

## **A Study of Tourist Perception on Tourist Harassment on Destination Image (With Special Reference to Arugam Bay Area)**

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Tourist harassment is one of the major challenges which affects the competitiveness of various tourist destinations over the globe and it destroys the tourists' positive destination image perceptions. In the Sri Lankan context, there are more pieces of evidence to prove that the tourists have been facing various types of harassment while they are traveling and staying in Sri Lanka. Thus, the main aim of this research was to explore the association between tourists' perception of tourist harassment and destination image. The target population of the study was international tourists who visited Arugam Bay from July to August 2019 and the sample size was 100 international tourists. A self-prepared structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data from the sample. Purposive sampling technique was used to gather data from international tourists. Simple linear regression analysis and descriptive statistical analysis were used to analyse the data to achieve the research objectives. The results revealed that there was a positive significant association between tourists' perception of tourist harassment and destination image. Also, verbal harassment was the mostly occurred harassments of Arugam Bay. Further, there was a higher level of influence on tourist harassments due to demographic factors like gender, age, marital status, etc. With the findings of the study, it is recommended to have the involvement of government organizations to avoid or minimize tourist harassment in Sri Lanka. Conducting comprehensive research related to the tourist harassments in Sri Lanka would be useful to avoid tourist harassment within Sri Lanka.

*Keywords:* Tourist perception, Tourist harassment, Destination image