

The Impacts of Entertainment Events on Host Community with Special Reference to Hikkaduwa

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Sri Lanka has proved to be one of the fastest growing tourist destinations for most type of tourism, especially events tourism. Events are widely recognized to generate many impacts on the host communities and other stakeholders. However the impacts of the events have not been considered in the Sri Lankan context in past few decades. Therefore this research mainly focuses on the entertainment event tourism sector and its impacts on the economy, socio-cultural and environment of the host community. Furthermore, the study identifies the existing strategies for development of host community needs in the research area. The researcher selected 20 event tourism stakeholders who lived in Hikkaduwa area using the convenience sampling method. Semi-structured interviews are conducted to gather the data. Local event organizers, government administrative staff and host community in Hikkaduwa area are interviewed and their views and opinions are used as the basis of the researcher's analysis from which findings and recommendations are derived. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis using NVivo 11 pro software. By using thematic analysis method, infrastructure development, income generation, living standards, illegal activities, cultural influence and waste management were identified as the main themes. A general conclusion is that entertainment events affect host communities positively by constructing a destination image & building community commitment and negatively by illegal activities, disturbances & pollution. Findings of this study recommend to improve the collaboration & networking among stakeholders, increase positive cultural influences and to raise awareness of the host community about event tourism.

Keywords: Event tourism, Entertainment events, Local event organizers, Host community