

(ID 188)

Impact of Agro-Tourism on Travel Experiences of Domestic Tourists in Sri Lanka

Gnanathilaka, L.P.S.D.

Department of Economics, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka
sdilhara119@gmail.com

Abstract

Agro-tourism as a branch of tourism refers to a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural industries and tourism to attract visitors to a farm or other agricultural businesses with the objectives of generating income and entertaining or educating the visitors. As the research problem, it was identified that limited number of research has been done on agro-tourism and its impact on the experiences of domestic tourists to travel as a path to establish a sustainable tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Hence, this study aimed to study the impact of agro-tourism on travel experiences of Sri Lankan domestic tourists. A mixed research design method was used in the study. It was mainly based on the primary data and the sample in the study was 50 which was randomly selected out of the total population of 233. As the variables, general demographic variables, main source of finance, trip length, major reasons to travel, the most favourite experience in selecting the destination and willingness to travel again were used for the study. Cross tabulation in SPSS analysis was mainly used with the descriptive analysis to obtain the results. As per the findings of the study, seventy percent of females and thirty percent of males were recorded representing the whole sample. Eighty four percent of domestic tourists had the willingness to travel again while sixteen percent had not. From the Cross-tabulation results, it was determined that 82.85% females from 70% and 86.66% of males from 30% showed interest to travel again to the same place. Further results showed that both female and male domestic tourists were interested to pick fresh fruits/vegetables from the farm recording 57.14% and 66.66% respectively. Rest of the domestic tourists was also interested in visiting agricultural farms, petting and feeding animals, and other activities. It is an evident fact that most of the domestic tourists are willing to gain live experiences in engaging into certain types of agriculture sectorial practices. Hence, it is highly recommended to concern on the agricultural practices of tourists' areas in Sri Lanka as both domestic and foreign tourists yearn to gain live experiences in current context. Further researchers are suggested to study on the foreign tourists and their travel experiences in connection with agro-tourism.

Keywords: Agro-tourism, Domestic tourists, Sri Lanka, Travel experiences