



Tourists Satisfaction towards Heritage Tourism in Jaffna Peninsula: Sri Lanka

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1 INTRODUCTION

Countries should preserve their cultural heritage for the sustainability of the tourism industry. Cultural heritage contributes to the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of a country. Therefore, an effective sustainable development plan is crucial to any country. In addition, failing to plan to safeguard one's cultural heritage, can result in the loss of the country's prosperity—(Norhasimah, *et al.*, 2014). Cultural heritage attributes such as museums and galleries increase the income of a region and requires them to compete with other tourism products (Brent, *et al.*, 1993). According to Pushparatnam (2014) there are many historical and archaeological sites found in the Jaffna Peninsula such as the Nallur Temple, the Selvasannithi temple, the Keerimalai temple, the Nainadivu amman, the Nagavigarai temple, the Kantharodai Buddhist temple, the ruins of the Buddhist temple in the Delft island, the Jaffna fort, museums, the Jaffna library, Manthirimanai, Sankiliyan thoppu, the Kopai Sankiliyan fort, the old statue of Bandaravanniyan, the Portuguese Fort in Delft, the Dutch barracks at in Delft, Historical churches and light houses. As a result of the 30 years of war which ravaged the Jaffna peninsula, most of these destinations are now abandoned. These heritage sites vital to the future

generations to study and understand the history, cultural reality and the cultural continuity of the society (Pushparatnam, 2014). Even though, Jaffna is rich with cultural heritage, studies conducted on these sites were sparse. (Mathivathani and Sasitharan, 2010) Additionally, many multicultural heritage sites have been damaged in Jaffna during the long war in Sri Lanka. (Mandawala 2012 Mathivathani *et al.*, 2013). Although, there is an urgent need for the development of the cultural heritage sites like Jaffna Fort, the tourism development activities are moving extremely sluggish in the Jaffna Peninsula (Douglas, 2015). "Because of the irreplaceability and non-renewability of the historical and cultural heritages, they should be conserved and managed in proper ways to preserve the values" (Comer, 2012; Timothy and Boyd, 2003). Further, many factors such as tour guides, enjoyments/entertainments, leisure and relaxation, photography, quality of architecture, preservation of sites, cleanliness, good distinct signs, first impression, crowding, carvings, historical aspects, archaeological remains/ruins, stone work, masterpieces, items of wonder/exotics works of art and the quality of service affects the heritage sites (Mohammad, 2014). Moreover, heritage sites were also affected by garbage, damages and environmental pollutions



which led to the negative impacts in sustainable heritage tourism development (Timothy and Boy 2006).

1.1 Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are as follows,

1. To find the factors affecting tourists' satisfaction.
2. To identify the level of tourists' satisfaction in historical and archaeological destinations.
3. To make recommendations for the development of historical and archaeological tourism.

2 METHODOLOGY

Research type: This is a descriptive and quantitative research.

2.1 Sample:

Convenience sampling method was used and six locations of the Archaeological and historical destinations were selected out of 18 destinations such as the Jaffna Fort, Sankiliyan Thoppu, the Kantharodai Buddhist temple, the Ruins of Buddhist temple in the Delft, the Portuguese Fort at in Delft, the Jaffna Fort and Dutch barracks in Delft by means of convenience sampling method and it was planned to gather data from 150 foreign tourists but data was obtained from only 110 tourists.

2.2 Data collection:

Primary data was collected through self-administered questionnaires in which the tourists were required to select their satisfaction level by ticking numbers varying from 5 to 1. 5 being very highly agreeable to 1 being a low level of satisfaction. Further, the secondary data was collected through books, previously conducted research and newspapers.

2.3 Data analyses:

Five Likert scale data were analysed in SPSS version 20 to find the tourists' satisfaction level and the mean values of the data were displayed in figure 1 and was used to analyze the results. Further, the percentage of the tourists' satisfaction levels were found through the calculation of the variables to the mean values out of total variables (18).

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the evaluation, the criteria is as follows $\{(0 < x_i \leq 2) = \text{low}, (2 < x_i \leq 3) = \text{moderate and } (3 < x_i \leq 5) = \text{high}, \text{ data was analyzed. Accordingly, fifty percent of the tourists viewed that (mean values of nine variables out of eighteen variables,)} \}$ the cultural heritage sites did not impress them at first sight and the attributes such as atmosphere/signs, tour guides, information about the destinations, potential for leisure and relaxation, preservation of the sites, carvings, damages and quality of service were perceived by the tourists as poor. 16.6% of tourists found that the transport facilities to the destinations were satisfactory but the facilities did not achieve a high level of satisfaction.

Further, the quality of architecture was rated as moderate. In addition, tourists also viewed that cultural heritage sites were good places for photography but not excellent. The cultural and archaeological sites were viewed as clean areas and the crowd density was assessed at a highly significant level. 33.33% of the tourists had a high level of satisfaction in the historical aspects of the sites and they expressed their high satisfaction about the stone work of the sites. The tourists were highly satisfied with the archaeological remains at the historical and archaeological sites.



Table 1: Survey results tourists’ levels of satisfaction in the cultural heritage of Jaffna

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Transport facilities	110	1.00	4.00	2.9909	1.00909
Tour guides	110	1.00	2.00	1.6091	.49019
First impression	110	1.00	2.00	1.5636	.49820
Leisure and relaxation	110	1.00	3.00	1.7091	.69527
Cleanliness	110	2.00	4.00	3.0818	.83646
Quality of architectures	110	1.00	4.00	2.7545	.92057
Preservation of sites	110	1.00	3.00	1.8182	.65219
Items of Wonder and exotic works of art	110	3.00	5.00	4.2182	.75882
Historical aspects	110	4.00	5.00	4.4818	.50196
Atmosphere	110	1.00	3.00	1.5545	.64376
Stone works	110	4.00	5.00	4.7545	.43233
Photography	110	1.00	4.00	2.8091	1.10458
Archaeological remains	110	3.00	5.00	4.0818	.85812
Level of damages	110	1.00	3.00	1.8545	.72740
Carvings	110	1.00	2.00	1.2364	.42679
Information on sites	110	1.00	2.00	1.3455	.47769
Quality of service	110	1.00	3.00	1.6091	.60723
Crowds	110	2.00	4.00	3.2273	.72516
Valid N (list wise)	110				

4 CONCLUSIONS

There is great potential for cultural heritage tourism in the Jaffna Peninsula. But, many tourists indicated low levels of satisfaction due to many issues at the destinations such as first impression, tour guides, quality of service, and leisure and relaxation, preservation of the sites, atmosphere/signs, damages, carvings and information about the destination. These low levels of satisfaction will affect the sustainability of the cultural heritage sites, because dissatisfied tourists will not come again to the destinations and also they will not recommend these destinations to other tourists. Consequently, these cultural sites may be further damaged or destroyed

because of a lack of maintenance of by the local authorities and relevant institutions. Therefore, an immense amount of attention is required by the destination developers on the above factors which affect the heritage sites. In addition, transport facilities, cleanliness of the sites, and the quality of architecture and environmental attraction were given moderate satisfaction. However, destination developers have already taken some initiatives to develop and improve the cultural heritages sites. But, new strategies should be implemented since the tourists showed moderate satisfaction and this should be converted into high

levels of satisfaction. Finally, tourists wondered about the historical and archaeological destinations and also they were highly satisfied about the many attributes of the cultural heritages sites such as the historical aspects, stone works and archaeological attributes. However, according to figure 1, the tourists did not assess them with a maximum level of satisfaction. Therefore, constructing a sustainable cultural tourism development plan is an urgent requirement to the tourism developers. In brief, the Jaffna Peninsula has great potential for heritage tourism but a master development plan is required to iron out the many challenges which hinders the sustainable cultural tourism and to ensure the long term sustainability of the destinations. In addition, an effective steering committee is also recommended to carry out a feasibility study and to refer the cultural heritages sites of other countries to implement the sustainable cultural tourism development plan in the Jaffna Peninsula.

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