



**A Study on Factors Influencing the Decline of Middle
East Tourists' Market in Sri Lanka; Stakeholders'
Perspective.**

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K.K.W.M.Costha
UWU/HTE/15/010
Department of Tourism Studies

ABSTRACT

Most of the people are used to travel when they have their vacation to avoid the consistency of their lives. As declared by Lonely Planet, Sri Lanka is one of the world's no 01 destinations to visit in 2018. Sri Lanka is a leading travel destination for Middle East tourists. Even though Sri Lanka paid attention to the Middle East market, they have not been able to achieve a high number of arrivals from the Middle East. This study attempts to determine the factors that influencing for the decline of Middle East tourists' market in Sri Lanka. Through that, the researcher is going to achieve the main objective to identify reasons for the decline of Middle East tourists' market in Sri Lanka. The researcher adopts the semi-structured interview to gather data about influencing factors of the decline of the Middle East tourist market. Hoteliers, Travel agents, Tour and site guides, SLTDA and Promotion Bureau are interviewed and their views and opinions are used as the basis of the researcher's analysis from which findings are gotten and recommendations made. Qualitative data have analyzed through thematic analysis. By using thematic analysis method researcher identified the themes as safety and security, facilities, attractions, marketing strategies, services, and other issues of the study. In order to conduct this study, a sample of 15 stakeholders was selected using purposeful sampling method. The findings of this study was the dissatisfaction of safety and security, lack of facilities, lack of manmade attractions and limitation of the night functions, lack of marketing strategies, dissatisfaction of the hotel and guide services, and other issues such as terrorism issues, and restrictions were influenced for the decline of the Middle East tourists' market in Sri Lanka. Finally, the study reflects what are the factors that influencing for the decline of the Middle East market in Sri Lanka. As a country, implementing new rules and giving special attention for the Middle East tourists' expectation can get more advantages from attracting the Middle East market. Those finding of this study can be applied to improve the Middle East tourists arrivals in Sri Lanka.

Key Words: Middle East tourists market, influencing factors, Implications.