A Comparative Study of International Tourists' Satisfaction towards Bagan, Mandalay Region

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were to evaluate the satisfaction levels of tourists from two generating regions, Asia and Europe towards their visit to historic city Bagan area and to study problems, which occurred during their stay in Bagan. The study was conducted using questionnaires interviewing 100 Asian tourists and 100 European tourists in 2015. Then data were analysed by using statistical analysis. The study showed that tourists from two different regions rated the highest average score at "very satisfied" with the ancient monument, architectural style, and traditional ways of living of inhabitants. In addition, the study revealed that they rated the medium average score at "moderately satisfied" with the cleanliness of accommodation, staff services, safety and security, cycling around Bagan and hot air balloons. Tourists from the two regions also experienced some problems, such as the hygiene and sanitation, health care services and clear directional signage, and reasonable price of hotel room, lack of nightlife in the city, which were rated as lowest score. The government should encourage for collaboration with every sector in promoting sustainable tourism within destinations. Tourism promotion agencies and travel companies not only should focus on promoting the Myanmar culture and custom but also should encourage local people for awareness of proper preservation of the national heritage of the country.

Keywords: Tourism products, Tourists' satisfaction, Nationality, Cultural heritage site, Bagan.

I. Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the world's largest industries. Government agencies and even local communities have already recognised tourism as important to development and modernization. In fact, every country has been trying to create and attract their uniqueness of tourism products to consumers. Understanding or monitoring the level of tourist satisfaction is of importance in promoting or maintaining the successful tourism industry.

Before 1988, Myanmar was still on its initial stage of tourist destination worldwide with 41,418 international tourist arrivals (MOHT, 2006). It has become an emerging tourist destination for international travellers, which rose to 4,681,020 in 2015 due to Myanmar's richness of cultural and natural heritage, genuine hospitality and spiritual values and pent-up interests of travellers. Today, the tourism industry has become a vital economic sector growing rapidly with the active participation of the private sector and major investments made by foreign companies. Total contribution of tourism was 5.9 percent of GDP to the country in 2015 (WTTC, 2015).

Bagan is one of the country's famous destinations due to its outstanding historical heritage (1044 -1286 A.D.), the symbol of national identity and aspiration with its religious importance. Although Bagan tourism started in the 1970s, the international tourism was introduced because the westerners were very interested in studying the

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ancient architectural style of the historic monuments and religious buildings, which were greatly damaged by the intense earthquake in 1975. Tourist arrival of Bagan numbered 13,004 in 1992 and it increased to 247,140 in 2015 (MOHT, 2015). At present, international tourism is more prominent than in any other region of the country except former capital of Yangon and received 27.5 percent of international tourists (MOHT, 2013). Among these, about 50 percent were from Europe and followed by Asia, America and Oceania.

Tourists' satisfaction plays an important role in the success of tourism development. Tourists from diverse nationalities have different expectations and different satisfaction levels after using tourism products. A comparative analysis between groups is required for better understanding the importance of different languages, food consumption and other national differences (Kozak, 2001). To attract foreign tourists, all tourism-stakeholders must know their customers' preferences. To achieve consumers' satisfaction, businesses must understand consumers' needs and wants to be able to provide products and services that meet consumers' expectations.

Despite a lot of literature exists on tourists' satisfaction and dissatisfaction in other countries, very few studies have been conducted in this study area and Myanmar as well. The aim of the study is to examine the tourists' satisfaction levels in relation to their origin, Europe and Asia. In light of this, we conducted research to answer the following research questions.

1. Why has international tourism developed in Bagan?
2. How do tourists achieve their highest satisfaction level towards tourism products of Bagan?
3. What were the problems that occurred during their stay in Bagan?

The findings of this research will provide a more analytical insight into tourists' motivation and satisfaction to the existing literature. Findings will be useful for those who are engaged in tourism-related industries to understand their customers. It will also help planners and decision-makers of tourism organisations to have a better understanding of customers' wants and preferences in order to formulate appropriate business strategies which will in turn enhance further tourism development and can support the sustainability of cultural/ heritage destination in Bagan.

II. Literature review

Tourism development in Bagan

Bagan is popularly known as the city of four million pagodas and one of the richest archaeological sites in South-East Asia. Bagan, located on the eastern bank of Ayeyarwady River is endowed with cultural heritage attractions, natural attractions and recreational attractions. The ruins of Bagan contain the largest concentration of temples and pagodas in the country. The majority of these well-preserved shrines, whose architectural beauty continues to offer a rich heritage, were built from the 11th to 13th century.

In Bagan, tourism actually started in the 1970s, particularly for domestic tourism. However, the area was not well-known as a popular tourist destination until the early 1980s. However, as the monuments and religious buildings were greatly damaged by the intense earthquake in 1975, westerners especially scholars were very interested in

studying the ancient architectural style and international tourism then was introduced. Currently, international tourism is more prominent than in any other region of the country except the former capital, Yangon.

Tourist arrival to Bagan has been increasing since then. As seen in Figure 1, it generally increased last decade from 57,875 in 2001-02 to 247,140 in 2014-15 except for the fiscal year 2007-08 and 2008-09 with 43.26% and 36.38%. The reason for decreasing tourist arrival is because of political instability in Myanmar due to the "Saffron Revolution" which happened in September 2007. The next year in May 2008, the "Cyclone Nargis", the greatest natural disaster in Myanmar's history in which about 138,373 people who live in Ayeyarwady Region where there are beautiful beaches along the coast died and were missing (MOHT, 2013). This situation encourages the cancelling of international tourists coming to Myanmar and as a consequence, the arrival of tourists declined drastically. In addition, this drop is indirectly affected by the global financial crisis in 2008. This situation reflects the internal shock and external shock that are obstacles in tourism growth even though the study area was free from such problems.
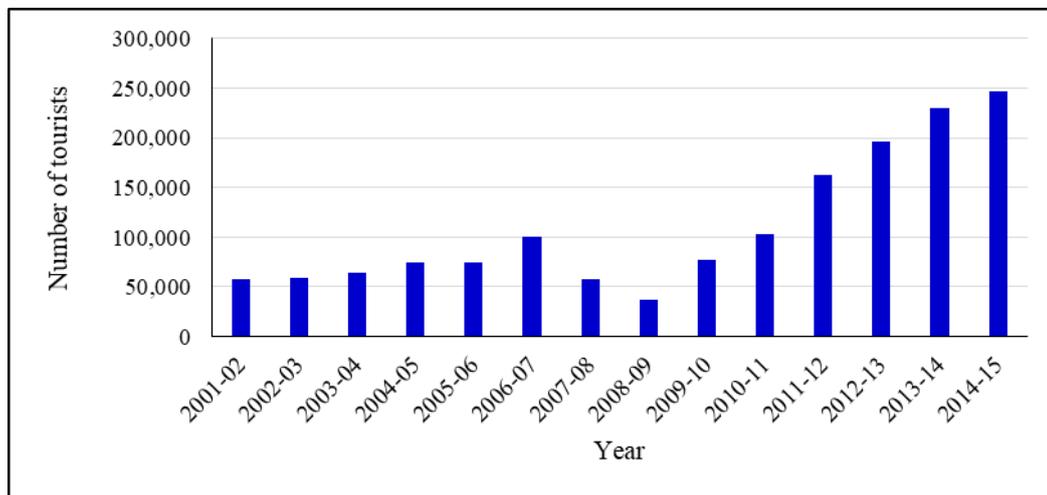

Figure 1. Growth of tourist arrivals to Bagan between 2001- 02 to 2014-15
Source: Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (Bagan Branch), 2015.

In terms of the distribution of tourists, Figure 2 shows that West Europe Region is the major market accounted for 49 percent in 2014-15 followed by Asia (39.36%), Americas (7.51%), East Europe (1.76%), Oceania (1.33%) and Middle East (1.05%). These figures indicate that Europe and Asia are the major potential markets for the long term because they generate wealthy tourists whose main interest is culture.
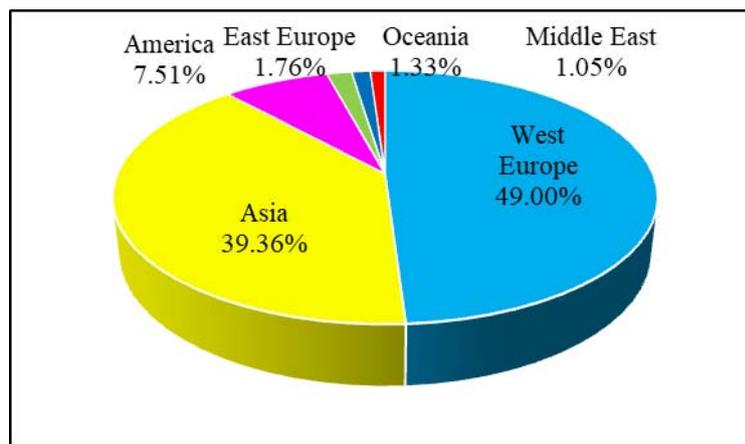
Figure 2. Distribution of tourist arrivals to Bagan by tourist generating countries
in 2014-15
Source: Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (Bagan Branch), 2015.

Tourist satisfaction

Tribe and Snaith (1998) defined tourists' satisfaction with a destination as the degree to which a tourist's assessment of the attributes of that destination exceeds his or her expectations for those attributes. Consumer satisfaction indicates the positive emotion and experience of consumers towards the business. Satisfaction is an outcome experience of meeting or exceeding the expectation of consumers (Engel et al., 2001). Customer satisfaction considerably influences the tourist's choice of a holiday destination (Ahmed, 1991), the consumption of products and services and the decision to visit the destination in the future (Stevens, 1992). Satisfied consumers also have a tendency to repurchase and recommend products to their families and friends. To achieve consumers' satisfaction, businesses must understand consumers' needs to provide products and services that meet or exceed consumers' expectations.

Tourists' satisfaction can be reflected by several attributes such as natural beauty of attractions, impression with arts and cultures, historic attractions blessed with rich architectural style, safety and smoothness of access to attractions, shops and eating places near attractions, friendliness and hospitality of peoples, qualified staff and reasonability of service prices (Qu and Li, 1997, Neal and Gursoy, 2008). Kuo (1999) recognized seven factors that influence customer satisfaction: service content, price, convenience, corporate image, equipment, staff and procedure.

In addition, tourist satisfaction is influenced by demography and travelling patterns. The findings of the past research confirmed that tourist perception of a destination or tourism businesses may vary according to countries of origin (Leong and Li, 1993; Amstrong et al., 1997).

There have been many studies on different aspects of consumers and destination satisfaction in the tourism industry. Tourist destinations attract visitors from different cultures and countries. It is not reasonable to examine the satisfaction level of only one specific group of customers. A comparative analysis between groups is required to better understand the importance of an understanding of different languages, food consumption and other national differences.

III. Research methodology

Research site

Bagan is situated on the eastern bank of Ayeyarwady River in Mandalay Region, Central Myanmar (Figure 3). It lies between north latitudes 21° 07′ - 21° 12′ and east longitudes 94° 52′ - 94° 55′. It is 685 km far from Yangon (former capital of Myanmar) and about 299 km south of Mandalay (second largest city of Myanmar). The range of temperature is as high as 25˚C. Because the mean maximum temperature is 39.2˚C and the mean minimum temperature is 14.2˚C, Nyaung U District belongs to tropical steppe type climate (BSh). It falls within the driest zone, which receives an annual average rainfall of 518.9 mm.

Bagan is generally known as a combination of two towns namely Nyaung U and Bagan Myothit. The study area covers 56.12 km^2 and designated as the Ancient Archaeological Preservation Zone. The majority of the inhabitants are Bamar who profess Buddhism. A few other ethnic groups also reside in this area. There are 44,662 households with a total population of 198,185, out of which 53.83 percent are female and 46.17 percent are male in Nyaung U District (DoP, 2015).

Prior to the development of tourism, local residents have been traditionally engaged in agriculture. With the development of tourism, tourism-related activities have become a new form of livelihood activity of communities (MarLar, 2010).
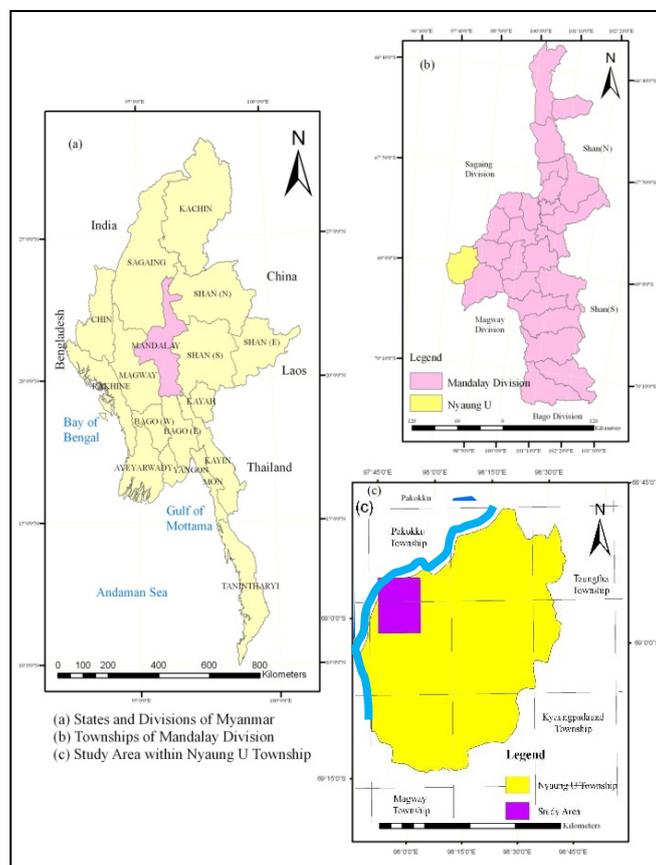
Research instrument

Figure 3. Location of study area
Source: Soe Tint (2010)

The questionnaire was formatted on information from the existing literature. The questionnaire content was also validated by researchers who are specialists in the area of consumer behaviour. The adjustment was made to the three-page questionnaire after the first draft of the questionnaire was piloted among Asian and European tourists visiting in Bagan hotels. The questionnaire was structured with satisfaction factors based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from not at all satisfied (1), slightly satisfied (2), moderately satisfied (3), very satisfied (4), to extremely satisfied (5). The language of survey instrument is in English and consists of three parts which are demography, travelling patterns and their satisfaction and the survey was conducted in 2015.

Sample selection

The target population was the Asian and European tourists who have visited to Bagan. Sample size was calculated using the following Yamane (1967) equation with confidence level of 90% and 10 % error level:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where, n = number of samples
                N = total population

                e = error limit

$$n = \frac{247140}{1 + 247140 * 0.1^2} = 99.95 = 100$$

Data collection

This study approach was a random sample of 100 international tourists from Asia and Europe who visited Bagan during August and December 2015. The study was conducted in private accommodation where the tourists required to stay there. The questionnaire was delivered to only one person of each group and those who were over 15 years old were requested to complete the survey because people in this age are old enough to answer all the survey questions.

Data analysis

Data from completed questionnaires was organized, coded, entered and analysed by using Microsoft Excel and SPSS. The differences in satisfaction between two different nationalities were analysed using statistical analysis which are frequencies, percentages and averages. Finally, the results were displayed in graphical forms and tables wherever necessary.

IV. Findings

Tourism products in Bagan

Bagan is famous for its unique historical and cultural heritage. However, this area was not well-known as popular tourist destination until the early 1980s. The development of tourism requires several attributes that come together to produce the right conditions. The five key elements of tourism comprises attractions, accessibility, accommodation, amenities and activities.

Attractions of Bagan environ

Attractions are key elements that need to be considered in assessing the tourism potential of an area. Tourism Western Australia (2009) defined a tourist attraction as a place of interest that tourists visit, typically for its inherent or exhibited cultural value, historical significance, natural or built beauty, or amusement opportunities. They include historical places, monuments, zoos, museums and art galleries, botanical gardens, buildings and structures, national parks and forests, theme parks and carnivals, ethnic enclave communities, historic trains and cultural events.

Attraction is a vital ingredient of tourism supply. In fact, all the other components of supply depend upon major tourist attractions. Bagan is not only one of the richest archaeological sites in the South-East Asia but also is endowed with cultural heritage attractions, natural attractions and recreational attractions. The majority of these well-preserved shrines, whose architectural beauty continues to offer a rich heritage, were all built from 11th to 13th century (Figure 4). Tourists are greatly attracted by the well-preserved and magnificent temples of Ananda, Shwezigon, Thatbyinnyu, Dhammanyangyi, Sulamuni, Gawdawpalin, Buphaya and so on. The new museum, Nann Myint Viewing Tower is also attracted by tourists (Tint, 2010).

Eco-tourism site, Popa Mountain Park is 1,500 meters high, rising out of the plain. It is an extinct volcano located about 67 km southeast of Bagan. Pakokku and and Salay are also known as the places of interest for hand weaving workshops and antique lacquerware.
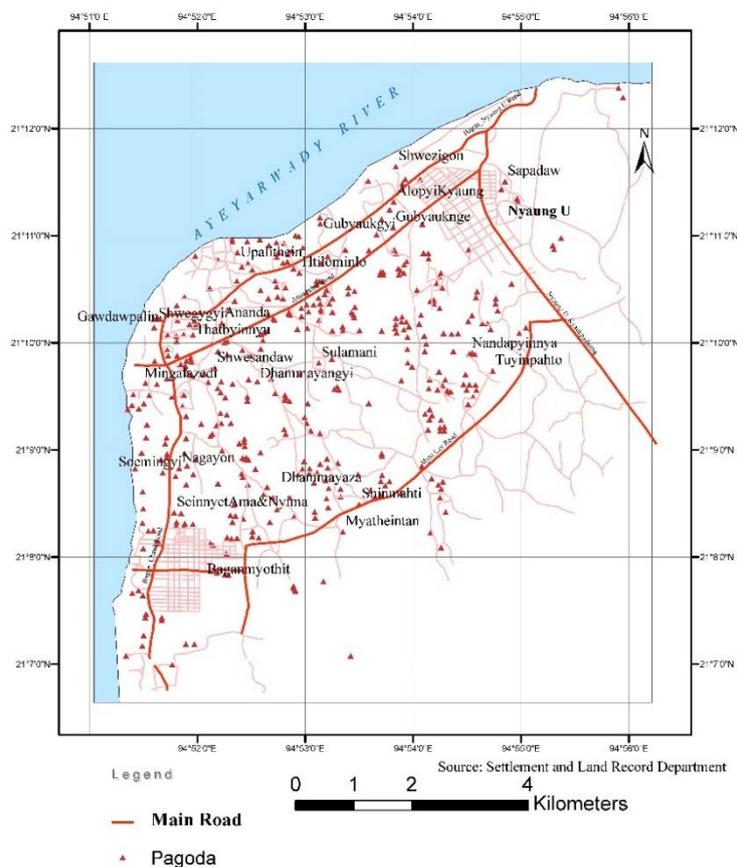

Figure 4. The cultural heritage attractions in Bagan archaeological zone
Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Pakokku is a typical upper Myanmar market town, with a large and bustling market, a cigar factory and hand weaving workshops. Tourists can see the ancient walls and visit the museum and a spectacular 19th century wood carved monastery and ancient monastery.

Accessibility to Bagan

Transport is needed to physically move tourists from where they live to where they are visiting. Globally, air transport dominates the movement of international visitors. The major requirements for visitor access include: safe and convenient public transport (especially for international visitors), well signed and maintained roads, parking facilities at major attractions, links between transport modes and attractions, public transport from parking areas to the site of activities.

There are a number of different modes of travel to Bagan. It is easily accessible by car, by flight, by train from Yangon and Mandalay where there are international airports. Motor road links between Yangon and Bagan and Mandalay and Bagan. Overland, express buses will take about twelve hours from Yangon and seven hours from Mandalay to Bagan. There are private taxis and bicycles to roam around in Bagan. There were two-daily scheduled trains between Yangon and Mandalay, two-daily trains between Yangon and Bagan, and one-daily train between Mandalay and Bagan. Bagan-Nyaug U is a river port, located on the east bank of Ayeyarwady River, having good access to riverine transportation. Passengers and cargo vessels, large boats, motor boats and ferryboats service by private, co-operative and government ply up and down in this area. There are river cruises to and from Mandalay and Bagan.
In Bagan-Nyaung U, airline service is an essential part of the tourism industry. Bagan-Nyaung U Airport is located about four miles south of Nyaung U. There are daily flights from Yangon to Bagan as well as regular flights, which take only 20 minutes from Mandalay. Yangon Airways, Air Mandalay, Myanmar Airways and Air Bagan provide the carrier flights. Bagan also has a direct link to Thailand and China.

Accommodation in Bagan
All destinations need accommodation nearby otherwise tourists will have nowhere to sleep. This seems basic enough but investors will only invest in accommodation infrastructure if there is sufficient economic return.

In Bagan, there was only one hotel – the Thiripyitsaya Hotel, which is state-owned, opened in 1972. The Golden Express Hotel opened in 1992 at the northeastern part of the Baganmyohaung. In order to fulfil the needs of increasing tourists, a number of hotels have been established and it rose to 20 in 1995 and 78 hotels in 2015 (Figure 5).

The major distribution of hotel is located around the commercial centre of Nyaung U with 29 hotels and guesthouses. In addition, 25 hotels and guesthouses are in the southwest of Bagan which is in Baganmyothit along the Khayae and the Myatlay roads. There is an old cluster of hotels in the west of Bagan which used to consist of Thiripyitsaya Sakura Hotel, Bagan Hotel and Bagan Thande Hotel.

Amenities

Amenities are the services that are required to meet the needs of tourists while they are away from home. They include public toilets, signage, retail shopping, restaurants and cafes, visitor centres, telecommunications and emergency services.

In Mount Popa, Radio Carrier Station was constructed for auto radiophone. In Bagan, there are one digital auto telephone office, one auto radiotelephone office, two post offices, one telegraph office, 964 auto telephones, 317 auto radio telephones and 48 dial telephones in 2006. However, a mobile penetration rate is significantly being increased after 2012. Internet service and DHL service cater to tourists as well as locals. Although telecom and Internet facilities are available for tourists in Bagan and major towns, service standards are frequently low (GAD, 2016).

Tourists need not only a place to sleep but also a wide range of services that ensure a pleasant stay. Eating is a necessity as well as a pleasure for tourists. Restaurants, food and beverage of Bagan offer a wide selection of Myanmar, Chinese, Indian, Thailand, Italian, and Western food items. Some hotels have restaurants and there are some independent restaurants suitable for tourists in Bagan. Besides, private restaurants offer Myanmar and Chinese food in another tourist area.

The quality and availability of international-standard health services in Bagan is limited. While access to clean water and sanitation is improving, there is still significant unmet demand, particularly in Bagan environ.
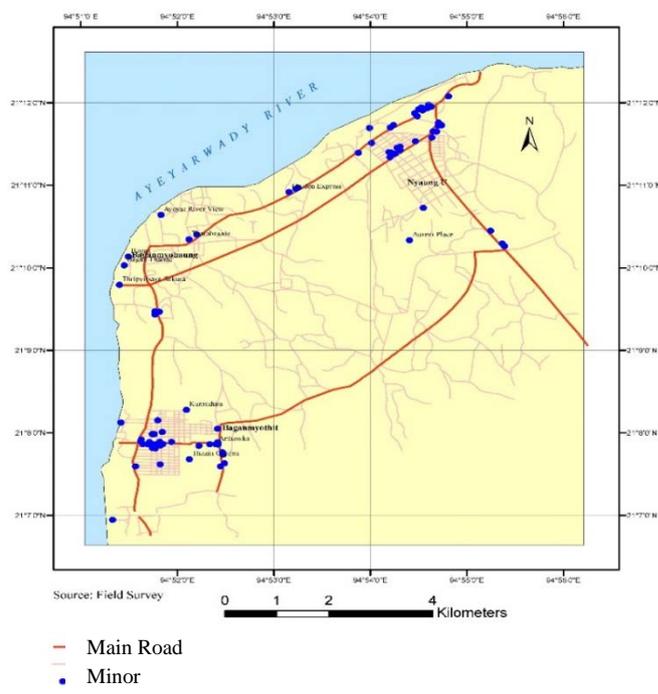
Activities

Figure 5 The distribution of accommodation in Bagan archaeological zone
Source: Field survey, 2015.

Attractions are often supported by a range of activities. Activities provide interesting or entertaining diversions for people once they are in the area. Activities add variety and can make a visit more enjoyable, but it is important to understand that they cannot replace attractions.

Bagan Golf Club is 10 minutes' drive from Baganmyohaung which is the most attractive sightseeing point. Visitors now have the unique opportunity to enjoy spectacular views of the ancient Kingdom of Bagan in a hot air balloon which can accommodate 12 passengers in four compartments.

Traditional lacquerware, the main industry of Bagan today and tourists can observe the making process of lacquerware. There were 95 lacquerware shops and 6 painting shops in 2015. Wood and ivory carving, tapestries, silverware, brassware, silk and cotton fabric and traditional garments are some of the favourite items. Manisithu Market which is at the junction of Nyaung U-Kyaukpadaung Road and Nyaung U-Bagan Road, sell handicrafts, foodstuffs, puppets, souvenir shops etc.

Ananda Temple Festival is one of the famous festivals which is held for one week preceding the Full Moon Day of Pyatho, usually in January. Shwezigon Pagoda Festival runs from the full moon day of Tazaungmone, usually in October. The Manuha Pagoda Festival is an amazing donation at such a time.

Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics and travel behaviour of the tourists from two generating regions. Results from descriptive statistics found that there was a significant difference between the gender of Asian and European tourists visiting Bagan. Male European tourists accounted for 5 percent, which was slightly less than Asian counterparts (54%). Over 60 percent of Asian tourists were married which was significantly higher in number than European tourists (45%). The slight difference was observed between the two age groups in which age group of 25–50 was slightly higher in number in the Asian tourists (60%) than European tourists (56%). Fifty-five percent of European tourists were employed which was slightly higher in number than their Asian counterparts (50%). However, those who are self-employed were of lower rate in European tourists.

Trip characteristics of the respondents

There was a great difference between the type of holiday taken by Asian and European tourists visiting Bagan. The purpose of European tourists was leisure (70%) and their number was higher than Asian tourists (60%). However, Asian tourists were more likely to travel for business purpose (10%) than European counterparts (5%). Comparison of travel arrangement, Asian tourists were more likely to choose a package tour (65%) than those of European counterparts (48%). European tourists were more likely than Asian tourists to stay in Bagan. Comparing the average length of stay between the two groups, it was slightly higher in European tourists who stayed three days than in Asian tourists who usually stays two days. In terms of repeat visits, approximately 20 percent of European tourists and 5 percent of Asian tourists had been to Bagan on holiday at least once before. In comparison, the monthly income of European tourists accounted for 69 percent which was significantly higher than Asian tourist (28%) in terms of income earned over 2000

USD. It was observed that the trip spending of European tourists was higher than that of spending of Asian tourists which were 50 percent for former and 43 percent for the latter.

Table 1. Comparison between demographic and trip characteristics of Asian and European tourist in Bagan in 2015

Demographic characteristics and behavior		Asia (n=100)	Europe (n=100)
		%	%
Gender	Male	54	51
	Female	46	49
Marital status	Single	35	55
	Married	65	45
Age	1-24	19	21
	25-50	60	56
	51+	21	23
Employment status	Student	20	25
	Employed	50	55
	Self-employed	20	10
	Retired	5	7
	Other	5	3
Education	High school	14	19
	Graduate	78	72
	Post graduate	8	9
Travel arrangement	Package tour	65	48
	FIT	35	52
Purpose of trip	Leisure	60	70
	Business	10	5
	VFR	1	0
	MICE	4	10
	Others	25	15
Stay	Avg. length of stay	2	3
Visitation	First	95	80
	Repeat	5	20
Monthly income (USD)	< 500	9	0
	501-1000	17	8
	1001-2000	46	23
	Over 2000	28	69
Spending pattern	Activities	43	50
	Shopping	30	25
	Meals	27	25

Source: Field survey, 2015.

Satisfaction levels of Asian and European tourists

Participants were asked to give the rating on a five-point Likert Scale, in which one (1) indicated "not at all satisfied", (2) for "slightly satisfied, (3) for "moderately satisfied", (4) for very satisfied and (5) indicated "extremely satisfied". Table 2 presents the mean scores of Asian and European tourists' satisfaction on each component of Bagan area's attributes. The scores obtained from each question were computed for mean and standard deviation to obtain the satisfaction scores for comparing the satisfaction level of both groups of tourists. There were a total of twenty nine questions of five key elements of tourism in Bagan area. The attributes of each component were ranked from the highest to the lowest satisfaction levels. Tourists' satisfaction from two generating countries was commonly positive. They rated their satisfaction level on the Bagan area attributes high, over a value of neutral apart from accessibilities and amenities attributes.

With regards to attraction attribute, both groups largely rated it between moderately satisfied to extremely satisfied. In comparison, European tourists found the attraction attributable to be more satisfactory ($\bar{x} = 4.50, 4.54$) than Asian tourists ($\bar{x} = 4.34, 4.27$) on the ancient monument and architectural design of temples. In addition, European tourists were more satisfied with the traditional ways of living and friendliness of local people than their Asian counterparts. The authenticity of attractions was rated the lowest ($\bar{x} = 3.05, 3.16$) in both groups of tourists but there was no significant difference between them.

Asian tourists' satisfaction was high on services of accommodation ($\bar{x} = 3.39$) while European tourists rated on inadequate water and electricity supply ($\bar{x} = 3.47$). These two groups had the lowest satisfaction on prices of accommodation which gave the value of less than three. However, European tourists were more satisfied with clean accommodation ($\bar{x} = 3.31$), and staff qualification ($\bar{x} = 3.25$) including English speaking and customer care than those of Asian tourist who gave scores ($\bar{x} = 3.07$) and ($\bar{x} = 3.14$) respectively.

Concerning the accessibilities to the Bagan area and around the area by both groups of tourists were less satisfied. However, convenient and comfort road was found to be more satisfactory by Asian tourists ($\bar{x} = 2.82$) than the European tourists ($\bar{x} = 2.77$). For the price of transport services and frequency there were no significant differences between the two groups of tourists in their ratings.

With regards to amenities, European tourists were slightly more satisfied with currency exchange ($\bar{x} = 2.97$), internet access ($\bar{x} = 3.08$), safety and security ($\bar{x} = 3.37$), and clear directional signage ($\bar{x} = 2.7$) than the Asian counterparts. But, Asian tourists were more satisfied with local food ($\bar{x} = 2.93$), the price of souvenirs ($\bar{x} = 2.8$), hygiene and sanitation ($\bar{x} = 2.44$) and health care ($\bar{x} = 2.81$) than European tourists. Although both groups rated the safety and security of Bagan environ to be moderately satisfied, the Asian tourists were more concerned that of the European tourists.

Table 2. Mean scores of tourists' satisfaction on attributes of Bagan tourism industry

Attributes	Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attractions				
Ancient monument	Asia	100	4.34	0.67
	Europe	100	4.50	0.50
Architectural style	Asia	100	4.27	0.57
	Europe	100	4.54	0.50
Authenticity	Asia	100	3.05	0.59
	Europe	100	3.16	0.47
Climate	Asia	100	3.87	0.66
	Europe	100	3.90	0.63
Traditional ways of living	Asia	100	4.28	0.60
	Europe	100	4.49	0.50
Friendliness of people	Asia	100	4.08	0.72
	Europe	100	4.01	0.72
Accommodation				
Clean accommodation	Asia	100	3.07	0.64
	Europe	100	3.31	0.53
Adequate water and electricity supply	Asia	100	3.47	0.70
	Europe	100	3.46	0.74
Services at accommodation	Asia	100	3.39	0.70
	Europe	100	3.39	0.70
Reasonable prices	Asia	100	2.57	0.50
	Europe	100	2.56	0.50
Quality of food	Asia	100	3.01	0.61
	Europe	100	3.06	0.57
Qualified staff	Asia	100	3.14	0.57
	Europe	100	3.25	0.48
Accessibilities				
Convenient and comfort road	Asia	100	2.82	0.58
	Europe	100	2.77	0.49
Price of transport services	Asia	100	2.86	0.51
	Europe	100	2.87	0.46
Frequency of transport services	Asia	100	2.53	0.50
	Europe	100	2.50	0.50

Attributes	Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Amenities				
Enjoying local food	Asia	100	2.93	0.64
	Europe	100	2.66	0.57
Credit cards	Asia	100	2.55	0.50
	Europe	100	2.47	0.50
Currency exchange	Asia	100	2.81	0.49
	Europe	100	2.97	0.46
Internet access	Asia	100	3.00	0.49
	Europe	100	3.08	0.37
Price of souvenirs	Asia	100	2.80	0.43
	Europe	100	2.65	0.48
Hygiene and sanitation	Asia	100	2.44	0.50
	Europe	100	2.39	0.65
Clear directional signage	Asia	100	2.61	0.53
	Europe	100	2.70	0.48
Health care services	Asia	100	2.81	0.42
	Europe	100	2.79	0.41
Safety and security	Asia	100	3.19	0.47
	Europe	100	3.37	0.49
Activities				
Traditional music and cultural shows	Asia	100	2.98	0.57
	Europe	100	3.74	0.71
Cycling	Asia	100	3.64	0.52
	Europe	100	3.90	0.60
Hot air balloons over Bagan	Asia	100	3.45	0.61
	Europe	100	3.59	0.57
Festival in Bagan	Asia	100	3.50	0.70
	Europe	100	3.40	0.73
Nightlife	Asia	100	1.93	0.64
	Europe	100	1.47	0.50

Source: Field survey, 2015.

Except for the traditional music and cultural shows, cycling and hot air balloons over Bagan and the rest of the attributes which are related to activities, Asian tourists were more satisfied than those of European tourists. Among the attributes, cycling was found to be the most satisfactory by European tourists ($\bar{x} = 3.9$) and satisfacation of nightlife was rated as the lowest while the Asian tourists have given the highest score on the festival in the Bagan ($\bar{x} = 3.5$) but nightlife was also rated as the lowest. However, there

were no significant differences found on nightlife and festival in Bagan area between the two groups of tourists.

Overall level of tourist satisfaction on Bagan Area

Among five elements of Bagan tourism, attractions were rated the highest between the values of four to five, or between very satisfied to extremely satisfied and followed by attributes on activities, accommodation, and amenities. The level of satisfaction on accessibilities was the lowest. The overall satisfaction levels of Asian tourists and European tourists are shown in Figure 6. In comparison, European tourists were more satisfied ($\bar{x} = 4.16$) than those of Asian counterparts ($\bar{x} = 3.97$) on attraction component.
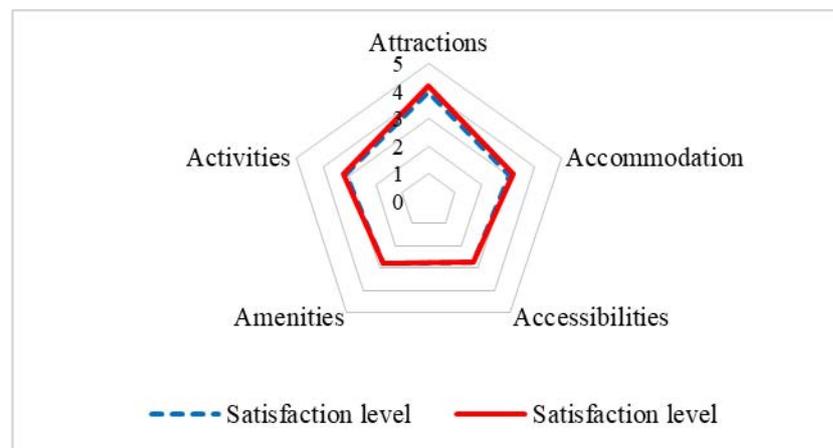

Figure 6. Levels of satisfaction according to regions in 2015
Source: Field survey, 2015.

The levels of satisfaction on activities and accommodation were rated between the values of three to four or between moderately to very satisfied. Asian tourists were less satisfied ($\bar{x} = 3.22$) on activities component than those of the European tourists ($\bar{x} = 3.10$). A similar level of satisfaction was found on accommodation between these two groups. The attributes related to accessibilities and amenities were rated the lowest with the value of less than three or moderately satisfied. There was a slight difference between the two groups on their satisfaction level.

V. Discussion and conclusion

This study mainly investigated the satisfaction levels of tourists from two generating countries, Asia and Europe towards their visit to historic city Bagan across 29 destination attributes and to study problems, which occurred during their stay in Bagan. In the whole study questionnaire information collected was subsequently used in the analysis of the data. Then data were analysed by using statistical analysis which are frequencies, percentages and averages.

The findings suggest that tourists from two different regions have different levels of satisfaction with five elements of Bagan tourism. European tourists are more satisfied with attributes concerning attractions, accommodation, amenities, and activities while Asians are less satisfied with such attributes. Generally, the findings have shown that

tourists are more satisfied with historic monuments, architecture, authenticity and traditional ways of living of the local residents.

However, both groups of tourists are concerned about accessibilities to Bagan, local transport services, the price of accommodation, hygiene and sanitation which are rated as less satisfaction level. Entertainment such as nightlife is the least satisfied by both groups. The findings suggest that not only the infrastructure should be improved but also better hospitality and services should be provided to tourists.

The finding also suggests that although the tourists enjoy social activities and interacting with others during the trip, one of the main concerns for tourist is safety and security. In Bagan area, although there is a Tourist Police service, it is advisable to have effective and strong service to prevent potential crime in destination area e.g., theft, pickpocketing, etc. the Government has a responsibility in ensuring safety and security.

Not only the government but also tourism stakeholders have played a crucial role in planning, regulating, and coordinating tourism development. Since the tourism industry consists of various sectors, the local government should encourage the collaboration of in every sector relating to tourism in promoting sustainable tourism. As tourist satisfaction is high on attraction attributes, monitoring of tourist satisfaction should be implemented on a continuous basis. Tourism promotion agencies and travel companies should not only focus on promoting the Myanmar culture and custom but also encourage people to be aware of proper preservation of the national heritage of the country.

According to interviews, most of the tourists feel that room rates are more much expensive, especially in high season than in neighbouring countries. To increase satisfaction, the tourism authority and respective tourism operators should control the price of products and services of Bagan tourism not to increase the cost too much. Most of the tourists suggest that hygiene and sanitation should be improved, and community-based tourism are also important for tourism development. If such a situation is not controlled, the market will move to the neighbouring countries, which is the transit country for most visitors to Myanmar and can offer similar natural and cultural attraction with better facilities.

The current research results will serve as a basis for tourism development in Bagan area. However, this study reveals that future research should be conducted to obtain the reliable results by increasing the number of nationalities and destinations as well as by comparing the differences and similarities of travel behaviours according to their demography. The repetition of the similar survey would confirm the reliability of these findings. In addition, the generalisation of the findings could be done with caution for each destination with its own uniqueness.

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