

Impact of Social Media on Young Local Leisure Travellers' Behaviour: Empirical Evidences from Tourist Destinations in Kandy District

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Sri Lanka has been one of the most prominent tourist destinations for travelers. Leisure travel can be defined as interest of entertaining, and relaxing from everyday life. Most of the time, leisure travel based on social media. Travel behavior represent the way in which tourists behave according to their attitudes during the traveling process. Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority highlighted that local travelers visited in Kandy get low amount compared to other cities in 2017. Objective of this research article is to investigate effect of social media on young local leisure travel behavior of Kandy. The population representing the number of young local leisure travelers visited in Kandy. Among them, two hundred sample was selected under convenience sampling method. The questionnaire consists of demographic factors and other questions represent all variables and it measured by using Likert scale to measure the impact on young local leisure travel behavior. Significant level of variables were measured by using AMOS software and path analysis. The research identifies independent variables as frequency of travel, destination selection, social sharing and itinerary planning and the dependent variable as travel behavior. H1, H2, H5 and H7 hypothesis were significant. Destination selection and frequency of travel can be identified as intermediate variables and the significant path represent that the travel frequency has a strong influence on travel behavior and destination selection has a significant path to the frequency of travel. Social sharing positively influence the destination selection and destination selection has significant path to itinerary planning and this path was affected on the leisure travel behavior. Therefore, the study gives a positive contribution to travel organizations to increase their travel frequency. The result of the study explains that social media has a strong impact on the young local leisure travel behavior of Kandy.

Keywords: Social media, Young local leisure travelers' behaviour, Kandy tourist destination