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AIRBNB IN TOURIST CITIES: MAPPING PEER-TO-PEER ACCOMMODATION SUPPLY IN SRI LANKA

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Abstract

Airbnb is well known as a disruptive innovation, or a digital disruption occurred in the real estate industry specifically in the tourist accommodation sector as a result of the firm's ground-breaking online commercial enterprise model and its remarkable charm to holidaymakers. At present Airbnb is known as the most extensive online platform providing tourist accommodations in private homes and is a function of growing movement most popularly recognised as "Sharing", "Peer-Peer" or "Digital" Economy. Scholars are ever more concerned on the tourism industry, tourist attributes and behaviour, tourist destinations and housing market shaped by the Airbnb. But quite a few scholars have utilised geospatial analysis to identify and explore the impacts of sharing accommodations through analysing the spreading of Airbnb accommodations in tourist regions. This study has interpreted the spread and other characteristics of Airbnb activity in selected tourist cities in Sri Lanka using the data obtained from the Airbnb platform through web scraping technique and using the data openly available at AirDNA website. As per the findings, there are approximately twelve thousand and four hundred listed Airbnb tourist accommodations in Sri Lanka as at July 2017, and the two largest Airbnb rental markets in Sri Lanka are Galle and Colombo, followed by other tourist cities. The composition of Airbnb supply is mostly dominated by rooms rented out by residents in private homes in both touristic and relatively non-touristic cities.

Keywords: Airbnb, Sharing Economy, Disruptive Innovation, Travel and Tourism Industry, Sri Lanka