



South Asian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality

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Faculty of Management Studies, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka



Editorial Note

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As Co-Editors-in-Chief for the South Asian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality (SAJTH), Faculty of Management Studies, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, we are delighted to issue Volume 1, Issue 1 of the Journal. Addressing the paucity of quality journals in tourism and hospitality in the South Asian Region this inaugural issue is launched. It is a peer-reviewed bi-annual outlet for substantive research in tourism and hospitality in and out of South Asia.

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The Journal accommodates three types of papers. Firstly, Research Papers, which will be the more common type and demonstrate sound theoretical, empirical, and/or methodological underpinnings and a clear contribution to knowledge in the field of Tourism and Hospitality. Secondly, Case Study and Practitioner Papers providing critical and concise yet pragmatic views on contemporary issues specific to Tourism and Hospitality will be accepted. Finally, there will be Book Reviews.

This inaugural issue of SAJTH propagates new tourism and hospitality knowledge through eight research papers and a book review that critically explore contemporary issues in both in and out of the South Asian context. In the first article, the development of the wildlife tourism resources at the Beijing Wildlife Park (BWP) is investigated with the aim of determining the way forward for sustainable development of the BWP by using the case study approach through collecting data from the online comments on two Chinese travel apps. The second paper explores the ways in which mass tourism has utilized cultural heritage as a salient asset for development. It argues that there are numerous ways in which ordinary heritage could be better researched in South Asia, how it might be used as a tourism resource, and as a tool for community empowerment.

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The third paper reports on a study of visitor demand for Human-Elephant Conflict mitigation strategies such as visitor willingness to pay a conservation tax at park level that could be used for implementing HEC mitigation measures to conserve elephants in the wild. A discrete choice experiment (DCE) was conducted at three national parks in Sri Lanka presenting different options for mitigating HEC. The influence of experiential marketing on destination loyalty through the mediating effect of tourists' satisfaction and destination image in the tourists' cultural destinations in Sri Lanka is the fourth paper. It discloses that experiential marketing has a significant positive effect on destination loyalty only with the mediating effect of destination image and satisfaction.

The fifth paper titled "Can the Western Tourist Gaze be deconstructed through Buddhist Ontology" with the philosophical insights advanced by the Kyoto School of Thoughts, articulates that the western gaze in the discovery of the outer world can become meaningless. Hence, the western tourist gaze that sought pleasure or leisure or even newness would be futile as it leads to avidya, the manifestation of the ego. The paper concludes that 'the union of the seer and the seen' gets deconstructed when the individual deeply realizes the fundamental nothingness that creates the above subjective-objective illusion (avidyā) - the foundation of the western tourist gaze.

The sixth paper focuses on the moderating role of personal initiative in projecting employee creativity through transformational leadership in five-star hotels in Sri Lanka. It discusses the fact that a significant moderating role of the personal initiative was found in the association between transformational leadership and employee creativity from surveying 312 employees and their immediate supervisors.

Whether and to what extent, branding and trademark regimes can be used in a business context to extract value from tourism-related products and services in Sri Lanka is discussed in the seventh paper, following a systematic literature review. The focus of the eighth paper is to understand how people used their cooking mishaps during the movement control order period due to the Covid-19 pandemic to seek emotional support and a sense of belonging to an online food community. Three major sharing motivations, namely, social and relational, emotional articulation, and information sharing, are derived through content analysis of reports. Finally, the book "Tourism, Hospitality and Digital Transformation," edited by K. Tajeddini, V. Ratten, and T. Merkle (Routledge; 1st Edition, 2019) is reviewed comprehensively and critically.

Future issues of the Journal will provide a platform for academic dialog in publishing interdisciplinary research in the intersection of tourism, hospitality, environmental management, business management, economics, and community. We will accept research that is conducted through qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods approaches.

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