

## Tourism in Sri Lanka and its Impact on Social Political and Natural Environment

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Travel and tourism is one of the world's largest business industries, it contributes more than 10 per cent of global GDP. Tourism is one of the major foreign income sources in Sri Lanka. Main objectives of this study is to find out what are the social political and economical problems created by tourism and also the policy formulation for correction of the problems. Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be used in the analysis with available secondary data.

Local hotel owners and tour operators claim the major portion of tourist income, while the government highly concerns over the foreign exchange which helps to balance the budge deficit. The irregular working hours, minimal job security or seasonal work, and low wages and inflation have negatively impact on the poor community depending on the industry. On the other hand, tourist arrival is also influenced by political unrest, war crimes, strong protests, scandals and terrorism in the country. Especially terrorist activities deteriorate the reputation of Sri Lanka and decrease the tourist arrivals. Tourism is also contributes to the deterioration of natural environment. Transportation and air traffic increases the global warming while hotel complexes, leisure parks, golf courses require huge amounts of water and energy. The huge amount of rubbish produced by the industry pollutes the environment and spread of diseases, such as cholera, among the poorest. Indigenous people who are exposed to tourists try to cultivate tourist's habits causing social problems. Prostitution and child labour are some of main social problems.

Tourism is also bringing some positive benefits if it is sustainable. Eco-tourism frequently opens up formerly untouched environments to tourists and brings foreign exchange without damaging natural resources. In addition, it provides additional income to local people which will help to reduce poverty level in rural areas.

**Key words:** eco-tourism, sustainable, foreign exchange, poverty reduction