Exploring Factors Affecting the Competitiveness of Kandy City as a Heritage Tourism Destination.

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Abstract

Sacred city of Kandy is well known in all over the world because of its heritage value. Therefore, it has become a renowned tourism destination point in Sri Lanka, but still there aren't any sustainable image to position it as a heritage tourism destination. Hence it is necessary to construct a sustainable heritage destination marketing model which will enable to enhance and sustain destination competitiveness in Sacred City of Kandy. In order to create a successful destination marketing model, study focused to determine key factors of distinctive destination points and it attempted to fill the paucity of identifying key factors to determine Kandy as a distinctive tourism destination point. From the purpose of fulfill above mentioned research gap, identified research questions were, what are the key factors determining competitiveness of Sacred City of Kandy as a heritage tourism destination? what is the significance of each factor for competitiveness of Sacred City of Kandy as a heritage tourism destination point? what is the relationship between the factors and the competitiveness of Sacred City of Kandy as a heritage tourism destination? According to research questions, established objective of the research was to identify the factors affecting to the Sacred City of Kandy as a competitive heritage tourism destination. A comprehensive literature survey carried out with the use of books, journals and articles in the aim of finding existing knowledge on various factors which are affecting to the competiveness of a tourism destination. Then primary data of the study was collected through a questionnaire survey. Population of the study were the tourists in all over the country. The sample of the study was 108 tourists (respondents), who visits to the sacred city of Kandy as heritage tourism purposely. Sampling method was judgmental sampling. Data analysis was done using Statistical

Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. According to the result of data analysis, it concluded a tourist who arrives to city they highly consider on destination management factor. In additionally, core resources and attractions on city and the level of safety and security of the destination also increase the competitiveness of the city, because of that destination gets the competitive advantage as a heritage tourism destination among other cities in the country.

Keywords: Heritage Tourism, Destination Competitiveness, Sacred City Of Kandy, Model of Destination Competitiveness

Introduction

Heritage sites are attractive destinations for visitors in almost every country for that reason the importance of heritage tourism is increasing day by day Hasan and Jobaid (2014). Destination marketing refers to a strategic approach of place development, considered in the framework of tourism. In this context, economic and cultural interests of local communities, local businesses and tourists are considered (Zbuchea, 2014). Sri Lanka's tourism has boomed to a new milestone of 1,527,153 arrivals in 2014, transcending all time high hits in the history which is an increase of 19.8% over last year's 1,274,593 arrivals (www.sltda.lk accessed on 19.03.2016). In 2013 number of tourists arrived for country as per the Religious & Cultural purpose was 4.8 % but in 2014 it decreased to 0.01 % and 2015 it was 0.1% (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority Statistical Report, 2015). When it compares to number of foreign visitors visiting the museums, total number of foreign visitors arrived to museums were 50,184 among them only 3,252 were visited to Kandy National Museum (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority Statistical Report, 2013). These Statistical data prove weak competitiveness of Sacred City of Kandy as a heritage tourism destination and as well as the country. In recent years' tourism has become a highly competitive market throughout the world. For this reason, it is vital that destinations are able to measure their competitiveness, in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses to develop their future strategies.

Destination competitiveness, is the ability of a destination to increase tourism expenditure to increasingly attract visitors while providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences and to do so in a profitable way, while enhancing the well-being of the destination residents and preserving

the natural capital of the destination for future generations (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, as cited in Azizet al,2014).

The UNESCO declared Kandy as a world heritage site in 1988, being one of the living ancient capitals of the world today and named it as "Sacred City of Kandy". Having a unique identification as "Sacred City of Kandy" it has highly potential to be a well recognize heritage tourism destination within the Sri Lanka as well as the world. Kandy city is the second largest city in the country after Colombo and it was the last capital of the ancient king's era of Sri Lanka.

Place marketing is not only limited to increasing the tourist trade, but also plays an important role in regional and urban development (Maheshwariet al, 2001). Therefore, active participation of both private and public sectors are necessary to implement sustainable heritage destination marketing framework because it plays an important role in sustainable urban development. Sustainable development implies development to meet the needs of current generations without negative impact on meeting the needs of future generations (Rehan, 2013). Since Kandy is a world renowned heritage site our responsibility is to conserve and protect this site by implementing sustainable tourism destination marketing strategies. This study was based for the identification of factors affecting the competitiveness of Kandy City as a heritage tourism destination.

Literature Review
Heritage Tourism

There is no singular, specific definition for heritage tourism. "Heritage tourism is largely concerned with the cultural legacy of the past, or the hard cultural resources usually contained in old buildings, museums, monuments and landscapes or represented and interpreted in specialized heritage centers" (Richards, 2000). Therefore, heritage tourism is positioned on what we have inherited which mean anything from historical buildings to art works, to beautiful scenery, lifestyles ways of living together values systems traditions and beliefs. Heritage is a broad concept it includes natural as well as cultural environment. "It incorporates landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as biodiversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences. It records and expresses the long processes of historic development, forming the essence of diverse national, regional, indigenous and local identities and is an integral

part of modern life" (The Charter Etos, 1999, as cited in Gunlu, n.d.). This broad view of heritage is reflected in the definition adopted by UNESCO in the World Heritage Convention. The Convention divides heritage into two categories namely cultural heritage and natural heritage.

"Cultural heritage" defined as a monument, group of buildings or site of historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value and "natural heritage", designating outstanding physical, biological and geological features; habitats of threatened plants or animal species and areas of value on scientific or aesthetic grounds or from the point of view of conservation (World Heritage Convention,1972). This combination of cultural and natural heritage reflects in many national inventories. Case study area of this research is also rich in above mentioned both natural and cultural heritage categories.

Tourism Destination Competitiveness

Various factors are affects to being competitive for a destination. (Azizet *et al* ,2014), suggests that destinations must put the environment first, make tourism a leader sector, strengthen the distribution channels in the market place and build a dynamic private sector. The conclusion is that what makes a tourism destination to truly competitive is, "its ability to increase tourism expenditure, to increasingly attract visitors while providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences, and to do so in a profitable way, while enhancing the well-being of destination residents and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generations" (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, as cited in Azizet al, 2014).

Model of Destination Competitiveness

Researchers have agreed that Ritchie and Crouch's model of destination competitiveness (2003) is now arguably the most comprehensive and most rigorous of all models of this type currently available. The most detailed work undertaken by tourism researchers on overall destination tourism competitiveness is that of Crouch and Ritchie (1995, 1999) and Ritchie and Crouch (2000, 2003), who significances that, in absolute terms, the most competitive destination is one which brings about the greatest success which mean, the greatest well-being for its residents on a sustainable basis. Crouch and Ritchie began to study the nature and structure of destination competitiveness in 1992 (Crouch & Ritchie 1994, 1995, 1999; Ritchie & Crouch 1993, 2000a, 2000b). In a study by (Chambers and Lagiewski, 2010)

their aim has been to develop a conceptual model that is based on the theories of comparative advantage and competitive advantage. It proved that their studies have also discussed the importance of determinants or sources of competitiveness for the tourism sector. Their model incorporates the main elements of macro (national) and micro (firm) competitiveness, as well as comparative and competitive advantages of tourism destination. Below it shows the Ritchie and Crouch's general Conceptual Model of Destination Competitiveness.

Figure 1. Ritchie and Crouch's Conceptual Model of Destination Competitiveness

Source: Ritchie & Crouch, 2003

(Ritchie and Crouch, 2010) "This model contains seven (7) components which we have found to play a major role, from a policy perspective, in determining the competitiveness/sustainability of a tourism destination". Those seven components could be identifying as follows, "macro environment", "micro environment", "core resources and attractors", "supporting factors and resources", "destination management", "destination policy planning and development" and "qualifying determinants".

Integrated Destination Competiveness Model Designed by scholars.
Omerzel's Conceptual Model of Destination Competitiveness.
This model was developed in a cooperative effort by researchers in Korea and Australia. Determinants are classified under six main headings. Those are "Created Resources", "Inherited Resources", "Supporting Factors", "Destination Management", "Demand Conditions" and "Situational Conditions".

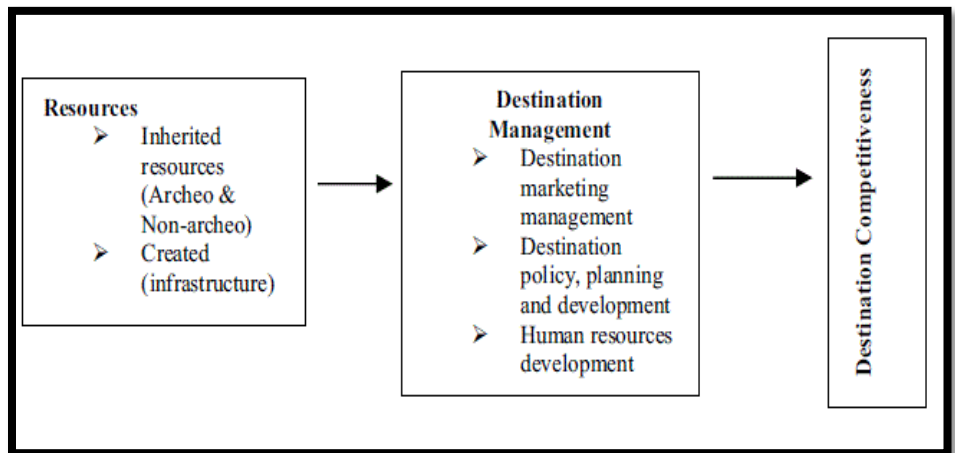Figure 2- Omerzel's Conceptual Model of Destination Competitiveness
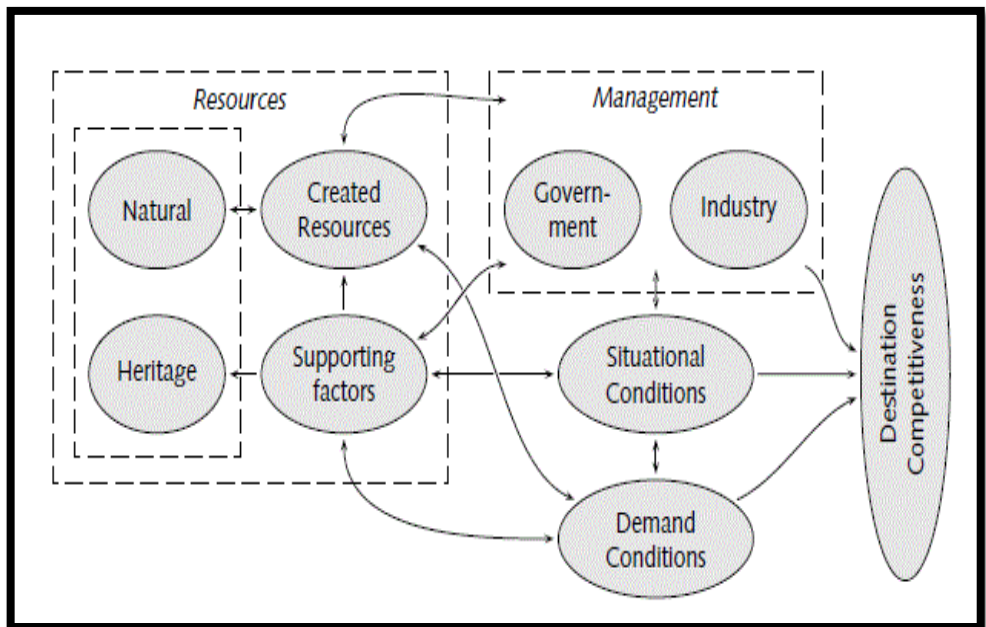
Source: Omerzel, 2006

Azizet al's Conceptual Model of Destination Competitiveness.
In this model basically they were considering about two categories' namely "Resources" and "Destination management".

Figure 3-Azizet al's Conceptual Model of Destination Competitiveness

Source: Azizet al, 2014

Dwyer and Kim's Conceptual Model of Destination Competitiveness.
According to them, Resources category is divided into two types, endowed (inherited) and Created. (Dwyer and Kim, 2003), Endowed Resources, in turn can be classified as Natural (mountains, lakes, beaches, rivers, climate etc.) and Heritage or Cultural (cuisine, handicrafts, language, customs, belief systems etc.). (Dwyer and Kim, 2003), Created Resources include tourism infrastructure, special events and the range of available activities, entertainment and shopping. In the model presented here Supporting Resources (or enabling factors) include general infrastructure, quality of service and accessibility of destination, hospitality and market ties, (Dwyer and Kim, 2003).

Figure 4- Dwyer and Kim's Conceptual Model of Destination Competitiveness.
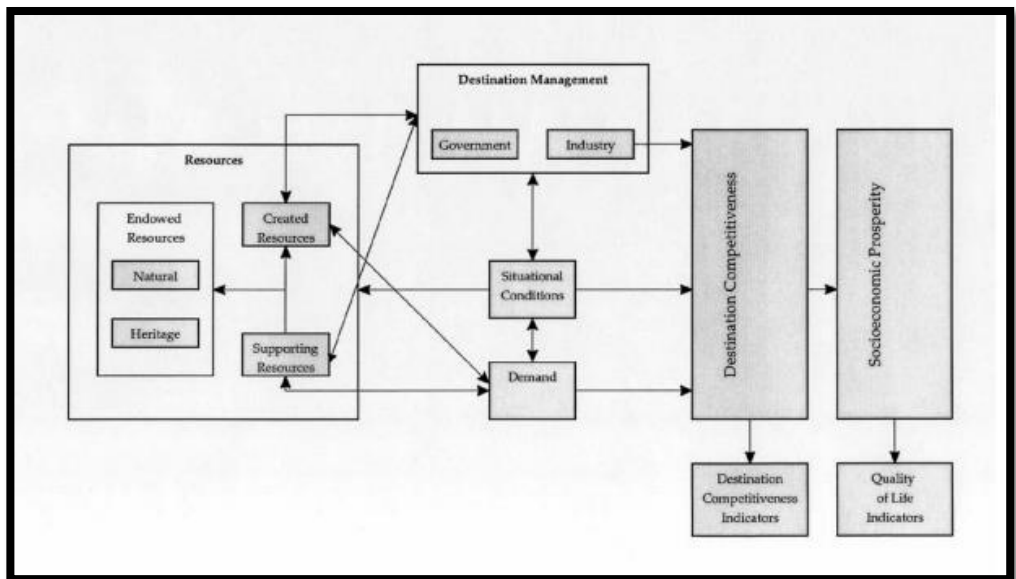
Source: Dwyer and Kim, 2003

(Dwyer and Kim, 2003),Situational conditions related with economic, social, cultural, demographic, environmental, political, legal, governmental, regulatory, technological, and competitive trends and events that impact on the way firms and other organizations in the destination do business.(Dwyer and Kim, 2003), In the model presented here, a distinction is made between destination management activities undertaken by the public sector and destination management undertaken by the private sector.(Dwyer and Kim, 2003), included among the activities of the public sector elements are, the development of national tourism strategies, national and regional manpower programmes, environmental protection legislation etc. (Dwyer and Kim, 2003), This model contains a separate box for Demand Conditions.

This category comprises three main elements of tourism demand awareness, perception and preferences.(Dwyer and Kim, 2003),The single direction arrows from Supporting Resources to Endowed Resources and Created Resources indicates that the mere existence of such resources is insufficient to generate visitation to a destination in the absence of tourism infrastructure (accommodation, transportation, restaurants), organized activities, entertainment, shopping and so, on which enable or facilitate

visitation. (Dwyer and Kim, 2003), such attributes represent value added by organizations in the destination to the overall tourism product. There are two-directional arrows linking both Created Resources and Supporting Resources to Demand and to Destination Management. (Dwyer and Kim, 2003), these arrows indicate a two-way causal link, specific features of Created Resources and Supporting Resources influence Demand, whilst the nature of Demand Conditions, specifically tourist preferences and motives for travel, influence the types of products and services developed within a destination.(Dwyer and Kim, 2003), In similar vein, specific features of Created Resources and Supporting Resources influence Destination Management to achieve and maintain sustainability whilst the activities of public- and private-sector tourism organizations influence types of products and services developed. (Dwyer and Kim, 2003), The box representing Destination Competitiveness is linked backwards to the various determinants of competitiveness and forwards to one representing Socio economic Prosperity, indicating that destination competitiveness is itself an intermediate goal towards a more fundamental aim of socioeconomic well-being for residents.

Summary of the Factors Identified by the Literature Survey

Table 1-Identified factors through the literature survey

Main factor	Sub factor	Literature source
01. Core resources and attractors	Natural, climate, culture and history	(Khin et al,2014) (Dwyer & Kim, 2003), (Omerzel, 2006)
	Comfortable climate for tourism.	
	Natural landscape.	
	Wonderful scenery.	
	Cultural and historical attractions.	
	Artistic and architectural design.	
	Traditional arts and crafts.	
	Exotic and unique local custom.	
	Unspoiled nature.	
	National parks/Nature reserves.	
	Historic/Heritage sites and museums.	
	Artistic/Architectural features.	
	Traditional arts.	
	Variety of cuisine.	
	Cultural precincts and (folk) villages.	
	Tourism Superstructure	
	Variety of accommodation.	
	Quality services in accommodation.	
	Variety of Food & Beverage services.	
	Quality services in Food & Beverage services.	
	Variety of evening entertainments.	
	Tourism activities.	

	Varity of shopping items.	
	Presence of service providers.	
	Created Resources	
	special events	
	the range of available activities	
	entertainment	
02. Supporting Factors	General infrastructure	(Dwyer & Kim, 2003) (Omerzel, 2006)
	Adequacy of infrastructure to meet visitor needs.	
	Health/Medical facilities to serve tourists.	
	Financial institution and currency exchange facilities.	
	Telecommunication system for tourists.	
	Local transport systems.	
	Waste disposal.	
	Electricity supply.	
	Accessibility of destination	
	Distance/Flying time to destination from key origins.	
	Direct/Indirect flights to destination.	
	Ease/Cost of obtaining entry visa.	
	Ease of combining travel to destination with travel to other destinations.	
	Frequency/Capacity of access transport to destination.	
	Quality of service	
	Tourism/Hospitality firms which have well defined performance standards in service delivery.	
	Visitor satisfaction with quality of service.	

	Hospitality	
	Friendliness of residents towards tourists.	
	Existence of resident hospitality development programmes.	
	Resident support for tourism industry.	
	Ease of communication between tourists and residents.	
03.Destination Management	Cleanliness in destination.	(Khin et al,2014), (Omerzel, 2006)
	Safety and security.	
	Public bathrooms and restrooms.	
	Multilingual signage.	
	Easy access to get destination map/ leaflets.	
	Favorable policies to tourists.	
	Preservation cultural heritage.	
	Conservation of local tradition.	
	Environmental conservation.	
	Efficiencies of tourism and hospitality staff.	
04. Demand Factor	Destination perception	(Dwyer & Kim, 2003),(Omerzel,2006)
	Destination preferences	
	Destination awareness	
05.Qualifying and amplifying determinants	Safety and security	(Dwyer & Kim, 2003)
	Level of visitor safety in destination.	
	Incidence of crimes against tourists in destination.	

Source: Author, 2016

Findings

Demographic Findings

It is identified that most of arrivers to the city were male and their age was in between 25- 34 ages, and most of the respondents were unmarried and majority of the sample were degree holders and also they were professionals. When it discussed about their hobby most of them are interest in cultural and environmental related hobbies and when it get the sample 105 of respondents were 1st time visitors to the city and only 3 of them were had their 2nd visit to the city the main reason as this the author found out was the survey was conduct during the off season of the city that means questionnaire was distributed on September and the season of tourist arrives to the city is "Esala perahara" and it was held on during August.

Further author found that majority of the respondents liked to visit around the city during the morning and their tour plan of staying in the city was less than two days. And most of the tourists were self-planners of their tour and most of they knew about sacred city through the internet. Final demographic finding from this study was most of the respondent were from United Kingdom.

Inferential Analysis

Table.2- Conclusion table of reliability test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha value	Conclusion
Competitiveness	0.732	Data is valid for further analysis
Core resources and attractions	0.874	Data is valid for further analysis
Destination management	0.806	Data is valid for further analysis
Qualifying and amplifying	0.778	Data is valid for further analysis
Supporting	0.789	Data is valid for further analysis
Demand	0.814	Data is valid for further analysis

Source by- Author: Survey data 2016

Table.3- Conclusion table of normality test

Variable	Alpha value	P value	Decision	Conclusion
Competitiveness	0.05	0.000	Reject H_0	Competitiveness is not normally distributed
Core resources and attractions	0.05	0.000	Reject H_0	Core resources and attractions is not normally distributed
Destination management	0.05	0.002	Reject H_0	Destination management factor is not normally distributed
Qualifying and amplifying	0.05	0.000	Reject H_0	Qualifying and amplifying factor is not normally distributed

|				
Supporting	0.05	0.000	Reject H_0	Supporting factor is not normally distributed
Demand	0.05	0.001	Reject H_0	Demand factor is not normally distributed

Source by- Author: Survey data 2016

As above table, dependent variable competitiveness and all other five independent variables are also not normally distributed. Therefor to the co-relation analysis Spearman's correlation will be used

Table 4- Correlation analysis

Variables	P value	Alpha value	Decision	Conclusion	Correlation coefficient
Competitiveness and core resources and attraction factor	0.000	0.05	Reject H_0	There is a relationship between competitiveness and core resources and attraction factor	0.454
Competitiveness and destination management factor	0.000	0.05	Reject H_0	There is a relationship between competitiveness and destination management	0.480
Competitiveness and qualifying and amplifying factor	0.000	0.05	Reject H_0	There is a relationship between competitiveness and qualifying and amplifying	0.356
Competitiveness and supporting factor	0.001	0.05	Reject H_0	There is a relationship between competitiveness and supporting factor	0.312
Competitiveness and demand factor	0.007	0.05	Reject H_0	There is a relationship between competitiveness and demand factor	0.256

Source by- Author: Survey data 2016

All the factors are having a positive relationship with the competiveness of the city as a tourism destination. It can also interpret that when a tourist selects this city as their visiting place they consider about city's core resources and attraction, destination management, qualifying and amplifying, supporting and demand factor. Also according to the results of correlation coefficient all the factors had a weak positive relationship with the destination competitiveness because all the correlation coefficient value of each factor is in between 0 to +0.5.

Figure 1-Relationship matrix of the study
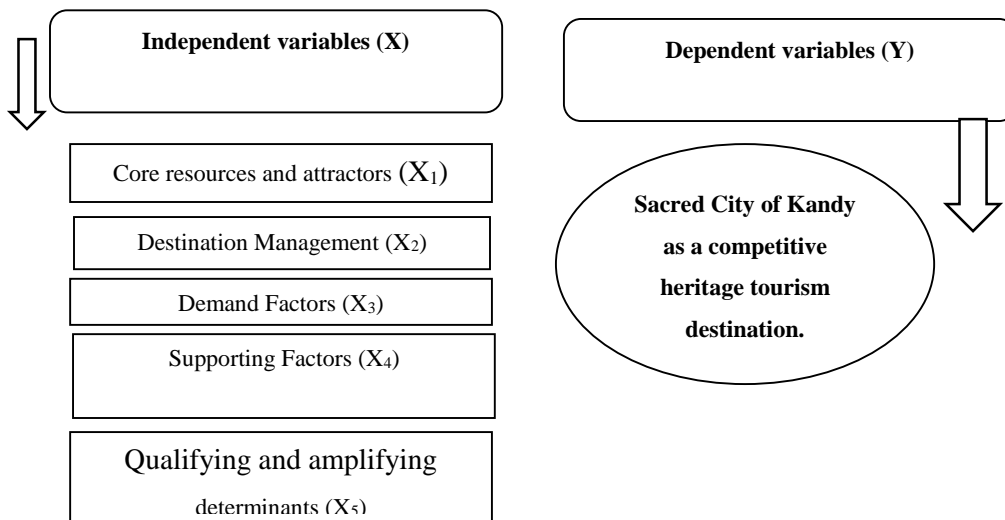
Source: Author, 2016

Model Summary

$$Y = -0.162 + 0.272X_1 + 0.679X_2 + 0.019X_3 - 0.022X_4 + 0.127X_5$$

Conclusion

This research was given a guideline for destination marketers, destination policy makers, destination planners and real estate developers in tourism filed to identify the factors affecting on the competitiveness of a tourism destination especially in perception on international tourist's point of view. In order to prove the relationship between factors and competitiveness of the city as a heritage tourism destination a correlation analysis was done and it confirmed that all the factors (Core resources and attractions, Destination management, Qualifying and amplifying Supporting and Demand) had a positive correlation with the competitiveness of the city as a heritage tourism destination.

The model of this relationship was extracted by a multiple regression analysis and it showed that strongest contribution was given by destination management factor, it has a 0.679 of beta value. Next to it 0.272 high beta value is get from the core resources and attraction. In contrast qualifying and amplifying (Safety and security) and demand factors have provided a small contribution to explain the dependent variable which had a Beta value of 0.019 and 0.127 following. Supporting factor has provided a negative contribution to explain the dependent variable with a minus Beta value of 0.022.

Finally, it concluded that a tourist who arrives to city they highly consider on destination management factor and because of that destination gets the competitive advantages as a heritage tourism destination and next factor was core resources and attractions on city and the level of safety and security of the destination also increase the competitiveness of the city among other cities in the country.

Limitation of the Research

01 Area
  ➢ This study cannot be done to the whole country due to time and cost limitations, where only one area will be selected as the study area.
02 Reference group
      ➢ This study will limit to tourists who visit the sacred city of Kandy as heritage tourism only.
      ➢ Data collected from the tourists whose age is above 25 years because as authors' point of view the questionnaire should be fill from a person who has a knowledge regarding with heritage tourism.

Contribution of the Research

• Study contributes for government sector institutions such as Sri Lanka Tourism Authority and as well as Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau for making their policies regarding with Sacred city of Kandy.

• Urban and regional planning authority of Sri Lanka as well as central province provincial authority for making their structured plans in a sustainable way.

• All the private sector stakeholders who are engaged with tourism industry such as hotel developers and small and medium entrepreneurs.

• Finally, this study will be a literature to future researchers who are willing to do their research on topics related with this study and it will be a reference to all the parties who have an interest in this filed.

Recommendation

As we know, a tourist is an ambassador from international level to local level and the image which he or she will get during their touring period is the one which they recommended for others. Therefore, it is a vital task for local community and their responsible parties to create a positive image in their minds. For this purpose, all the responsible parties both private and public sector should pay attention to the factors discussed in this research. All other aspects and factors which was not covered by this research due to its limitations.

Direction for Future Research

This research is a study on a particular area and also for a sample of specific respondents but there is a gap to fulfill, this study should not be restricted to Kandy itself, but it should be carried our throughout Sri Lanka and to be a competitive tourism destination in international market, not only for heritage tourism but for all other purposes of tourism such as education, adventures, business etc.

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