



**A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF BEACH TOURISM ON
THE HOST COMMUNITY IN ARUGAM BAY**

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ABSTRACT

It is a fact that tourism is a major income generator in many countries, especially developing countries like Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is famous for its long sandy beaches. Among them Arugam Bay is considered as one of the ten world's best surfing points. This study focuses on the beach tourism activities in Arugam Bay and how these activities influence the host community. The main objective of this study is to identify the beach tourism activities and to find out the kind of impact these beach tourism activities have on the host community. For this study the primary data was collected through structured interview from 30 samples. The sample size includes 15 samples from host community, 05 from foreign tourists, 05 samples from local tourists and 05 from the government officials in Arugam Bay. The analysis was done using thematic analysis which analyses the 3 main themes economic impacts, sociocultural impacts and environmental impacts along with several sub themes. Income generation, Job creation Regional development, Cost of living and Real estate rates are the sub themes that come under economic impact whilst, Living standards, Illegal activities, Misbehaviors, Drug abuse and Cultural influence under socio cultural impacts and Environmental concern, Pollution and Overcrowding come under environmental impacts. The study analyzed the sub themes separately to derive the overall results for each main theme. The results conclude that the beach tourism activities have a positive impact on the economy and the environment of the host community, while the activities negatively affect the socio culture of the host community.

Key words: *Beach tourism, Arugam Bay, Impact, Host Community*