DIGITAL NOMAD TOURISTS: THE ANTICIPATED POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF THEM ON SRI LANKA DURING POST PANDEMIC SITUATION

R. Fernando[a*], H. Pirashath[a], K. Chamodya[a], and S. Rathnayake[b]

[a] Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education, Colombo, Sri Lanka
[b] University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

*rishini@sliate.ac.lk

Abstract

Digital nomad tourists are subject to intense attention, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic as a new type of tourists. Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority recently announced that efforts will be put towards attracting digital nomads to the country as a tactic of surviving the economic downfall caused by the pandemic. Considering this fact, this research was carried out with the aim of assessing possible positive and negative impacts under economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects when promoting Sri Lanka to the given market group. The qualitative approach was adopted in the present research. It was focused on the Sri Lankan context while considering the practices of other destinations in terms of digital nomad tourism. The sample consisted of 15 participants selected through the non-probability purposive sampling technique. Primary data was collected from these 15 participants, including 5 sociologists, 5 economists, and 5 environmentalists, through structured interviews via online applications. Furthermore, Information contained in literature from different perspectives about digital nomad tourists were accessed and processed as secondary data to find the answers for the given research problem. The thematic content analysis technique was used in the present study. This study enabled the space to broaden the view of possible impacts of activities of digital nomads in Sri Lanka according to different perspectives. It was expressed that digital nomad tourism could bring many benefits in the base of economic, socio-cultural, and natural traits also, it could also bring negative impacts. The findings of this study could be taken into consideration to make policies, might attract the tourism planners and the policymakers to effectively implement digital nomad tourism profitably with the understanding of the positive and negative impacts.

Keywords: Digital Nomads, Impacts, Sri Lanka, Tourism