an annual basis. Further, Nyanzi et al. (2005) outlined, with the minimum qualifications, the beach boys provide many useful services to the tourists including working as a guide, interpreter, companion and a friend (Ranasinghe, 2016).

The benefits received by the beach boys totally depend on the type of the service they rendered to the tourists. At the intermediary level, the tourists may sponsor for meals and drinks, offer them wrist watches, walkmans, radios, leather jackets, their entry into a club paid, and get the chance to accompany the tourist on their various excursions and enjoy (Herold, 1992; Herold, Garcia, DeMoya, 2001). According to Cohen (1971), Herold (1992), Herold, Garcia, DeMoya (2001) and Zinovieff (1991), the beach boys those who belong to the advanced category receive free air tickets abroad, sponsorships for expensive household equipment, receipt of money in a timely basis from foreign tourists along with a letter, or even the opportunity to marry a female foreign tourist and settle in a developed country. Dahles (1998) in his study in Indonesia identified the distinct behaviours of the beach boys to maximize the benefits, for example they never take the lead when they are in the company of the foreign tourists. Further, the beach boys are highly precautious about the quality of services they provide to the tourists since the benefits they receive totally depend on the satisfaction that the tourists are getting. Other than the direct benefits received by the beach boys, they maintain a system to receive commissions from almost every transaction made by the tourists. For example, the souvenir industry has made the beach boys to earn large commissions (Dahles, 1998), that may range from 10 percent to 60 percent of the selling price (Soedarso, 1992). The previous literature, as stated earlier provides valuable blueprints to understand the breadth of beach boys, while the succeeding sections explain the methodology employed.

Methodology

Study Site

Bentota National Holiday Resort (BNHR) is the first planned holiday resort in Sri Lanka, which is located approximately 65 Km's away from Colombo, along the southern coastal belt. The resort is a home to a pristine beach, range of accommodations from five-star luxury hotels to budget hotels. Further, the resort offers a shopping arcade, restaurants, a bank, a post office, a police post, a telecommunication centre and a lifesaving unit for the convenience of the tourists. Founded in 1969, the NHR is said to be the best planned resort in Sri Lanka with the highest number of tourist arrival in the Southern Province (SLTDA, 2017).

Sample and Data Collection

A qualitative approach has been employed to reach research objectives through in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews with the beach boys and observations in the BNHR area. A qualitative content analysis has been performed using NVivo software (11.0).

The sample for the study was collected from Bentota, a beach resort on the Southwest part of Sri Lanka. The sample (n=11) consisted of two senior beach boys who have decades of experience as beach boys and a vast knowledge of tourism industry through the eye of the informal sector and 09 beach boys. The sample is small but it reached the saturation early than expected given the objectives of this study are limited to explore the relationship between beach boys and tourists in the coastal area of BNHR area. Two in-depth interviews followed by 09 semi-structured interviews were conducted by the researchers. Interview approach enabled the researcher to expand on what appear to be significant replies (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The sample was reached by means of 'snowball'. The first two in-depth interviews with the two key informants assisted the researcher to identify and understand the common phenomenon associated with the role of a beach boys and the nature of relationship they maintain with the foreign tourists. In order to compare the findings, certain similar type of relationship topics was also discussed considering the previous researchers. The study questions were categorized under nine categories including: demographics, motivations for being a beach boy, services provided to the tourists, repeat tourists, self-marketing, benefits received, unethical and illegal activities, education and training and finally challenges facing. This approach allowed the researcher to construct a demographic profile of each of the participants which is presented in the Table 01.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Informant Code	Age	Income	Education	Marital Status	Years of Experience
BB 1	26 - 35	60,001 - 75,000	Ordinary level	Single	11 – 15
BB 2	46 - 60	Above 75,000	Ordinary level	Single	Above 16
BB 3	15 - 25	45,001 - 60,000	Ordinary level	Married	11 – 15
BB 4	36 - 45	Above 75,000	Grade 08 - 10	Married	6 – 10
BB 5	46 - 60	45,001 - 60,000	Ordinary level	Married	Above 16
BB 6	15 - 25	45,001 - 60,000	Advanced level	Single	1 – 5
BB 7	15 - 25	60,001 - 75,000	Grade 08 - 10	Single	1 – 5
BB 8	36 - 45	Above 75,000	Grade 08 - 10	Married	Above 16
BB 9	15 - 25	60,001 - 75,000	Ordinary level	Married	1 – 5 years

BB 10	26 - 35	Above 75,000	Grade 08 - 10	Married	6 – 10
BB 11	15 - 25	30,001 - 45,000	Ordinary level	Single	1 – 5 years

The interviews were conducted by the researcher with a research assistance in December 2017 and January 2018, the busiest months for Sri Lanka tourism. The duration of the first and second interviews were 140 minutes and 110 minutes respectively. The average duration of the semi-structured interviews ranged from 30 – 45 minutes but were often disturbed by the presence of tourists. In such occasions, the researcher paused the interview and contacted the same interviewee at a later time and resumed. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Further, many informal conversations with other tourism service providers (tuk-tuk drivers, guides, restaurant workers), and both participatory and non-participatory observation were employed to understand the context of the study. Given some information are sensitive in nature, the researcher maintained great care to keep the anonymity of the respondents.

Analytical Approach

The researcher used NVivo, a content analysis software, to code the transcribed interviews and word counts and most representative sentences were analyzed. Content analysis is a research method for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context, with the purpose of providing knowledge, new insights, a representation of facts and a practical guide to action (Krippendorff, 2004). 309 references were derived from the 11 interviews conducted that were significant based on the answers of the interviewees (Table 2). The identified references were then allocated to one of the eight nodes which have already been defined as separate units of analysis within the software. Then, the relative importance of each node was calculated by dividing the number of references assigned to the node by the total number of references and is presented in the Table 2.

Table 2: Coding Summary

Name of Node and Sub-nodes	References	Percent (%)
Motivations to join	30	9.5
- Economic factors	12	3.8
- Educational factors	11	3.5
- Personal factors	07	2.2
Services provided	54	17.4
- Tours & excursions	35	11.3
- Personal assistance	19	6.1
Repeat tourists	11	3.5
Self-marketing	19	6.1
- Direct conversations	10	3.2
- Referrals	05	1.6
- Other	04	1.3
Benefits received	67	21
- Monetary rewards	19	6.1
- Sponsorships & gifts	39	12.6
- Other	09	2.3
Unethical and illegal activities	38	12.2
- Prostitution	22	7.1
- Illegal drugs	16	5.1
Education & training	24	7
- Professional education	05	1.6
- Foreign languages	13	4.2
- Guide license	06	1.2
Challenges facing	66	21.3

- Warnings issued by private and public agencies and other people	28	9.1
- Uncertainty	19	6.1
- Other challenges	19	6.1
TOTAL	309	

Four most representative words (key words), in terms of word count and depth, from each node and sub-node were abstracted and analyzed. The key words were derived through running word frequency command in NVivo. In order to analyze the narratives coding scheme of key words in each sub-node were employed. As an indicator, the depthness of the respective key words was calculated by dividing the word count of the given word by the total number of words in the node. The most representative sentences, which include the keyword of each node, were also selected. Such sentences elaborate the node and its implications in order to understand the relationship between the beach boys and international tourists.

Analysis and Discussion

Motivations to Join

There are many reasons among all the interviewees to become a beach boy (Table 3). Previous jobs of the present beach boys in Bentota area had been the path opener to become a beach boy. Most of the beach boys had worked closely with the foreign tourists as waiters, bar tenders, tuk-tuk drivers, boat service providers. Further, some of the successful beach boys have inspired other younger boys to take up this job and to support them during the busy seasons. Economic reasons also act as a key motivator for the youths in coastal areas to take up this job since the people believe the foreign tourists are rich and affluent, hence beach boys can earn a lot of money. Less education qualification plays a pivotal role for the beach boys to join with this sector since the duties and responsibilities involved are treated as less difficult and complex compared to other occupations. Besides, the youth perceive being a beach boy is the best solution for their unemployment problem.

Table 3: Motivations to Become a Beach Boy

Category (Node)	Key Words	Word Count	Depth	Core Phrases
Motivations to join	Work	26	8.67	“Earlier I worked in a hotel for many years” BB01; “First, we have to work under another beach boys” BB01; “Most of my neighbouring brothers and friends are working with foreign tourists and I was fascinated by them” BB06; “Being a beach boy is more profitable than working in a hotel” BB08
	Money	12	4.00	“I did not have money, neither my parents could spend for me” BB01; “Being a beach boy I can earn a plenty of money” BB02; “I wanted to earn money” BB04; I think this is a good opportunity to earn a lot of money” BB07
	Good	11	3.66	“We, had a good image about the people who are with the tourists” BB01; “Beach boys have a good

				demand from foreign ladies” BB05; “You can earn a good income being a beach boy” BB09
Education	10	3.33		“According to my education, I knew that I would not be able to find a good job” BB03; “...without having a good education, we could not find other job that helps earn us a lot” BB05; “I could not complete my school education successfully” BB06

Services Provided

The beach boys in Bentota provides a range of services to the tourists (Table 4). However, it was observed that the services provided are entirely up to the desire of the tourists. Whilst most tourists have asked for and provided with excursions, round tours, boat tours, massage treatments, shopping tourism garden tours and surfing, certain illegal products and services have also been rendered. For instance, illegal drugs have been requested by the tourists. However, it is not clear that whether the tourists are aware about the illegal nature of that product. The tourists also find it very convenient to obtain services from the beach boys since they are widely available and the friendly nature of the beach boys.

Table 4: Services Provided by Beach Boys

Category (Node)	Key Words	Word Count	Depth	Core Phrases
Services provided	Provide	27	10.80	“We provide whatever we are asked to provide” BB01; “Even tourists ask us to provide illegal drugs” BB05; I provide boat tours, tours to the herbal gardens, excursions to Galle etc.” BB11
	Tours	26	10.40	“We provide round tours in the countryside” BB02; “... many services like round tours, boat tours, Ayurvedic treatments, shopping tours, garden tours etc.” BB05; “...boat tours, round tours, brief garden tours, surfing, visits to massage centers” BB09
	Boat	15	6.00	“We conduct boat tours along Bentota river” BB02; “We provide many services including boat tours, round tours, organizing parties etc.” BB10;
	Shopping	09	3.60	“Sometimes I accompany them during their shopping” BB06; “We also take them for shopping” BB05; “Tourists need our assistance for local shopping” BB07

Repeat Tourists

Repeat tourists have a high value to any tourism destination since they bring more foreign currency and more tourists to any destination. If a destination is often frequented by repeat tourists means that the destination is successful in

attracting and retaining tourists. This study identifies that beach boys also work as informal tourism promoters in Sri Lanka by attracting repeat tourists (Table 5). Out of the beach boys interviewed, majority (n=9) of them receive repeat tourist in an annual basis. The number of repeat tourists mainly vary according to the years of experience they have in the field.

Table 5: Repeat Tourists

Category (Node)	Key Words	Word Count	Depth	Core Phrases
Repeat tourists	Repeat	27	10.23	“I have around 6 -7 repeat guests per year” BB04; “I have three repeat foreign families. But they are not annual visitors” BB05; “I receive around 10 repeat tourists annually” BB06
	Receive	20	7.60	“Annually I receive three repeat tourists” BB01; “Annually I receive around 20 tourists” BB08; “I do not receive repeat tourists since I am new” BB11

Self-Marketing

The informal sector service providers often have to market their products and themselves to get the attention of the tourists so as to work on a business. The beach boys in BNHR employ many techniques to approach the tourists whilst respecting the privacy and convenience of the guests (Table 6). The most common method used by the beach boys to approach the tourists is through establishing a direct conversation with them. Further, the beach boys are extremely cautious about the services they provide to the tourists since happy tourists bring more clients and money for them. Further, in order to establish the trust about themselves and the services provided, the beach boys show some recommendation letters issued by some other tourist from the same country. Further, photo albums they maintain about the happy tourists during the previous tours help them to tangibilize the services they provide. It was also discovered that the beach boys have allied with some other stakeholders of the tourism industry to get more businesses. They include, tuk-tuk drivers and waiters of the hotels. Based on their recommendations and directions, the beach boys find opportunities to serve the foreign tourists. In addition to that, in order to get the attention of the female tourists, the beach boys engage with physically demanding sports like beach volleyball, jet skiing, surfing and wind surfing.

Table 6: Self-Marketing

Category (Node)	Key Words	Word Count	Depth	Core Phrases
Self-marketing	Tourists	40	6.08	“We never disturb a tourist who is resting in the beach” BB01; “Once I satisfy a guest, he will direct some more tourists to me” BB05; “... showing them my albums taken with other tourists” BB10
	Talk	30	4.56	“I get tourists from the beach, by talking to them directly” BB07; “We talk to them directly” BB08

Recommendations	20	3.04	“...through the recommendation of other tourists” BB07; “I have friends in the hotels and they recommend me” BB09; “I maintain a recommendation book” BB10
Friends	12	1.82	“My friends those who are driving tuk-tuks also help me to get some tourists” BB04; “Through the contacts of my friends in the hotels” BB08; “With friends we play many games in the beach and the sea” BB09

Benefits Received

All the beach boys in the sample had enjoyed different types of benefits (Table 7). It is important to note that the nature of the benefit received depend on the strength of the relationship they maintain and the level of satisfaction of the tourists. Out of many benefits received, income is the main benefit enjoyed by the beach boys in BNHR while they perceive company of the foreign tourists also as a motivating factor. Further, some beach boys receive money on a monthly basis from their foreign friends. In addition to that, many beach boys had received houses as presents from the tourists or they were sponsored to buy a new house. However, follow-up questions regarding the valuable presents revealed that when the tourists donate or sponsor for a house, they tend to visit the house in an annual basis and stay a longer period with the locals. Therefore, it is not clear whether these expensive offerings are either true gifts or investments in the eye of the foreign tourists.

Table 7: Benefits Received

Category (Node)	Key Words	Word Count	Depth	Core Phrases
Benefits received	Received	42	5.00	“A strong relationship helps us to receive more benefits” BB01; “We don’t receive that much presents now” BB02; “The benefits we receive depend upon the satisfaction we give” BB03
	Benefits	31	3.79	“The main benefit is the income” BB02; “Knowing foreign languages will always be beneficial” BB03; “There are many benefits one can enjoy in this job” BB05
Money	20	2.53	“Freedom, Money, company of foreigners and foreign tours are the main benefits” BB09; “There are some old guests of mine who send me money monthly” BB03; “I have	

			friends who ready to send me money if I need” BB05
House	20	2.53	“One couple built up a house for me” BB03; “One German Lady presented me this house” BB06; “Some foreigners helped to build my house” BB08

Unethical and Illegal Activities

All the beach boys in BNHR have engaged with different types of illegal activities when servicing the foreign tourists. The statements pertaining to illegal and unethical practices are presented in the Table 8. All the beach boys interviewed had had sexual intercourses with female foreign tourists. Even, some have perceived maintaining a sexual relationship is a part of their job. Further, they were expected to be temporary sex partners by the female tourists. Additionally, beach boys have been given money by the foreign tourists for being a sex partner. The next illegal action of the beach boys is supply of illegal drugs. In most occasions, beach boys inform the tourists about availability of drugs and in certain cases tourists have requested for local drugs. Consequently, when requested for prostitutes, beach boys do not hesitate to provide the same service.

Table 8: Unethical and Illegal Practices of Beach Boys

Category (Node)	Key Words	Word Count	Depth	Core Phrases
Unethical and illegal activities	Sex	27	6.80	“I have done sex with countless foreign ladies” BB01; “Maintaining a sexual relationship is part of this job” BB06; “Some female tourists want us to become their temporary sex partners” BB08; “I have been given money after sex” BB 11
Drugs		23	5.79	“Somehow we have to satisfy tourists by providing whatever they like including drugs” BB01; “We have to smuggle some illegal drugs to the area” BB06; “Tourists like to try local drugs” BB09
Prostitutes		19	4.79	“We have to supply prostitutes to the tourists” BB03; “Sometimes tourists ask for local prostitutes” BB06; “There are many prostitutes that we know” BB08

Education & Training

When studying about the beach boys, their education and training is also worth investigating. Although education and training levels are not pre-requisites in joining with this informal industry, different beach boys are in different stages in their education and training levels (Table 9). However, most of the beach boys have not completed their school successfully. In contrast to school education, the beach boys are more focused on learning a foreign language that benefits

them to approach the tourists easily. German, English. French and Russian languages have a high value in performing their jobs, according to their opinion. In addition to that, after understanding the legal requirement to become a guide, the beach boys are keen to pursue a relevant course and to possess a guide license which will earn them a legal acceptance as guides.

Table 9: Education and Training Levels of Beach Boys

Category (Node)	Key Words	Word Count	Depth	Core Phrases
Education and training	School	50	8.61	“I schooled up to grade 10” BB04; “I could not complete the school successfully” BB07; “I went to the school only up to grade 08” BB08
	German	31	5.34	“I’m very good in German, both writing and speaking” BB01; “I studied German in German Cultural Institute” BB02; “My German knowledge is better than English” BB02; “I speak German, French and Russian” BB06
	English	27	4.65	“Earlier I could not speak English” BB03; “English is important” BB04; “Most of the tourists speak at least English” BB07
	Course	18	2.93	“I have no time to follow any courses” BB01; “I completed Responsible Tourism Partnership Course” BB03; “I did a course of three months for the area guide license” BB04; “Tourist Board area guide license course” BB05; “Now I am following an Area Tourist Guide course” BB09

Challenges Faced by Beach Boys

When performing their duties as beach boys, the beach boys face a range of challenges (Table 10). One of the main challenges is age. As the name sounds and when considering the duties that they have to perform, the beach boy job is more suitable for young men. Further, most of the beach boys commented that being young (below 30) is advantageous in performing their duties. It was further revealed that the involvement of new beach boys causes damages to the businesses of the elderly beach boys. Moreover, the present beach boys are in the understanding that this is not a full time or a pensionable job. The second most cited challenge is the involvement of police and relevant authorities. As indicated earlier, servicing for a foreign tourist without having a valid license is illegal in Sri Lanka. Thus, police often inquire for the guide or tourist facilitator license when the beach boys are found with the company of foreign tourists, which affect their business. Hotels, travel agencies and tour guides are also found as threats to perform their duties since these parties often discourage the tourists to obtain the services from beach boys.

Table 10: Challenges Faced by the Beach Boys

Category (Node)	Key Words	Word Count	Depth	Core Phrases
Challenges faced	Challenge	25	7.37	“The first challenge is that I am old and I cannot

			work as I used to” BB05; “New beach boys impose a big challenge to us” BB06; “The biggest challenge is we cannot do this forever” BB07
Police	16	4.42	“Police put pressure on us” BB04; “Police is making many troubles to our job” BB06; “Police and tourism officers are always asking for our license” BB08
Guides	13	3.83	“Senior guides neglect us” BB03; “Hotels and tour guides also give falsified information about us” BB06; “Guides often sell them our tours” BB07
Agencies	8	2.36	“All inclusive packages of the travel agencies are a problem for us” BB05; “Hotels and travel agencies are discouraging the tourist to obtain our service” BB07; “Hotels and travel agencies scare the tourists not to get our service” BB10

Challenges facing	Challenges – Police – Guides – Agencies	17.98	62
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Many factors motive Sri Lankan local males to become beach boys. This study identified economic factors as the main reason for them to become beach boys which is closely followed by less educational qualifications. The findings are similar to the conclusions of Herold, Garcia and DeMoya, (2001) about the involvement of beach boys in Dominican Republic in two aspects. First, beach boys in both countries have worked in tourism related industries before becoming beach boys and second, the beach boys were inspired to take this job by their neighbours and peers who are more successful as a beach boy. Whilst many studies including Connell (2005), Dahles (1998), Herold (1992), and Spencer and Bean (2017) identify sexual desires are strong motives for local men to become beach boys, the current study do not support that argument in Sri Lankan context.

Unlike the beach boys found in other countries, Sri Lankan beach boys provide an array of services to the tourists. They include recommending hotels, restaurants, providing transportation services, organizing tours, excursions, parties, selling souvenirs etc. On one hand it is very convenient for the tourists to get their needs fulfilled through easily available beach boys, but on the other hand, supply of tourism related services by unqualified and unorganized persons without being monitored by authorities might cause chaos in the industry. Beach boys make a living by providing personalized services to the tourists. As such, they need to get the attention of the tourists and establish a healthy relationship with the tourists through various approaches. In Sri Lanka, the most common way of approaching to the tourists are by talking with them directly and volunteering themselves to make the tourists familiarize with the area.

Present study findings about the benefits enjoyed by Sri Lankan beach boys have certain similarities with the benefits received by beach boys in other countries. The common benefits received include, receipt of different type of gifts, clothes, sponsorships and foreign trips. Further, the study identified that the beach boys clear a path to settle in a developed country after establishing a strong relationship with foreign tourists, especially with the female. Topics related to sex and beach boys are very common. The present study also found that the beach boys often engage with sexual activities with the female foreign tourists visiting Sri Lanka. On the other hand, unethical sexual relationships affect Sri Lankan culture and social value systems adversely and will eventually destroy the social orders and family structures. Popularizing of drugs and prostitution, on the others hand is another illegal practice of the beach boys in Sri Lanka.

The intent of the study was to generate a holistic idea about beach boys through the host-guest relationship theory, challenging the existing notion of sex workers that they are pinned at. The study concludes that the beach boys develop very strong relationships with the tourists by providing various services to the tourists through which they receive many personal benefits and even a safe passage to migrate to a developed country after marrying foreign tourists. Further, the tourists continue to patronize the services of the beach boys encouraging more young men to join with this informal industry. As a result, the beach boys become an inseparable segment in the Sri Lankan tourism industry servicing the foreign tourists, even though the negative impacts caused by them to the tourism industry are unavoidable.

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Conclusions and Implications

Although often neglected or downgraded, beach boys are an important sector in the informal tourism industry, who try to make a living by providing different services to the tourists. Previous researches only discuss the beach boys' sexual relationships with the foreign tourists ignoring the services they rendered to the tourists, motivators to become beach boys, benefits they received, illegal practices and challenges facing. The encounters between the beach boys and foreign tourists are important aspects in host-guest theory since the studies pertaining to beach boys are limited. Thus, this study aimed at filling this gap through an explorative study. Content analysis was carried out in this study to understand the relationship between beach boys and tourists and to check the applicability of international findings with the local context. The study further sheds new light on how socio-demographic and economic characteristics of beach boys, contributes and impacts on tourism development and the influence on the tourists. Table 11 summarizes the qualitative analysis in word count and the depth of the four main key words in a node.

Table 11: Summary

Nodes	Key Words	Depth	Words
Reasons for joining	Work – Money – Good – Education	19.66	59
Services provided	Provide – Tours – Boats – Shopping	30.8	77
Repeat tourists	Repeat – Receive	17.83	47
Self-marketing	Tourists – Talk – Recommendations – Friends	15.5	95
Benefits received	Receive – Benefits – Money – House	15.49	126
Unethical and illegal activities	Sex – Drugs – Prostitutes	17.38	69
Education and training	School – German – English – Course	21.53	126

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