

A STUDY OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN A HISTORICAL PLACE OF MYANMAR, BAGAN

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Abstract

This article aims to explore tourism development in Bagan based on general information particularly transportation, accommodation and attraction. The article will present projects for tourism development in the areas. The arrival of International visitors to Bagan which can directly contribute national income generation and employments. Its generated 338,500 job national wide during 2013 (1.2%) of total employment and MMK 849. 6bn (1.6% of GDP). Although service and facilities are weak, transportation and accommodation are currently upgrading in Bagan and expected to have enough soon. The Survey result show that most of visitors satisfied with attraction and activities in Bagan. Tourism development is national priority for Myanmar government. Presently for tourism development master plan being implemented with corporation of government of Norway and Asian development Bank. Tourism development in Bagan a three year project (JICA) Japan International Corporation Agency is jointly implemented with Myanmar government since 2013. These projects set up strategy direction and preparation for tourism development in Myanmar. As a result of research the strong demand to visit Myanmar and current trends suggest that visitor arrivals will increase to rise sharply. Research survey result show that the satisfaction of services and facilities of transportation, accommodation in Bagan are 25%, 34% each. After training human resource management team for tourism development in Bagan, expected to provide more facilities and services in 2016 -onward. Statistic of International Tourist arrivals to Bagan were 230,129 till December 2014 -most arrival visitors by nationality –USA (1st), Thailand (2nd), Japan (3rd) and total arrival visitors to Bagan in 2013 were 170796. Most arrival visitors by nationality – Thailand (1st), Japan (2nd). Tourism directly associate poverty reduction and socio economic progress through employment and income generation. According to survey result show that most of the visitors satisfied with attraction and activities in Bagan, transportation, accommodation are lack satisfied. Transportation and accommodation are still need to improve including facilities and services. Moreover,

to sustain tourism development need to set-up rules and laws, train local people and let them know to benefit from its so that they can preserve and protect existing sites.

Although there are some weakness and threat in Myanmar such as lack of trained human resources, insufficient public service, infrastructure, and financial system, having outstanding historic, natural and cultural heritage with renowned friendliness of Myanmar people, Bagan has potential to become one of the top 10 tourism attraction places if government and tourism development put enough funds into rehabilitating the historical pagodas, protecting the environment, promoting the Bagan image more, encouraging foreign and future investors.

Keywords: Bagan Tourism development cooperation with ADB / Tourism contribution to Economy

Introduction

Tourism business is priority to the development of country. Its can generate national income, and employments being directly impact to the nation and people, most of the countries implemented tourism business as a key driver for socio-economic progress.

Myanmar is also a nation trying to improve tourism business but there are many things to do dealing with tourism development such as government sectors, private sectors, and tour operators. By realizing this, ministry of hotel and tourism and (JICA) Japan International Cooperation Agency jointly implemented a three year projects of tourism development in Bagan. The program aims to development tourism management, infrastructure development and human resources in the region. Having genuine hospitality and rich cultural heritages in Southeast Asia, international visitors rapidly increase to visit to Myanmar. Ministry of Hotel and tourism report said that during 2013 visitor arrived 2.8 million, in 2014 arrival of international visitor were 3.8 million and expected to arrive during 2015-2016, 4.5 million. (Ministry of hotel and tourism, Myanmar tourism statistic 2014)

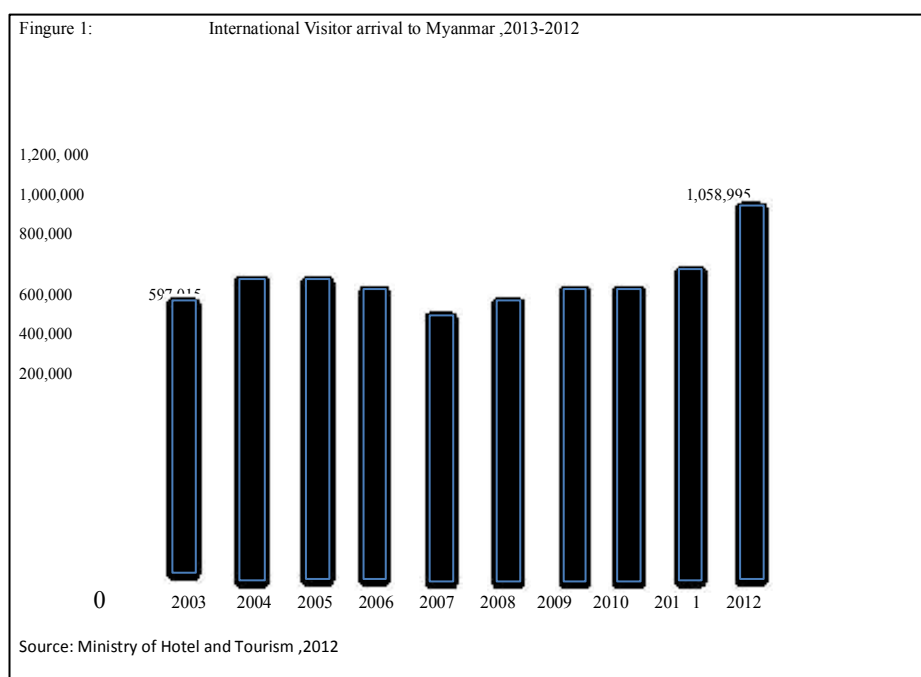
Bagan is one of the richest archaeological sites in Asia. The age of Bagan was from AD 407 to AD 1369 located in eastern bank of the Ayeyarwaddy river in central Myanmar. Containing over 2000 well preserved pagodas and temples of the 11th, 13th century. It is one of the main tourist destination, and rapidly increase international tourist attraction yearly, even though no sufficient accommodation and transportation. According to ministry of Hotel and Tourism report said that Bagan region attracted 170,796 tourists during 2013 and in 2014 total international visitors arrived to Bagan 230,129 .

The objective of the study

This study aims to provide the finding which may be developed as a guideline for government sectors of ministry of hotel tourism in Myanmar, and travel companies, hotels industry including private sectors of local residences to sustain tourism development in Bagan.

Research background

Tourism development is mostly depend on an environmental factors before 2010 during military period, there were many problems such as visa problems, political problems, transportation and accommodation problems. International visitors unwilling to visit to Myanmar. As a result of remarkable reform, between 2011 and 2012 visitors arrival increased 29.7%. It was first time receiving international visitors over 1 million in Myanmar history. Figure 1 show that

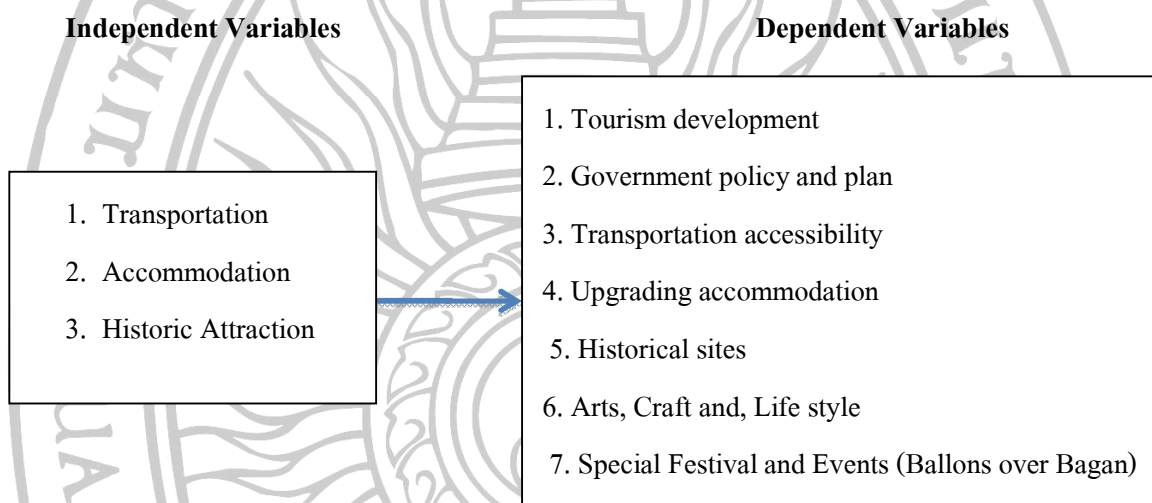


Tourism is an important economic activity in most countries around the world. Its is direct an indirect contribute to national GDP and employment. According to travel & tourism economic impact 2014 report said that the direct contribution of travel & tourism to GDP in Myanmar during 2013 was MMK 849.6 bn (1.6% of GDP) This is forecast to rise by 9.5% to MMK 930.4 bn in 2014 .

Travel & Tourism generated 338,500 job directly in Myanmar during 2013 (1.2% of total employment) and this is forecast to grow 12.0% in 2014 to 379,000 (1.3% of total employment)

Conceptual framework

There are three independent variables which are transportation, accommodations and attraction. And seven dependent variables which are tourism development, transportation accessibility, upgrading accommodation, ancient pagodas, temple and monuments, Bagan arts and craft, lacquer ware, life style, special festivals and events balloons over Bagan.



Literature Review

Tourism and economic development directly associate through employment and income generation, and indirectly through its contribution to improve health, education, and transportation service, economic linkage. According to statistic of Ministry of Hotel and Tourism, before 2010 during Military government, there were many problems which is international visitor avoided to visit to Myanmar. As a result of remarkable reform, international visitors rapidly increase. By realizing this, government of Myanmar set up tourism development plan corporation with Norway, Asian development bank and JICA. Tourism development master plan set up in 2013 and the project period is from 2013 to 2020. This plan included transportation master plan and upgrading accommodation, hotel zone areas. **The goal of this master plan is to maximize tourism's contribution to national employment and income generation while ensuring that the social and economic benefits of tourism are distributed equitably.** For the

regional tourism development, government of Myanmar implement corporation with Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA) in Bagan regional tourism development project.

The program aim to develop tourism management, infrastructure development and human resources development in Bagan. The current activities of JICA's expert team is establishing a Bagan tourism website, building tourism information centers and constructing view points and tourism routes. However, knowledge around the impact of tourism development in Bagan is still limited. The study finds that tourism development in Bagan is viewed as having both a direct and indirect influence upon transportation, accommodation, and attraction. There are still problems unfixed remaining such as the poor infrastructures, student travel restrictions to tourists, the lack of ATMs and mobile phone and Internet speed, and the big problems for tourists came from developed countries will find some hotels disappoint since payments by credit card is not acceptable.

Research method

This study is a qualitative research will be selected as the methodology. In general, qualitative research is based on three different kinds of data collection methods: interviews, observation, and written documents.

The Bagan regional tourism development

According to the Director of Hotel and Tourism (Bagan Sub-office) up to 16 initial projects will be implemented under the Bagan Region Tourism Development Project. The projects will be included under three categories which are development of Tourism management, infrastructure development and human resource development. The current activities of JICA's expert team is establishing a Bagan tourism website, building tourism information centers and constructing view points and tourism routes.

From January 2015 to the end of September 2015, over 160,000 tourists visited Bagan, and the area is expected to see more tourists in 2015 than it did in 2014, said Khin Maung Kyi, director of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Bagan Sub-office).

List of tourism- related operators in Bagan.

1. Myanmar hoteller association.
2. Myanmar travel association.
3. Myanmar tourist guide association.

4. Myanmar restaurant association.

5. Myanmar souvenir enterpreneurs association.

Register tour guide in Bagan

The total of register tour guide in Bagan is (232), including (107) tourist guide is regional tour guide in Bagan. (elevenmyanmar.com, bagan region tourism development project, n.d.)

Total arrival of tourism in Bagan during 2014 was 230,129 till December 2014- most arrival visitors by nationality –USA (1st), Thailand (2nd), Japan (3rd).

Total arrival visitors to Bagan during 2013 were 170796. Most arrival visitors by nationality – Thailand (1st), Japan (2nd).

According to figures compiled by ministry of Hotels and tourism more than 125,000 international visitors arrive to Bagan in 2011 and increase more than 77500 visitors first six month form Januar 2012 to June 2012. Government of Myanmar recognize that transportation infrastructure critically influences tourism development potential. Therefore, the ministry of transport (MOT) intends to prepare transport master plan to harmonize future transport planning with the new state constitution, intergrate plans of different transport subsectors and promote domestic connectivity and multimodal transport network. Current transportation to Bagan are ---

1. Bagan International Airport. 2. Daily flights between Yangoon and Bagan. 3. Regular express coach service and express trains. 4. A double –decker steamer service and luxury Curise “Road to Mandalay” between Mandalay and Bagan.

Current Accommodation in Bagan

Bagan Currently has 78 hotels and guest houses with a total of 2,565 rooms. In 2012 there were (75) Hotels and Lodging houses with (2196) rooms, three hotels, 369 rooms improved but accommodations were still insufficient in the region for high season. Although some five- star properties offer facilities and services comparable with the best hotel in region, more need to be done to improve standards in a middle and lower at the ends of market. With highly demand of accommodation in Bagan, Bagan hotel zone project has been implementing in Bagan Nyaung Oo. Planing areas of hotel zone project is about 1260 Acres and the estimated cost for project is 165 million USD. Expect to have enough and standard accommodation, transportation will facilitate soon with increasing of daily tourists arriving Bagan.

Attraction

1. Historical sites, 2. Arts, Craft, and Life style, 3. Special festival and Events. (Balloons over Bagan)

SWOT Analysis

Strengths Tourism is a national priority. Rapidly increasing visitor arrivals. Outstanding historic, natural and cultural heritage. Renowned friendliness of Myanmar people. New destination with extensive international media exposure. Commitment to effective and efficient Government	Weakness Lack of trained human resources. Insufficient public service, Infrastructure, and financial system. Weak regulatory environment. Insufficient coordination among and between private and public sectors. Lack of accurate tourism information.
Opportunity Strategic location between the people's Republic of China and India. Robust market demand. Increase foreign direct investment and public revenue. Job creation. Technology transfer. Intercultural exchanged with international visitors.	Threat Visitor perception of poor value for money. Negative economics, social and environmental impacts. Global economic instability and climate change. Natural disaster. Communal violent

Although there are some threat and weakness such as natural disaster and communal violent which were recently occurred in Myanmar and lack of trained human resources, insufficient public service, infrastructure and financial system but being located strategic location of between two country Republic of China and India, Myanmar has opportunities and strength such as increase foreign direct investment and public revenue, outstanding historic, natural and cultural heritage with renowned friendliness of its people. Commitment to effective and efficient government policy and plan, Bagan has potential to become one of the top ten tourism attraction place in the world.

Research finding

In November – December 2012, a survey of 400 departing visitors (mostly at Yangon International Airport) determined that the primary purpose of travel to Myanmar was for a holiday (77%). The typical respondent was older than 35 years of age (70%) and University -educated (78%). Most were traveling independently (67%) either alone or in small group, and average length of stay for his cohort was 13.8 night. This is likely due to the survey's bias toward European visitors, who formed 58% of the sample size and stay an average 15.1 nights. In comparison, Asian visitors accounted for 19% of the sample and stayed an average of 6.3 nights. In the Bagan region, length of stay for European visitors 3.4 days on the other hand, for Asian visitors stay 2-3 days. Across total sample, averages daily expenditure was around \$100 (excluding accommodation). Activities and tour accounted for the most spending (43%), followed by shopping (23%) and meals (7%). The averages tours spend \$125 per night for accommodation 25% of respondents spend between \$200 and \$299 per night for a Hotel in Yangon and Bagan. Seventy -seven percent were on their first trip to Bagan, 9.3 percent on their second visit and 3.3% had visited more than ten time. About 98% wanted to learn more about Myanmar' culture and history, 90% sought to sample Myanmar' cuisine, and 83% expressed interest in visiting protest areas. Prior to visiting, the main source of information about Myanmar was the internet (27%); (20%) of visitor used guidebooks and (13%) relied on word of mouth.

Target Market

According to the research report done by Myanmar Ministry of Hotel and Tourism (MHT), USA, Thailand, Japan, China tourists are the top ones on the list of the number of tourists in Bagan each year. Based on the statistic that mentioned on above, it would be wise, If USA, Thailand, Japan nationality tourists are going to target. It is can not be denied among other nationalities tourist, Thailand, Japan USA, China tourists are know as cultural and religious tourists and they are keen on experiencing difficult cultures, and world heritage sites in the country, explore the experience of the diverse way of life other people, reflecting all the social customs, religious traditions and ancient architecture.

Satisfaction with the visitor experience:**Most satisfied****Least satisfied**

Choice of deferent activities /things to do (75%)	Value for money accommodation (34%)
Ease of access to cultural /historical attractions (74%)	Cleanness of transportation options (25%)
	Availability of information on destinations (22%)
	Choice of transportations options destinations (21%)

Discussion and Conclusions

Tourism directly associate poverty reduction through employment and income generation, and indirectly through its contribution to improve health, education, and transportation services, economic linkage. Although Myanmar received second lowest share of arrivals in ASEAN during 2012 (1.2%) annual growth was the highest in the region. Market demand for specialized products suggests good potential 14.653 visitors took river cruise and more that 8.00 bough ballon tour in 2012. Most of the tourists usually coming to Bagan by flight, by river, by car from Mandalay & Yangoon. And, the last transportation highly recommended since visitors can explore and experience random crazy things that gone wrong something like involving spending time with locals, find out what do those local people do for a living that cannot be found on any guide book. And, try to get package that includes a ballon flight over the temple site which is really superb and priceless.

In fact, tourism development interrelated with security, transportation, accommodation attraction. Less security and insufficient transportation, accommodation and attraction tourism will not be developed. Most of the tourists interesting to visit functional, clean and not polluted environment.

Today, Bagan is not only tourism destination but also a commercial place for investment. Myanmar ministry of hotel and tourism permitted to open one foreign invested hotel with 127 room in Bagan. Many of local people would like to invest in Bagan because of daily increase tourism arrival and its direct impact to improve income generation and job opportunity. Its help for local and national income and employment. Being a heart of Myanmar people, tourism development is prior as well as preservation and protection must be undertaken. For this perception, Ministry of Hotel and Tourism corporate with ministry of culture to maintain historic and cultural sites. Although most of visitors satisfied with

attraction and activities in Bagan, transportation, accommodation are lack satisfied. Transportation and accommodation are still need to improve including facilities and services. Moreover, to sustain tourism development need to set-up rules and laws, train local people and let them know to benefit from its so that they can preserve and protect existing sites. Needless to say, Bagan has potential to become one of the top 10 tourism attraction places if government and tourism development put enough funds into rehabilitating the historical pagodas, protecting the environment, promoting the Bagan 'image more' encouraging foreign and future investors, and etc.

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