

# TOURIST MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT TOURIST VISITING DECISION-A CASE OF SRI LANKA

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**Abstract-** With the globalization and the open market policies of different nations, the movement from one country to another has been drastically increased among the people. Out of the most sustainable industries in the world, the tourism industry is showing a significant landmark over the years. There is a trend in the global market towards tourism industry as many people are currently looking for self-fulfillment needs over basic needs (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs). Sri Lanka is possessing the geographical advantage over other countries with the natural beauty and peaceful environment within the local territory. After 30 years of war and the new development practices in modern Sri Lanka provide good insights to the foreigners to visit Sri Lanka. In this context the most important thing is to understand the reasons for choosing Sri Lanka over other countries and what exactly impact on their visiting decision. Therefore the main objective of this study is to understand what motivates a foreign tourist to visit Sri Lanka and what motivates on their visiting decision. This study will be based on push (Intrinsic) and pull (Extrinsic) motivation factors as those are the main driving motivational factors in the tourism industry. The sample population for this study was 100 foreign tourists and which have been selected from the departure section of the Bandaranayake International Airport. The data was gathered through structured questionnaire and Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) used to analyze the data.

There were many surprising key findings of this study and it founded that Sri Lanka is an emerging destination towards sightseeing, sports activities and other leisure activities. Findings clearly showed that the tourist who visits Sri Lanka has very less motivation to stay at hotel and get the comfort of the hotel. Staying and relaxing at

the hotel is not that much strong motivational factor in the Sri Lankan context. The findings will help many sectors in Sri Lanka such as hotel industry, travel and tourism industry, sports and leisure management industry, event management industry, to incorporate good improvements to their tourism products.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka is a country which is filled with natural beauty and it has the unique features that most of the countries are lacking with. Because of this beauty, Sri Lanka is named as the Pearl of the Indian Ocean. Since the history in Sri Lanka it attracts a lot of foreigners from different countries for different reasons. Because of its diversity in terms of culture, religions, weather conditions, and all other climatic conditions, it attracts most of the tourists over the years. As the industry is boosting and the many government incentives are coming to this industry (Ex: Year 2011 they named as "Visit Sri Lanka Year" (Anjana et al., 2012)), it is worth of studying the foreigners travel motivations to visit Sri Lanka.

Therefore as a country we should have a responsibility to clearly categorize all the possible types of motivational factors. The reason is the tourist satisfaction depends on the level they meet their exact motivations. As an example if a tourist having a motivation to do wildlife photography, we as a service provider needs to facilitate that.

When we are studying about the tourist motivations there are two main motivation types namely Push motivational factors and pull motivational factors. Even though the motivation is only the one variable of the tourist decision,

it is highly impacting on the tourist visiting decision (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996).

'Push' factors are internal feelings or inner factors and it is more intangible oriented. Intrinsic expectations of the individual traveler e.g. rest and relaxation, adventure, health or prestige, sports, culture and heritage studying motivations are some examples.

'Pull' factors are external factors and it is linked with the attractive characteristics of a particular destination and they are more tangible and visible in nature such as wildlife, shopping destinations, medical destinations(Cuba), beaches, accommodation, heritage, religious sites and cultural and historical resources according to Uysal & Hagan, 1993 (as cited in Kozak, 2002) .

When it comes to the global context, there are a few studies regarding tourist motivational factor analysis. The uniqueness of this study is addressing the Sri Lankan situation and the model has adjusted to the Sri Lankan context. There are no sound studies conducted regarding what motivational factors affect tourist visiting decision in Sri Lankan context. This study address that gap and reach some good findings to match with Sri Lankan tourist market requirements.

With the intention of filling that gap, this study is focusing to address the following two research objectives.

1. To understand the push motivational factors that affect foreigners to visit Sri Lanka as tourism destination.
2. To understand the pull motivational factors that affect foreigners to visit Sri Lanka as tourism destination.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Global Tourism Industry*

In the global context the global tourism is defined as the type of a practice of travelling for somewhere for different reasons such as business, education, pleasure or relaxation (Simkova & Holzner, 2014). According to the World Travel and Tourism Council the global travel and tourism industry is the biggest industry in the world. When we look at the past growth of the global tourism industry we

can find immense growth over the time period. In 1950 the International Tourist Receipt was 2.1 billion USD. In 2002 it showed that 478 billion USD (World Tourism Organization, 2003). It was recorded around 1.25 trillion USD revenue by the end of 2014.

### *Sri Lankan Tourism Industry*

Most of the important part of the Sri Lankan tourism industry is the location of the country. The uniqueness of the location itself attracts most of the foreign tourists to the country. Over the year the expansions of the hotels, resorts, spas and other infrastructures promote Sri Lanka as a nice destination to be visiting among the foreign visitors.

As a very much important milestone of the Sri Lankan tourism industry, the Ceylon Tourism Board was formed by the Sri Lankan government in 1966 and in 2005 the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority formed under a new parliament act (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, 2015).

### *Travel purposes*

In the tourism industry there are two main types of tourism purposes. The first one is leisure travel purpose and the second one is business travel purpose (Mill & Morrison, 2012).

According to their studies there are many activities included under the leisure travel motivations. Meet friends and relatives, Family sightseers, outdoor vacation, resort vacation, foreign vacation, shopping, beaches and adventure. When it comes to the business travel purpose it includes the regular business travels, participating meetings, conferences, conventions and occupational designations (Mill & Morrison, 2012).

### *Motivation*

When we define the motivation it's better to find how the word "Motivation" derived. The term "Motivation" has been derived from the Latin word of "Movere". In Latin "Movere" means move, energize or activate (Jyothi, 2011). According to Jyothi (2011), there are two main types of motivation namely "intrinsic motivation" and "extrinsic motivation". Intrinsic refers the internal driving factors of a person and extrinsic refers the outside third party factors which make the influence on the human behavior.

## ***Tourist Travel Motivation***

The tourist travel motivation can be mentioned as the key factor to any tourist when they decide their next tour or vacation in a new country. The outcome of any tourist decision will be based on the type of motivation they have. Most of the researches have used Maslow's hierarchical theory (1970) as the base for the tourist motivational studies according to Jang and Cai, 2002 (as cited in Huang & Hsu, 2009) Based on the kind of motivation they have in their mind will decide their next tour package.

According to "Psychology of travel" (2015), says that a motivation of travel is multiple and there are variety of motivations to visit a particular destination. Ex: escape, relaxation, relief tension, family togetherness, education, status and prestigious are some of examples. According to "Psychology of travel" (2015), it further identifies four types of "Travel Motivator types".

1. **Physical Motivators:** This involves the physical activities like rest, sports participation, beach walks and recreation and entertainments.
2. **Cultural Motivators:** Willingness to study about the new cultures and enthusiasm to being part of the new cultures.
3. **Interpersonal Motivators:** Here the people would do travel because they want to meet new people, meet their friends in foreign countries, see neighbors etc.
4. **Status and Prestigious Motivators:** This category comes with the Ego satisfaction of each of the tourist and to get social status by travelling. They believe that the travelling will enhance their recognition and their individual reputation.
5. According to Hailu (2013) different level of travel experience of individual can be impacted on the individual travel motivation and he identifies domestic travel experience, International travel experience and Age as the three main levels of such travel experience.

## ***Push motivation***

Push motivational factors refers that the intrinsic factors or the person oriented factors according to Yoon & Uysal 2005 (as cited in Correia, Kozak & Ferradeira, 2013). From one person to another, requirements, willingness are

different. Individual desires can be considered as one of the most powerful determinant factor of the intrinsic or push factors according to Reiss, 2004 (as cited in Correia, Kozak & Ferradeira, 2013). Ex: There are some tourists they like to stay in a hotel and relax for the entire day.

There are some tourists they do not like to spend the day in a hotel but they want to travel as much as they can, engage some sports and adventure activities. There can be some tourists they like wild life, photography and natural beauty. Therefore they like the hotels located inside the jungles, sightseeing, ecofriendly hotel arrangements and they do not like to stay in city based hotels. Therefore it is very clear that there are some people oriented factors that pushes people to make their visiting decisions and based on that factor they will plan their entire foreign vacations. According to Baloglu and Uysal (1996), desire for escape, rest and relaxation, health and fitness, adventure, prestige, and social interaction are considered as push motivation factors.

Push motivation factors again can be varied from male tourist to female tourist. Based on the gender of a person, there can be different types of internal motivation factors. As suggested by Kirkwood (2009) females have different push motivation factors and males may have different motivation factors. Most of the cases the push factors are related to the ego satisfaction of the individuals where social status maintaining and showing their social values. As human beings all of the people like to show their social levels to others and they feel the travelling as one of the ways of expressing their personal brand. Satisfying their ego will be the key determinant factor of any tourists and the initial location settings will be based on the push motivation factors (Dann, 1981).

## ***Pull motivation***

Pull motivational factors refers the external attributes or destination oriented factors. That destination factors can influence the tourist visitation decisions according to Correia and Pimpa, 2008; Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977, 1981; Uysal and Jurowski, 1994 (as cited in Correia, Kozak & Ferradeira, 2013). These factors are varied from destination to destination.

These factors explain why a particular destination has selected by the tourists as per Dayour, 2013 (as cited in Dayour & Adongo, 2015). Pull factors are having the

capability of attracting the tourists to the particular destination. Ex: Sigiriya has the unique attributes in terms of the heritage, arts. That feature itself attract tourists to the Sigiriya. Kithulgala has the location advantage for the water sports and activities. Therefore that place attracts the people who likes rafting.

Modern atmosphere and activities are the first identified pull factor in the tourism sector. It has the following sub areas of factors. Visiting to modern developed cities, playing games like casinos, star class hotels, participate musical concerts and experiencing new atmosphere (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Wide space and activities is the second factor and there are three sub factors under this heading. Get away from crowd and be relax, budget accommodation and different activities to watch (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Small size and reliable weather acts as the third factor of the pull factor and it is also having three sub factors. Personal safety, expected and reliable weather conditions and manageable size. The safety of a particular location is very important factor for tourist and weather reliability is one of the main determinant factors of the safety (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Natural scenery plays the fourth factor of destination attributes and it has two main sub factors under it. Rock and mountain areas, remarkable and outstanding scenes motivate people to visit beautiful locations. People like to see natural beauty and get the relax feelings (Yoon & Uysal, 2005)

Therefore visitors from different countries may visit such destinations solely on getting that experience. According to this study the culture of a particular country or a destination acts as one of the most influencing attractive factors.

### ***Interrelationship between push motivation and pull motivation***

There are many importance of understanding the inter relationship between the push and pull factors and both the marketers and destination promoting professionals should understand both the specific destination attributes and tourist psychological needs to introduce more customized service (Mohammad, Mohammad, & Som, 2010). Firstly the individual tourist's visitation decision arises from the intrinsic factor (Push factor) and it can be changed based on the actual attributes of the particular destination according to Gartner, 1993; Dann, 1996;

Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997 (as cited in Mohammad, Mohammad, & Som, 2010).

According to the Crompton (1979) push-pull theory is mutual theory which defines the overall tourist behavior. Therefore by isolating just one theory and come to the conclusion about the tourist behavior is not practical (Crompton, 1979). Tourist motivations are varied from time to time and they are multiple. One theory alone cannot perform or give the conclusion about the impact they create on the entire tourist behavior (Crompton, 1979).

The initial travel decision is starting with the intrinsic motivation of the individual and it will follow by the pull factors of a particular destination. According to the above given examples even it clearly says that the because of their inner feelings, people will be searching a particular place for the best fit to fulfill initial desires. That is very much clear that tourist visiting decision will only occur when the both push and pull factors intersect to each other (multifaceted).

### ***Tourist satisfaction***

Tourist satisfaction is inherent factor for individual tourist and the difficulty of measuring the tourist satisfaction is because of the intangible nature of it. The satisfaction may be varied from one person to another even in the same tourist product.

As the tourist satisfaction is inherent factor, the best way to satisfy all the tourist is to have some standardize form of tourist products and services with high quality standards. When it comes to the location management or promoting the destination, it is very much important to maximize the tourist satisfaction. That will be the key factor of the success of any tourist product (Mohammad & Som, 2010). The best way to enhance the destination loyalty is maximizing the tourist satisfaction. When they get the positive feelings about the particular destination, happy about their services, automatically they will be loyal to that specific destination (Mohammad & Som, 2010).

The destination management professionals should formulate strategies in a way that satisfy the tourist expectation. It has the direct relationship with the tourist satisfaction. To ensure the positive viral marketing effect and the revisit, satisfying their exact needs is very much

needed. The strategy formulation of their destination should be based on “how we can satisfy our visitors?”. The post experience evaluation is very common in the tourism industry and it will be completely based on the level of satisfaction they gained.

## ***Relationship between tourist motivation and satisfaction***

The extent the country, particular hotel or a tourism company that meets the exact tourist motivation will determine the level of tourist satisfaction. Tourism satisfaction is most commonly studied topic in the tourism sector as discussed by Kozak et al., 2003 (as cited in Correia, Kozak & Ferradeira, 2013). According to Olivier and Swan, 1989 (as cited in Correia, Kozak & Ferradeira, 2013) there is a theory in this sector call “Equity theory” which says the satisfaction is the kind of tradeoff between what tourist sacrifice and what tourist gain actually.

Satisfaction is something that fulfilled gain by the tourist after consuming some tourist product as per Oliver, 1997 (as cited in Dayour & Adongo, 2015). Understanding the tourist satisfaction is one of the most important parameter that can use to analyses the performances of the particular tourist activity according to Noe & Uysal, 1997; Schofield, 2000 (as cited in Yoon & Uysal, 2003). There is a causal relationship between tourist motivation and tourist satisfaction according to Yoon and Uysal, 2005 (as cited in Aziz & Ariffin, 2009).

## **Hypotheses**

Based on the research questions, research objectives and the theoretical framework, the following ten hypothesis can be developed and at the end of the research study each and every hypothesis will be tested. However in this study area there is a lack of previous study about the “Motivational factors that affect tourist to visit Sri Lanka” and because of that it suffers with lack of developed existing hypothesis exactly in Sri Lankan context. But there is a very similar research done in Northern Cyprus by Yoon and Uysal, 2005 and in that study they have identified several push and pull factors and they have developed hypothesis based on that factors (Here 5 from each factor).

H1- Knowledge factor/Education will have a positive effect on tourist visiting decision.

In the above Knowledge factor will refer the education considerations that each tourist focus by visiting to a

particular country. There are five sub categories have been identified under the Knowledge factor by Yoon and Uysal, 2005. They are experiencing new/different lifestyles, trying new food, visiting historical places, meeting new people, being free to act how I feel (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

H2- Relaxation factor will have a positive effect on tourist visiting decision.

According to Yoon and Uysal, 2005 there are two main sub relaxation factors that creates an effect on the tourist's visiting decision. Doing nothing at all, getting a change from a busy job. According to Mohammad, Mohammad, and Som, 2010 has identified three sub categories of Relaxation such as to be away from home, to relax physically, to find thrills and excitement.

H3- Sightseeing factor will have a positive effect on tourist visiting decision.

Sightseeing is the intrinsic feature of an individual tourist that has an effect on their visiting decision (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). There are sub areas of sightseeing such as to fulfill my dream of visiting a foreign land/country, to sightsee touristic spots, to explore cultural resources (Mohammad, Mohammad, & Som, 2010).

H4- Maximizing prestige factor will have a positive effect on tourist visiting decision.

It consists with increasing social status, enjoying simpler and solitude life style according to Mohammad, Mohammad, and Som, 2010 there is an impact of the escape factor on the tourist visiting decision.

H5- Enhancing relationship factor will have a positive effect on tourist visiting decision.

There is a relationship between enhancing relationship and visitation decision and it consists with four sub categories as to enhance communication with local community, to exchange custom and traditions, to participate in new activities, to appreciate natural resources (Mohammad, Mohammad, & Som, 2010).

H6- Natural scenery factor has positive effect on tourist visiting decision. Mohammad, Mohammad, and Som, 2010 says that natural beauty is a determinant visiting

factor of tourists. According to them it is one of the pull factors and it has two main sub categories namely Natural Reserves, Beautiful Beaches.

H7- Different cultures will have a positive effect on tourist visiting decision.

Interesting and friendly local people, Different culture, Historic old cities are considered as the most important cultural reasons as to why tourists visit to a particular destination (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Therefore the above hypothesis can be developed.

H8- Sports and water activities will have a positive effect on tourist visiting decision.

There are some places very much suited for sports and water activities because of the special attributes of a particular place. Water sports, surfing and adventurous games are very much popular among sports tourists (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Therefore the above hypotheses can be developed.

H9- Small size and reliable weather will have a positive effect on tourist visiting decision.

Climate and weather will be a key external attribute of a particular destination and tourists are willing to get that experience (Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Mohammad, Mohammad, and Som, 2010). Therefore the above hypotheses can be developed.

H10- Easy access and affordability will have a positive effect on tourist visiting decision.

When the tourists are selecting some destinations, there is a tendency of considering the affordability of the tour package and convenience of getting visa to that particular destination (Mohammad, Mohammad, and Som, 2010).

**Theoretical Framework**

In order to understand and reducing the number of push and pull motivation factors, here uses the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) model, which has been used in a similar study done in Northern Cyprus and the findings of that study can be applied for the here as well in order to develop the independent variables as well as the hypothesis (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

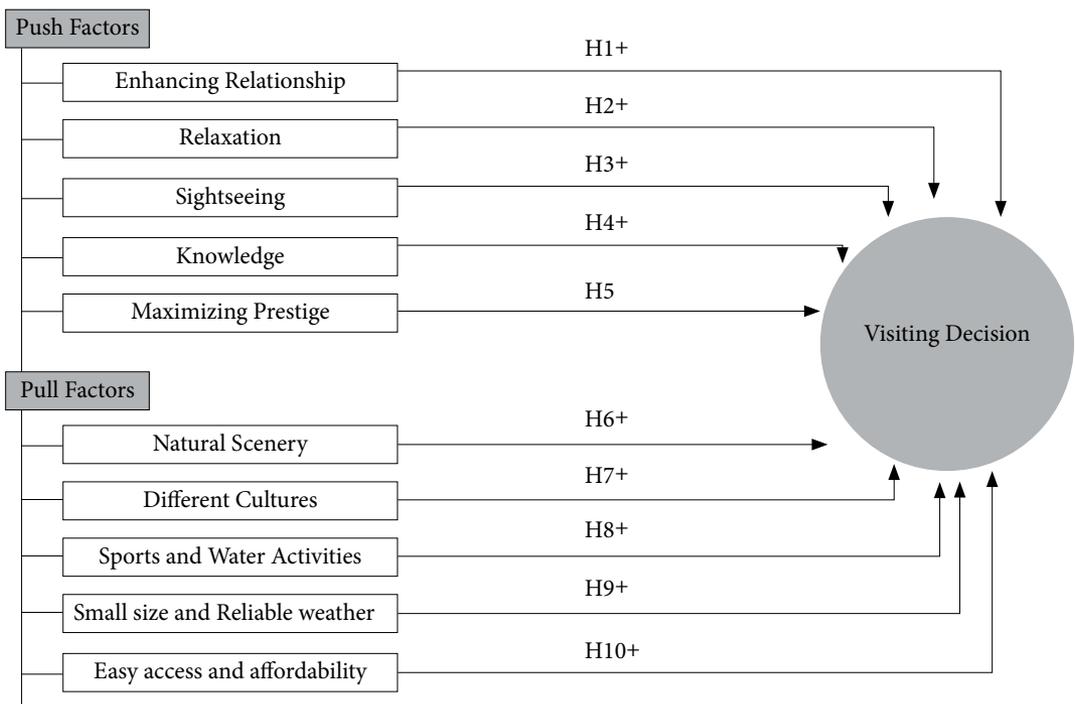


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework for the Research

## III. METHODS

### *Population and Sample*

The population of the study is the targeted unit of analysis in the particular study. The purpose of using the population is collecting the data we need for the study. Selecting the right population will be very much critical to reach an unbiased evaluation and conclusion. In this research the target population is the foreign tourists they are visiting to Sri Lanka from all around the world. The sample of the study is the targeted respondent from the population for the purpose of the data collection. All the questioner distributions and interviews have been done among the targeted sample. In this research the sample is 200 foreigners among the foreign tourists visiting to Sri Lanka from different country.

### *Data Analysis*

In the data analysis section, the gathered data has been evaluated by using different types of techniques. In order to analyses and measure the push and pull factors the five point Likert-type scale has been used. From very much agree to not at all agree (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). The hypotheses have been tested against the information we gathered by distributing questioners and based on the data we gathered through interviews. The final objective of the data analysis is to understand and interpret the relationship between push and pull factors and the tourist's visiting decision. In order to analyze data in this research the Mean value, regression analysis, T-test and One-Way ANOVA test has been used.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis and discussion of the empirical findings of the study. This study consist of 10 hypothesis and different techniques have been used to test each of those. Mean value has been used to test the H1, H5, H6 and H7. Such mean values showing 4 and above in the Five-Point Likert scale citing that all the above independent variables relating to H1, H5, H6 and H7 are positively impact on the tourist visiting decision to Sri Lanka.

In Five-Point Likert scale 1 represent the poor impact and the 5 shows the very high positive impact. As all the above

hypotheses are showing high impact, we can conclude that Sri Lanka is very much rich in terms of the above motivational factors.

H2 and H9 have been tested using the regression analysis. In both H2 and H9 shows high R2 values closer to 1. With that need to consider the ANOVA significance value as well. H2 shows 0.063 significance and H9 shows 0.000 significance values. It indicates that H2 is rejecting and H9 will be accepted in this study. It is surprising that the relaxation factors does not positively effect on the tourist visiting decision to Sri Lanka.

This finding was very much remarkable and it is unique to the Sri Lanka. According to this finding we can categorize Sri Lanka as one of the destinations to travel, sightseeing and not a popular place to stay and relax.

H8 has been tested using T-test technique. The overall significant value of the H8 records value below 0.05. It indicates very much significant positive impact by the sport and water activities to the tourist visiting decision in Sri Lanka.

H3, H4 and H10 have been tested using One-way ANOVA test. Here the focus is given to the significant value and all the above three hypotheses show 0.000 significant values. It indicates that all the above three independent variables are highly significant to the dependent variable and positively impact to the tourist visiting decision to Sri Lanka.

## V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

### *Conclusion*

Tourism sector in the world is boosting as part of the modern development and Sri Lanka is one of the best destinations in the world to get the more tourist attraction. The most important factor for the successful tourism is to first understand what motivates them to visit Sri Lanka. By identifying that we can fulfill their exact requirements and then it will increase their post satisfaction. In this study the priority is given to understand and examine the tourist motivational factors.

According to the findings in this study there are more Western Europe tourists in Sri Lanka. East Asians hold the second place. Therefore it is clear that these two categories

are from two regions. Therefore there are huge difference in terms of culture, language, food patterns and income distributions. As a country we have to consider that as well when we make decisions regarding tourism development in Sri Lanka. And also as a country we have to introduce our own tourism package including above mentioned services and this would help us to differentiate Sri Lanka from the rest of the tourist destinations.

Therefore in conclusion we can mention that most of the foreign tourist visit to Sri Lanka is having knowledge enhancing motivation and travelling all around the country to watch nice places in Sri Lanka. They do not have much intention to stay at Sri Lankan hotels and just relax.

### **Limitations of the study**

This study was conducted by targeting foreign tourists. Therefore the main problem faced was the poor corporation from the tourist. As Sri Lanka is still a developing country, most of them are not willing to share their ideas. And also it was very difficult to collect data when there are enjoying their days in Sri Lanka. Most of the foreigners are not familiar with English even though it considers as international language. Therefore get the support from them was a bit tough task.

As the motivational factors may be varied with person to person the sample size should be large. But with the time constraints and other difficulties (Get the approval from Airport and Aviation authority) reaching large amount of foreigners were difficult.

### **Direction for Further Research**

Study about tourism motivation is one of the most important determinant factor of the successful tourism industry. Whenever they decide to travel away from their home country the first thing matters is the motivation According to Mak, Wong and Chang, 2009 (as cited in Dayour & Adongo, 2015). Therefore it is clear that tourist motivation is very important factor. In Sri Lanka there is lack of studies conducted related to tourist travel motivation. There are many reasons for that. As tourist motivation may change from time to time, as it could vary from one tourist to another can be seen as reasons to the lack of studies relating to this topic in Sri Lanka.

In this study I have used five push motivation factors and five pull motivation factors. I have tested how all these ten motivation factors could impact on the tourist visiting decision in Sri Lankan context. But there are many other push and pull factors in the tourism sector.

There is a lack of studies about those factors that I haven't covered in this study and lack of studies regarding how those factors could affect visiting decision in Sri Lankan context. There are eight push motivation factors and ten pull motivation factors in the tourism sector (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). There are eight push and pull motivation factors in the tourism industry (Mohammad, Mohammad, & Som, 2010). Therefore it is very clear that there are many other tourist motivation factors which haven't tested in this study. Therefore I provide direction to future researchers to focus on those areas in the future studies and do the studies regarding how those factors could affect to the Sri Lanka tourism industry.

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