

## **Study on Impact of Ecotourism Practices on Customer Attractiveness in Tourism industry; with Special Reference to Nuwara Eliya District**

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The businesses in the 21<sup>st</sup> century try to be green and eco friendly more than in the past decades and centuries. This study focuses on ecotourism practices in Nuwara Eliya District and elicits its impact on tourist attractiveness to the area. The central focus of this study is to test the impact of ecotourism initiatives on customer attractiveness. To facilitate this, both primary & secondary data was used while survey method was employed to collect primary data. Descriptive statistics method was used to analyze data. The study elucidated nature trails, tea tourism & bird watching to be attractive eco-activities in the area. Usage of eco-friendly products, organic farming can be seen among the ecotourism practitioners. Hotels were able to build environmental awareness through sponsorships & promotions, creates employment opportunities & financial benefits to local community through ecotourism practices. The facility operators emphasized slower, positive growth rates related to ecotourism market under the area of study. It was also evident that eco-activities have not directly influenced to increase hotels' profits, & tourists' arrivals to the area. Lacking infrastructure & safety & quality ecotourism product availability limit the growth of ecotourism practices within the Nuwara Eliya district. Finally the study recommends addressing urgently the above issues to promote Nuwara Eliya as an attractive ecotourism destination.

Key words: Ecotourism, Customer attractiveness