

Empirically mapping the image and personality of Sri Lanka as a tourist destination

Mohamed Ismai¹ Mujahid Hilal¹ and Selvaratnam Gunapalan²

^{1,2} South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

mujahidh@seu.ac.lk

Abstract

Sri Lanka's destination marketing organizations are currently taking measures to promote Sri Lanka among international tourists in all over the world. However, it is paramount to promote further to position Sri Lanka as tourists' destination. Hence, a study about relationship between the brand image and the personality in respect to the Sri Lanka is significant and help tourism brand developing strategy. Therefore, the objective of the study was to investigate what factors make up the Sri Lanka's brand image and its brand personality among the international tourists. To meet this objective, researchers conducted a survey among 195 international tourists arrived in the country. A self-administered questionnaire was developed adopting previous researchers and with the help of research assistants, questionnaires were collected at the tourist's attractions. Researchers used AMOS to analyze the data. Sri Lanka's brand image is made up of pleasant environment, relaxing place, beautiful places, glooming attractions, quiet and innocent atmosphere significantly contributing to the Sri Lanka's destination brand image. In the case of accessibility to friendly environment, easily accessible and interesting factors were also contributing to the Sri Lanka destination brand image. In addition, the factors such as sincerity, intelligent, reliability, success, exiting, daring, sprits, suitable to family and charming factors contribute massively to the brand personality of Sri Lanka as tourism destination. Findings also indicate that brand image of Sri Lanka has significant and positive impact on the brand personality of Sri Lanka as destination brand. Therefore, destination marketers of Sri Lanka can utilize these dimensions to create favorable brand image to the Sri Lanka as a destination to formulate branding strategies. This also helps influence international tourists behaviour by communicating unique features of the Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Destination branding, brand image, Sri Lanka, brand personality