

ABSTRACT

Cultural heritage tourism is the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry because there is trend toward an increased specialization among tourists. This trend is evident in the rise in the volume of tourists who seek adventure, culture, history, archaeology and interaction with local people.

This study attempts to investigate the pre and post trip perceptions of foreign tourists about Bagan (Myanmar) as a Cultural Heritage Destination. The study also explores the demographic and travel behavior characteristics of foreign tourists about the overall satisfaction with Bagan as a Cultural Heritage Destination. The study area is Bagan, Myanmar. The data was collected using the convenience sampling survey method. The questionnaires were distributed to 200 foreign tourists.

The expectancy-disconfirmation theory provided a conceptual framework for this study. Appropriate statistical analyses such as descriptive analysis, factor analysis, correlation analysis, Independent Simple *t*-test, Paired Simple *t*-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used according to the objectives of this study.

The factor analysis led to test the perception of 15 destination attributes loaded into four factors; Tour Component, Commercial, Recreation and Cultural Heritage. Moreover, by using correlation analysis, all four factors were found related to overall satisfaction. It was found out that there is no significant difference between expectation and perception of foreign tourists on museums, galleries, festivals, religious places, shopping places, information centers and souvenirs. And there is a significant difference between expectation and perception of foreign tourists on the historical buildings, scenic

beauty (nature), food (regional specialty), people (hospitality), accessibility, accommodations, tour packages (city sight seeing), and guides.

Finding also indicates that there is a significant difference between demographic characteristics and overall satisfaction of foreign tourists in terms of gender, age levels, and their educational levels and there is no significant difference between the overall satisfaction of foreign tourists in terms of country and monthly income. It was also observed that there is no difference between selected travel behavior characteristics and overall satisfaction of foreign tourists in terms of past experience, time of travel, length of stay, membership in a group, and source of information.

In addition, from the results of this study, some recommendations can be made to increase tourists' satisfaction with the Bagan Cultural Heritage destination. Firstly, comprehending what tourists seek at cultural heritage attractions and secondly, identifying and concentrating on selected attributes that satisfy the tourists visiting cultural heritage destinations will help tourism planners develop appropriate strategies to attract their customers and serve them effectively.

Finally, knowing the ways to satisfy the tourists may help reduce marketing costs and maintain cultural heritage destinations' sustainability.