

HOLIDAY DESTINATION SELECTION FACTORS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LEISURE TRAVELERS IN SRI LANKA

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Faculty of management

Uva Wellassa University

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ABSTRACT

In leisure tourism it is important to identify holiday destination selection factors which assist tourist to select one destination over another. Tourist's perception can be differing in destination selection. Therefore authorities of any destination must make sure that they are able to deliver experiences to the travelers which are similar to their expectations. The purpose of this thesis is to review tourist perception towards destination selection and their experiences in Sri Lanka as an international tourist destination and identify the service gap. Data was collected at Bandaranaike international Airport by using questionnaires to reach those objectives. As overall result, most of the leisure tourists consider Geography and climate, accessibility, super structure, quality services and Safety and security to select their holiday destination prominently. They could gain high experiences in Sri Lanka through culture and history, hospitality accessibility and safety and security than other factors. However there are more sectors that should be considered by authorities in Sri Lanka It is better if Sri Lanka can more consider marketing, developing entertainment facilities, tourism activities to make Sri Lanka as a competitive holiday destination among others. Then it will help to reduce negative service quality gap and deliver more experiences to the leisure travelers in Sri Lanka.

Key wards: Destination selection, perception, experience, Service gap