

Destination Image and Destination Loyalty: Comparison between Asia Pacific and European Tourists

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Sri Lanka is full of natural and man-made attractions and things that can attract many of tourists towards them from different regions in the world and Tourist satisfaction has been identified as a key performance indicator in tourism industry. According to the SLTDA 2016 report, Sri Lankan tourist arrival markets are moving from Western Europe countries to Asian countries. In this respect, this study attempted to explore the difference between these two major source markets in the context of Destination Image and Destination Loyalty to advise the Destination Management efforts of the country. The researches done by scholars suggest that there is a significant positive relationship between Destination image and Tourism satisfaction. Key objectives of the study include identify the role of destination image on the destination loyalty among the Asia Pacific and European tourists and identify the difference between destination loyalty among Asia Pacific and European tourists. Research data were collected using convenience sampling method with 180 tourists 90 from each both regions visit to Western province by distributing self-administrated questionnaires. Questionnaire consists with four major parts and 35 questions from two dependent variables and mediator variable. Results obtained from using Descriptive analysis and PLS-SEM model. Findings revealed that tourists from both regions were highly satisfied with the existing level of cognitive destination image and affective destination image on Sri Lanka. Both region tourists have an effect on Cognitive Destination Image through Perceived Value and only Asia Pacific tourists have an effect on Affective Destination Image through Destination Loyalty. Western Europe tourists are effect on Cognitive Image, Affective Image and Perceived Value through Destination Loyalty. Therefore, researchers recommended improving the Affective Image facilities among Destination Loyalty in Asia Pacific tourists.

Keywords: Destination image, Destination loyalty, Asia pacific tourists, Europe tourists