The Empirical study on Potentials to Developing Rail Tourism in Sri Lanka - Evidence from Colombo – Badulla Railway Route

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Introduction

Rail tourism is a niche tourism segment and activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for engage with Rail Tourism activities include short train rides, railroad park observations, museum visitations, and special events, such as rail fairs, festivals and days. Rail tourism provides potential economic benefits as a means of business and heritage identity (Philip, case study of Rail Tourism, 2012).

Current situation of tourism in Sri Lanka is not much focused on rail tourism sector and there were no statistical data or annual reports with responsible authority to indicate on international tourists who are travel using train. But according to the Ministry of Transport "Sri Lankan tourism industry is booming and can achieve higher revenue through the promotion of railroad tourism, if developed and market appropriately" (Sri Lanka by rail Article, 2012).

Objectives

The objectives of the study were identifying most affecting destination mix factor for developing rail tourism in Sri Lanka and identify the effect of Coach's interior attributes to rail tourism in Sri Lanka.

Methodology

According to objectives of the study, population was foreign tourists who travel by train from Colombo to Badulla railway route. Sample size was 80 and sample selected from Podi Manike 20, Udarata Manike 20, Rajadhani Express 20 and Expo Rail 20. Judgment Sampling Technique employed to select respondents who were actively engaged with rail tourism. Primary data was collected by distributing semi structured questionnaires. Exploratory factor analysis and descriptive statistics were used to analyze destination mix factors and Coach's interior attributes. Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) software was used for analyze data.

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