

Impacts of Unplanned Tourism Development on Tourists’ Satisfaction with Special Reference to Negombo, Sri Lanka

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Negombo is a popular tourist destination and has attracted millions of tourists over the last few decades. However, the unplanned tourism developments and constructions have become a major impediment for its sustainability and also deteriorate the tourists’ satisfaction. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to identify the impacts of unplanned tourism development on tourists’ satisfaction. The data gathered through a questionnaire survey using 378 tourists at Negombo beach and two interviews with authorized persons in Negombo and hence the study has used the mixed methodology. The study considered that the tourists’ satisfaction depends on the factors related to the tourism planning and development such as natural and manmade attractions, infrastructure and superstructure, social and cultural setting, environmental management, government and industry intervention on tourism planning through developing rules, regulations and policies etc. The result of the survey shows that, except the social cultural setting, all the other factors positively influence on the tourists’ satisfaction who visited Negombo. The tourists are dissatisfied about some social cultural factors, especially the behaviour of beach boys. The majority of the tourists believe that, the beach boys have disturbed their holidays. Also, the hawkers have disturbed the holiday spending of the tourists. The tourists believe, that the locals suffer from xenophobia and the Sri Lankan culture has presently become a commodity. Even though tourists are dissatisfied with the socio-cultural setting of the area, the study concludes that the majority of the tourists are satisfied with the present tourism development in the study area. However, the government and the industry should intervene to take necessary actions to improve the social cultural setting of the Negombo area to ensure the sustainable tourism and development.

Keywords: Tourism Planning; Tourists Satisfaction; Unplanned Tourism Development