

The Potentials in Promoting Ayurvedic Tourism as an Alternative Product in the City of Anuradhapura

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Tourism industry is one of the exclusive foreign exchange generating industries in Sri Lanka. The industry has many potentials to answer lot of problems such as poverty, unemployment, less regional development of rural areas and the low advancement of infrastructure facilities of the country. To get rid of these issues, tourism products should be differentiated to attract more tourists to gain solutions for the above mentioned problems. Ayurvedic tourism which is the concept of tourism related to Ayurvedic medical treatments can be identified as one of the best tourism products that can be added value to differentiate the tourism product to generate more and more tourists to the country. Currently a large number of tourists who are travelling to Anuradhapura belongs to the group of senior citizens. Therefore, it is apparent that this alternative market product can immensely be promoted among this target market. The key objective of the research was to identify the potentials to promote Ayurvedic tourism in the city of Anuradhapura. The study was mainly based on quantitative and qualitative data and the sample was consisted of 50 tourists who were randomly selected in the Ancient city of Anuradhapura. It was revealed that, 68 % of tourists belonged 45-55 age group and it was identified that there was a strong possibility to promote Ayurvedic tourism among these aged people as it is one of the basic needs of these aged groups. Also 70% of them preferred to stay in Ayurvedic hotels while they are in Anuradhapura and 90% agreed that they like to purchase Ayurvedic products which strengthen them both physically and mentally. Enhancing the involvement of both government and private sector for creating an efficient and well-attracted product, updating tourism related web-sites showing the healing power of the Ayurvedic medicine, informing travel companies to include Ayurvedic products into their tour packages and introducing tourism promotional campaigns specially focused on Ayurvedic products to gain attention can be identified as the recommendations of the research.

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