

Influence of Gastronomy on Domestic Tourists' Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

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Abstract

Gastronomy tourism is a contemporary and exceedingly developing sub-sector in the tourism industry. The purpose of this study is to identify how gastronomy influences domestic tourists' satisfaction and destination loyalty. The study adopted the quantitative research technique. A sample of 175 domestic tourists was drawn from the population of all the domestic tourists who visit Kandy city through the convenient sampling technique. Data were collected through an online survey by using a structured questionnaire. Data analysis was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics by using SPSS 21.0 package. Sobel test was conducted to reveal the mediate effect. According to the results of the t-test and the ANOVA test, marital status, education, occupation, and purpose of the visitation have a significant difference with the tourists' satisfaction while the marital status has a significant difference with the destination loyalty. The results of correlation analysis revealed that there was a positive relationship between food quality, food variety, food presentation, food price, and tourists' satisfaction. In terms of destination loyalty, there was a positive relationship exposed in food quality, food variety, food presentation, food price, and as well as the tourists' satisfaction and destination loyalty. According to the results of regression analysis, all the hypotheses were accepted shown that the gastronomic variables significantly impact tourists' satisfaction while tourists' satisfaction significantly impacts destination loyalty. The Sobel test results disclose a positive mediation effect between gastronomic variables, tourists' satisfaction, and destination loyalty. According to the research, findings conclude that there was an influence of gastronomy on domestic tourists' satisfaction and destination loyalty. Based on the findings researcher mainly recommended providing fresh and diverse food items, maintaining quality standards, and using correct preparation methods, adopting varied yet reasonable pricing strategies to enhance the tourists' satisfaction and destination loyalty. This study is substantial, predominantly, for hoteliers, food operators, food marketers, destination managers, and all related private and public tourism authorities to make policy decisions to ensure sustainable gastronomy tourism in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Destination loyalty, gastronomy tourism, tourists' satisfaction