

Social impact of tourism

WAWL Wickramaarachchi¹

The tourism takes an important place of the economy of a nation. In 1999, the tourism became the fourth largest foreign exchange earner in Sri Lanka. As a result Sri Lanka has been making a considerable effort to attract as much as tourists from other countries in the world. Even though there are many benefits of tourism industry, negative social impact of the same has been generally forgotten or not much discussed.

The objective of this research is to identify the negative social impact of tourism to a country like Sri Lanka. The location of research is Bentota in the Galle district. The methodology of the study comprised of two vital research methods. They are functional method and survey method. Interviews, questionnaires and observation are used as tools of primary data collection. Secondary data were collected from sources such as books, periodicals, reports and newspapers.

For Sri Lanka the year 2004 was the best year with 566,202 tourist arrivals to the country which was the highest arrival figure reported so far. Presently, Sri Lanka is targeting one millions tourist arrivals in 2010. However, if tourism is not properly planned and managed it might exert serious negative impact on society, culture and environment of the country.

Key words: Social impact, Tourism, Social problem, Sri Lanka, Bentota

¹Department of Sociology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka