

# **Social Impact of tourism: A Case study of Hikkaduwa Divisional Secretariat Division**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Tourism is one of the major foreign income sources in Sri Lanka. The social impact of tourism varies. Whatever the shortcoming of it, the development of tourism has been regarded as a panacea for the economic malaise of Sri Lanka. Using robust data the study explore the changes influenced by development of tourism in terms of sociocultural life in Hikkaduwa resort. The qualitative method meant to analyze and interpret data is given priority in the study. It has found that, tourism brings some positive as well as negative benefits to the island. The environment degradation, archaeological ruins, illegal businesses, black money frauds thefts drugs trafficking, prostitution, HIV threat, gambling, and rising crime rate are identified social cost of international tourism. The 'child sex' is one of the major issues raised by tourism in Sri Lanka. The younger generation believes that they can have valuable things or secure a chance to go abroad etc. After the boom the beach fronts were being rapidly bought up for tourist establishments, after which they were surrounded by walls to block the locals' access to these areas, which had since become private property. Tourism has direct impact on the price level and the consumption behavior of the host population. Tourism has provided a variety of employment in different capacities in restaurants, guest houses, shops and the transport sectors; some are involved in their own mini businesses, related to tourism. The international tourism has a significant impact on the socio-cultural structure of the host country. Some educated middle class personnel, who are involved in the tourism industry in various capacities such as managers and others, view that even though they are not happy with the worst aspect of European culture, they accept tourism as by and large what the country needs to earn foreign exchange.

**Key words:** Tourism, Culture, Social impact, Tourist Resorts. Island