

# The role of park attributes in visitor satisfaction: evidence from Minneriya National Park in Sri Lanka

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** This study was to explore and recognize visitor satisfaction on Minneriya national park, and this evaluation was to define the gaps for future national park studies in Sri Lanka.

**Research Methodology:** Quantitative research design was used for the study. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 180 foreign visitors and 180 local visitors. Purposive sampling tool was used in the study. SmartPLS was used as a tool to run the proposed theoretical model.

**Results:** Destination image impacts of tourist satisfaction show that someone visiting a destination is strongly linked to the image of the tourist destination visited, particularly for those who have visited several times. Overall findings highlighted that all the hypotheses were accepted

**Limitations:** Tourists' satisfaction on park attributes is not to be the only factor effects on visitor satisfaction.

**Contribution:** The study findings also provide guidelines for practitioners within the service sector to undertake the result and to adapt it to assessing and enhancing performance in national parks in Sri Lanka

**Keywords:** Park attributes, Visitor satisfaction, Travel motivation, Destination image

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## 1. Introduction

Tourism is considered one of the fastest-growing industries in the world. It caters to millions of international and domestic tourists worldwide. For the past few years, international tourism has boosted in the world & international tourist arrivals worldwide will increase by 3.3% a year from 2010 to 2030 to reach 1.8 billion by 2030 long term forecast tourism towards 2030. Asian countries consist of natural attractions, their way of hospitality, and also they consist of high biological hotspots. Therefore Asian regions gain the opportunity to cater to tourism naturally. ([United Nations World Tourism Organization UNWTO, 2013](#)). The Main purposes of tourism are recreation, leisure, and also a business. It is highlighted by the World Tourism Organization. Tourists can be defined as the people traveling and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes (WTO). International tourists increased to 7 % in 2017 and it was increased as a total of 1323 million. The growth in the tourism sector the global level measured by international arrivals are projected to continue in 2018 at a rate of 4 to 5%.

Sri Lanka is also becoming a world-famous tourist destination since the past decades. According to the annual statistical report 2017, tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka during the year 2017 aggregated to 2,116,407 registering 3.2%. Recently it is a huge demand for nature-based tourism and wildlife tourism attending on natural protected areas. Therefore the visitor participation in the national parks increased with the time nationally and also internationally. National parks provide nature experience and visitors more preferred to travel to those parks ([Shafer and Inglis, 2000](#); [Deng et al., 2002](#)). With the period nature-based tourism magnificently growing area in the global arena. This is the main purpose of wildlife watching in the protected areas ([Buckley 2000](#)).

Wildlife is a valuable tool for bringing more visitors to a given destination since some visitors primarily want to see indigenous species or endangered species. The impassioned bond that a person offers with environments such as national parks is commonly referred to within the tourism, relaxation, and environmental brain research writing as a put connection. Most of the country's tourism is based on a wildlife safari. Local authorities mainly consider on the refurbishments and redevelopment of the parks. The optimal number of visitors in the park, the attributes, and features can be identified through this. Research conducted as a natural experiment mainly highlighted that the changes in park attribute on park visitation ([Veitch, Ball, Crawford, Abbott, & Salmon, 2012](#)); Economic development and environment protection of the national parks in the protected area need to be considered. Previous researchers highlighted that nature-based tourism engages with the different factors including expected time, the experience of the tour, involvement in the site, revisitation, and regathered phases. ([Borrie & Roggenbuck, 2001](#)).

Minneriya national park was selected among the other national parks because Minneriya national park is one of the prominent national park situated in the center of the cultural triangle. On the other hand, this is the largest elephant gathering national park when considering the other national parks. This research was attempting to identify visitor satisfaction of Minneriya national park. Further, it uncovers the role of park attributes in shaping visitors' satisfaction who visit Minneriya national park, and the researcher considers park attributes, travels motivation, destination image how to assisting for visitor satisfaction, and the interconnected between each of the above. When considering the tourist's satisfaction, mainly connected with motivation. It is highlighted in the previous literature. Sightseeing, climbing rocks, visitation into the cultural areas, and festivals revealed in various empirical studies. ([Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991](#)), ([Fielding, Pearce, & Hughes, 1992](#)), ([Lee, Lee, & Wicks, 2004](#)). Therefore visitor satisfaction is not a simple thing. It is complex and also consists of multi-dimensions. It affects with different variables such as level of development, levels, absence of litter, the amount that value of the visitor in the site, perceived crowding, weather, the behavior of others interactions with family and friends and condition of trails ([Howat & Crilley, 2007](#); [Oliver, 1997](#)).

#### *Problem statement*

Tourism in protected areas in Sri Lanka has the potential to provide economic development & also has to maintain the environmental values of national parks. Most tourists want to get a higher experience of wildlife & nature in national parks. Anticipation time, travel experience, on-site participation, return travel, and recollection phase can be considered as factors that consist of nature-based tourism ([Borrie & Roggenbuck, 2001](#)). There were some researches related to national parks., namely, wildlife tourism, wildlife conservation, national parks management, and sustainable tourism planning, and others, but researches have been done related to the national parks covered with visitor satisfaction at the role of park attributes in the Sri Lankan context are still limited. Therefore, there is an empirical gap.

#### *Research Objectives*

1. To identify the park attributes influence on visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park.
2. To identify the intermediating role of travel motivation in shaping visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park.

3. To identify the intermediating role of destination image in shaping visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park.
4. To identify the most significant attributes affecting visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park.

## 2. Literature review and hypotheses development

### 2.1. Wildlife tourism

The demand for wildlife tourism and also activities related to national parks are more trending and people more concerned about this. (Duffus and Dearden 1990; Reynolds and Braithwaite 2001). Here need to reduce the risk of the areas due to human involvement since those areas are protected areas. (Mason, 2005). But with the tourist arrival, national parks can be degraded and it can't avoid easily. (Tubb, 2003). Proper visitor management and better involvement of the management increase the demand. (Eagles and McCool, 2002; Sowman and Pearce, 2000; Tubb, 2003). The wildlife conservation department is the regulated body of the national park in Sri Lanka. Those areas are separate from the protected areas. There are nearly 22 national parks covered in Sri Lanka. When considering the demand several tourists visited the area. The number of tourist arrivals of the national park can be considered as the Index of relating to these protected areas. Discovering and evaluating drivers who assess the number of visitors to national parks is necessary. With the busy schedule people more concerned about national park visitation to get a positive feeling and also perception. (Han and Patterson, 2007). Nature-based tourism is one of the more trending areas and the number of tourists visitation and attributes of the national park mainly affects visitor satisfaction. National park attributes magnificently effect when promoting wildlife tourism in Sri Lanka.

### 2.2. Park attributes

Many studies have identified various park characteristics, which are associated with indoor recreation and visitor satisfaction. They analyzed the number of visitors concerning the internal and external attributes of the parks and identified opportunities and increased number of visits from around the country. In the case of Guimaraes, tourists' level of satisfaction comes from their visit and the attributes of their destination. (Kozak, M. and Rimmington, 2000), In their research on tourist satisfaction with Mallorca, Spain, the attractiveness of destinations, tourist attractions, and amenities, as well as facilities and services at the airport location, were described as important variables influencing satisfaction levels.

The destination features perceived as high in satisfaction were factors such as transportation, shopping centers, and cultural activities. Safety and security, cost-effectiveness, cleanliness, signage, and family-oriented attractions and people's hospitality were seen as low in contentment. All of these studies examined tourists' cognitive assessment of various qualities of tourist destinations and their effect on overall satisfaction with tourist destinations. However, considering the wide variety of contexts in which tourist satisfaction was addressed, a limited study has been conducted to examine visitor satisfaction in nature-based environments. (Naidoo, Ramseook-Munhurrun & Seegoolam, 2011). The quality of natural attraction and the facilities offered were also characteristics measured by (Akama & Kieti, 2003), to assess the satisfaction of tourists with two East African domestic parks. Based on the above literature, it is clear that the overall satisfaction of tourists or visitors with their encounters has usually been measured in terms of their satisfaction with different elements directly related to the destination or site visited. Thus, in this study, it is proposed that the overall satisfaction of visitors with their experiences in a natural environment is positively related to their satisfaction with site-specific attributes. (Figure 1).



Figure 1: The positive effect of satisfaction with park attributes on visitors' overall satisfaction.

This study helps to fill in the locational attributes, facility attributes, natural scenery and activities, destination environment. When travelers choose a place with scenic beauty, such beauty will amaze them. Almost every seasoned beauty traveler brings more tales to share. Naturally gifted places to visit and fly will work like magic. Watching them with a smile in whatever situation makes it special to their own lives.

### 2.3. Visitor Satisfaction

Most of the researches were obtained by measuring visitor satisfaction with the facilities at the national park. Others have used the importance-performance analysis to determine visitor satisfaction ([Crisley, Weber & Taplin, 2012](#); [Tonge et al., 2011](#)), etc. Visitor satisfaction with an interpretation of the environment in national parks has been studied slightly. Satisfaction is an important aspect of the travel and tourism sector. Because it increases visitor awareness and it help to survive with the tourist destinations. ([Gursoy et al, 2014](#); [Neal & Gursoy, 2008](#)), visitor satisfaction also involves important roles such as recommend others regarding the place and also revisitation. ([Kozak and Rimmington, 2000](#)).

Visitor satisfaction is another important factor. Quantity and quality also another important factor that affects park experience. Many park visitors who are unaware of the park 's qualities and require patronage in obtaining information on the contrasts between one geographical or historical area and another, the duration of the paths, the type of facilities, etc. Some park visitors consider by the number of paths, things that can be seen, and experience that available in the national park. The visitors always consider what are the things that can be done with the facilities. They seeking n the park activities that they can be done. Therefore tourist satisfaction can be considered as a long term success factor. Since revisitation can happen. ([Alegre & Garau 2010](#); [Neal & Gursoy,2008](#)). [Eagles \(2002\)](#) revealed two components of satisfaction in nature-based tourism. Those are levels of environmental quality. A suitable level of the service of the employees. The required level of visitor satisfaction creates revisitation and positive word of mouth.

Therefore some researches highlights revisitation, political and social encourage, the loyalty of the visitor, and word of mouth marketing can be effective marketing tools that can be used to promote the visitation of the tourist effectively. ([Baker & Crompton, 2000](#), [tongue et al., 2011](#)), ([Chen & Tsai, 2007](#)), ([Okello & Yerian, 2009](#)), ([Dharmaratne, Yee Sang, & Walling, 2000](#); [Sivalioğlu & Berköz, 2012](#)). Visitor satisfaction always places with the activities, amenities, or the environments of the national park. ([Sivalioğlu & Berköz, 2012](#)).

The previous literature assessed that visitor satisfaction. The majority of them have assessed visitor satisfaction considering the services offered in the area. (e.g. [Akama and Kieti, 2003](#); [Tonge, Moore, and Taplin, 2011, etc.](#)) In the literature highlighted that there are limited researchers done related to visitor satisfaction and environment interpretation in the national parks. ([Crisley, Weber, and Taplin, 2012](#); [Tonge et al., 2011, etc.](#)).

### 2.4. Destination image

Differentiated from the secondary image was created before the visit to the destination to the secondary or primary image come with soon after the visit to the particular attractive area. The destination image connects with the tourist image and is categorized as a subcategory. ([Lopes, 2011](#)). The destination image consists of the different considerations and factors of activity or attraction in the destination. It creates a good image in the destination and it shapes the image. ([Stylidis, Shani, & Belhassen, 2017](#)). Once a visitor visits a particular area and gets the experience with happiness and then visitors revisit to the area in the future. This depends on the experience of the particular area and connection of each service and each facility of the area. The methods used to determine destination image four measures are the availability of appropriate parking spaces, protected environment, a wide range of wildlife viewing, and the national park's frame or reputation. Cognitive appurtenant is composed of the number of devotions, experiences, points of view, and observations that people's understanding deals with how a person feels about the objects. Considering the weaknesses and also

strengths, Supporting visitor prognostication on behavioral intentions, and developing the tourist destination with proper management, managers can be identified as the destination image. ([Bigne, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2001](#); [Fakeye & Crompton, 1991](#)). Others used a single-item approach for enjoying the destination overall. ([Lee, 2009](#); [Bigne et al., 2001](#)). According to past researches, destination image can be considered an important factor. ([Beerli & Martin, 2004](#); [Bigne et al., 2001](#); [Lee, 2009](#); [Chen & Tsai, 2007](#); [Gallarza et al., 2002](#)). Positive feelings of the destination create a good image and they prefer to stay in those places. ([Lee, 2009](#))

### 2.5. Travel motivation

Previous researches highlighted that the different market segments differently consider the travel motivations and the travel behaviour ([Vigolo, 2017](#)). The relationship between the pull and push were discovered ([Prayag & Ryan, 2012](#)). There are few types of research have been done with the relationship of travel motivation and also the satisfaction with the destination.

Previous literature revealed that motivation as the most important factor which can affect travel decision making. ([Do Valle et al., 2006](#)). According to [Swanson and Horridge \(2006\)](#), motivation is can be considered as the tourist activity that visitors can be. Travel motivation also a multidimensional factor. [Van der Merwe et al. \(2011\)](#). The researchers representing the numerous travel destinations have different reasons for traveling before a person chooses a destination. Travel motivation helps to select the destination with various factors. ([Kozak 2003](#)) Analyzed visitors' travel motives visiting two distinct geographic locations from the same country, and tourists visiting the same destination from two different nations. Analyzed travel motives of visitors visiting two separate geographical locations from a certain country, and travelers traveling a certain destination through two different nations. This research created the model for tourism motivation, It revealed the 14 items with four buildings. Those are culture, pleasure-seeking, relation, physical. ([Wang, Qu, and Hsu 2016](#)), Those travel motivations influence travelers' cognitive image. Individual expectations connect with this cognitive image and it connects with the affective image also. This research revealed that men's cognitive was impacted by travel motives and advertising than women. Another study found that an outbound destination's expectation has a direct impact on the desire to visit the destination; motivation has a direct impact on the destination's attitude. The main motivation of the younger generation is sun and beach, social interaction and enjoying with nature experiences and second motivation is health and wellness tourism ([Hsu, Cai, & Li, 2010](#))

According to ([Yoon & Uysal, 2005](#)), tourist travel is connecting with two perceptions of motivation, which are factors of push and pull. The push factor is the psychological strength that affects tourist's choices about excitement or relaxation. The pull factors include the external influences of the characteristics of the destination, for example, the country's destination climate or community. This study shows that factors which push and pull have a direct effect on tourist satisfaction. Moreover, most push factors are intangible or inherent wishes of individual travelers, while pull variables result from the attractiveness of a location including, tangible assets and traveler views and expectations ([Mohammad & Som, 2010](#)). A general conclusion that defines perceptions by pushing motives and pulling motives can be drawn ([Mohammad & Som, 2010](#)). In a dynamic and evolving sense, these motivations intersect, and tourist motivation can be seen as a multidimensional term that can help understand tourist choices ([Iwashita, 2003](#)). Travel motives can be classified further as follows. ([Van der Merwe, Slabbert, & Saayman 2011](#)), into:

- a. Leisure travel motives
- b. Events or festival travel motives
- c. Shopping travel motives;
- d. Relaxation travel motives
- e. Nature or heritage travel motives

### 2.6. The "push" and "pull" motivational factors.

Push factor considered as factors that drive one to a destination within the traveler. Push factors are factors that are Visitors to a particular destination after a travel decision has been taken ([Wangari,](#)

2017; Falcão, A. L., Damásio, A. S., & Melo, 2015). Previous literature suggested that pull motivation factors play an important role in the travel and tourist motivations. It will create the intention of the individuals to experience a particular destination. Different factors can be identified as travel motivators of pull factors. Yuan and McDonald (1990), Another research highlighted that budget, culture, and history, ease of travel wilderness, composition environment, hunting as pull factors. Nevertheless, the authors suggested that tourists with various countries that travel for the same reasons, the reasons for choosing a specific destination and the degree of significance applied to the factors that vary due to the various destinations' changing existence.

There are pull factors that can be identified in the destination. Those pull factors can be categorized into two main segments. Those are service infrastructure including transportation, accommodation and catering services, etc. Natural, cultural, social, and also economic, etc can be considered as another factor in the destination environment. (Wangari, 2017). The destination consists of a bundle combination of tourist products and services. The amount of research was performed to establish the specific variables ultimately derive from the pull and push factors and what their relative value as travel motivators.

Pull factors are linked to visitors, such as motives, social and demographic factors, consumer awareness, according to previous literature. Motivations such as escape, relaxation, self-esteem, reputation, adventure, social contact, personal interests, and expectations of benefits, etc., Socio-economic and demographic factors such as age, gender, income, education, family life cycle and size, jobs, second home ownership, etc., and market awareness. At the other hand, draw destination factors which include destination attributes (such as climate, historical sites, scenic beauty, cultural activities, recreational opportunities, etc.); destination accessibility, maintenance or situational factors (such as destination safety and security); and marketable destination image such as perceived service and quality of facilities. The following section discussed both sides of the incentive for 'push' and 'pull' travel. Push motives can be summarized from the various frameworks outlined above as individual mental and internal elements contributing to a choice of travel (Reihanian, A., Hin, T. W., Kahrom, E., Mahmood, N. B., & Porshokouh, 2015).

### Conceptual Framework

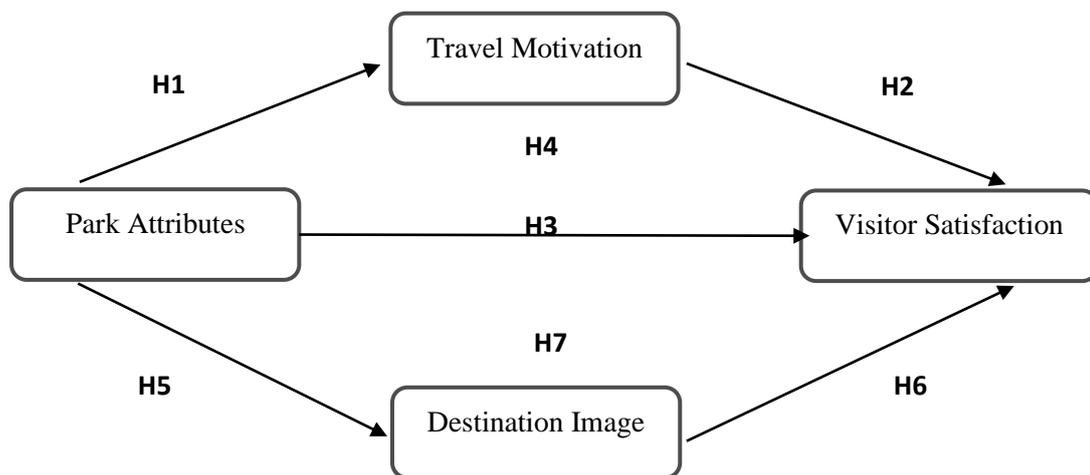


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework  
Source: Developed by the researcher based on the literature

### Hypotheses Development

H1: There is a relationship between park attributes and travel motivation. Any location should consist of a specific service with some facilities, characteristic, important environment. These features would satisfy the recognized visitors as the attribute of destination for

any tourism and recreation operation. [Harris & Leiper \(1995\)](#) describe destination as “locations to which individuals travel and where they choose to remain for a while to experience a perceived appeal of some kind.” Destination attributes play a major role in evaluating the attractiveness of the destination, destination image, and satisfaction of the tourists in the, particularly attracted area.

These attributes of destination have been commonly recognized as extensive travel and play a key role in destination choice ([Wangari, 2017](#)). ([Crompton, 1979](#)), Previous literature highlighted that escape, self-exploration and assessment, relaxation, prestige, regression, improvement of relationships of kinship, and social interactions push motives as new and educational as push motives. ([Yoon & Uysal, 2005](#)), found that pushing and pulling factors such as escape, novelty, prestige, improved relationships, relaxation, and hobbies draw factors such as budget, culture and history, wildlife, ease of travel, cosmopolitan surroundings, amenities, and hunting—accuracy as compared slightly differently about the push and pull variables as the mean-end theory. The results showed that travel motivations had significantly influenced the park attributes with the destination. ([Kim, Lee & Klenosky, 2003](#)).

H2: There is a positive relationship between travel motivation and visitor satisfaction.

Empirical studies have proposed that motivation influences tourist satisfaction significantly ([Lee, 2009](#)), ([Yoon and Uysal, 2005](#)), also pointed out that a destination’s achievement depends strongly on an extensive travel motive, satisfaction, and loyalty assessment. Yoon and Uysal created a model in their research to examine the connection between motivation and satisfaction push and pull through a modeling strategy to structural equation. “pull motivations” affect tourist satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be reached: On the one hand, motivation for travel will directly affect overall satisfaction ([Lee, 2009](#)). The findings showed that travel motives greatly affected the general tourist satisfaction with the destination.

H3: There is a relationship between park attributes and visitor satisfaction.

In favor of a transactional view, ([Williams, 1989](#)), proposed that the settings given by park and outdoor recreation supervisors influence visitor satisfaction. However, the way tourists perceive and evaluate these settings may be equally crucial as the latest study has recognized highly varied and manageable variables associated with visitor satisfaction. Previous researches found that park attributes affect visitor satisfaction.

H4: There is an intermediating role of travel motivation between park attributes and visitor satisfaction.

Push motivation significantly influences satisfaction, while pull motivation has influenced satisfaction directly. ([Yoon & Uysal, 2005](#)). Different scientists have recognized factors that affect tourist travel behaviors such as variables that motivate visitors to travel, tourist attitudes, different situational factors, and environmental factors that affect the tourist’s significance ([Vuuren & Slabbert, 2012](#)). Travel motivations considerably influence general tourist satisfaction with the destination. ([Lee, 2009](#)). Visitor overall satisfaction with their experiences has been generally assessed in terms of their satisfaction with various elements related directly to the destination or site visited. ([Banyai, 2012](#))

H5: There is a relationship between park attributes and destination image.

Previous studies revealed that the factors affecting the tourist satisfaction on the hospitality and tourism industry as 33 destination items. It evaluates the satisfaction of the tourists in the industry. The destination provides seven main variables. Those are loading, dining, shopping, attractions, activities and events, environment, and accessibility([Chi and Qu,2008](#)).

H6: There is a positive relationship between destination image and visitor satisfaction.

Tourists' satisfaction can be effect by both the positive and negative side of the destination image. ([Bigne, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2001](#); [Castro, Armario, & Ruiz, 2007](#); [Chen & Tsai, 2007](#); [Prayag, 2009](#)). Many efforts have been carried out to investigate the relationship between destination image and tourist satisfaction. So many of these inquiries have shown that destination image is a significant

factor influencing tourist satisfaction. ([Coban, 2012](#), [Chen and Tsai 2007](#); [Prayag 2008](#)). Thus, while the positive image of the destination provided elevated satisfaction, adverse images caused discontent. Several studies have identified the connection between a destination's performance and tourist satisfaction. ([Alegre & Garau, 2010](#); [Kozak & Rimmington, 1999](#); [Vigolo et al, 2018](#)). ([Kozak & Rimmington, 2000](#)) According to the Kozak and Rimmington highlighted that the Improved model which is for benchmarking distinct tourist destinations through customer-driven performance (tourist satisfaction) and understanding the factors behind each tourist destination's high or low performance. It revealed there is a positive relationship between visitor satisfaction and long-term economic achievement and competitiveness of the destination. ([Coghlan, 2012](#)).

H7: There is an intermediating role of Destination image between park attributes and visitor satisfaction.

The destination image is related to the attractiveness of destination-related characteristics. Those attributes include that physical landscape, natural beauty scenic environment, access to the wilderness, and access to various equipment such as data deck, clean and unpolluted area, restaurants, and others. ([Chen and Tsai 2007](#)). Previous literature revealed that the destination image directly impact on the quality of the particular journey and visitor satisfaction also affect by the destination image.

### **3. Research methodology**

The research approach was deductive reasoning. According to [Dubois and Gibbert \(2010\)](#), the deductive method deals with creating present theoretical theory (or hypotheses) and then designing a hypothesis-testing research approach. The deduction approach is mainly considered with the anticipated pattern, according to the hypothesis testing with observations, and this starts with the observation and it can find the specif pattern from this. ([Rubin, & Babbie, 2016](#)). This study is therefore fundamentally dependent on the quantitative analytical methods used to collect the information. Consequently, the qualitative technique cannot be used as the analytical method of this research.

The population of the research is the visitors who visit the Minneriya National Park in Sri Lanka. The sample was both local and foreign visitors who visit the Minneriya National park in Sr Lanka. The sample size is 360 visitors who visit the Minneriya national park and selected 180 foreign visitors and 180 local visitors. Purposive sampling technique is used as the sampling technique of the study because of the Simplicity of sampling and the ease of study. Data collection using a purposive sampling method. Questionnaires were randomly distributed by the researcher to the visitors who were visiting the Minneriya national park. Visitors participated in the survey voluntarily. Descriptive statistics, SEM-PLS techniques, SPSS software, and SmartPLS software have been used for the analysis of the collected data. Data analysis has been carried out by using the data gathered through a questionnaire. Simple illustrations such as ANOVA test, hypothesis test evaluate the relationship between factors through the SEM. data analysis techniques software and Structural Equation Model (SEM) Statistical Procedure for Social Science (SPSS) through Partial Least Square will be used for statistical data processing and will be used to evaluate the hypotheses suggested in the conceptual model. Data analysis was performed using information collected through primary data, evaluating questionnaire answers, achieving the study's objectives, using the following methods for data analysis.

### **4. Results and discussions**

#### **Descriptive Analysis**

According to the analysis, it showed that the majority of visitors were European (35.00%), others are 22.50%, Asian and American are in the same percentage of 21.25%. 100 percent of Sri Lankan were also respondents. Above the graph, we can suppose the most visitors are European tourists who come to the national park of Minneriya. Researcher identified foreign male visitors is greater than local male visitors when compared with both graphs, the difference of 7.5 percent. According to the sample, the majority of visitors visiting the national park were younger travelers. They prefer to engage in the environment. The minority of the visitors in the above 54 years was 2.5 percent. The researcher supposed that the majority of married people like to travel and like to interact with the

natural environment. There was a major distinction between the total monthly household income of local tourists below Rs.20000 and Rs.60000 more, considering the foreign visitors' monthly total household income as many as 53.75 percent. Most visitors come to see the natural attraction and wildlife view. Foreign visitors have also come to the Minneriya National Park for the reason of natural attraction and wildlife viewing.

### One-way ANOVA Test

According to the one-way ANOVA Test results, there is no significant mean difference inter the variety of age groups relating age groups, marital status, total household income (Monthly), reasons for selecting the Minneriya National Park concerning the independent variable respective with the dependent variable observed. Park Attributes were the first independent variable and they represented achievement, locational attributes, service attributes, natural scenery and activities, destination environment. Mean value was 4.37,4.26,4.45 (std.0.790, std. 0.797, std. 0.725). Therefore, as a whole, all indicators were scored the high level of agreeing on answers. Respondents were highly satisfied with the Comparison with other places. Std. were similar to wildlife watching and resting and relaxing. Adequate parking facilities' mean value was 4.39 under the strongly agree category. Respondents were highly satisfied with destination image Comparison with other places. Respondents' visitor satisfaction were highly satisfied with Minneriya national park, the role of park attributes. Respondents were highly intended to revisit and willing to recommend the destination since it has fallen to the  $4.21 < X = 5$  category. all the factors were confirmed as best.

### Evaluations of the Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

The algorithm obtains the effects of the measurement model, which are the relations between the constructs and their indicator variables. Then, together with the R2 values of endogenous constructs, the algorithm calculates the path coefficients, which are the ties between the constructs in the structural model. The structural equation model described by the following figure was tested using the determination coefficient (R2) of latent endogenous variables. Below is an illustration of the standardized path coefficients (predictive relevance) and relevant t-statistics of relationships obtained through the performance of PLS bootstraps.

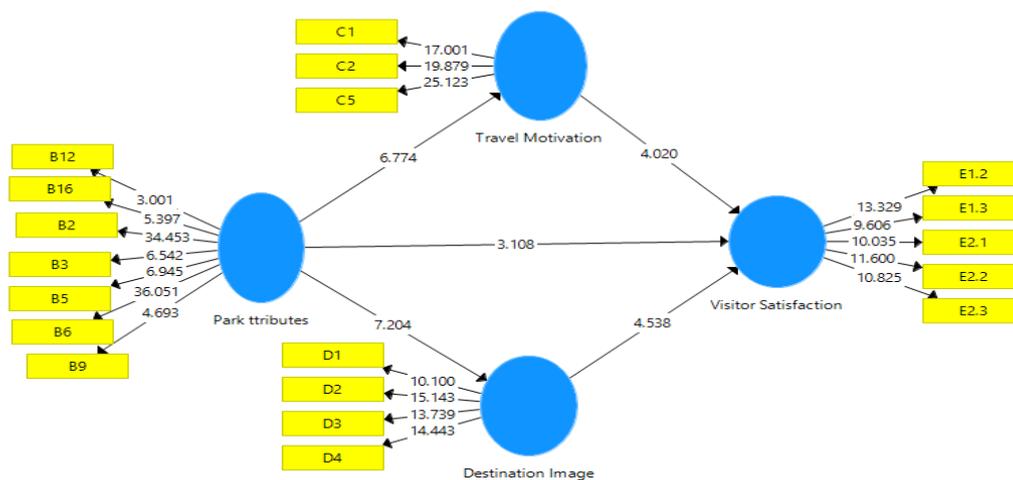


Figure 3: SEM Output

Source: SmartPLS Output, Author's estimation of the field survey (2019)

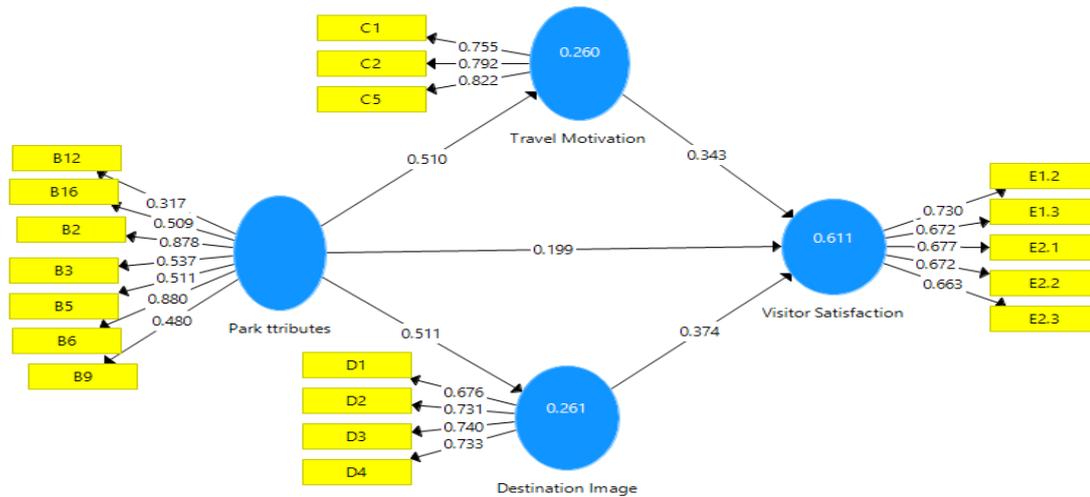


Figure 4. SEM Output

Source: SmartPLS Output, Author's estimation of the field survey (2019)

H1: There is a relationship between park attributes and Travel Motivation

A positive relationship between park attributes and travel motivation at Minnariya national park the first hypothesis (H1). In this case, got the path coefficient value as 0.510 strong positive relationships (+0.5 to +1) an also T value was 6.823 visitor satisfaction R<sup>2</sup> was 0.611. It got 0.000 when considering the P value between them. It has been under the level of p<0.1. It indicates there is a significant effect. Because of that H1 was accepted.

H:2 There is a positive relationship between Travel Motivation and Visitor Satisfaction

A positive relationship between travel motivation and visitor satisfaction at Minnariya national park the Second hypothesis (H2). In this case, got the path coefficient value as 0.343 weak positive relationship (0 to 0.5) an also T value was 4.042 visitor satisfaction R<sup>2</sup> was 0.611. It got 0.000 when considering the P value between them. It has been under the level of p<0.1. It indicates there is a significant effect. Because of that H1 was accepted.

C1-For learning about nature and the natural environment

C2-For wildlife watching (Specially elephants)

C5-Increased mental wellbeing. (Independence, happiness, stress reduction, etc.) factors were accepted under the travel motivation.

Travel motivation has long been regarded as complex and multifaceted and is widely regarded in the push-and-pull structure(Crompton, 1979). Empirical studies have proposed that motivation influences tourist satisfaction significantly (Lee, 2009) On the one hand, travel motivation can directly affect overall satisfaction (Lee, 2009). The results showed that the general tourist satisfaction with the destination was considerably influenced by travel motivations.

H:3 There is a relationship between park attributes and visitor satisfaction.

The researcher has proposed hypothesis 3 as a positive relationship between park attributes and visitor satisfaction. According to figure 4.7 get the path coefficient value as 0.199 and it indicates there was a weak positive relationship (0 to 0.5). At the same time, the T-Statistic value was 3.149 and also P value was 0.002. It is lower than 0.1 (P<0.1). Therefore, it is predicting, there was a significance at P<0.1 confidence level. Under that level, H3 was accepted. In favor of a transactional view, (Williams, 1989), proposed that the settings given by park and recreation activities influence visitor satisfaction, However, the way tourists perceive and evaluate these settings may be equally crucial as the latest study has recognized highly varied and manageable variables associated with visitor

satisfaction. Previous researches found park attributes affect visitor satisfaction. Destinations are made up of distinct characteristics that influence tourists considerably at distinct phases. Such as, a good image of a destination that consists of a combination of the attributes of the destination (e.g., beautiful landscape, cultural exchange, infrastructure, safety, and activities) significantly affects individuals' destination choices.

B12- Providing a memorable experience for visitors in Wildlife safari

B16- Affordable infrastructure facilities

B2- Enough safety and security facilities

B3- Visitors can easily access to the national park

B5 – Price is very fair for the visitors.

B6- Provide favorable spending hours for the visit.

B9- The large information displays (with maps, descriptions, illustrations, etc.)

Under that outer loading above the park, attributes were influenced by visitor satisfaction.

H4: There is an intermediating role of travel motivation between park attributes and visitor satisfaction

The researcher has proposed hypothesis 4 as a significant mediator effect between park attributes and visitor satisfaction. As per the results, the independent variable, PA is a significant predictor of the dependent variable, VS in which the beta coefficient of PA is equal to 0.808 and the P-value is equal to 0.000 ( $P < 0.05$ ). Under the test, statistics travel motivation Sobel test value was ( $Z=7.10360$ ) Significance Mediator effect. Therefore, the H4 hypothesis was accepted. Under travel motivation,

C1- For learning about nature and the natural environment

C2- For wildlife watching

C5-Increased mental wellbeing (Independence, happiness, stress reduction) factors were accepted.

H5: There is a relationship between park attributes and destination image.

According to figure 4.7 get the path coefficient value as 0.511 and it indicates there was a strong positive relationship (+0.5 to +1). At the same time, the T-Statistic value was 7.402 and also P value was 0.000. It is lower than 0.1 ( $P < 0.1$ ). Therefore, it is predicting, there was a significance at  $P < 0.1$  confidence level. The destination image  $R^2$  value was 0.261.

H6: There is a positive relationship between destination image and visitor satisfaction

The researcher has proposed hypothesis 6 as a positive relationship between destination image and visitor satisfaction. According to figure 4.7 get the path coefficient value as 0.374 and it indicates there was a weak positive relationship (0 to 0.5). At the same time, the T-Statistic value was 4.538 and also P value was 0.000. It is lower than 0.1 ( $P < 0.1$ ). Therefore, it is predicting, there was a significance at  $P < 0.1$  confidence level. Under the destination image, all the factors were accepted.

D1- Adequate parking spaces inside the park

D2- A safe place to visit

D3-Great variety of wildlife viewing

D4-Frame or reputation of the national park

H7: There is an intermediating role of destination image between park attributes and visitor satisfaction

The researcher has proposed hypothesis 7 as an intermediating role of destination image between park attributes and visitor satisfaction. According to the Sobel test Under the test statistics, destination image Sobel test value was ( $Z=5.6006$ ) Significance Mediator effect. Therefore, the H7 hypothesis was accepted. Thus, while the positive image of the destination provided elevated satisfaction, adverse images caused discontent. Several studies have identified the connection between a destination's performance and tourist satisfaction. ([Vigolo et al, 2018](#)). Under the destination image, all the factors were accepted.

D1- Adequate parking spaces inside the park  
D2- Safe place to visit  
D3- Great variety of wildlife viewing  
D4- Frame reputation of the national park  
Also, visitor satisfaction below factors was accepted,  
E1.2- Revisit  
E1.3- Recommended to others  
E2.1- Price is very reasonable  
E2.2- Destination is clean  
E2.3- Free health and facilities an emergency

([Chen, C. and Tsai, 2007](#)), ascertained that the destination image directly impacts the quality of the journey and directly impacts the satisfaction. The tourism literature, therefore, indicates that the destination image is the antecedent of satisfaction. States that D.I (destination image) has a positive impact on the satisfaction of visitors. According to the descriptive statistics collected from the field survey, local female visitation is more than male visitation and the foreign male visitation is more than female visitors. Local represents 46.25 percent and foreign visitors 53.75 percent. According to the visitor's point of view, the reason for selecting the Minneriya national park was a natural attraction and wildlife viewing. It was local visitors 81.25 percent and foreign visitors 76.25 percent. Finally, according to the overall information of the visitors visiting the national park, it is possible to outline and extract as the majority of them were young and middle-aged, high-income earners.

According to the SmartPLS, all the variables were significant under the significance level  $P < 0.05$ . The best Cronbach's Alpha value was visitor satisfaction 0.715. There were two mediator effect travel motivation and visitor satisfaction. So, the researcher used the Sobel test to analyze the mediating effect. Both two mediators were accepted and Travel motivation got 7.10360 Z value and the Destination image got 5.6006 Z value. When the researcher analyzing the factors (CFA) under the independent variable of park attributes seven attributes were accepted which were B12, B16, B2, B3, B5, B6, and B9. Mediator of travel motivation three factors were accepted C1, C2, C5. Also another mediator of destination image all the four factors were accepted and depended variable of visitor satisfaction E1.2, E1.3, E2.1, E2.2, E2.3 factors were accepted. After that research, the researcher identified all the hypothesis were accepted

Tourist satisfaction's significance makes it necessary to assess the satisfaction of visitors and the variables that affect them. The government of Sri Lanka places a high priority on the tourism industry. The tourism industry's sustainable growth relies on a good plan for associated services and equipment. Satisfaction measurement enables executives in the tourism industry to know the motivations and behaviors. This research examined the relationship between tourist satisfaction and attributes of destination in Minneriya national park. Demographic characteristics, destination image, travel motivation factors affect the connection between destination attributes, and visitor satisfaction. Seven hypotheses were built and the hypotheses were tested using suitable methods. The findings that the destination image impacts tourist satisfaction show that someone visiting a destination is strongly linked to the image of the tourist destination visited, particularly for those who have visited several times. The same is true of ([Prayag et al. \(2017\)](#)), who also stated the relationship between the image and the visiting tourists' intention. Similarly, research on the relationship between image and tourist satisfaction showed a positive and meaningful relationship. However, this demonstrates the supposed motivation of satisfied visitors, even motivation can encourage somebody to return to the same location without feeling satisfied at first travel. In Indonesia, the study on tourist conduct in Bandung by [Pratminingsih et al. \(2014\)](#), found an important impact on the satisfaction of a tourist motive. Multiple attributes are the positive experiences of visitors, which then affect their fulfillment. These attributes do not contribute to the satisfaction of visitors in a single dimension, but are multiple and usually regarded as economic, socio-cultural, and managerial aspects of the protected area.

## 5. Conclusion

The purpose of this to explore and recognize visitor satisfaction on Minneriya national park and this evaluation was to define the gaps for future national park studies in Sri Lanka. At the end of the 30-year civil conflict, all existing studies are dated after 2012. The government of Sri Lanka has identified tourism as a key tool for developing the country's economy. A result has been that demands on parks have increased immensely. There is an urgent need for studies into the sustainable promotion and development of parks and wildlife-watching tourism in Sri Lanka with the abundance of parks and wildlife-watching potential.

There is one independent, two mediators, and one dependent variable in this research. A questionnaire on the Likert scale of 5 points was used to measure these three variables. As the first stage of the research, the researcher set research questions as follows, the first question was what are the park attributes influence on visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park. To answer, the researcher sets the secondary question, what is the role of travel motivation in shaping visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park. The third one was what is the role of travel destination image in shaping visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park and finally what are the most significant attributes affecting visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park. Then the researcher developed the objectives based on these questions as follows. To identify the park attributes influence on visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park, to identify the role of travel motivation in shaping visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park, to identify the destination image in shaping visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park and the final one was to identify the most significant attributes affecting visitor satisfaction at Minneriya national park. Afterward by studying the past literature and journals researcher constructed the conceptual framework and according to the conceptual framework, the hypothesis was developed.

There were one independent, two mediators, and one dependent variable in this research. A questionnaire on the Likert scale of 5 points was used to measure these three variables Research design was Quantitative and a sample was both local and foreign visitors who travel to a Minneriya national park. The sample was selected from the population using a purposive sampling technique. The sample size was 160 both local and foreign visitors who visit the Minneriya national park. Statistical Procedure for social science (IBM SPSS Statistics 21) software will be used for statistical treatment of data. Data analysis will be carried out by using the data gathered through data, evaluation of the responses of questionnaires, to achieve the objectives of the study, the following data analyzing techniques are used. Descriptive statistics were used to assess the guest profile, Statistical Procedure for Social Science (SPSS) and Partial Least Squares (SmartPLS) used to achieve other objectives.

Based on the outcomes of this research, several suggestions could be produced. Park authority can provide toilet facilities in the Minneriya National Park if it is environmentally hazardous when we to safeguard wildlife or enable tourists to bring their waste outside the park. They suggest reducing the pace of jeeps to safeguard wildlife. Both local and foreign visitors were suggested for all tourists with appropriate information about the national parks. Also, jeep drivers said one-way tracks were available but it is very disturbing for the watching wildlife. By the way, visitors said that sanitary facilities are not great, they also have to deal with monkey's assaults sometimes causing tourists to eat food and other stuff. So it is very disturbing for visitors so that park personnel should make some decisions. A major problem is public support is much less, so employees should attempt to get assistance from the government because of the national park's maintenance.

Safety and security are some of the tourist's fundamental expectations. If visitors discover a destination unsafe, visiting it is less probable. Safety and security in destinations, however, cannot be guaranteed. The government could provide suitable services, such as safety. The government also needs to take severe action against gullible tourist misuse. Another significant factor an improving the availability of tourist amenities. During the holiday season, museums, cafes, and other amenities must be accessible to ensure tourists have access to them. They must have access to information centers helplines and internet/email.

The staff-tourist interface is critical in handling the overall experience, training, and growth environment and getting the correct individuals. It remains essential to provide high service standards with friendly, useful, and locally knowledgeable staff. The service must be fast, honest, and helpful to react to the requirements of visitors. Price represents the value received by visitors. Better pricing of products and services and informing tourists about costly products and services could enhance the destination's image. The government must attempt to maintain as pure as possible the destination that is renowned for its setting. If visitors discover it differently from what they anticipated, they had felt they have wasted their time and money visiting the destination. It requires eco-tourism acceptance. These findings indicate that to make visitors re-visit the destination and suggest it to others, they should be satisfied with the best and most significant satisfaction factors were tourist substructure transportation choices and tourist attraction image variables. That is why it is essential to ensure that the services provided to visitors are adequate and skilled and to establish fresh functions with these qualities, to set and create service requirements, to check transport alternatives and to carry out the required work to establish or provide alternative vehicles such as safari jeep and drivers. On the other hand, the price level of tourism products is another issue. Local people attempting to make the tourist's unfair earnings. Specially tour guides. This can be minimized by providing tourist products a set price amount. But adoption alone is not enough, and accountable parties also need to enforce and monitor it. It is suggested that park management improves their destination image by addressing problems related to destination characteristics (service quality, possibilities for adventure, language barrier, and exotic atmosphere, restful/relaxing) that some visitors negatively affect the satisfaction of tourists. They can enhance the quality of services such as timely service at the entrance and the deployment of well-trained and effective front line service employees and consider the requirements of international visitors. And need to get knowledge of other foreign languages also. Management of particular national park needs to provide mainly relaxation, souvenir shops to buy tangible things to get valuable memory of Sri Lankan national parks like including pictures of the wild animals.

Finally, tourist information supplied through printed media and the website should be given in other languages, including Chinese, Japanese, Russian, French, and Italian, to improve and diversify the number of visitors.

### **Limitation and study forward**

This research concerns the visitor satisfaction on Minneriya national park: the role of park attributes. But tourists' satisfaction on park attributes is not to be the only factor effects on visitor satisfaction. Based on that, the researcher whose interests in this area can investigate based on the other factors' effect on visitor satisfaction. Other than that, there is space to develop this research by increasing the sample of the research since this research was limited to 160 visitors to represent the population of whole visitors who visit the Minneriya national park.

The findings that the destination image impacts tourist satisfaction show that someone visiting a destination is strongly linked to the image of the tourist destination visited, particularly for those who have visited several times.

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