



**A STUDY ON IDENTIFYING THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE
LENGTH OF STAY OF INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS WITHIN A
DESTINATION**

(With special Reference to Ella and Bandarawela areas)

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ABSTRACT

Sri Lanka has proved to be one of the fastest growing tourist destinations and the country is receiving an increasing number of tourist arrivals annually. Nevertheless, according to the Chairman of Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, Mr. Rohantha Athukorale, there are some issues associated with the Sri Lankan tourism industry. Lack of marketing and promotional strategies to attract high spend tourists, unavailability of brand equity development in the promotions, lack of global communication partners and shorter LOS are some of these issues. Thus, this study focused on the factors that affect the tourists' LOS which is an important determinant of the overall impact of tourism in a given economy. The objectives of this study are to identify the significant factors that affect the LOS of international tourists who visit Ella and Bandarawela areas, identify the relationship between travel characteristics and LOS, identify relationship between destination image and LOS, and identify relationship between travel motives and LOS. Researcher collected the data from the tourists who visit Ella and Bandarawela areas. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample and sample size is 100. Survey methodology approach has been used to collect primary data from the respondents through a structured questionnaire and the collected data was analyzed through correlation coefficient, factor analysis and Hypothesis testing of SPSS software. Research tested the relationship between Tourists' travel characteristics, Destination image, and Travel motives with LOS. The findings show that the total amount of days spend in Sri Lanka limit the tourists' length of stay in Ella and Bandarawela. Further, it has been identified that the pull travel motives, push travel motives, service quality, destination attributes and economic characteristics are most important factors that affect the length of stay. Moreover, the image perception of tourists regard with these two destination tend to have positive relationship with their length of stay. On the other hand, Pull travel motives such as; climate, cost of the trip, Events, Activities, Attractions and landscape tend to influence the tourists' length of stay.

Key words: Length of stay, Travel characteristics, Destination image, Travel motives.