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Identify the Potential to Promote Kuragala Archeological Site and Nearby Area as A Tourism Destination

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ABSTRACT

Kuragala is one of a most significant archaeological preserve in Sabaragamuwa province of which designated in Sri Lanka as a pre-historic archaeological site with ruins of ancient Buddhist Cave temple complex, dating back to the 2nd century BC. Kuragala is considered as the oldest archaeological site found in the Intermediate Zone. It is timely to explore the potentiality and the demand as there are more tourist attractions and tourism resources in this area. This study aimed to identify the potential to promote Kuragala and nearby area as a tourism destination. Specific objectives were to identify the potential to promote Kuragala archeological site and near-by areas as a tourism destination, to find out the current situation and benefits for community through tourism promotion. Residents and Allied officers of Kuragala and nearby area and travellers to this area were considered as study population. Thirty residents were selected by simple random sampling. Convenient sampling was used to select 30 travellers and 10 allied officers. Primary data was gathered from residents and travellers using two types of self-administered questionnaires. Data from allied Officers & community members of Kuragala and nearby area was gathered by interview method. Data was entered and analyzed using SPSS software. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as graphs and tables. Qualitative data was analyzed using verbatim quotes. The results of this study revealed that Kuragala and nearby areas are very attractive and iconic place in Sabaragamuwa province. The community has high perception on infrastructure, facility development and community involvement. It is highly recommend that the nature of the area, agriculture and their socio-cultural values shouldn't be disturbed or damaged due to tourism activities and the basic facilities such as food and beverage, accommodation should be developed.

Keywords: potential, Tourism promotion, Kuragala and nearby area