

**EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF GOOGLE MAPS
REVIEWS ON SELECTING TOURIST DESTINATIONS
IN SRI LANKA**

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Degree of Master of Business Administration in Information Technology

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DECLARATION

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The above candidate has carried out research for the Masters thesis under my supervision.

.....

(Dr. Buddhika Karunaratne)

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ABSTRACT

Online reviews have a significant impact on the travelers' decision on selecting a tourist attraction. There are many sources of online reviews to refer to when planning a journey. The reviews published in the Google Maps play an important role in this regard in the Sri Lankan context. The review rating given for the same tourist attraction can be contradictory in two different review platforms. Therefore, the question of whether travelers believe in the reliability of online reviews needs to be researched. Also, the performance of different types of tourist attractions can be identified by analyzing the review data in Google Maps. There has been only a few research done in Sri Lanka with Google Maps data. We address these issues through a quantitative analysis of data gathered through questionnaire responses. We analyzed and found seven factors that relate with the intention to select a tourist attraction. They are Access Frequency, Willingness to recommend, Attitude towards visiting, Perceived Reliability, Trust on Map Information, Destination perception and Desire to visit. Further we analyzed the data related to tourist attractions scraped out from Google Maps to find out the best performing tourist attraction categories in the Sri Lankan tourism industry.

Keywords: Tourist Attractions, Online Reviews, Google Maps

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBSL	Central Bank of Sri Lanka
CSV	Comma Separated Values
SLTDA	Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization