

Evaluating Tourist Expectations, Perceived Value, and Satisfaction of Tourists in Sri Lanka

Ruchira Ashain Vansanden¹, RAM Madhuwanthi¹ and Asanka D Dharmawansa^{2*}

¹School of Business, ESOF Metro Campus, Kurunegala

²Wayamba University of Sri Lanka

*asankad@wyb.ac.lk

The tourism industry has become a pillar that holds the Sri Lankan economy. The world travel and tourism sector in 2019 has contributed US\$ 8.9 trillion to the global GDP. Tourism is a method of generating foreign exchange which helps to control the balance of payment of US\$ 35.3 billion of Sri Lanka which was due up to year 2020. There is significant slow growth and fluctuation in the European tourist market before the COVID-19 pandemic. It's important to identify the reason for slow growth and fluctuation in the European tourist market and it will be useful to improve the tourist industry in Sri Lanka. The main objective of this study is to evaluate the expectations, perceived value, and satisfaction of Tourists' who are visiting Sri Lanka from the European region. The data was collected using a questionnaire covering expectation, perceived values, and satisfaction in the aspect of accommodation, transport and services, food and beverages, health and safety, and attractions and activities. A total of 269 tourists visited from Europe in 2019 were used on analysis from the convenience sampling method as the sample size. Tourist expectations have been analysed against the perceived values initially. Then expectation and perceived values have been analysed against the satisfaction. It is concluded that there is a positive significant relationship with all the variables. Among them, the expectation prevails as the most significant precursor of the tourists' satisfaction rather than the perceived value with satisfaction. The decision makers in the tourism industry in Sri Lanka should devote more efforts to improve the facilities for accommodation, transportation, health and safety and food quality.

Keywords: *European Region, Expectations, Perceived Values, Satisfaction, Sri Lanka Tourism*