

IMPACT OF OVER-TOURISM ON TOURIST SATISFACTION WITH THE MODERATING EFFECT OF EXPENDITURE: A STUDY IN NUWARA ELIYA

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1. Introduction

This study examines the impact of over-tourism on tourist satisfaction in Nuwara Eliya, Sri Lanka, with a specific focus on the moderating effect of tourist expenditure. The rapid growth of tourism has created challenges in maintaining high-quality infrastructure and visitor experiences, particularly during peak seasons and long holiday periods. This influx strains local resources and impacts the environment. This study aims to assess how increasing visitor numbers affect tourist satisfaction and to what extent higher spending can mitigate the discomfort associated with overcrowding.

2. Research Methodology

A quantitative research approach and correlational research design were employed in this study. Using simple random sampling, data were collected from a sample of 385 local and international tourists visiting Nuwara Eliya during the long holiday period in August. Descriptive analyses were performed using SPSS and SmartPLS software to interpret the data.

3. Findings and Discussion

The analysis reveals a strong negative correlation between over-tourism and tourist satisfaction, suggesting that as visitor numbers increase, overall satisfaction tends to decrease. Additionally, tourist expenditure was found to moderate this relationship, indicating that higher spending can help alleviate some of the adverse effects of over-tourism on satisfaction levels.

4. Conclusion and Implications

The study underscores the need for tourism stakeholders to actively manage visitor flows, enhance service quality, and devise strategic plans for sustainable tourism development in Nuwara Eliya. Recommendations include implementing visitor management strategies, investing in professional training, continuously monitoring customer satisfaction, improving signage and transportation options, and promoting educational campaigns on responsible travel and environmental stewardship.

Keywords: Nuwara Eliya, Over-Tourism, Overcrowding, Tourist satisfaction, Tourist expenditure