

---

## Extended Abstract

International Symposium of Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

(ICSUSL) - 2017

### Tourism and Economic Social Development in Jaffna District

---

#### 1. Abstract

There is a lack of research studies regarding regional development through tourism in Jaffna District. Tourism seems to be an emerging income earning sector in Jaffna District after the end of 30 years of civil war. It generates employment opportunities and it helps to enhance the livelihood of the residents. Poverty reduction, export generation, job creation, investment stimulation, and promoting socio-cultural understanding, harmony within the nation are being done through tourism development. This study investigates the regional tourism development in Jaffna District. Data has been collected through field visit interviews with stakeholders. The result of this study reveals that tourism has made a substantial contribution to regional and intercultural promotion in Jaffna District. Consequently, this study provides suggestions on how economic and socio-cultural development through sustainable tourism in Jaffna following decades of civil war.

**Keywords:** Regional development, host communities, poverty reduction,

#### 2. Introduction and research problem/issue

Tourism in Sri Lanka is the largest industry and has been an integral component of economic development. Recently, tourist arrivals throughout Sri Lanka are continuously increasing. Recent Sri Lanka Development Authority (SLTDA) figures show that in the 2016, tourist arrivals of 1.7 million to representing an increase of 17.8 percent in the

2015 figures for the country (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, 2016). In Sri Lanka, particularly in Jaffna, tourism has been an emerging sector after the aftermath of civil war.

Domestic tourists from Southern part of the country and international tourists have been attracted by Jaffna's culture and heritage (Pushparatnam, 2014). Many scholars, within the tourism literature, have discussed the role of tourism in various views. For example, (Sharpley & Ussi, 2014) believe that tourism is seen as a means to build economic and regional development. Similarly, as noted by Binns and Nel (2002, p. 235) "the role of tourism has been identified as a key strategy that can lead to economic upliftment, community development and relief in developing world". It should be noted that investors' perception, tourism can generate advantages with a comparatively small amount of investment when compared to other business investments. Income distribution and poverty alleviation, however, particularly in developing nations, are serious issues (Holden, 2013; Tisdell & Bandara, 2004). Tourism in Sri Lanka is one of the faster growing and is the fourth largest foreign-exchange earner in 2015 (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority). However, over

---

#### 4. Results and findings

---

the last four decades, growth of this industry has fluctuated due to political unrest. In Jaffna, presently, this industry has been received more attention. In fact, this study investigates how de of tourism influences economic and socio-cultural development in Jaffna district.

#### 3. Research Methodology

For this study, a qualitative approach is used. This approach works best for understanding social ( Gomm, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Ritchie & Spencer, 2002). The authors realized that the b gather the industrial practitioners a local community knowledge as well as government perspective, w the interviews in Jaffna district. These have been done to generate the data in the absence of readily av gained information on tourism development in Jaffna district and its surrounding region. The sample interview was twenty five and the format was that of semi structured interviews under taken wi stakeholders.

This consists with other researches Lew (2014), Daskon and Binns (2009) and Becken (2013) who hav the qualitative method and analysis data collection in order to gain the views of different stakeholders. period December to January 2016/2017, data was collected through filed based in country interview. Th enabled a discourse analysis methodological approach to interviewees. This means that respondents discuss their thoughts on the role of tourism development in Jaffna district also long term appr sustainability. The interviews also enabled more extended responses where interviewees discu experiences, attitudes and understanding the tourism development in Jaffna district.

---

Many respondents confirmed that tourism has been pursued by the Sri Lankan government for the main purpose of earning foreign exchange, generating direct and indirect employment opportunities and providing government's income through taxes and service charges. As stated earlier, in Sri Lanka employment growth is a key factor with which to evaluate the contribution of tourism development. The tourism industry is associated with several service providing industries such as the hotel industry, tourist operators, tour agencies and caterers. Some industries are not directly linked with the tourism industry but also linked with other industries. For example, airport services are fundamental to enhancing the flow of tourists. Measurement of employment within the tourism industry has therefore been incorporated into the total employment volume of direct and indirect employment increased steadily from 59,914 in 1990 to 319,436 in 2015 (Tourism Development Authority, 2016). In fact, figures specific to Jaffna District are not available to indicate the economic gains of tourism. Therefore, national indicators are relied upon to provide a broad understanding of economic gains. Yet a respondent said, "There is no stable growth in economy. Further, this boom is not a real boon as most of these were funded by the diaspora and this may be ceased at any time as the inflow of money through the Hawala system which is not legalized. Since they have money they are pumping funds and constructing buildings at a rate and this is really an abuse of land."

A civil servant from Northern Province confirms that in case of Jaffna, post war tourism development has been implemented. However developers failed to take appropriate destinations to develop tourism destination. It is considered as a main challenge to tourism boom in Jaffna district. Through field visit it can be observed that the tourism industry has made, and continues to make, a valuable contribution to

Provinces' economic and socio cultural development. One respondent said "First the Northern Province should establish an association for the tourism service providers and a uniformity should be followed province. Also this particular association should be the contact point for all entering into the province and must be shared among the members". Another significant indicator of backward linkages is the multiplier coefficient, which calculates the overall effect on the economy of a unit of tourist expenditure. In Sri Lanka it is relatively high, which means that for every rupee that a tourist spends, gross output in economy increases by a strong backward linkage to the economy generates employment and revenue for host communities, but also have negative repercussions. In fact, this negative effect has been proved through field base interviews. Tourists' products are in limited supply, demand from the tourism sectors may drive the prices up. In

Jaffna the prices of fresh produce have increased considerably". Many respondents indicate that government should pay more attention to maintain sustainable prices for tourists' products. Stakeholders believed that one of the strengths of the tourism industry is that it continues to provide new job opportunities compared with traditional sectors. Hoteliers indicated that jobs in the tourism industry are acceptable standard, their

productivity is desirable. However, hotels offer skills development programmes including communication and body language to employees.

Through interview with host communities different types of tourism provide different types of economy for the local communities. General perception is that the difference in spending power between independent package tourists is decreasing. Independent travelers generally have larger budgets. They would prefer stay system which leads to promote livelihood development of host communities.

##### 5. Conclusions, implications and significance

Tourism is a growing industry all over the world in recent years. In many war affected countries it has that national investors and international investors have engaged themselves in investing more on industry as well as they are more eagerly waiting to invest more in the near future (Ashley, Boyd, & 2000; Ioannides & Apostolopoulos, 1999; Teye, 1986). In Jaffna district, Foreign Direct Investment increased in the tourism industry after the end of 30 years of civil war. This study found out that tourism

has made a substantial economic socio cultural contribution to regional development and also intercultural connections. In Sri Lanka, tourism generates economic advantage comparatively small amount of investment when compared to other business options. Furthermore, the tourism development board has to make effort to design sustainable tourism and they need to be implemented in the Northern Region.

##### 6. References (Selected)

- Ashley, C., Boyd, C., & Goodwin, H. (2000). Pro-poor tourism: putting poverty at the heart of the tourism industry. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 8(2), 105-116.
- Becken, S. (2013). Developing a framework for assessing resilience of tourism sub-systems to climate change. *Annals of tourism research*, 43, 506-528.
- Binns, T., & Nel, E. (2002). Tourism as a local development strategy in South Africa. *The geographical magazine*, 168(3), 235-247.
- Daskon, C., & Binns, T. (2009). Culture, tradition and sustainable rural livelihoods: exploring the tourism development interface in Kandy, Sri Lanka. *Community Development Journal*, 45(4), 494-517.
- Gomm, R. (2008). *Social research methodology: A critical introduction*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

- 
- Holden, A. (2013). *Tourism, poverty and development*: Routledge.
- Ioannides, D., & Apostolopoulos, Y. (1999). Political instability, war, and tourism in Cyprus: Effects, m and prospects for recovery. *Journal of travel research*, 38(1), 51-56.
- Lew, A. A. (2014). Scale, change and resilience in community tourism planning. *Tourism Geographies* 22.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*: Sage.
- Pushparatnam, P. (2014). *Tourism and Monuments of Archaeological Heritage in Northern Sri Lanka* Express Newspapers (ceylon) (Pvt) Ltd.
- Ritchie, J., & Spencer, L. (2002). Qualitative data analysis for applied policy research. In A. Bryman & R. G. Burgess (Eds.), *The qualitative researcher's companion* ( pp. 305-329). New York: R
- Sharpley, R., & Ussi, M. (2014). Tourism and governance in small island developing states (SIDS): the Case of Zanzibar. *International journal of tourism research*, 16(1), 87-96.
- Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority. (2016). *Monthly Statistical Bulletin* <http://www.sltda.lk/node/704>: Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority.
- Teye, V. B. (1986). Liberation wars and tourism development in Africa: The case of Zambia. *Annals of tourism research*, 13(4), 589-608.
- Tisdell, C. A., & Bandara, R. (2004). *Tourism as a contributor to development in Sri Lanka: An overview and a case study*: University of Queensland, School of Economics.
-