

Identifying the Factors that Affect the Length of Stay of International Tourists within a Destination (With special Reference to Nuwaraeliya in Sri Lanka)

K.K.B.Wanasinghe*, U.G.O.Sammani*

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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 length of stay (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 was to identify the significant factors that affect the LOS of international tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya area, identify the relationship between travel characteristics and LOS, identify the relationship between destination image and LOS, and identify relationship between travel motives and LOS. Researcher collected the data from the tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya area. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample and sample size was 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 Nuwaraeliya. 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.

Index Terms - Length of stay, Travel characteristics, Destination image, Travel motives

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the decades, tourism has experienced a continued growth and deepening diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Modern tourism is closely linked to development and encompasses a growing number of new destinations. These dynamics have turned tourism into a key driver for socio-economic progress. Today, the business volume of tourism equals or even surpasses that of oil exports, food products or automobiles. Tourism has become one of the major players in international commerce, and represents at the same time one of the main income sources for many developing countries. This growth goes hand in hand with an increasing diversification and competition among destinations (World Tourism Organization [WTO, 2016]). Sri Lanka is identified as a blooming tourist destination. Since gaining the independence from the British in 1947, Sri Lanka has continued to attract foreign investors and tourists to the island. The country's important placement also enables it to attract transit visitors into the island. Over the years, many beautiful resorts, hotels and spas have been opened. Incorporating the diverse culture of the country, the various Tourist Establishments here offer visitors a unique, yet memorable experience to remember with (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority [SLTDA, 2016]).

There was a rapid growth of tourist arrivals to the country in recent years. At the End of year 2015, it is recorded as 1.79 million arrivals to the Country. During the year 2015 up to November, Sri Lanka Tourism recorded 18 percent growth on arrivals with 1.5 million arrivals. The total tourism revenue generated was US\$ 2.2 billion (SLTDA, 2016). According to the 2016 new Strategic plan, Government expects 4.5 tourist arrival by the year 2020. However, Government has identified that there are some issues regarding Sri Lankan tourism development. Some problems associated with the tourism industry were conveyed by Chairman of Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, Rohantha Athukorale. Athukorala has mentioned that lack of marketing and promotional strategies to attract high

spend tourist, no brand equity development in the promotions, lack of global communication partner and shorter length of stay are some of these issues (Wijewardena, P. 2015). Hence, „The length of stay“ of a tourist is one of the most important issues which directly affects determining revenue from tourism.

As cited in Menezes, Moniz and Vieira (2008) “Length of stay is an important determinant of the overall impact of tourism in a given economy. The number of days that tourists stay at a particular destination is likely to influence their expenditure, for instance, as the number of possible experiences to be undertaken by tourists depends on their length of stay (Davies and Mangan, 1992; Legohere, 1998; Saarinen, 2006; Gokovali et al, 2007)”. As cited in Menezes et al. (2008), “uncovering the microeconomic determinants of length of stay is critical to the design of marketing policies that effectively promote longer stays, associated with higher occupancy rates and revenue streams (Alegre and Pou, 2006)”. Thus, Length of stay is a most crucial decision to be made when planning a holiday”. Basically a tourist’s length of stay is recorded as number of days he or she spent at a particular destination. In this study, researcher tried to identify the significant factors which affecting the length of stay. Further, identification of relationships in between Travel characteristics, Destination image, Travel motives and the Length of stay have been carried out.

Nuwara Eliya is a city in the tea country hills of central Sri Lanka. The naturally landscaped Hakgala Botanical Gardens displays roses and tree ferns, and shelters monkeys and blue magpies. Nearby Seetha Amman Temple, a colorful Hindu shrine, is decorated with religious figures. Densely forested Galway's Land National Park is a sanctuary for endemic and migratory bird species, including bulbuls and flycatchers. Often referred to as ‘Little England’, this genteel highland community does have a rose-tinted, vaguely British-country-village feel to it, with its colonial-era bungalows, Tudor-style hotels, well-tended hedgerows and pretty gardens. Indeed, Nuwara Eliya was once was the favoured cool-climate escape for the hard-working and hard-drinking English and Scottish pioneers of Sri Lanka’s tea industry (Lonely Planet).

1.1 Problem Statement

In present, Nuwaraeliya is considered as a famous tourist hotspot. In recent years, there was a rapid growth of tourist arrivals to Nuwaraeliya and surrounding areas. However, Tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya area have a shorter length of stay. Most probably it is limited to one or two nights. According to the survey conducted by Central Province Tourism Ministry, 90% of tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya spend only three days. In order to prove this problem, researcher conducted a pilot survey in Nuwaraeliya area. According to the result, total sample tourists“ overnight stays in Nuwaraeliya was below 3 days. Hence, this research aims to identify factors that affect the shorter length of stay of international tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya. In addition, globally there are similar researches exist related to this topic. However, according to the studies that have been conducted in Sri Lankan context, there are limited findings on this topic. Hence, researcher’s objective is to fill this gap.

1.2 Research Objectives

To identify the significant factors that affect the length of stay of international tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya.

To identify the relationship between travel characteristics and the length of stay.

To identify the relationship between destination image and the length of stay.

To identify the relationship between travel motives and the length of stay

II. LITERATURE RIVIEW AND THEORITICAL BACKGROUND

Length of Stay

Tourism demand is a broadly defined subject that considers a variety of objects, such as tourist arrivals, tourist expenditure, travel exports and length of stay (Menezes & Moniz, 2011). As cited in Menezes et al., (2008); the overall impact of tourists in a given economy hinges on length of stay. Length of stay is an important determinant of tourists’ overall expenditure and consumption of local resources as the number of possible experiences that can be undertaken by tourists depends on their length of stay (Davies and Mangan, 1992; Legohere, 1998; Saarinen, 2006; Gokovali et al, 2007). As cited in Menezes et al., (2008); length of stay is one of the questions resolved by tourists when planning or while taking their trips (Decrop & Snelders, 2004). Hence, it follows that length of stay is best recorded when tourists depart and quite likely, is influenced by tourists“ socio-demographic profiles, on the one hand, and their experiences while visiting their destination, on the other. (Bargeman & Poel, 2006; Decrop & Snelders, 2004). Length of stay is usually recorded as the number of nights spent at a given destination. (Menezes et al., 2008). As cited in Gokavali, Bahar, & Kozak, (2007); the length of stay

is a prior stage for potential tourists while making a decision to go on a vacation and choosing a place to stay. As such, one of the existing problems in the tourism industry is the length of stay.

Barros and Machado (2010), state that holiday duration is a prominent importance of tourism management. Thus, hotels attempt to attract tourists who wish to stay longer, including repeaters, since the length of stay is influenced by previous visits. Moreover, they argued that tourists who visit only for short periods tend to stay centrally and visit only the major tourist attractions. On the other hand, Longer-stay tourists visit a greater range of attractions, explore more peripheral regions, and generate more diverse economic, social and environmental impacts. Many researchers have argued that individual's socio-demographic profiles influence the length of stay (Menezes et al., 2008; Alegre et al., 2005; Kruger et al., 2014; Menezes & Moniz, 2011). According to the result of the study on the, Determinants of length of stay of tourists in the Azores, it was found that, socio-demographic profiles, such as nationality and Azorean ascendancy, and trip attributes, such as repeat visitation rates and type of flight, are important determinants of length of stay (Menezes et al., 2008). In addition, destination image and attitudes regarding environmental initiatives, constructed from a factor analysis exercise, also influence the length of stay. According to the results, male tourists tend to experience shorter stays. Married tourists also tend to experience shorter stays, higher levels of education are associated with shorter expected stays, a high-level profession is associated with shorter expected stays, travel motives, such as Leisure, visiting friends or relatives, business explicitly are considered as increased expected duration of stays etc. Thus, Tourists' Individual socio-demographic characteristic is a conspicuous variable in the literature of previous researches, which determines the length of stay.

Travel characteristics

Many researchers have found tourists' travel characteristics, such as; repeat visit, type of package, type of accommodation, purpose of visit, type of trip and travel party also influence the length of stay {Alen, E., Nicolau, J. L., Losada, N., & Dominguez, T., (2014); Kazuzuru (2014); Menezes et al. (2008)}. According to the Alen et al. (2014), The travel characteristics considered to be one of the most important determinants of length of stay which include: the (national/international) destination, type of accommodation, mode of trip (individual/group), type of trip and the activities carried out. Moreover, he found that type of accommodation contributes to the increased length of stay, the type of trip affects the length of stay. Specifically, it was found that those who travel alone tend to have extended stays than those who travelled with a companion.

This result is similar to the findings of Kuzuzuru (2014), who found that trip-related characteristics, tourist purpose of visit as measured by business visits and those for leisure purposes are the most influential variables of the length of stay. Menezes et al. (2008, p. 218), found that "being a repeat visitor is an important criterion to identify tourists who are likely to experience longer stays". Similar results were also found by other researchers [e.g. Machado (2010); Barros (2010, p. 702)]. However, this result is contrary to the study of Kazuzuru, (2014), who found that "frequent traveler is associated with shorter stays than ordinary traveler".

Hence Following hypothesis is developed according to the literature

H1: There is a significant relationship between Tourists' Travel characteristics and the Length of stay.

Destination image

Destination image is another prominent variable which affects the length of stay. As cited in Machado (2010, p. 444), "Image formation on a specific tourism destination starts when the individual plans the holiday and finishes when he or she departs from the destination (Chon, 1990, 1991; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999)". Moreover, he showed that destination image will influence tourists in the process of choosing a destination, the length of stay in the destination, the subsequent evaluation of the holiday and their future intentions. Therefore, image formation and length of stay are defined simultaneously, but while the length of stay is established prior to the holiday, the destination image will change with the destination attributes, the quality of service and so on. In 2008, Menezes et al. (2008) identified six factors which determined the destination image based on factor analysis exercise. They are cultural heritage, nature and landscape, availability of packages and flights, safety and hospitality, quality and price, and weather and remoteness. According to the result, it is mentioned that tourists who chose particular holiday destination for its weather and remoteness and nature and landscape experienced longer stays. On the contrary, tourists who select it for cultural heritage tend to stay short period of time.

Hence Following hypothesis is developed according to the literature.

H2: There is a significant relationship between Destination image and the Length of stay.

Travel motives

As cited in Alen et al. (2014), the main area of research concerning travel and tourism is based around motivation. Certain authors have emphasized the presence of two main motivational components, push factors and pull factors. Crompton (1979), indicated that push

factors explain the desire to travel, whilst pull factors explain the choice of destination. Kruger et al. (2014), showed five push travel motives such as escape from routine life, exploration, education & spiritual fulfilment and value and amenities. According to the results, among those factors, tourists' whose motivate factor to travel is escape, tend to stay longer.

According to the Alen et al. (2014), in terms of pull factors, or appealing attributes of the destination, the most important ones when choosing the destination for tourists, have been noted as being: hygiene and cleanliness, security, climate, cost, events and attractions, ease of transport, shopping areas, medical coverage, places of historical/artistic interest, natural attractions/countryside and distance, according to the studies by Baloglu and Uysal (1996), Chen (2009), Huang and Tsai (2003), Jang and Wu (2006), Norman et al (2001), Prayag (2012), Sangpikul (2008), Wang (2005) and Wu (2003). According to the results, only climate was found as a significant factor which influences the trip duration. It showed that tourists who choose their destination based on climate tend to stay longer. This results are also similar to the finding of Machado (2010) and Alegre et al. (2006).

Hence, push and pull travel motives is another prominent variable which influences the length of stay.

Thus following hypothesis is developed according to the literature.

H3: There is a significant relationship between Travel motives and the Length of stay

Conceptual Framework

After reviewing the relevant literature, this subsection will develop the Conceptual Framework of this research

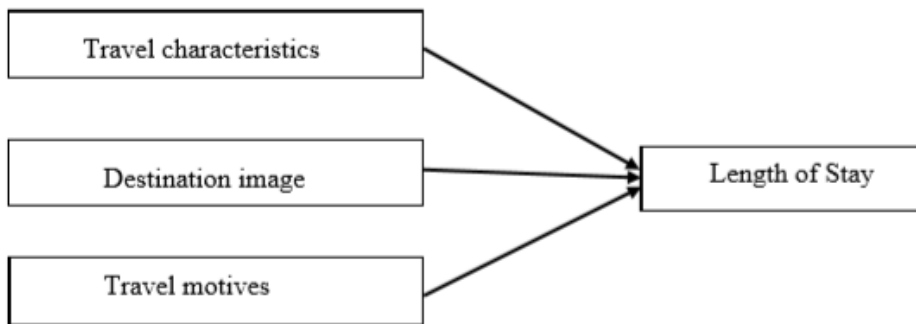


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Developed by researcher according to the literature

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This research is designed to identify significant factors that affect the length of stay of tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya. Hence, researcher collected data from the tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya. The Research will be Quantitative in nature since research questions can be best answered by the quantitative approach.

3.2 Population and Sample

After conducting a pilot survey, researcher identified that Nuwaraeliya have a comparative shorter length of stay. Hence, according to the research objectives, researcher selected tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya as population. The convenience sampling technique is used to select the sample since lack of statistical evidence on tourist arrivals to the selected destinations. The Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority has not been recorded regional tourist arrivals of Sri Lanka. Thus, due to the limitations, this research has used 100 tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya as a sample. Sample unit is a tourist.

3.3 Data collection

The researcher used a survey methodology approach to collect primary data from the respondent through structured questionnaires. Data collection process has implemented in Nuwaraeliya within one-month period of time. Questionnaires were randomly distributed among the tourists who visited Nuwaraeliya. The questionnaire consists of five segments. First segment consists of basic demographic information of tourists such as; gender, marital status, educational level, employment status and annual income. These questions assist to express overview of the sample. The second segment consists with set of close ended questions regarding travel characteristics of tourists such as; type of accommodation, type of trip, purpose of visit, repeat visit travel party and type of package. The third segment of the questionnaire consist of a single close ended question which aids to measure the length of stay of tourists. The fourth and fifth segment include five point likert scale questions which measure tourists' perception about destination image, push and pull travel motives under several indicators. The likert scale range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. It is made up with, 5 - Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Moderate, 2 - Disagree, 1 - strongly disagree

3.4 Data Analysis

In order to achieve objectives of the research, the analysis is done using a quantitative technique. Quantitative data were obtained by means of closed ended questions and five point likert scale. Furthermore, open ended questions were used in order to obtain qualitative data. Gathered data was analyzed by using correlation coefficient, factor analysis and graphs, charts and tables were used for the graphical representation. Following hypotheses were developed and tested in order to find out on relationships existed.

Hypotheses 01

H0: There is no significant relationship between Tourists' Travel characteristics and the Length of stay.

H1: There is a significant relationship between Tourists' Travel characteristics and the Length of stay.

Hypotheses 02

H0: There is no significant relationship between Destination image and the Length of stay.

H1: There is a significant relationship between Destination image and the Length of stay.

Hypotheses 03

H0: There is no significant relationship between Travel motives and the Length of stay.

H1: There is a significant relationship between Travel motives and the Length of stay

Table 3.1 Data Analysis Techniques

Objective	Analyzing Technique
To identify the significant factors that affect the length of stay of international tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya.	Factor Analysis
To identify the relationship between travel characteristics and the length of stay	Correlation Analysis
To identify the relationship between destination image and the length of stay	Correlation Analysis
To identify the relationship between travel motives and the length of stay	Correlation Analysis

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Conclusion

Profile of the Sample

According to the frequency analysis of respondents most of the tourists were males that represented the 67% of sample. When considering the respondents age, most of the tourists were in between 26-35 years of age group which represented 50% out of total sample. Lowest age category guests were represented by 46-55 age category and over the 50 age group. That represent 4% of the sample. According to the marital status of responded tourists, majority were single which represented 40% of the sample and minority were divorced tourists. When considering the education level of tourists, majority of responded tourists were Graduates. It represents 46 percent of total sample. When considering the employment status, 45% of respondents were employed in private sector as a majority of the sample. With regard to respondents' annual income, the largest group included those with an annual income of us \$50,000 to us \$70,000.

Overview of Responded Travel Characteristics

With regards to the responded tourists' choice of accommodation, majority of responded (53%) who visit Nuwaraeliya tend to stayed at Home stay units, while minority of responded (6%) selected star category hotels to stay. In additionally majority of tourists were free independent travelers which represented 92% of the total sample. When consider the purpose of visit, majority of tourists visit Nuwaraeliya for the purpose of pleasure. Further, few tourists came for honeymoon. Only few tourists have visited Nuwaraeliya more than one time. For majority it was their first visit. Meanwhile, many tourists tend to travel with their spouse and minority of tourist travelled alone. According to the Type of package of responded tourists, majority of tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya prefer to select room only package since they prefer to enjoyed street foods rather than hotel foods. Further no tourists selected full Board and other packages.

To identify the significant factors that affect the length of stay of international tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya

According to the results of factor analysis, five significant components were identified by using principal component analysis with VARIMAX rotation method. They can be recognized as pull travel motives, push travel motives, service quality, destination attributes and economic characteristics. All dimensions used in the study are regrouped under the different factors and some items from different dimension are found to fall into more than one factor as well. This major five components explained 76% of total variance.

Table 4.1 Final Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis

	Pull travel motives	Push travel motives	Service quality	Destination attributes	Economic characteristics
a	Climate	Explore new destination	Quality of food & beverage	Natural attractions	Accommodation & facilities value for money paid
b	Safety & Security	Escape from routine life	Quality of hotel facilities	Natural landscape	Total cost of the trip
c	Historical places	Spend time with friends	Hospitality	Remoteness	
d	Events & attractions	Relaxation	Other facilities	Transport facilities	
e	Cleanness & hygiene	See famous sights			

Source: SPSS output based on field survey information 2017

Table 4.1 illustrates the factor loadings for each item in relation to the major five categories. These values in the table show the weight and correlation each item has to a factor or component.

According to the results, pull travel motives such as; climate, safety and security, historical places, events and attractions, cleanliness and hygiene are the most influencing factors to the tourists' length of stay at Nuwaraeliya. Among them climate shows the highest value. Second most influencing factor is push travel motives which included, explore new destination, Escape from routine life, spend time with friends, Relaxation and seeing famous sights. Quality of food & beverage, Quality of hotel facilities, Hospitality of people and other facilities such as; public toilets, souvenir shops, information centers and telecommunication facilities come under service quality as the third significant factor. Natural attractions, landscape, remoteness and transport facilities come under the destination attributes as the fourth significant factor. Final factor is economic characteristics of tourists such as; Accommodation & facilities value for money paid and Total cost of the trip. According to the literature, many researches have found push travel motives, pull travel motives and

destination attributes affect the length of stay. Other than those three factors, new two factors have been discovered in this study. They are service quality and economic characteristics.

To Identify the Relationship between Travel Characteristics, Destination Image, Travel Motives and the Length of Stay

Table 4.2 Summary of Correlation analysis with Hypothesis

	P Value	</>	Significant Level	Null Hypothesis (H0)	Alternative Hypothesis (H1)
Travel Characteristics	0.081	>	0.05	Accepted	Rejected
Destination Image	0.018	<	0.05	Rejected	Accepted
Travel Motives	0.038	<	0.05	Rejected	Accepted
Push Motives	0.000	<	0.05	Rejected	Accepted
Pull Motives	0.031	<	0.05	Rejected	Accepted

Source: SPSS output based on field survey information 2017

Table 4.2 illustrates the summary of the relationships between independent variables and the dependent variable. In order to above explanations, decision was taken with the P-value compared with Alfa (α)/ Significant level. Alpha level is 0.05 (95% confidence level). In accordance with the P-value condition decision rule is, (P-value < Significant level (α)) the calculated P-values should be less than the Alfa significance level to reject the null hypothesis that causes to accept the alternative hypothesis. According to the analysis, accepted null and alternative hypotheses are;

There is no significant relationship between travel characteristics and length of stay.

There is a positive relationship between Destination image and Length of stay at 95% confidence level.

There is a positive relationship between travel motives and length of stay at 95% confidence level.

There is a positive relationship between push travel motives and length of stay at 95% confidence level.

There is a positive relationship between pull travel motives and Length of stay at 95% confidence level

According to the results of Correlation analysis, there is no significant relationship between Tourists’ travel characteristics and Length of stay. This results contrary to the literature of the study that many researchers have found Tourists’ travel characteristics such as; type of accommodation, repeat visit and purpose of visit are associated with length of stay. It means these characteristics do not influence the choice of tourists’ when deciding the period of stay at the particular destination. It is already found that tourists’ overall stay in Sri Lanka limits the length of stay at Nuwaraeliya. Thus within that short time period, tourists want to explore as much as possible and they tend to stay couple of days in those places and it does not depend on travel characteristics.

However, results show that there is a positive relationship between destination image and length of stay. It comprehended that destination attributes such as cultural heritage, natural landscape, safety, hospitality of people and climate of Nuwaraeliya areas, which contribute to the destination image, affect the length of stay of tourists. As above majority of tourists chose Nuwaraeliya as their destinations since the natural attractions, landscape and climate. Furthermore, there is a significant relationship between overall Travel motives and Length of stay. There is a positive relationships for the pull travel motives and push travel motives with the length of stay. That means push and pull factors affect the tourists to travel away from their homes at a particular destination.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

Majority of tourists who travel to Nuwaraeliya, were male, and they were young tourists with a good education and also their income is relatively higher. Further, majority of them were single and they had not got much responsibilities and have enough time to travel more. Majority of responded (53%) who visit Nuwaraeliya tend to stayed at Home stay units. When consider the purpose of visit, majority of tourists visit Nuwaraeliya for the purpose of pleasure. Majority of tourists have visited Nuwaraeliya for the first time. Meanwhile, many tourists tend to travel with their spouse and minority of tourist travelled alone. According to the Type of package of responded tourists,

majority of tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya prefer to select room only package since they prefer to enjoyed street foods rather than hotel foods. Further no tourists selected full Board and other packages.

When consider the reasons for this shorter length of stay, many tourists mentioned that total amount of days spend in Sri Lanka limit the time in Nuwaraeliya. According to the results, many tourists' length of overall trip in Sri Lanka lies between 10 to 14 days. Thus, they tend to allocate only two or three days in Nuwaraeliya since they wanted to explore more destinations within that limited length of time. As a conclusion, time is the major constrain which limits the length of stay of tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya. Basically Tourists' choice of destinations and length of stay are shaped by economical characteristics. Thus, the total cost of the trip, accommodation and facilities value for money paid tend to influence tourists' choice when selecting Nuwaraeliya as their destinations and the length of stay because many tourists found that Nuwaraeliya and surrounding areas are cheaper destinations which are worth for money paid. Based on the results of the correlation analysis, there is a positive relationship for the length of stay of tourists with the destination image, push travel motives and the push travel motives.

5.2 Recommendations

According to the findings of the previous studies, many researchers have found that length of stay is a prominent variable which is able to obtain more social and economic benefits. Results of this study indicated that, tourists who visit Nuwaraeliya have shorter length of stay. This study has strongly recommended to find out possible ways to extend period of stay of tourists. Previous studies have revealed that, activities carried out in a particular destination tend to increase tourists' length of stay. It was proved with the outcomes of this study as well. Nuwaraeliya has huge potential to promote such activities which may lead to increase the length of stay. There are plenty of hidden attractions and places around Nuwaraeliya which can be used to promote various kind of activities. Moon Plains, Seetha Amman Kovil, Ambewela Farm, Strawberry Fields, tea estates and many waterfalls like Laxapana, Ramboda, St. Clares are very attractive places. There is huge potential to promote those places among tourists. All these places are located around Nuwaraeliya. This Study has recommended that local government authorities should identify these places and develop strong promotional plan in order to promote these places among tourists. Moreover, it is necessary to develop infrastructure facilities as well.

As to the practical implications, one step in the right direction would be to use the results of this study to widen the horizon for locals and service providers. Seminars that are open to the public and service providers should be set up to make them understand what they may lose if tourists stay is of shorter length and what they gain if tourists stays longer in Nuwaraeliya. A further suggestion, which is more likely to be academically driven and considered as a long-term strategy, may include designing a special program and a pilot project for hospitality and tourism students interested in tourists length of stay that would enable them to spend at least part of their practical studying on this phenomenon and making suggestions about how to promote longer stays and how to increase the shorter length of stays. Such a program may provide the basis to achieve a socially and economically sustainable tourism development in the future. As the prospective employees for the future, students who currently studying at tourism and hospitality schools should be taught to emphasize that this industry is important for the national economy and failing to address the problem of tourists' shorter length of stays compromises the contribution.

Moreover, strong attention should be paid for some factors such as; transport facilities, cleanliness and hygiene and safety and security which are having less factor loadings in factor analysis. Recently some unacceptable incidents happened in Nuwaraeliya with tourists' safety. These incidents might affect the tourists' length of stay as well. Thus, established rules and regulations against the unnecessary influencers is a must. Because most of the tourists are faced difficulties due to some locals. For that study recommends that officials should establish some rules and regulations.

Hence, responsible parties must consider the above requirements and take the possible reaction to overcome such type of problems and take possible actions to increase the tourists' length of stay and create memorable travel experience within Sri Lanka. The directions for further researchers have derived from the experiences gathered through whole research study. Truthfully, this study was a new area of research so that basics have been found in this research regards to international tourists' length of stay in Nuwaraeliya. Future studies that employ samples from different origins and across different seasons will enhance the generalizability of the results.

One of most important finding of this study is tourists' total amount of days spend in Sri Lanka limit the time in Nuwaraeliya. Hence, future researches can be conduct to find out reasons and factors that affect the tourists' overall trip duration in Sri Lanka. It will be very useful if researchers can be conducted in island wide for the Sri Lankan tourism industry. This issue should be addressed in future studies.

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