

Assessing the Impact of Marketing Mix Factors to the Development of Gem Tourism in Sri Lanka

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Tourism industry is rapidly growing industry in the world. Also with the global completion of the world, most of countries are considering different tourism sectors. As a result of that niche tourism concept become a most important aspect of tourism industry. In this study focused on gem tourism. It is one of the untapped niche tourism segments in the world. Sri Lanka is country which has a great potential for gem tourism with its resources. In this respect, this study attempted to explore gem tourism development within a Sri Lanka with special reference to Rathnapura, Colombo and Kandy. Since, marketing mix factors are critical in any form of tourism to develop, the main purpose of this study to identify the impact of the marketing mix factors to develop gem tourism in Sri Lanka .After the extensive literature review, a conceptual framework has been developed based on the 7 P's in marketing mix. In this study quantitative method used to assessing the marketing mix factors to develop gem tourism from gem tourist's perspectives and questionnaire based survey used to collect data with the convenience sampling techniques. Also qualitative method used to identify the opportunities and barriers from service provider's perspectives and structured interview used to collect data. Initially, descriptive analysis was carried out to screen the existing situation of gem tourism. Further, Pearson correlation analysis and the multiple linear regression analysis have been used as analysis techniques. According to the research findings product and place have the strong positive relationship with gem tourism development and product is the most significant element. Also according to the thematic analysis, unique and quality gems were the main opportunity and lack of promotion was the main barriers for the gem tourism development. Also have to keep more attention to develop gem tourism from the service providers and need to focus on different promotional techniques.

Keywords: Tourism, Niche tourism Gem tourism, Marketing mix, Seven P's.