

# Potentiality of Fashion Industry for the Tourism Development in Sri Lanka

B. D.W. Sirisena<sup>1</sup>, H.M.W.M. Herath<sup>2</sup> and A.K.A. Damunupola<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Public Administration, Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Management Sciences, Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

Today many tourists from all over the world specifically visit fashion cities to explore fashion related elements such as participate in major fashion weeks, fashion forums and exhibitions, consume branded and unique fashion products and so on. These fashion elements can be seen in this tropical country Sri Lanka along with the unique and extraordinary manufacturing techniques. Sri Lanka is globally recognized as the tourism destination with unprecedented natural beauty, beaches, wild life, culture and art and crafts. The art and craft play a major role in promoting Sri Lankan beauty to the world; it represents our culture, natural beauty, wild life and traditions. Fortunately, this remarkable craftsmanship was adopted by Sri Lankan fashion industry many years ago that led to create great masterpieces inspired with Batik, handloom, lace and so on. Colombo is the major hub for fashion since it's consisted with major fashion design institutes, national and international fashion weeks, origin of talented fashion designers and major fashion boutiques. The focus of the study was to examine the linkage between fashion and tourism in the city of Colombo and its tourism potentials. The research analysed existing situation of fashion industry and the potential of fashion industry to promote Colombo as a fashion city. This study unveiled the challenges and opportunities involve in fashion industry to contribute for the tourism development in Sri Lanka. In order to justify the potentiality of fashion industry for the tourism development, all the evidences and data was collected from experienced and famous fashion designers, major fashion week organizers, Export Development Board and Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau through semi- structured interviews and the conclusion was given after going through the thematic analysis. The conclusion of the study emphasized the fact that there is a huge potentiality for the fashion industry to make a vital contribution to tourism development in Sri Lanka by promoting Colombo as a fashion city. But this depends on proper framework for the fashion industry a tourism industry, financial support by the government to all the stakeholders of fashion and tourism industry and effective marketing and promotional efforts that are consistent.

*Keywords:* Fashion tourism, Cultural and creative industry, City branding fashion city, Tourism development