

Original Research Article

Analyzing the Determinants of Tourists' Buying Behaviour in Sri Lanka: With Special Reference to Tourism Destinations in Down South of Sri Lanka.

ABSTRACT

Aims: The current study attempts to model tourists' buying behavior in the context of Sri Lanka focusing on the key determinants of tourists' buying behavior along with demographic characteristics of the tourists. More specifically, the paper elaborates how Marketing Mix Factors, Situational Factors and Personal Factors and tourists' and other demographic factors associate with their buying behavior in the context of Sri Lanka

Methodology: Data were collected from 500 tourists who visited three main tourist destinations such as *Hikkaduwa*, *Unawatuna* and *Mirissa* located in Down South of Sri Lanka. Both descriptive and econometric analyses were employed to accomplish the objectives of the study.

Results: The results of the descriptive analysis suggest that most of the tourists were from countries such as Russia, Germany and United Kingdom and their main purpose of the visits were recreation and leisure followed by education and health. Moreover, the respondents stayed 20 days on average in Down-South. However, it was observed that tourists' spending per day is significantly low and more than 69% of the tourists spent less than 100\$ per day. The econometric findings emphasize that all three key determinants of consumer buying behaviour– marketing mix factors, situational factors and personal factors positively affect the tourists' buying behavior. Apart from that, personal factors have been recognized as the most influential factor of tourists' buying behavior in the context of Sri Lanka. Furthermore, demographic characteristics of tourists such as gender, marital status, education level and employment status also affect tourist buying behavior.

Conclusion: Hence, appropriate policies are required to enhance the quality of all indicators of the marketing mix, situational factors and personal factors in order to increase tourists' buying behavior. Similarly, the current study also recommends the implementation of efficient policies to ensure security, cultural harmony and political stability in order to uplift tourists' buying behavior pattern.

Keywords: *Tourists Buying Behavior, Marketing Mix Factors, Tourists Arrivals, Tourism Destinations, Situational Factors*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Globally, the tourism sector has shown a steady growth over the last two decades, transforming the touristic activities into a real industry. In the new millennium, we have witnessed a continuous growth of interest in the way people spend their leisure time. There is also great interest in the development of what people "consume" during these periods of

23 free time, especially in times dedicated to travel and holidays. Tourism include activities
24 where people travel to and stay in locations outside their usual surroundings for a period of
25 not more than one consecutive year for leisure business or other purposes. Choices made
26 by tourists are changeable due to the economic conditions in their countries of origin and
27 perception of status associated with destination (Williams & Hall, 2000). In tourism, the
28 efforts of boosting sales are carried out with help of personal selling, advertising, promotion,
29 public relations and sales development tools. On the other hand, social media platforms
30 provide more rapid dissemination of such rumours and hence the effects of rumours are
31 more great (Özdemir and Sarı, 2014). With the aim of developing a model of tourist
32 behaviour Moutinho (1993) has reviewed the social and psychological influences on
33 individual travel Behavior. Moreover, Dimanche and Havitz (1995) have reviewed four
34 concepts (ego-involvement, loyalty and commitment, family decision-making and novelty-
35 seeking) in an attempt to methodologically advance consumer behaviour in tourism studies.
36 Tourists' consuming pattern is crucial in terms of tourism receipt which contributes to
37 economic growth and development in different ways. As Fratu (2011) indicated, it is required
38 to consider tourists' buying behavior when promoting and selling tourism products. Omondi
39 (2017) defines tourism buying behaviour as the combination of acts, attitudes and decisions
40 concerned with choosing buying and consuming any of the tourism products, services and
41 its post consuming reactions. Englis & Solomon (2006) further elaborated that tourism
42 buying behaviour consists of certain decisions, activities and experiences which required to
43 fulfil their needs and wants. Myers & Sar (2015) highlighted that consumer buying behaviour
44 is widely affected by promotions, advertisements and also previous experiences.

45 Developing tourism is one of the major economic development strategies in Sri Lanka.
46 According to the Tourism Strategic Plan, (2011) the major agendas of tourism development
47 in Sri Lanka are create an environment conducive for tourism promotion, attracting the
48 potential inbound tourist markets and create awareness and positive perception globally with
49 the objective of achieving a target of twenty five million tourists within five years' time period.
50 Moreover, success of any tourist attraction has depended heavily on giving the customer
51 what he or she wants. Since, tourism has been the third largest foreign income earner of Sri
52 Lanka, it is crucial to examine tourists' buying behaviour in the context of Sri Lanka.
53 Similarly, being an island, Sri Lanka is popular for Sun and Sand tourism among the region
54 and therefore majority of tourists prefer to visit major tourism destinations located in Down
55 South costal area. However, lack of empirical studies on this matter leaves a huge gap that
56 should be addressed by a proper empirical study. Therefore, the current study aims to
57 recognize tourists' consumer buying behaviour in the context of Down South of Sri Lanka.
58 More specifically, major destinations such as Hikkaduwa, Unawatuna and Mirissa are taken
59 into account on this regard.

60 **1.2 Research Objectives and Structure of the Study**

61 The main objective of the current study is to recognize the key determinants of tourists'
62 buying behaviour in the context of Sri Lanka. However, the specific objectives of the study
63 are as follows.

- 64 01. Examine the impacts of marketing mix factors, situational factors and personal
65 factors on tourists' buying Behavior in Down South of Sri Lanka and recognize the
66 most influential factor out them.
- 67 02. Observe whether the demographic factors of tourists influence their buying
68 Behavior.

69 The current study is expected to achieve the highlighted objectives and the paper is
70 structured as follow. The next section of the paper is allocated for the literature review where
71 the existing knowledge is critically reviewed. After that, the methodology applied to achieve
72 the objectives of the research is elaborated followed by the results and discussion. Finally,
73 conclusions and recommendations of the study is highlighted along with reference.

74

75 **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

76

77 **02.1. Impact of Marketing-Mix Factors on Consumer Buying Behavior**

78 ***Product***

79

80 A components view of travel and tourism products suggests those tourism products as a
81 category of components or elements, which consists transport, accommodation attractions
82 and other facilities, like catering and entertainments. There are five main components of
83 tourism products. The whole tourism product concept discusses wider view on product
84 concept, defining tourism product as complete experience from the time tourist leaves home
85 to the time he returns to it (Middleton & Clark, 2004). Leiper (1990) defines the attractions as
86 systems or the sets of interconnected elements. Leiper (1990) further illustrates tourist
87 attractions as all those elements of "non-home" place that tie discretionary travellers away
88 from their homes. They usually include landscapes to observe, activities to participate in,
89 and experiences to remember (Lew, 1987). Tourist attraction is a system that covers three
90 elements: a tourist or human element, a nucleus or central element, and marker or
91 informative element. Tourist attraction comes into existence when the three elements are
92 connected (Leiper, 1990).

93 ***Price***

94 The "price" of tourism is highly irregular due to the interdependent and seasonal nature of
95 tourism services. Kimes and Chase (1998) stated that, understanding the composition of and
96 an interrelationships among regional tourism products is a vital prerequisite to the
97 development of an effective pricing strategy. Flexible pricing strategies play a main role in
98 demand management, as lower prices can be used to tourist attraction towards various
99 destinations during their off-seasons. Similarly, higher prices can be used to limit visitors in
100 peak seasons. Kimes and Chase (1998) argued for a broader managerial view of yield
101 management (also known as revenue management) than the more common tactical and
102 mathematical perspective of pricing.

103 ***Place***

104 An organization should pay attention to place decisions, because of the importance of the
105 product and consumption occurring at the same time and at the same place; a place that
106 delivers entire facts of customer, competition, promotion action, and marketing procedures.
107 In addition, place focuses on how it can deliver the products on the right time and at the right
108 place, and which channel has to be used to deliver the product (Copley, 2004). Travel
109 intermediaries are defined as members in the distribution chain in the tourism marketing
110 channel. They include retail travel agents, tour packagers, incentive marketers, and tour
111 wholesalers. They provide lodging, transportation and other travel products and services
112 demanded by domestic and foreign tourists. Travel intermediaries have considerable
113 influence in the decision making process of the tourist. They serve as an opinion leader and
114 expert for taking a travel decision process. They play the role of influencers for many of their
115 loyal customers. This implies that they are of greater importance to both the tourist and the

116 destination marketer particularly in the cases of destinations with far greater distance from
117 the point of origin.

118 **Promotion**

119 Promotion is basically considered a selling technique; to accomplish in every marketing
120 program. It must be involved with communication (promotion). Promotion is vital as it
121 provides information, advice, and persuades the target market in their buying Behavior. It
122 guides and teaches the customer or consumer to take action at a particular time and how
123 they can utilize the product and get beneficial outcome from it. Non - search capability refers
124 to the fact that before they are purchased intangibles cannot be searched or inspected.
125 Physical service attributes can be checked in advance, such as the appearance of a health
126 club and the type of equipment installed, but the experience of working with the trainers can
127 only be determined by experience.

128 **Personnel**

129 The level of service provided and the delivery of the service can be an important source of
130 differentiation and competitive advantage. Service staff is the services' most visible element
131 and the component that delivers service quality significantly. As the service staff represent
132 the company in its interactions with the customers and deliver the brand promise, the service
133 staff are also very much the service firm (from the customers' point of view) and the brand.
134 Highly motivated service employees play a key role in anticipating customer needs, building
135 customer relationships and building customer loyalty. Other than being an invaluable asset
136 in high contact services, frontline staff is also crucial in low contact services where
137 technology is largely commoditised. The firms' differentiation will then rest on these few
138 moments of truth whether it is through the phone, email or face-to-face.

139 **Process**

140 Process is generally defined as action and function that increases value for low - cost and
141 high - customer benefit products and is more important for service than for goods. According
142 to Hirankitti et al. (2009), both the pace of the process and the ability of the service providers
143 are clearly revealed to the customer and form the basis for their satisfaction with the
144 purchase. Process management therefore ensures quality availability and consistency.
145 Given the process management's simultaneous consumption and production, it is extremely
146 difficult to balance service demand with service delivery (Magrath, 1986). Designing and
147 implementing product elements is crucial for product creation and delivery.

148 **Physical Evidence**

149 This factor refers to the environment in which the service is delivered and any tangible goods
150 facilitating the service's performance and communication. This is very important because the
151 customer normally assesses the quality of the service it provides. (Rafiq & Ahmed, 1995). In
152 addition, Mittal and Baker (1998) said, this factor also refers to the environment in which the
153 services production is in. Similarly, Bitner (1990) adds that other visible surroundings can
154 affect the impressions perceived by the customers about service quality. The components of
155 the service experience are called the "services - cape "- that is, the atmosphere, the
156 background music, the seating comfort and the physical layout of the service facility, the
157 appearance of the staff can greatly affect the satisfaction of a customer with a service
158 experience (Rust, Zahorik and Keiningham, 1996). The environmental decoration and design
159 also have a major impact on the service expectations of the customer (Shostack, 1977).

160 Services cannot normally be displayed; therefore, companies should create an appropriate
161 environment to emphasize the fact to customers (Rathmell, 1974).

162

163 **02.2 Impact of Situational and Personal Factors on Consumer Buying** 164 **Behavior**

165

166 Marketing literature has revealed that shoppers buying decisions can be affected by many
167 factors, including individual and psychological characteristics, cultural, social and
168 environmental variables and promotional strategies (Kotler, 2000). Belk (1975) argued that
169 other situational factors influencing behaviour affect the decision process of the buyers and
170 that this should be considered to explain the customers' purchase decisions. Belk argued
171 that it is possible to classify time, place and other situational factors that influence the
172 purchasing decision as environment. Therefore, it is acceptable that situations and
173 Behavioral settings are subunits within an environment, although what 'bound and define'
174 an environment is not clearly defined, it can be considered as the main characteristic that
175 encompasses a number of factors (Belk, 1975).

176 Personal factors such as the age and state of a buyer's life cycle, occupation, economic
177 situation, lifestyle, and personality and self-concept influence the decisions of an individual
178 (Palani & Sohrabi, 2013). Change in the lifetime of consumers and the purchase of products
179 vary depending on age and stage of life. Factors related to age include food, clothing,
180 recreation and furniture taste (Moschis, 1994). In addition, during lifetime, environment,
181 values, lifestyle, hobbies and consumer habits are evolving. Stages of family life change the
182 behaviour of buying and the selection of brands. Traditionally, only young singles and
183 married couples with children included a family life cycle. Marketers today focus on
184 alternative, non-traditional stages such as unmarried couples, childless couples, same-sex
185 couples, single parents and later-life singles (Kotler & Armstrong 2010).

186

187 **3. METHODOLOGY**

188

189 **3.1 Research Design**

190

191 The study is designed to examine the determinants of consumer buying behaviour in the
192 context of international tourists in Sri Lanka. As Englis & Solomon (2006) indicated, series of
193 activities which lead to make decisions to satisfy the consumers' needs and wants is known
194 as consumer Behavior. Thus, consumer buying behaviour is an integral part of tourism
195 marketing which directly focuses on promoting and selling tourism products (Fratu, 2011).
196 Further, Myers & Sar (2015) emphasized that consumers make their decisions considering
197 various factors such as influence of advertising and marketing, physical conditions of the
198 products, consumers' expectation and background information as well. Considering the
199 study by Omondi (2017), the present study recognizes main three factors of consumer
200 buying behaviour in the context of Sri Lanka tourism market. The factors include Marketing
201 Mix Factors, Situational Factors and Personal Factors. Table 01 below indicates the utilized
202 indicators to measure each factor along with the dependent variable – tourists' buying
203 Behavior.

204

205

206 **Table 01: Operationalization of Variables**

207

Factors/Variables	Indicator(s)	Measuring Scale
Tourists' Buying Behavior	The Product of Length of Stay and Average	Numerical

242 InMMF – Log of Marketing Mix Factors
 243 InSF – Log of Situational Factors
 244 InPF – Log of Personal Factors
 245 Xi – Vector of control variables which include Age, Marital Status, Education Level and
 246 Employment Status.
 247 The regression includes log transformation of the variable in order to minimize the
 248 unnecessary variability of each variable and also provide a meaningful interpretation to the
 249 estimated coefficients.

250
 251
 252

253 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

254
 255

255 4.1 Reliability Analysis

256
 257
 258
 259
 260
 261
 262
 263
 264

Reliability implies whether a measurement produces consistent results, when the measurement is repeated a number of times. The analysis which determines the reliability of a measurement is known as reliability analysis which takes into account the association between the scores obtained from different administrations of the scale. Hence, higher association in reliability analysis confirms consistent results for the measurement. The current study carried out the reliability analysis to determine whether the measurements related to each dimensions are reliable. Table 02 indicates the results of the reliability analysis.

265
 266
 267

Table 02: Reliability Analysis

Dimensions	Indicators	Number of Measurements	Cronbach Alpha value
Marketing Mix Factors	Product	3	0.732
	Price	3	0.783
	Promotion	3	0.711
	Place	3	0.834
	Physical Evidence	3	0.756
	Processes	3	0.734
Situational Factors	Physical Factors	3	0.821
	Social Factors	3	0.873
	Time Factors	3	0.707
Personal Factors	Age	3	0.786
	Stage in Life	3	0.843
	Personality and Self Concept	3	0.702
	Lifestyle	3	0.785
	Income	3	0.831

268
 269
 270
 271
 272
 273
 274
 275
 276

Source: Computed by authors based on survey data

The reliability of a measurement is checked based on the Cronbach Alpha value and in general the value should be 7 or above. According to table 02, it is apparent that Cronbach Alpha values related to each dimension are higher than 0.7. Therefore, the measurements included in the questionnaire are reliable to conduct the present study.

276 04.2 Descriptive Analysis

277 **Country of Origin of the Tourists and Purpose of Visit**

278 As table 03 indicates, majority of the tourists who visited the key tourism destinations in
279 Down-South area were from Russia (17.8%) followed by Germany (17%) and United
280 Kingdom (13.8%). Apart from that, Australian accounted for 13.8% while 5% equally
281 accounted by the tourists from Netherland and Sweden. These facts reveal that majority of
282 the tourists to Down-South are from developed countries and however wider diversity can be
283 seen in terms of tourist arrivals to Down-South.

284

285 **Table 03: Country of Origin**

286

287 Source: Computed by authors based on field survey

288

289 Figure 01 clearly visualizes that 85% of tourists visited Down-South for recreation and
290 leisure purposes while 2.4%, 1.8% and 1.6% of tourists visited for education, official and
291 business activities. Thus, it is apparent that Down-South is a more famous among tourist as
292 recreation and leisure destination due to its locational attractions which mainly include
293 beautiful beaches.

294

Country	Percentage
Russia	17.8%
Germany	17%
United Kingdom	13.8%
Australia	5.2%
Netherland	5%
Sweden	5%
Ukraine	4.4%
Canada	3.4%
France	3%
Czech Republic	2.6%
Switzerland	2.4%
Other	20.4%
Total	100%

295

296

297

298

299

300

301

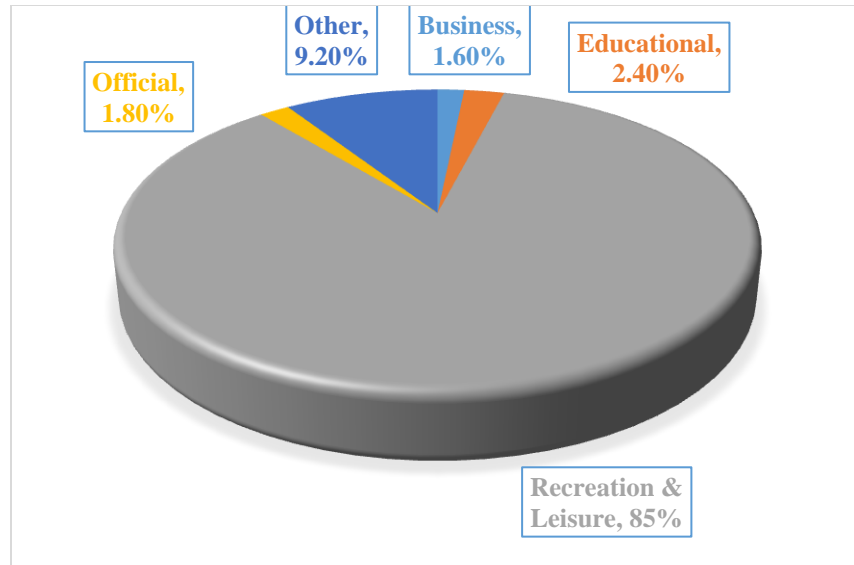
302

303

304

305

Figure 01: Purpose of Visit



Source: Computed by authors based on field survey

306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318

Length of Stay and Average Spending per Day

Both length of stay and average spending per day is crucial in terms of tourist receipts to Sri Lanka. Table 04 indicates the length of stay of the responded tourists. The table clearly highlights that 42.2% of tourists stayed 9-14 days in Down-South while 20.4% tourists stayed at 20-50 days. However, calculation confirms that the average length of stay of the respondents is 20 day.

Table 04: Length of Stay

No. of Days	Percentage
Less than 5	1.4%
05-09	11.4%
09-14	42.2%
15-19	19.6%
20-50	20.4%
More than 50	5%

319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332

Source: Computed by authors based on field survey

Furthermore, it is indicated that tourists who stayed less than 5 days and more than 50 days are significantly low (6.4% in total).

Table 05: Average spending per day

Expenditure US \$	Percentage
Below 50\$	38.9%
50\$ - 99\$	30.3%
100\$ - 149\$	17.1%
150\$ - 200\$	9.7%
More than 200\$	3.9%

333 Source: Computed by authors based on field survey
 334 According to table 05, the majority of the tourists (38.9%) spent below 50\$ per day in Sri
 335 Lanka. Moreover, 69.2% of the tourists spent less than 100\$ per day in and therefore more
 336 than half of the tourists who visit Down-South spend less than 100\$ per day. Moreover, there
 337 were only 3.9 % of the tourists who spent more than 200\$ per day.

338

339 **Impact of Marketing Mix Factors on Tourists' Buying Behavior**

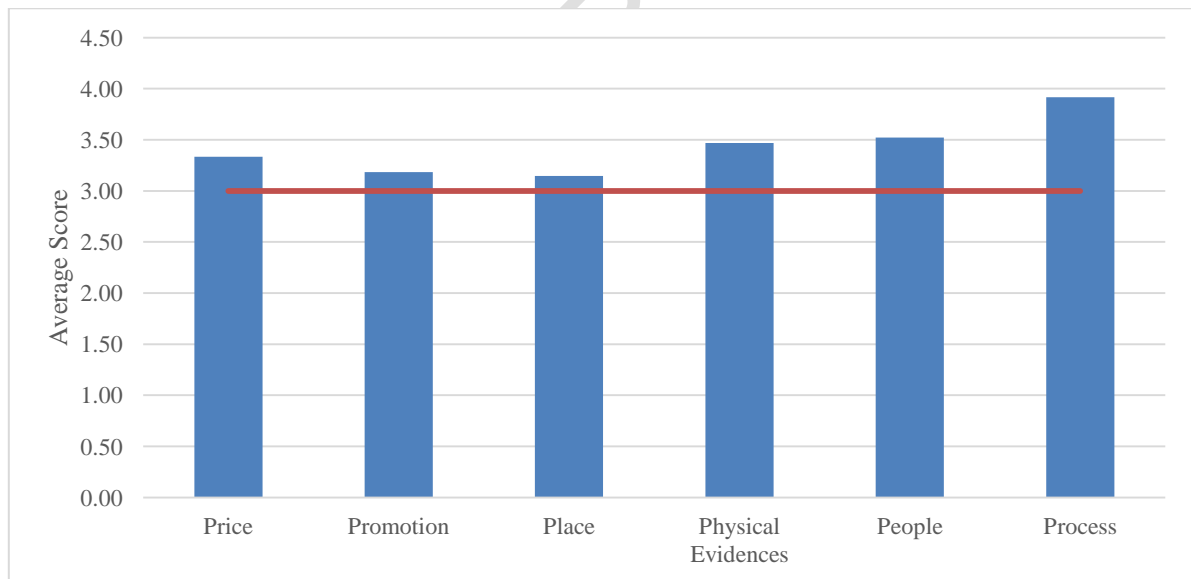
340

341 There are six indicators such as price, promotion, place, physical evidences, people and
 342 process were used to measure the marketing mix factors. The respondents were asked
 343 whether these indicators affect their buying Behaviour and asked them to rank their response
 344 using five point Likert Scale. Indices were created for all six indicators getting the average
 345 values of Likert Scale provided by individual tourists. Figure 02 depicts the index values
 346 related to each indicator of marketing mix factors.

347

348 **Figure 02: Impact of Marketing Mix Factors on Tourists' Buying Behavior**

349



350

351 Source: Computed by authors based on field survey

352

353 Since, the value "3" in the Likert Scale is considered as the neutral value, the value "3" is
 354 considered as the reference line. If the index value related to any indicator is greater than
 355 "3", it implies that the relevant indicator affects tourists' buying Behavior. As figure 02
 356 illustrates, index values related to all indicators are higher than the reference value of 3 and
 357 therefore, it can be concluded all indicators of marketing mix factors affect tourists' buying
 358 Behavior. In fact, Taleghani & Azizi (2013) highlighted that impact of quality of the people
 359 and also hospitality of personnel in the industry, while Goi (2009) confirmed the quality of
 360 products affect consumer buying Behavior. Apart from that, scholars such as Li et al. (2013),

361 Rodriguez et al. (2013) also elaborated that both price and place respectively influence
362 consumers' buying Behavior.

363

364 ***Impact of Situational Factors on Tourists' Buying Behavior***

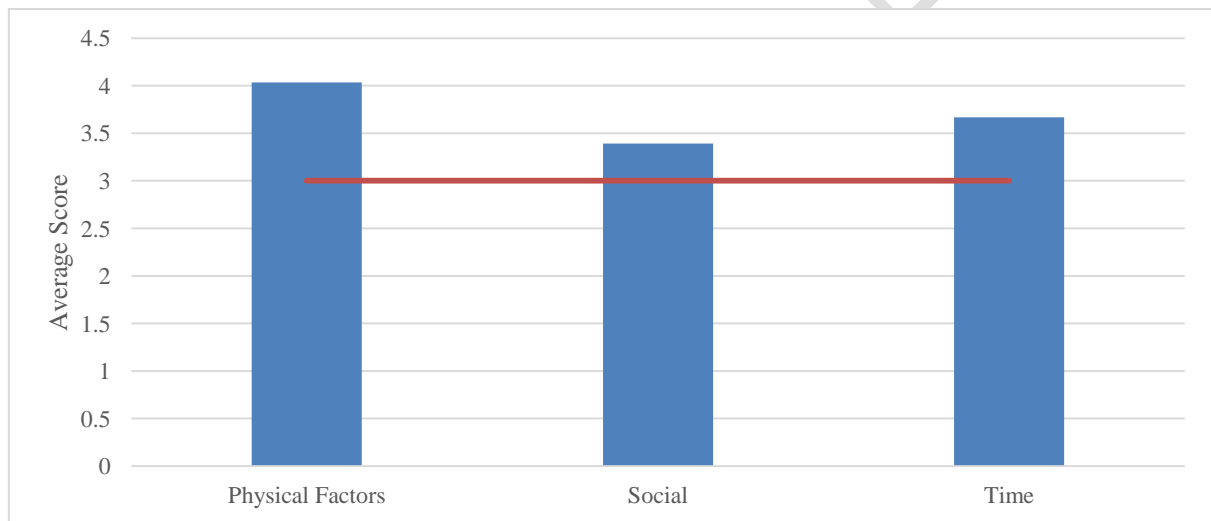
365

366 The situational factors are measured using three indicators such as physical factors, social
367 factors and time factors. As figure 03 indicates, index values related to all three indicators
368 are higher than reference value of 3. It implies that situational factors such as physical,
369 social and time factors influence tourists' buying behaviour in the context of Sri Lanka.
370 Moreover, physical factors which include eco-friendly tourism practices, natural beauty and
371 natural disasters have higher influence on tourists' buying behaviour compared to social and
372 time factors.

373

374 **Figure 03: Impact of Situational Factors on Tourists' Buying Behavior**

375



376

377 Source: Computed by authors based on field survey

378

379 Furthermore, the present findings are also in line with the findings of the empirical works
380 such as Mondal (2015) and Schmoll (1977).

381

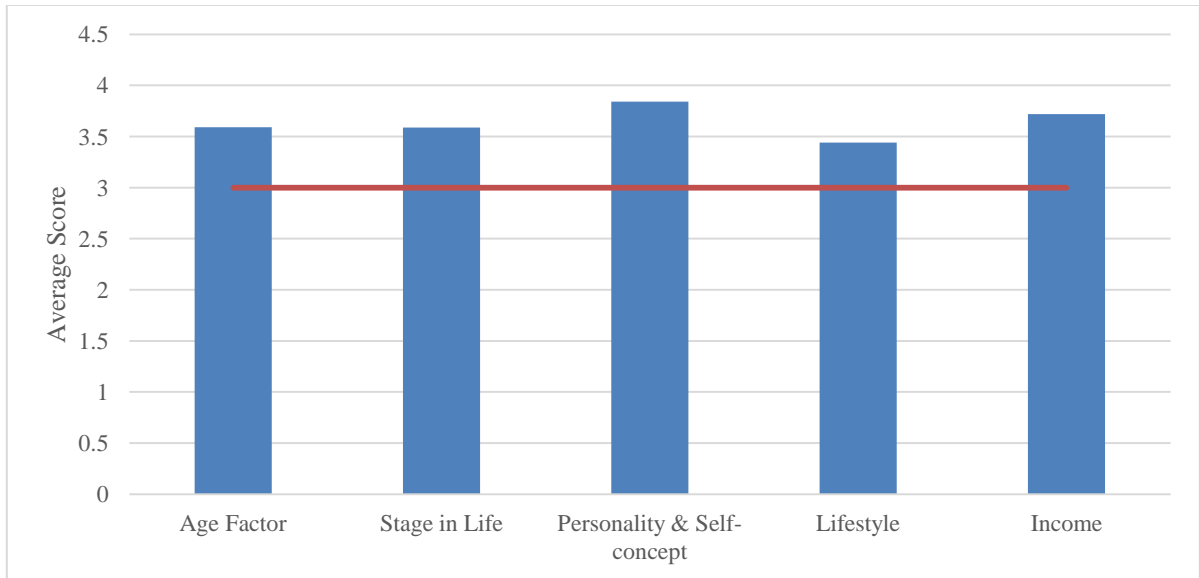
382 ***Impact of Personal Factors on Tourists' Buying Behavior***

383 Personal factors which represented by the indicators such as age, stage in life, personality &
384 self-concept, lifestyle and income are also important to recognize the patter of tourists'
385 buying Behavior. Figure 04 illustrates the index values related to each indicator in
386 comparison with the reference value of 3. According to figure 04, it is apparent that index
387 value related to all indicators are higher than that of the reference level. Hence, indicators
388 such as age, stage in life, personality & self-concept, lifestyle and income affect tourists'
389 buying Behavior.

390

391

392 **Figure 04: Impact of Personal Factors on Tourists' Buying Behavior**



393
394
395

Source: Computed by authors based on field survey

396 In addition to the present findings, Kotler & Armstrong (2010) emphasized that age structure,
397 family life stage and personal preferences highly affect tourists' purchasing behaviour on
398 tangible and non-tangible goods and services. Similarly, scholars such as Scott & Mowen
399 (2007) and Alvarez & Asugman (2006) also discussed about how self-concept and
400 personality affect consumers' buying Behavior. Particularly, Alvarez & Asugman (2006)
401 stressed that both self-concept and personality change over time and hence impact of self-
402 concept and personality on consumers' buying behaviour is dynamic.

403 **04.3. Econometric Analysis**

404 The descriptive analysis above clearly indicated how the marketing mix factors, situational
405 factors and personal factors individually influence tourists' buying Behavior. However, a solid
406 statistical approach is required to assess the impact of each factor on tourists' buying
407 behaviour quantitatively. Thus, regression analysis which is indicated in equation (1) in the
408 methodology sections was estimated under OLS method. Table 06 summarises the
409 estimated results of the regression analysis. Log of buying behaviour is assigned as the
410 dependent variable of the model along with number of independent variables.

411

412

413

414

415

416

417 **Table 06: Estimated Results of the Regression Model**

Variables	Coefficients	Standard Errors	t-Ration	P-Value
LnMMF	0.3943*	0.2322	1.70	0.090
LnSF	0.3554*	0.1846	1.93	0.055
LnPF	0.5970***	0.1978	-3.02	0.003
LnAGE	0.9302***	0.0324	28.63	0.000
Gender(Female)				
Male	-0.0932*	0.0536	-1.74	0.083
Marital Status (Unmarried)				
Married	-0.0974*	0.0526	-1.85	0.065
Education (School)				
University	-0.2094***	0.0755	-2.77	0.006
Above University	-0.1534*	0.0840	-1.83	0.068
Employment Status (Unemployed)				
Government	-0.0653	0.1038	-0.63	0.530
Semi Government	-0.0290	0.1274	-0.23	0.820
Private	0.0343	0.0858	0.40	0.689
Self Employed	0.0135	0.0999	0.14	0.892
Employer	-0.0509	0.1023	-0.50	0.619
Retired	0.2388*	0.1409	1.69	0.091
Constant	4.0562***	0.2928	13.85	0.000
R2				
	0.6549			
F(14,475)				
	64.39			
Prob > F				
	0.0000			
Observations				
	490			

419 Source: Calculated by authors based on survey data

420 Note: *- Significant at 10%, ** - Significant at 5%, ***-Significant at 1%

421

422 As table 06 indicated all three key factors of tourist buying behaviour positively and
423 significantly affect tourists buying behaviour decision in the context of Sri Lanka. Particularly,
424 one percent increase in MMF index leads to increase consumer buying behaviour index by
425 0.39 percent and the estimated coefficient is statistically significant at 10% level. In fact, this
426 finding is in line with Perreault et al. (2013) who confirmed all dimensions of marketing mix
427 factor are highly associated with tourists' buying Behavior. Similarly, Perreault et al. (2013)
428 mentioned that combined effect of market mix factors is higher than that of individual
429 component of market mix factors. Moreover, Taleghani & Azizi (2013) also found the same
430 relationship between tourists buying behaviour and market mix factors. Apart from that,
431 situational factors also significantly affect tourist buying behaviour and one percent increase
432 in the index of situational factors results to increase buying behaviour by 0.35 percent. In
433 fact, major points considered under situational factors such as physical factors, social factors
434 and time factors are crucial for tourist not only to select destinations but also to decide their
435 consumption pattern and length of stay. The present finding related to situational factors also
436 confirmed by Omondi (2017), Kotler (2000) and Belk (1975) and they highlighted that sub-
437 components of situational factors affect tourist buying behaviour over different tourism
438 products and holiday packages. Unlike marketing mix and situational factors, personal factors
439 have become to most influential factor determinant of tourist buying Behavior. More
440 specifically, one percent change in the index of personal factors causes to change buying
441 behaviour index by 0.59% and the estimated coefficient is significant at 1% level.
442 Consequently, it is confirmed that impacts of personal factors on tourist buying behaviour are

443 significantly higher than both marketing mix factors and situational factors in the context of
444 Sri Lanka. In fact, personal factors such as age structure, stage in life, personality, income
445 and lifestyle play a vital role when people make decisions. Similar findings related to
446 personal factors have also been observed by Moschis (1994), Kotler and Armstrong (2010)
447 and Omondi (2017). Further, Moschis (1994), indicated that pattern of consumer buying
448 behaviour varies during the lifetime of the consumer Omondi (2017).

449 In addition to above discussed key determinants, demographic factors such as age, gender,
450 marital status and educational level also affect tourist buying behaviour in Sri Lanka.
451 According the table 06, it is apparent that tourist buying behaviour index increases with the
452 age of tourists and also the relationship is statistically significant at 1% level. Scholars such
453 as Fratu (2011), Omondi (2017) and Kotler & Armstrong (2010) also recognized age as an
454 important determinant of consumer buying Behavior. Apart from age, gender variation in
455 tourist buying behaviour is captured by introducing a dummy variable in which female is
456 assigned as the reference group. According to the estimated coefficient, male tourists'
457 buying behaviour is lower than that of female tourists'. Similarly, unmarried tourists have
458 higher buying behaviour nature than their married counterparts. In fact, it is generally
459 accepted fact that unmarried have lack of responsibilities and hence they tend to spend
460 more on leisure activities and other tourism products. Estimated coefficients for both gender
461 and marital status are significant at 10% level.

462 The current study also observed a statistically significant relationship between educational
463 level and tourists' buying Behavior. Interestingly, it is examined that tourists who have only
464 'school' level education have higher consumer buying behaviour compared to the tourists
465 who have 'university' or 'above university' educational qualifications. Better education is
466 essential to make rational decisions and thus more educated tourists might spend carefully
467 and also might postpone their buying decisions due to various reasons whereas tourists with
468 comparatively low educational qualifications spend more on tourism products as their
469 Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC) is considerably higher than that of more educated
470 counterparts. Apart from that, employment statuses do not significantly affect tourist buying
471 behaviour decisions. It implies that, tourists' buying behaviour decisions do not vary across
472 various employment statuses. However, tourists who are retired from their employment
473 account for significantly higher buying behaviour pattern compared to all unemployed and
474 employed counterparts and the estimated coefficient is statistically significant at 10% level.

475 The estimated model is statistically significant at 1% level ($\text{Prob} > F = 0.0000$) and therefore
476 the model accurately estimates how the tourists buying behaviour correlates with its
477 determinants. Moreover, coefficient of determination (R^2) also confirms the same fact as all
478 the independent variables jointly explain 65% of total variation of the dependent variable –
479 tourist buying Behavior.

480 **05. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

481 The main objective of this study is to examine the determinants of tourist buying behaviour
482 considering the tourists who visit tourism destinations in Down-South in Sri Lanka. Data
483 were collected from 500 tourists from three main tourism destination namely Hikkaduwa,
484 Unawatuna and Mirissa. The descriptive analysis suggests that most of the tourists were
485 from countries such as Russia, Germany and United Kingdom. Moreover, majority of the
486 tourists visited Down-South for recreation and leisure purposes while only a negligible
487 amount of tourists visited for business, education and official purposes. Considering the
488 length of stay, the respondents stayed 20 days on average in Down-South and however,
489 69.2% of the tourists spent less than 100\$ per day and therefore more than half of the
490 tourists who visit Down-South spend less than 100\$ per day. The econometric analysis

491 highlights that all three key determinants of consumer buying behaviour– marketing mix
492 factors, situational factors and personal factors positively affect the tourists' buying
493 behaviour while personal factors have been recognized as the most influential factor of
494 tourist buying behaviour in the context of Sri Lanka. Apart from that, demographic factors
495 such as gender, marital status, education level and employment status also significantly
496 affect tourist buying Behavior. Thus, the current study proposes to adopt necessary policies
497 to enhance the quality of the all the marketing mix factors in order to increase tourists'
498 buying Behavior. More specifically, policies related to transparent and stable price policies,
499 better promotional campaigns, efficient business process are strongly recommended. Apart
500 from that, appropriate policies to ensure security, cultural harmony and political stability are
501 also crucial. Moreover, it is essential to consider the demographical factors of tourists when
502 implementing such policies.

503

504 REFERENCES

505

506 Alvarez M, Asugman G. Explorers versus planners: A study of Turkish tourists. *Annals of*
507 *tourism research*. 2006: 33(2), 319-338.

508 Belk RW. Situational variables and consumer Behavior. *Journal of Consumer research*.
509 1975: 2(3), 157-164.

510 Bitner MJ. Evaluating service encounters: the effects of physical surroundings and employee
511 responses. *Journal of marketing*. 1990: 54(2), 69-82.

512 Copley P. *Marketing communications management: concepts and theories, cases and*
513 *practices*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. 2004

514 Dimanche F, Havitz ME. Consumer behaviour and tourism: Review and extension of four
515 study areas. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*. 1995: 3(3), 37-57.

516 Englis BG, Solomon MR. Special Session Summary I am not Therefore, I am: The role of
517 avoidance products in shaping consumer behavior. *NA-Advances in Consumer Research*
518 *Volume*. 2006: 24

519 Fratu D. Factors of influence and changes in the tourism consumer Behavior. *Bulletin of the*
520 *Transilvania University of Brasov. Economic Sciences*. 2011: 4(1), 119.

521 Goi CL. A review of marketing mix: 4Ps or More?. *International journal of marketing studies*.
522 2009: 1(1), 2.

523 Hirankitti P, Mechinda P Manjing S. *Marketing strategies of thai spa operators in bangkok*
524 *metropolitan*. 2009.

525 Kimes SE, Chase RB. The strategic levers of yield management. *Journal of service*
526 *research*. 1998: 1(2), 156-166.

527 Kotler P. *Marketing management (10th ed.)*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. 2000.

528 Kotler P, Armstrong G. *Principles of marketing*. Pearson education. 2010.

529 Leiper N. Tourist attraction systems. *Annals of tourism research*. 1990:17(3), 367-384

- 530 Lew AA. A framework of tourist attraction research. *Annals of tourism research*. 1987 14(4),
531 553-575.
- 532 Li S, Blake A, Thomas R. Modelling the economic impact of sports events: The case of the
533 Beijing Olympics. *Economic Modelling*. 2013: 30, 235-244.
- 534 Magrath AJ. When marketing services, 4 Ps are not enough. *Business Horizons*. 1986:
535 29(3), 44-50.
- 536 Middleton VT, Clark J. *Marketing in travel and tourism*. 2001.
- 537 Mondal S. Tourists SPOT Buying Behavior: An Analytical Study. *Journal of Tourism &
538 Hospitality*. 2015: 4(1).
- 539 Moschis GP. Consumer behaviour in later life: multidisciplinary contributions and implications
540 for research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. 1994: 22(3), 195-204.
- 541 Moutinho L. The use of the analytic hierarchy process (AHP) in goal setting and goal
542 assessment: The case of professional services companies. *Journal of Professional Services
543 Marketing*. 1993: 8(2), 97-114.
- 544 Myers J, Sar S. The influence of consumer mood state as a contextual factor on imagery-
545 inducing advertisements and brand attitude. *Journal of Marketing Communications*. 2015:
546 21(4), 284-299.
- 547 Omondi S. Determinants of Consumer Buying Behaviour for the Domestic Tourists in Kenya.
548 2017.
- 549 Özdemir G, Sarı FÖ. Turist destinasyonlarına dönük sosyal medya söylentileri üzerine bir
550 durum çalışması. 2014.
- 551 Palani S, Sohrabi S. Consumer attitudes and behaviour when selecting a holiday destination:
552 introducing Kurdistan to the Finnish traveler. 2013.
- 553 Perreault JRW, Cannon J, McCarthy EJ. *Basic marketing*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
554 2013.
- 555 Rafiq M, Ahmed PK. Using the 7Ps as a generic marketing mix: an exploratory survey of UK
556 and European marketing academics. *Marketing intelligence & planning*. 1995: 13(9), 4-15.
- 557 Rathmell JM. *Marketing in the service sector*. Winthrop. 1974.
- 558 Rodríguez XA, Martínez-Roget F, Pawlowska E. Academic tourism: a more sustainable
559 tourism. *Regional and Sectoral Economic Studies*. 2013: 13(2), 89-98.
- 560 Rust RT, Zahorik AJ, Keiningham TL. *Service marketing*. HarperCollins. 1996.
- 561 Schmoll GA. *Tourism promotion: Marketing background, promotion techniques and
562 promotion planning methods*. Tourism International Press. 1977.
- 563 Scott K, Mowen JC. Travelers and their traits: A hierarchical model approach. *Journal of
564 Consumer Behavior: An International Research Review*. 2007: 6(2-3), 146-157.

- 565 Shostack GL. Breaking free from product marketing. *Journal of marketing*. 1977: 41(2), 73-
566 80.
- 567 Taleghani TGM, Azizi N. Marketing mix and consumer behavior. *Kuwait Chapter of Arabian*
568 *Journal of Business and Management Review*. 2013: 33(861), 1-6.
- 569 Williams AM, Hall CM. Tourism and migration: new relationships between production and
570 consumption. *Tourism Geographies*. 2000: 2(1), 5-27.
571

UNDER PEER REVIEW