

Impact of Eco Tourism Practices on Customer Satisfaction (with special reference to hotels in Uva province)

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Sri Lanka has obtained tremendous ecotourism resources with great potential for further development in modern economy. The study based on two main objectives; to identify the existing situation of eco-tourism practices, and to assess the impact of eco-tourism practices on customer satisfaction. Sri Lankan eco resort hoteliers construct the meaning of eco-tourism practices in various ways. They are more towards nature based tourism, wild life tourism and environment conservation tourism. They were unable to target international eco-tourism standard and attract eco tourists. Because the hoteliers' practice of the eco concept differs from international practices and standards, they could not meet the expectations of eco tourists. Even though eco-tourism concept main market is eco tourist market, they cater and address to other type of tourists. Comparing to the international eco-tourism standard, Sri Lankan hoteliers consider only few practices as an essential components of an eco-tourism practices. Many hoteliers are launching awareness programs and interpretation programs to their stakeholders about the environmental conservation practices of the hotel and the hotel facilities. It is not about the eco hotels and ecotourism concepts. Therefore, need to launch correct awareness programs on the eco concept. Data collection of the study was conducted self-administered questionnaire. Questionnaires were distributed among 100 tourists who accommodated in the hotels in Uva province employing convenient sampling method. Ten hotels were selected using random sampling technique and ten guests were selected from each hotel for this study. Study examined the relationship between eco-tourism practices and customer satisfaction. The findings revealed that the existing situation of eco-tourism practices in Uva province the tourists are satisfied. According to Pearson correlation analysis, strong positive relationship has been proven in between eco-tourism practices and customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Customer, satisfaction, Eco-tourism, Hotels, Eco tourists