

Perspective of Tourist in Bagan Relating to Heritage Site in Myanmar

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Abstract: The aim of this study was to understand the tourists' perspective status at the Bagan related to heritage Site such as temples, pagodas and nature beauty based on satisfaction, experience and memory ensure visitors as positive perspective. Bagan, representing one of the most popular destinations in Myanmar, is in fact facing a sharp increase in tourist arrivals since the country opened up to the outside world in 2011. Due to the fast changing environment and the recent political events, such figures are expected to rise even more enormously. This research project examined tourists' perspective of Bagan region as a tourist destination. By questioning 270 domestic and international tourists about their travel habits, this project constituted the first research of its kind in the region.

The objectives of the project were to provide a profile of international and domestic tourists, to study their travel satisfaction, experience and memory destinations visited preferred accommodation and mode of transportation, information sources used average length of stay, and satisfaction levels. Future sustainable tourism management will require catering for both domestic and international needs. The sample showed an almost equal distribution of gender, with one quarter of participants being relatively young 25-35 years. The largest group of foreigners was retired, followed by Photographer, Journalist, Office worker, Teacher and Government officer. Europeans made up more than 60% of all international respondents. Most domestic and international tourists were highly educated. In terms of travel parties, more than half of Myanmar people visited the region as part of a group tour, while only one third of foreigners traveled in a group tour. Nearly one quarter of all internationals visited the region as a couple, while only 1% of Myanmar nationals visited the area with their partners. Almost all international visitors visited in Bagan heritage site. Myanmar nationals, in contrast, spread themselves much more widely across the region than their foreign counterparts.

The main motivation for visiting Bagan for foreigners was cultural experience. Most tourists get satisfaction about sightseeing to temples and pagodas. The most tourists get the best experience are hot air balloon over the Bagan. The most tourists of the best memory are taking photography about Bagan heritage site such as temples and pagodas. Most of international tourists visited the temples, stupas and pagodas in the region, followed by a guided book tour of Bagan and visiting the markets. Nearly all participants, whether they were Myanmar nationals or foreigners, were generally quite happy with what was on offer in the region. Almost all respondents indicated they would recommend the destination to their peers. When asked what they enjoyed most about the Bagan area.

Keyword: Tourists' satisfaction, experience, memory, and motivation related to heritage site in Bagan.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is currently experiencing rapid growth in tourism demand. Myanmar is becoming an emerging and fast growing tourism destination in South East Asia. In the first six months of 2012, international visitor arrivals increased by over 30% compared to 2011. Tourist arrivals have surged since a quasi-civilian government took power under President Thein Sein, with the number of arrivals climbing from 800,000 in 2011 to 3.08 million in 2014, according to official statistics. The ministry had previously stated a goal of between 4.5 to 5 million tourists in 2015. (16 May 2016 Myanmar Tourism, Economic News)

In Myanmar, the main of tourists interesting place is Bagan heritage site. Bagan is an ancient city located in Mandalay Region built between the 9th and 11th centuries, during an era when some 55 Buddhist kings ruled the Bagan Dynasty. Bagan Archaeological Zone covers about 42 sq km (16 miles) and has more than 3,000 pagodas. In 2014, there were more than 240,000 tourists who generated USD4.1 million in tourism-related revenue. Among all the cities in Myanmar, Bagan is the most ideal destination for tourists to visit regardless of the time of the year. Unlike cities in the lower part of Myanmar, Bagan does not experience a rainy season and it is the perfect climate of Bagan that enables tourists to discover and explore the ancient city with ease all year round. Bagan may be an old city, but it does offer something fresh to its visitors. There are many contemporary hotels and establishments for the modern adventurer.

This study attempts to explore the perceptions of tourists in Bagan relating to heritage site which are based on tourists' satisfaction, experiences and memory. The study conducts with the subjects of three independent variables namely: tourists' satisfaction, tourists' experiences and tourists' memory related to heritage site in Bagan.

- To study the existing situation of how tourists' perspective of Bagan relating to heritage site such as temples and pagodas and natural beauties.
- To study how tourists' satisfaction on Bagan dealing with ancient temples and pagodas and natural beauties.
- To study how tourists' experiences on Bagan dealing with ancient temples and pagodas and natural beauties.
- To study how tourists' memories on Bagan dealing with ancient temples and pagodas and natural beauties.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bagan Heritage Site: Bagan is situated in the central part of Myanmar, on the east bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River (see Figure) Dating back to the 10th century AD, Bagan represented the capital city of the first Myanmar Kingdom (Unesco, n.d). Thanks to King Anawrahta (1044-1077) and his devotion to the Theravada ideas, the Buddhism religion took roots within the Bagan population, and probably as a consequence the King embarked a construction program of Pagodas and other religious structures in an area that today covers 26 square miles (42 sq. Km). During its golden age (from 10th to 13th century), around 13,000 Buddhist monuments were constructed (Asian Historical Architecture Today only 2,800 buildings remain, according to the inventory of Monuments at Bagan (Pichard, 1992J-2002). Pichard, in fact, was tasked by the UNESCO to create an inventory book with every single building present at the site. The buildings were categorized by size (small, medium and large) and by their architectural characteristics.



Tourists' satisfaction: It is important to first identify what is meant by tourist and tourists' perspective. For this study, the word tourists' perspective (TP) has been preferred to the word tourist a particular attitude toward or way of regarding something; a point of view to emphasize the characteristic of the daily visitor, hence excluding from the study the management of the overnight facilities. Although tourists' perspective is a discipline which also includes the satisfaction of tourists, experiences of tourists and memories of tourists only the visitor characteristic of the tourists visiting in Bagan will be taken, thus only the moment spent at visiting the Temples, Monasteries and Pagodas at the archaeological site will be analyzed. There are different classifications of tourist perspective (TP), but as per the scope of this study, only the

heritage tourists' perspectives are examined. Considered by Boyd (2000), as the majority of the total TPs supply, heritage TPs are defined as “something a particular attitude toward or way of regarding; a point of view” (Leask, 2009, p.156). Bagan Archaeological site dates back to the 11th century AD, Thus bringing it in this category. As heritage as a critical point for tourism, Bagan is incredible archaeological site. Hence, as heritage is critical to tourism because it represents an economic capital, on the other hand, tourism to heritage has a more complicated relation as it may hinder or promote its conservation (Henderson, 2009). It is also the case for the Bagan heritage site whom conservation is hindered by tourism. There is an interdependent relation between tourists' perspective related to heritage site and tourists' satisfaction (LingKuo, 2003). Visitors go to tourist attraction (TA) to experience the site, and in order to safe guard this interest the site is given protection.

Tourist's satisfaction: When considering tourists' satisfaction, a lot of variable come to place influencing the overall experience of tourists. It can be said that the overall tourist's experience is a function of satisfactions of the single elements composing a tourism product (Oliver, 1993). Hence, single elements such as transportation, facilities present at the attractions, hotels, restaurants etc. compose the overall tourist's experience. These elements can be controlled by tourism managers at a certain extent, however, there are also other elements/factors coming from the external environment which cannot be controlled or monitored. These are part of the social factors such as human interactions with the surrounding which can come both from locals or other tourists (Fuchs and Weiermair, 2003). To summarize, many variables of different nature (functional, contextual and environmental) create the overall experience of tourists. For this reason, assessing tourists' experience has always been a challenge for tourism managers. For this study, the overall tourists' experience is not assessed, but instead only the satisfaction of single elements/factors is analyzed. Such elements have been chosen systematically after a preliminary study of the destination and which are relevant in terms of tourists' perception. The tool utilized to assess such satisfaction is the Importance – experiences analysis is explained further in the following section.

Tourists experiences: However, as tourism has continued to expand in both scale and scope, and as tourists' needs and expectations have become more diverse and complex in response to transformations in the dynamic socio-cultural world of tourism, so too have tourist experiences. Tourist experience provides a focused analysis into tourist experiences that reflect their ever-increasing diversity and complexity, and their significance and meaning to tourists themselves. Written by leading international scholars, it offers new insights into emergent behaviors, motivations and sought meanings on the part of tourists based on five contemporary themes determined by current research activity in tourism experience: dark tourism experiences, experiencing poor places, sport tourism experiences, writing the tourist experience and researching tourist experiences: methodological approaches. This study critically explores these experiences from multidisciplinary perspectives and includes present situation from a wide range of geographical Bagan regions. By analyzing these contemporary tourists' perspective, the study will provide further understanding of the tourists' memory and motivations.

Memories & Motivations: To recall events, facts or processes, have to commit them to memory. The process of forming a memory involves encoding, storing, retaining and subsequently recalling information and past experiences. (Kim Ann Zimmermann, 2014) Cognitive psychologist Margaret W. Matlin has described memory as the “process of retaining information over time.” Others have defined it as the ability to use our past experiences to determine our future path. Important memories typically move from short-term memory to long-term memory. The transfer of information to long-term memory for more permanent storage can be happen in several steps. Information can be committed to long-term memory through repetition — such as studying for a test or repeatedly taking steps until walking can be performed without thinking — or associating it with other previously acquired knowledge.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study is a descriptive research using survey method. The survey method of this research used questionnaires distribution to the respondents in order to collected primary data form the internet. The advantage of research has used the survey tourists in Bagan during my collection data. Questionnaires are international tourists and local tourists to gather primary data about their attitudes towards the all variables in this study. Questionnaires were approached 300 simple sizes but there were 270 available and number of 30 unavailable. Survey are conducted to understand the right target and approach towards the research, questionnaires are used as the survey surveys for this research. The Secondary sources were used from government newspapers, article, books, internet, related works and other documents. Especially, this

research use data from monthly reports of the ministry of hotel and tourism Development in Myanmar, and the report from social media, and the data from each Myanmar travel agencies and travel operators.

IV. RESEARCH FINDING

Referring to table 1 is the result of regression analysis for independent variables and dependent variables. 0.543 was the satisfaction beta score, the significant level of p was 0.000. The result shows that tourists' perspective has a positive statistical value and proves that satisfaction has a significant effect on tourists' perspective. 0.429 was the experience beta score, the significant level of p was 0.000. The result shows that tourists' perspective has a positive statistical value and proves that experience has a significant effect on tourists' perspective. 0.514 was the memory beta score, the significant level of p was 0.000. The result show that tourists' perspective has a positive statistical value and proves that memory has a significant effect on tourists' perspective.

Table 1: Reliability and Correlation Analysis of tourists' perspective

Factors of tourists' perspective	Relationship	Statistically significant rate	Correlation Scores	Cronbach's alpha
Satisfaction	Strong	P=0.00	0.543	0.732
Experience	Strong	P=0.00	0.429	0.732
Memory	Strong	P=0.00	0.514	0.732
Motivation	Strong	P=0.00	0.516	0.732

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation between Observed Variables

Bagan Tourists' Perspective			Future Travelling intention toward Bagan	
Mean	SD		r	Sig. (2- tailed)
Satisfaction	4.15	.794	.195**	.000
Experience	4.05	.768	.208**	.000
Memory	3.79	.916	.257**	.000
Motivation	4.02	.879	.234**	.000

According to Table 2., the results of tourists' perspective towards tourism activities along the Bagan Heritage site indicated that tourists were most interested in Satisfaction ($x = 4.15$) as the first rank, Experience ($x = 4.05$) Motivation ($x = 4.02$) and Memory ($x = 3.79$), respectively. The Pearson's correlation analysis revealed that all factors of attitude towards Tourists' perspective, including satisfaction ($r = .195$), experience ($r = .208$), memory ($r = .257$), and motivation ($r = .234$), were positively correlated with future travelling intention towards Bagan heritage site at the statistical significance level of 0.01.

This research focuses on three stages with 7 factors and the most respondents answers were with the means greater than 3, insisted the respondent answer were "Agree" This is shown that a large percentage of respondents were satisfied with the value created. Mean greater than 3, indicated that tourists' satisfaction in Bagan related to heritage site. The finding of this study indicated that the 7 factors in three stages can lead the tourists to accept the tourists' perspective.

First, the result supports hypotheses H1 is indicating that the satisfaction of Bagan tourists are related to tourists' perspective of Sightseeing of temples and pagodas, taking hot air balloon over the Bagan, sightseeing taking by bicycle, natural beauty of sun set, taking photography, and observing the museum in Bagan. The level of agree area is greater than rejection area. Therefore, the perspective of Bagan tourists satisfactions are significance relation with tourists' perspective and sightseeing.

Second, the result supports hypotheses H2 is indicating that the experience of Bagan tourists are related to tourists' perspective of Sightseeing of temples and pagodas, taking hot air balloon over the Bagan, sightseeing taking by bicycle, natural beauty of sun set, taking photography, and observing the museum in Bagan. The level of agree area is greater than

rejection area. Therefore, the perspective of Bagan tourists experiences are significance relation with tourists' perspective and sightseeing.

Third, the result supports hypotheses H3 is indicating that the memory of Bagan tourists are related to tourists' perspective of Sightseeing of temples and pagodas, taking hot air balloon over the Bagan, sightseeing taking by bicycle, natural beauty of sun set, taking photography, and observing the museum in Bagan. The level of agree area is greater than rejection area. Therefore, the perspective of Bagan tourists memories are significance relation with tourists' perspective and sightseeing.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

Three hundred surveys were collected and 270 final surveys were utilized for the study. The demographic and travel behavior characteristics of the respondents were presented. In general, almost 60% of respondents tended to be 35 years old. Most of the respondents had a high level of education level. Most respondents had previous experience in visiting heritage site in Bagan. They usually spent 2 to 4 days at the destination. Moreover, they obtained information about the heritage site of Bagan by Internet or word-of-mouth.

The study describe tourists' satisfaction, experience and memory or motivation toward 7 heritage of Bagan destination attributes and categorized the attributes into satisfied attributes, experienced attributes, and memorized or motivated attributes. Results of the study showed that tourists' satisfaction, experience and memory or motivation attributes were agree level of significance area.

First of all, factor analysis of 7 activities heritage site of Bagan destination attributes was conducted in order to delineate the underlying activities of the attributes, and then correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were used in order to identify the relationship between Bagan Tourist's perspective of heritage site and Tourists' Satisfaction, Experience, Memory, Motivation and Future travelling intention in Bagan.

Using factor analysis, 4 perspective attributes resulted to 7 activities: Sightseeing of Temples and Pagodas, Taking hot air balloon over the Bagan, Sightseeing by taking Horse cart, Sightseeing taking by bicycle, Natural beauty of Sun set in Bagan, Taking photography and Observing the Museum in Bagan. These seven activities then were related with overall satisfaction, experience, memory and motivation for future travelling in Bagn.

Correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis revealed that Taking hot air balloon over the Bagan had the highest influence on tourists' overall satisfaction. The second highest influential dimension was Sightseeing of Temples and Pagodas, and Sightseeing by taking Horse cart, Sightseeing taking by bicycle, Natural beauty of Sun set in Bagan, Taking photography and observing the Museum in Bagan are orderly respective level of tourists' perspective related to heritage site in Bagan.

Two-tailed independent t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were also used in order to analyze the differences in the level of overall satisfaction in relation to demographic and travel behavior characteristics. The results of the two-tailed independent t-test and ANOVA revealed that there was a significant difference between male and in the female tourists overall satisfaction with the heritage site attributes ($t=4.15$, $p<0.05$), overall experience with the heritage site attributes ($t=4.05$, $p<0.05$), overall memory with the heritage site attributes ($t=3.79$, $p<0.05$), overall motivation with the heritage site attributes ($t=4.02$, $p<0.05$). Furthermore, the results revealed that there was a significant difference among the groups.

Recommendation

Recommendations were given for each specific aspect analyzed by the researcher namely Bagan tourists' perspective related to heritage site and other factors which included the need of collaboration and consultation; the government regulations including the revision of policies and zoning as well as the entrance fee and monitoring system; the current visitor management infrastructure consisting on recommendations about tourist map, public toilets, direction signs, rule of conduct signs, explanation banners, litter bins, means of transportation, tourist information center, tourist police and virtual reality application. In addition, no existing framework was utilized by the author in formulating such recommendations as considered to be not effective for the context of Bagan. Instead, tailor made recommendations were formulated which can be easily and thus efficiently implemented by the stakeholders involved.

Although the current study has important yielding findings which the researcher hopes will be implemented by the stakeholders involved, it does not cover all the aspects involved in the visitor management framework. This study can be considered preliminary and thus opens the doors for future research. It is in fact important to analyze the type of tourists coming and visiting the Bagan heritage site and in particular it would be interesting and helpful for the destination managers to investigate on the motivations pulling tourists to visit Bagan. Although an attempt to investigate more on the domestic market has been made by the researcher, this has unfortunately not been achieved.

While the interviews gave perspective insight into the supply side of the stakeholder group, a survey of 20 questions was administered to visitors to analyze the perspective on the demand side. This technique was implemented to touch different aspects of visitor management as well as get taxonomy of the sample. Both international and domestic visitors were aimed to be captured in order to analyze possible differences in satisfaction, importance given to certain attributes as well as taxonomy.

Therefore the questionnaire was translated also in Burmese. 270 questionnaires were printed, half in English and half in Burmese and distributed at the reception of hotels, guest houses and hostels in order to ensure a varied sample in terms of type of visitors. The front office staff was asked to administer the survey prior to the moment of the guests' checkout so as to ensure that guests entirely visited the BHS. However, during this process, the researcher realized that a significant low response rate was going to be reached, hence this approach was modified by administering the survey to the visitors directly by the researcher Same magnitude as the one of tourist arrivals. No monitoring system is yet in place and the actual number of the Bagan population is unclear. Therefore, researchers could study this phenomenon as possibly threatening the conservation of the ancient site.

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