

**FACTORS WHICH AFFECT ON TOURISTS'
WILLINGNESS TOWARDS AGRO-TOURISM**

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ABSTRACT

Agro-tourism is an emerging and very prospective sub-sector of tourism and which is still the infant stage in Sri Lanka. Agro-tourism is an important alternative source of income for rural dwellers including small-scale farmers in many countries of the developing world. There should be basic facilities to start and operate an agro-tourism destination and if so, it has the ability to generate benefits for the owner and the surrounding community. To develop the agro-tourism sector of the country, it is vitally important to carry out research studies to generate a comprehensive understanding. The objectives of this study were to find consumer willingness towards Agro-tourism in Sri Lanka and to identify potential agro tourists, identify their attitudes and preferences. To accomplish the objectives of the study, a semi-structured questionnaire was prepared, and direct interviews were conducted with both local and foreign tourists who visited tourism destinations in Ella, Sigiriya and Anuradhapura. In the survey, 100 local tourists and 150 foreign tourists were selected using simple random sampling method. Chi-squared analysis was used to find the factors that affect on the willingness of tourists on agro-tourism. Occupation, marital status, travelling frequency, reasons to visit, awareness of agro-tourism, experience on visiting agro-tourism destination before, regions of visited agro-tourism destination before, dimensions of tourist expectations, dimensions of facilities concern by tourists, dimensions of agro-tourism services and productions (tourists point of view), influenced on the willingness of foreign tourists on agro-tourism. Furthermore, only five factors were significantly number of days prefer to stay in an agro-tourism destination, willingness to pay for a day, willingness to travel from airport/port, occupation, education level, dimensions of tourists expectations, dimensions of facilities concern by tourists and number of days prefer to stay in an agro-tourism destination affected for the willingness of local tourists on agro-tourism.

Keywords: Willingness, Agro-tourism, Chi-squared analysis