

INVESTIGATING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY TOURISTS IN KALPITIYA, SRI LANKA

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Kalpitiya, located on the northwest coast of Sri Lanka, is recognized as one of the island's popular tourist destinations. Its unique appeal attracts both domestic and international tourists, making it a standout location for those seeking relaxation and excitement amidst Sri Lanka's coastal landscapes. However, there are several challenges in Kalpitiya that impact the overall tourist satisfaction and the sustainability of the region's tourism development. The objectives of this study are to identify the key challenges faced by tourists in Kalpitiya and to suggest strategies for the identified issues. The study adopts the qualitative approach, utilizing both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was collected through site observation and semi-structured interviews with 30 respondents, including tourists, tour operators, hotel operators, and local residents. Secondary data was gathered from previous publications, journal articles, reports, and websites. The collected data was analysed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study revealed that tourists face significant challenges, including mosquito infestations, stray cattle, inadequate sanitation facilities, incomplete highway development, insufficient street lighting, poor maintenance of the beach park area, a lack of a long-term water supply scheme, and the provision of temporary liquor licenses to tourist hotels. These issues cause considerable inconvenience to tourists. To prevent these challenges, the study suggests recommendations such as enhancing sanitation facilities, completing infrastructure projects, better waste management, implementing robust safety measures, and ensuring environmental preservation. They help to ensure a balance between providing a positive visitor experience and preserving local environments and resources for long-term sustainability.

Keywords: Kalpitiya, Challenges, Sustainable Tourism, Tourist Satisfaction, Long-Term Sustainability

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