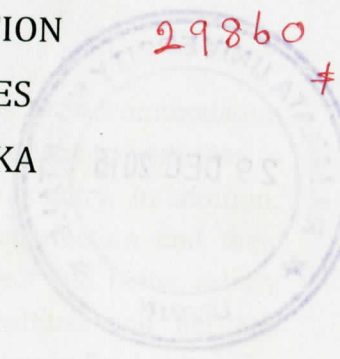




MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
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HOMESTAY IN SRI LANKA:

OPERATORS' AND CLIENTS' PERSPECTIVE

JPRC Ranasinghe
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ABSTRACT

Homestays in Sri Lanka have become increasingly popular as an accommodation option among domestic and international tourists. The client patronage to homestay is increasing drastically given the increasing tourist arrivals to the country. In addition, operators need to regard which attributes influence tourist satisfaction and their destination choice in order to formulate the strategies that attract and better satisfy customers. Although several researchers have studied the cultural and heritage tourism, they did not provide homestay issues, especially homestays in Sri Lanka. The present study tries to answer the broad question "how the concept of homestay has been perceived by both tourists who visit homestay and homestay operators in Sri Lanka? The general explicit objective of this research study is to explore the homestay tourism product attributes, tourists' motivation and satisfaction and the perceptions of host communities on the homestay tourism product. Obviously the research is socio-economically and culturally situated and requires a rich narrative description which would support both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study utilized exploratory research design to examine the predicting effects of tourist's motivation and product attributes on tourists' satisfaction, the relationship between tourist's motivation and tourists' overall satisfaction and hosts' perceptions of homestay. The population for this study being the total number of homestay guests and operators of a given time it was practically difficult to figure out exact number. Hence the sample was drawn using statistical standards suits such situations. A total of 300 visitors were surveyed and 27 homestay operators were interviewed with a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews based on an interview protocol to collect primary data. Host family, toilets, housekeeping and internet access are of pivotal in selecting homestay. Seeing, excitement, relaxation, nature, culture, activities and cleanliness were key motivators towards homestay. HS tourists were highly satisfied with living culture, local food and warm hospitality while entertainment, night life, information material and environmental concerns were of inadequately satisfied. While all target markets may not seek luxury and sophistication, conformable and reliable accommodation in a healthy and safe environment is demanded by all segments of the market. Homestay accommodation can be one of the major activities for economic development among rural communities where the appeal for tourism is rich and diversified. Local communities can benefit from this program as economically, socially and environmentally and culturally. Tourism policy should be formulated for enhancing homestay in the rural areas. This accommodation will ensure employment opportunities and economic advancement for the local people. Proper planning and marketing, standardization and quality assurance, legal and administrative formalities must ensure for a healthy homestay accommodation. Future research should focus community perceptions on homestay and post purchase behaviors of guests.

Key Words; Homestay, Satisfaction, Motivation, Perceptions

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgement	ii
Declaration	iii
Contents	iv
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Problem Statement	5
1.3 Research Questions	6
1.4 Objectives of the Study	7
1.5 Hypotheses	7
1.6 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Summary of the Methodology.....	9
1.8 Limitations of the Study.....	10
1.9 Organization of Chapters	10
1.10 Summary	11
CHAPTER TWO	12
REVIEW OF LITERATURE	12
2.1 Introduction.....	12
2.2 Tourists' Demographic Characteristics.....	12
2.3 Homestay.....	13
2.3.1 Evolution of Homestays	14
2.3.2 Homestay Context	16
2.3.3 Morphological Changes of Homestays.....	17
2.3.4 Authenticity and Homestay Product.....	19
2.4 Tourism Product Attributes.....	19
2.4.1 Destination attributes: an overview	19
2.5 Tourists' Satisfaction.....	23
2.6 Tourists' Motivation.....	29

2.7 Homestay: benefits, issues and challenges.....	34
2.7.1 Benefits of Homestay programme.....	34
2.7.2 Issues and Challenges of Homestay Programmes	36
2.8 Summary	40
CHAPTER THREE	41
METHODOLOGY.....	41
3.1 Introduction	41
3.2 Research Design.....	41
3.2.1 Specification of Empirical Model	41
3.3 Population and Sampling	42
3.3.1 Population.....	42
3.3.2 Sample frame.....	42
3.3.3 Sample and Data Collection	42
3.3.4 Sampling error	44
3.3.5 Selection error and frame error.....	44
3.3.5 Data collection tools	44
3.4 Instrumentation	45
3.4.1 Measurement	45
3.4.2 Validity.....	45
3.4.3 Reliability	46
3.5 Data Analysis	49
3.6 Preliminary Evaluation of Data.....	50
3.6.1 Data screening and missing analysis procedures.....	50
3.6.2 Statistic Assumptions	50
3.7 Summary	51
CHAPTER FOUR.....	52
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.....	52
4.1 Introduction.....	52
4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Subjects.....	52

4.2.1 Percentage of Sex Distribution of Homestay Tourists	52
4.2.2 Percentage of Age Distribution of Homestay Tourists.....	53
4.2.3 Percentage of Regional Representation of Homestay Tourists	53
4.2.4 Purpose of Visit of Homestay Tourists.....	54
4.2.5 Travel Party Composition of Homestay Tourists.....	55
4.2.6 Professions of Homestay Tourists.....	56
4.2.7 Income Levels of Homestay Tourists.....	56
4.2.8 Duration of Total period of Stay in Sri Lanka by Homestay Tourists	57
4.2.9 Duration of Stay in Homestays by Homestay Tourists	58
4.3 Significant Attributes of Sri Lankan Homestay Product.....	58
4.3.1Significance of Washroom in Homestay Selection Decision.....	60
4.3.2Significance of Meals in Homestay Selection Decision.....	60
4.3.3Significance of Bedroom and housekeeping in Homestay Selection Decision.....	61
4.3.4Significance of Restaurant Facilities in Homestay Selection Decision.....	62
4.3.5Significance of Host Family in Homestay Selection Decision.....	63
4.3.6Significance of Internet Access in Homestay Selection Decision.....	64
4.3.7Significance of Language and Itinerary in Homestay Selection Decision	65
4.3.8Significance of Location in Homestay Selection Decision	66
4.3.9 Significance of Activities in Homestay Selection Decision.....	67
4.3.10 Significance of Transportation in Homestay Selection Decision.....	68
4.4 Motivation of Homestay Tourists	69
4.4.1 Push Motivation Factors.....	69
4.4.2 Pull Motivation Factors	70
4.5 Attribute Satisfaction of Homestay Tourists	70
4.6 Summary of Overall Satisfaction	72
4.7 Test of Hypotheses	72
4.7.1Regression Assumptions.....	72
4.7.3Test of Hypotheses of the Study.....	76
4.7.4Test of Overall Regression Model:.....	79

4.7.5 Detailed Analysis of Tourists Motivation towards Homestay in Sri Lanka.....	80
4.8 Perceptions of Homestay by the Host Families.....	82
CHAPTER FIVE.....	105
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	105
5.1 Introduction.....	105
5.2 Conclusions.....	105
5.3 Recommendations.....	107
5.4 Future Research Avenues.....	109
5.5 Summary.....	109
REFERENCES.....	110

APPENDIX

- I. Survey Questionnaire**
- II. Interview Protocol**
- III. Transcriptions**
- IV. Open and Axial coding for HS motives, issues and potential solutions**
- V. Reliability Test Results**