

TOWARDS A TOURISM INDUSTRY DRIVEN ECONOMY IN SALAY, CHAUK TOWNSHIP, MAGWAY REGION*

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Abstract

Myanmar has many tourist attractions in cultural, architectural objects, religious monuments, historic sites and other interesting places. Among them, one of the tourist attraction sites is Salay. Salay is located on the eastern bank of Ayeyarwady River in Central Myanmar. Salay has good transportation as it is situated not more than 35.41 kilometers (22 miles) far away from famous archaeological area Bagan and it also has Yoke Sone Kyaung built in AD 1882, Museum of Myanmar famous writer U Pone Nya in 1812-1867, Lacquerware “Man” pagoda built in AD1300 and so on. As tourism can help develop the socio-economy of a region, tourism development potential of the local people in the surrounding areas is focused to be able to give practicable suggestions for further development of socio-economic conditions in the study area. The main aim of this study is to examine how tourism industry determines socio- economic development of local people in Salay and its environ. The first objective is to study the current situation of Salay and environ as a tourism destination. The second objective is to analyze tourism as key factor for local economy. This is to seek out the important factors for the development of effective marketing and tourism promotion for each group. For identifying the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, SWOT Analysis is also employed. This study also examines the positive and negative impacts and sustainability relating to tourism development.

Keywords: *Tourism, architectural area, tourist attraction, impacts, SWOT Analysis*

Introduction

According to World Tourism Organization, one of the most important niche markets is the market of cultural heritage tourism (WTO 2001). There is a close relationship between tourism and cultural heritage. On the other hand, cultural heritage can serve as a tourism attraction, while tourism can lead to financial and political support. There are unique cultural heritages in Salay which is located on the east of Ayeyarwady River in Chauk Township, Magway Region of Central Myanmar. As it is Bagan-era village, 35.41 kilometers (22 miles) south of Bagan, it becomes a tourist attraction site for visitors to Bagan who want to go a day trip around it.

Salay and environ with all aspects are a product as a heritage tourism destination. The main component that makes a heritage tourism destination is its reflection through heritage. Salay which became the ancient architecture in history has various sites such as “Yoke Sone Kyaung”, “Man Pagoda” and U Pone Nya museum.

Moreover, a natural link exists between cultural heritage tourism and regional development, which contributes to the economic advantage of the host country. The tourism industry has responded to this range of interests by developing many types of niche market packages. The development and application of a system assessing cultural and heritage tourism

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assets including cultural, physical, product and experiential values are vital for the sustainability of the tourism attractions.

Research question

"Is tourism really effective for socio-economy of local people in the study area?"

Aim

- to examine how tourism industry determines socio-economic development of local people in Salay.

Objectives

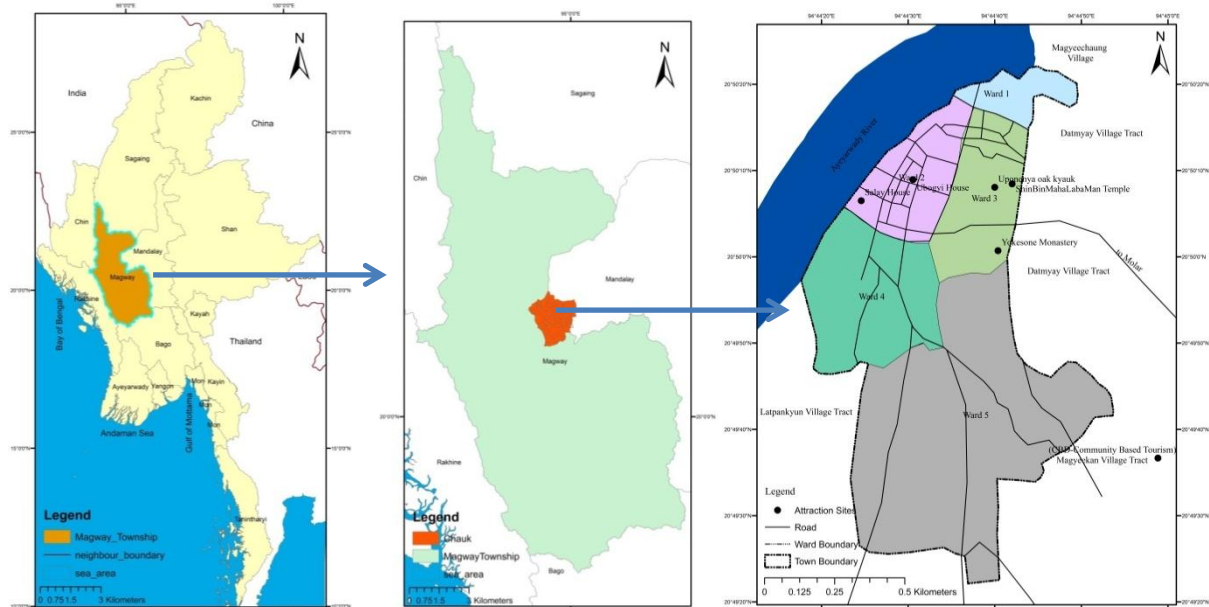
- to study the current situation of Salay and environ as a tourism destination
- to analyze tourism as a key factor for local economy.

Data and Methodology

The methodology of the research is based on field observations. During the interviews with opinion leaders and the community, some conclusions were reached. Cultural tourism is studied as main literature to understand how tourism is supporting locals' economic condition. Furthermore, the research is also based on the literature review that includes the subtitles of tourism destination development, on the basis of heritage, history, cultural and attractions and facilities of Salay and environ. In addition, to collect data, interviews with local people were done. Mapping data linkage and analysis are carried out by Geographic Information Systems (GIS) with the help of topographic maps, google satellite images. Photographs are taken in field survey to identify for research. Microsoft Excel is used for Tables, Diagrams and Graphs. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are used for data collections and analysis. SWOT Analysis is employed through questionnaires and interviews to identify the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the local people in the area. Finally suitable suggestions concerned with the tourism industry in Salay have been expressed.

Study Area

Salay is situated within Chauk Township, Magway Region of central Myanmar. It is located between 20°83' and 20°85' north latitudes and 94°73' and 94°75' east longitudes. Starting from 10.5.2018, it is the one of the town in Chauk Township. The area of Salay is 2.67 square kilometers (1.029 square miles). It consists of five Wards. It is bounded on the east by Dutmyae village tract, and on the south by Letpanyun village tract. On the North and West, Ayeyarwady River serves as natural boundary. The location of Salay is shown in Figure (1). Climate, in fact, is one of the demand factors in tourism industry. Being located in the Tropical Zone, Salay suffers intense heat. Except a few months with cold dry season, temperatures are usually high. The monthly mean temperature was highest in April with 42.02 °C(107.64°F) and lowest in January with 22.16°C (71.88°F) during the period from 2002 to 2017. The total annual mean rainfall in 2002 to 2017 was 606.3 mm(23.87 inches). It receives Tropical Steppe Type or BSh Type of climate. This cannot restrict the travelers in study area. In 2018, total population of Salay was 7028 persons. The total number of houses and households were 1547 and 1642 in 2018.



Source: Survey Department and General Administrative Department, Chauk Township

Figure 1 Location of Salay in Chauk Township, Magway Region

Findings

Salay is a cultural heritage rich region as well as a geographical favourable place. The 19th century wooden monasteries, some Bagan-era shrines, old houses and a handful of untouched British colonial buildings in Salay are drawing attention to tourists. The location of the village, in near distance from Bagan, and the landscapes from the tropical zone of central Myanmar are also attraction points of Salay. It only took one hour by a car and about one and half hours by an e-bike to reach there from Bagan. As Salay is located on the east of Ayeyarwady River and in Central Myanmar, the weather is really hot there. The tropical scenes beside the road make Salay more attractive to visitors. Due to the fact that it is situated in Dry Arid Zone, dunes and tropical scenes can be seen there. In addition, kerosene oil wells can be found on either side of the road to Salay. Those wells are from Burma Oil Company, first founded in 1886, and hence, have been there for more than one century. Tourists can also visit Man Pagoda, Yoke Sone Kyaung, and famous Myanmar Writer U Pone Nya museum. Furthermore, the fascinating view of Ayeyarwady River which is famous as the Natural Heritage of Myanmar can be enjoyed there. Thus, Salay has both natural and cultural attractions for tourists.

First of all, Yoke Sone Kyaung was done by department of archeology and national museum in 1995. Among the foreign tourists who have been to Salay, some visited only to Yoke Sone Kyaung. The number of tourists arrivals to Salay Yoke Sone Kyaung from 2015 to 2019 with the money received from the area presented in Table 1.

If the number of visitors to Bagan and Salay are compared, the gap was found narrow although it was wide in 2015. From 2015 to 2017, the number of foreign tourists to Bagan is presented in Table 2. The entrance fee to the Salay Yoke Sone Kyaung for each foreign tourist was 5000 kyats. As can be seen in Table, the number of travelers was 185,167 in 2015 and it has been rising continuously up to 284,842 in 2017. However, in 2018, the figure was 238,630 which is fewer than 2017. It was a result of the emergence of new trip to the vicinity areas

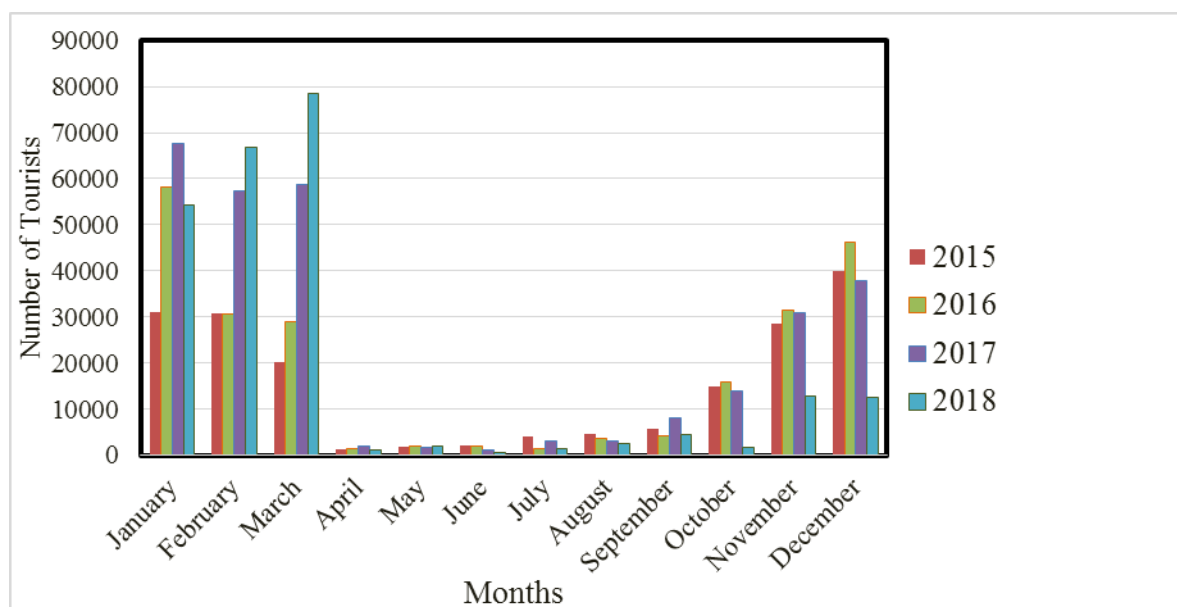
(eg, Community Based Tourism (CBT) at Magyeekan Village). March is the peak season for tourists in Salay whereas during April, May and June, the number of tourists declines noticeably. The number of tourists increase from July to March.

But, the number of visitors to Yoke Sone Kyaung is still significantly higher than that of people visiting Sri Ksetra Ancient Zone in Pyay.

Table 1 Number of International Tourist arrival in Salay Yoke Sone Kyaung(2015-2019)

Months	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Number of Tourists	Kyats (Millions)	Number of Tourists	Kyats (Millions)	Number of Tourists	Kyats (Millions)	Number of Tourists	Kyats (Millions)	Number of Tourists	Kyats (Millions)
January	31153	155.77	58282	291.41	67545	337.73	54349	271.75	21545	107.73
February	30865	154.33	30668	153.34	57395	286.98	66861	334.31	30194	150.97
March	20074	100.37	28845	144.23	58643	293.22	78484	392.42	31566	157.83
April	1369	6.85	1469	7.35	1862	9.31	1252	6.26	6696	33.48
May	1740	8.70	2087	10.44	1589	7.95	1856	9.28	-	-
June	1978	9.89	1816	9.08	1199	6.00	535	2.68	-	-
July	4067	20.34	1402	7.01	2982	14.91	1256	6.28	-	-
August	4580	22.90	3724	18.62	3021	15.11	2523	12.62	-	-
September	5814	29.07	4118	20.59	8065	40.33	4473	22.37	-	-
October	14953	74.77	15905	79.53	13800	69.00	1739	8.70	-	-
November	28603	143.02	31553	157.77	30971	154.86	12852	64.26	-	-
December	39971	199.86	46262	231.31	37770	188.85	12450	62.25	-	-
Total	185167	925.84	226131	1130.66	284842	1424.21	238630	1193.15	90001	450.01

Source: Salay Archeological Zone



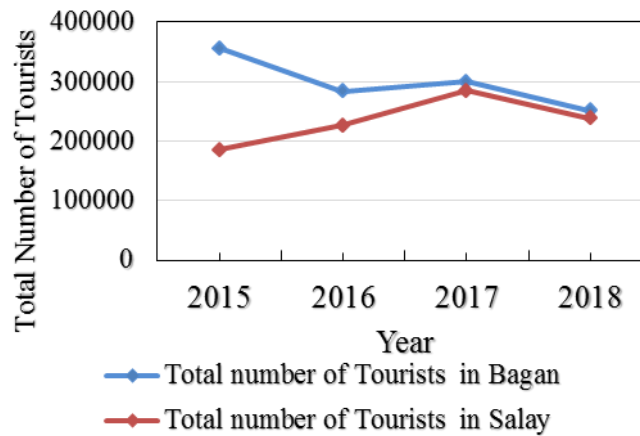
Source: Based on Table 1.

Figure 2 The Number of Monthly Tourist Arrival (from 2015 to 2018)

Table 2 Total number of tourists in Bagan and Salay (2015-2018)

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total number of Tourists in Bagan	356331	283907	299441	250807
Total number of Tourists in Salay	185167	226131	284842	238630

Source: Ministry of Tourism in Bagan office and Salay Archeological Zone



Source: Based on Table 2

Figure 3 Total number of tourists in Bagan and Salay(2015-2018)

For transportation, road and water transport are available and there is a Nyaung U airport not so far away from Salay. Therefore, it is very easy to go there. For tourists, favourable travel means easy communication and convenient transportation. Hence, better road transportation condition can improve tourism industry. The location of Salay and its vicinity being near to Bagan where all three transportation such as road, water and air transport are available plays a big part in the development of tourism in that area.

The majority arrived Salay by car, while a few took waterway along the Ayeyarwady. The data mentioned refer to those who spent at least one night at the hotel. The number of tourists that arrived Salay has been increasing. Some travelers especially enjoy the day trips from Bagan to Salay by e-bikes.

The tourists who arrived Salay by waterway mostly came from Mandalay-Bagan-Yangon or Yangon-Pyay-Bagan journeys as riverine tourism. There are a little over 20 companies engaging in riverine tourism, mostly that belong to Western European countries, particularly Switzerland and United Kingdom and Australia on joint venture basis with Myanmar. Being luxury cruise, the ships are well facilitated. Depending on the type of ships, the number of passengers is between 15 and 30. In Myanmar, riverine cruise is available along the Ayeyarwady and Chindwin rivers. It takes 7 to 11 days to complete the journey. The ships used in riverine cruise are instructed to dock at a fixed place. They usually visit Salay Yoke Sone Kyaung, U Pone Nya museum and Man Pagoda. The majority of foreign tourists have arrived by waterway are aged above 50 years, with only a few aged under 20.

Transportation itself serves as a tourists' attraction in tourism field and that is why this factor is a crucial one in the study area.

Two types of tourists that come to the study area are international tourists and domestic tourists. Domestic tourists include those who come from different parts of Myanmar (regional tourists). Tourism is a highly individualized activity and thus it is difficult to collect the actual number of tourists.

Since tourism industry has been there for a long time, there are lots of people who work in that industry and its related businesses. However, facilities for accommodation are not complete in that area yet. There is a hotel named Salay House and it has 18 bedrooms and 28 beds in 2018. A restaurant for European and Chinese food can be found on the bank of Ayeyarwady River so that most travelers enjoy going there for its beautiful river view.

In 2017, community based tourism has been established in Magyeekan village, about 0.81 kilometers(0.21 miles) from Salay, there are now night stay visits. Tourists visiting Magyeekan Village are shown in Table 3. It can be seen that the number travelling there has increased. Among the tourists, most Europeans visit to Magyeekan Village, particularly French travelers. Asians also visit there especially Japanese. Day trips are the most popular type but there are also tourists who stay overnight. They spend at least one night there. The commute by bullock carts in Magyeekan village is also one of the tourist attractions. This is a result from the unity of travel agencies and local people under the support of the government. The satisfaction from the tourists creates a chance for tourism industry to flourish there which benefits the local residents and travel agencies. But it also depends on the availability of water and electricity in the area. So, if the authority can supply both in that area, there will be more opportunities for tourism industry.

Table 3 Tourists Arrival in Magyeekan Village, Chauk Township (October, 2017 to April, 2019)

Months	2017			2018			2019		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
January			nil	37	34	71	42	48	90
February			nil	52	53	105	43	43	86
March			nil	22	14	36	41	149	190
April			nil	9	5	14	6	9	15
May			nil	1	2	3	-	-	-
June			nil	8	7	15	-	-	-
July			nil	10	27	37	-	-	-
August			nil	5	5	10	-	-	-
September			nil	1	14	15	-	-	-
October	2	5	7	6	17	23	-	-	-
November	42	44	86	48	50	98	-	-	-
December	8	10	18	14	17	31	-	-	-
Total	52	59	111	213	245	458	132	249	381

Source: Magyeekan village, Chauk Township

The purpose of the study is to analyze the current situation of Salay as a tourism destination and describe the potential areas of heritage tourism development, to make the attractive international tourism destination based on cultural heritage. To examine this analysis, interviewing was used as a field study. First the literature about the destination development based on cultural heritage was reviewed. Then semi structured interviews was developed. This type of interview involves asking respondents open-ended questions. The goal of this method is to deeply explore the respondents' point of views about accessibility, accommodation, amenities and attractions of Salay and environ.

In this study, demographic analysis was used to analyze the data pattern. Demographic variables are gender, age, occupation, native town and level of graduation. When the category was investigated, to understand various opinions, questions were asked according to the demographic variables of local residents. Survey was done with the locals from the chosen sites in the study area. Total 180 survey papers were distributed and 153 complete papers were collected. Most of the interviewees answered in details patiently. Among them, (71.24 %) males and (28.76 %) females participated. Only people who are 18 years old and above were asked in the survey. Most of the interviewees, (82.35 %) are engaged in tourism and related businesses. Most of them are staffs from the restaurants, hotels, transportation business and sellers. Unemployed individuals and craftsmen were included in the category named 'others', accounting for (17.65%). For education level, there were (104) graduates and (49) undergraduates. People whose native town being Salay were (71.24%) and those who are immigrants were (28.76%). The immigrants were from other villages in Chauk Township. And most of them, (85.62%), have been residing in that area for more than 17 years.

Among the participants, (92.81%) people are proud and satisfied for the historical buildings in the study area. When the duration of tourism and related business was asked, it was found that there are (63.4%) of below three years duration, (22.88%) of 4-5 years duration and (13.73%) for over 5 years duration. Among the respondents, government workers are largest in percentage with (31.37%). To know the prioritized wants and views related to the arrival of the travelers, the numbers of arrival were asked, and the highest percentage, (34.64%), answered that the number of arrival has increased. Besides, related to the increases number of travelers, their satisfaction of the visit was also asked, and most (73.2%) responded that they are satisfied. To ensure the answers from the closed questions, interviews were also conducted and concluded that the answers are trustworthy.

For the closed questions, four economic related questions, four social related ones and two environmental related one were asked. From the results, according to agree matrix, tourism industry shows much agreement on four economic factors such as economic benefits, income, job opportunities and increased goods price. From social view, it is found that tourism business reveals agreement on causing disturbance of regional culture, support of culture conservation and social benefits related to knowledge. Moreover, it was also agreed that tourism can raise the number of crimes. Beside, satisfaction and dissatisfaction for the following factors in tourism development of this area were also questioned. As a consequence, there are more respondents who are satisfied about job opportunities, commercial activities, social benefits, transportation, health sector, education and environmental development related to tourism. Therefore, it was found that there is no disturbance due to tourism, and only satisfaction in the study area.

Table 4 Facts about respondents from questionnaires

No of respondents	Questionnaire item	Sub items	No of results	%
153	Gender	Male	109	71.24
		Female	44	28.76
	Age Group	18-30	35	22.88
		31-50	62	40.52
		51 and above	56	36.60
	Occupation	Business	60	39.22
		Government Staff	48	31.37
		Student	18	11.76
		Others	27	17.65
	Level of Education	Graduate	84	54.90
		Post Graduate	20	13.07
		Others	49	32.03
	Native	Native	109	71.24
		Migrant	44	28.76
	Length of Stay in Salay and environ	below 17 years	22	14.38
		above 17 years	131	85.62
	Heritage Building	Satisfy	142	92.81
		Unknown	7	4.58
		Unsatisfied	4	2.61
	Related with tourism	Yes	126	82.35
No		27	17.65	
Duration of tourism business	below 3	97	63.40	
	4to5	35	22.88	
	above 5	21	13.73	
Function	Transportation	20	13.07	
	Government staff	48	31.37	
	Commercial	19	12.42	
	Hotel	21	13.73	
	Restaurant	18	11.76	
	Others	27	17.65	
Arrival of Tourists	little low	19	12.42	
	Low	27	17.65	
	Unknown	9	5.88	
	little more	45	29.41	
	much more	53	34.64	
Crowded Tourists	Very Unsatisfied	9	5.88	
	Unsatisfied	21	13.73	
	Unknown	11	7.19	
	Satisfied	68	44.44	
	Very satisfied	44	28.76	

Source: Field Observation (April, 2019)

The following outcomes are acquired from tourism industry in the study area. The results were shown in the Table.

Table 5 Agreement levels about respondents from questionnaires

Questions	Absolutely agree	Agree	neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Absolutely disagree	(a+b)	(d+e)
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)		
Economic benefits	48	53	15	19	18	101	37
Income	46	63	11	21	12	109	33
Job Opportunities	49	55	9	18	22	104	40
Make everything more expensive	39	57	17	32	8	96	40
Disturb our local culture	34	53	19	32	15	87	47
Contribute to conserve our culture	65	47	8	19	14	112	33
Social benefits (knowledge, education...)	57	45	11	16	24	102	40
Increased crimes	31	49	12	24	37	80	61
Produce more waste	26	32	14	44	37	58	81
Pollutes the environment	43	42	15	34	19	85	53

Source: Based on Field Observation (2019)

Table 6 Satisfaction level about respondents from questionnaires

Facts	Very satisfied (a)	Satisfied (b)	Neutral (c)	Unsatisfied (d)	Extremely unsatisfied (e)	Satisfied Matrix (a+b)	Unsatisfied Matrix (d+e)
Job opportunity	13	48	8	17	14	61	31
Commercial	30	45	9	14	2	75	16
Social	18	39	8	19	16	57	35
Transportation	45	31	3	12	9	76	21
Health	19	49	6	15	11	68	26
Education	17	34	11	22	16	51	38
Environment	32	42	13	9	4	74	13

Source: Based on Field Observation (2019)

To get the perception related to tourism industry, local citizens were interviewed with questionnaires. It is important to know their perception as they are the ones mostly affected by the economy in the area. The interest and participation of them play huge part in the economy of the area.

According to the survey, local residents were asked whether they are satisfied with the results from the tourism business in their region or not. The factors are about economic, social, cultural and environmental related facts. Generally, tourism is essential for job positions for the locals, income, poverty mitigation and cultural development or art crafts preservation. The participation of the local residents is crucial for the development of tourism industry. They are

the ones who have to suffer both positive and negative impacts from tourism. Tourism development should therefore not only focus on economic benefits in general but also the quality of life and empowerment of the local people (Whittaker, 1997).

To analyze the data, most of the visitors enjoyed their visits there especially because of the friendliness of the locals, natural heritages including fascinating scenes and views of Ayeyarwady river, cost-friendly food and convenient transportation as well as cultural heritage museums. Moreover, many tourists are also fond of the tropical weather and Myanmar culture. One of the problems is communication hindrance between the local residents and foreign travelers due to language barrier.

To obtain effective data, interviewees were selected by using purposive sampling. The interviewees were district authority, municipality representatives, sellers, community representatives and the tourists. Sellers include the owners of small and medium sized enterprises mostly related to tourism and people employed in tourism such as tourist guides and waiters. A SWOT analysis was applied in order to take into consideration the most valuable data obtained from the interviews. The benefit of such an analysis tool is that it can better balance all internal and external aspects of enterprises, ensuring that analysis is more comprehensive. The strengths and weaknesses of a system are determined by internal elements, whereas external forces dictate opportunities and threats. Strengths can be defined as any available resource that can be used to improve its performance. Weaknesses are flaws/short-comings of any system that may cause to lose a competitive advantage, efficiency or financial resources (Ying, Wang and Hong 2011).

The objective of this analysis is to identify key strengths to build strategies for the tourism development plan, and weaknesses, opportunities and threats must be taken into account.

Strengths

Salay and environ has many strengths to build on, shown as follows:

- 1) Favorable Geographic Position (Not so far from Bagan)
- 2) Outstanding historic, natural and cultural heritage, Architectural old building (Famous Cultural Building (Yoke Sone Kyaung)
- 3) Unspoiled natural resources (Ayeyarwady river view and tropical landscape and agricultural landscape)
- 4) Cultural attractions (Ahnyar Culture)
- 5) Attractive monuments, preserved and restored old houses and buildings
- 6) Friendliness and Hospitality of local people
- 7) Reasonable cost of living

Weaknesses

There are also ranges of weaknesses that must be addressed:

- 1) Irregular boat trips from/to Bagan to/from Salay (inadequate transportation facilities)
- 2) Affect of seasonality on tourist arrivals
- 3) Lack of skillful or trained employee
- 4) Insufficient tourist facilities

- 5) Insufficient support from the government
- 6) One day trip destination
- 7) Lack of souvenirs
- 8) Poor manufacturing of local food
- 9) Lack of Water, Electricity
- 10) Lack of Information for tourists about the natural cultural monuments in this area(Signage - Directional, Place names)

Opportunities

There are many potential tourism development opportunities to consider, as shown below:

- 1) Salay and environ as a transit point from Chauk to Bagan
- 2) A great diversity of landscapes with tourism potential
- 3) Increased foreign direct investment and public revenue
- 4) Job creation
- 5) Intercultural exchange with international visitors
- 6) Increased popularity of local products
- 7) Improved transportation and upgraded infrastructure
- 8) Potential for alternative tourism activities like ecotourism

Threats

Specific threats must also be examined and addressed by strategies:

- 1) Negative economic, social and environmental impacts
- 2) Climate change
- 3) Competition of other destinations which are strengthening at a faster rate
- 4) River management
- 5) Lack of refined water and inadequate sewage system with the increase of tourist arrivals to the Salay

Discussion and Conclusion

According to the SWOT analysis and facilities of Salay and environ, it has an important potential to be developed as a sustainable tourism destination. Sustainable tourism can be reached in the site but infrastructure should be enhanced immediately. The main component makes a destination as a heritage tourism destinations, its reflection through heritage. The attitude of local people towards tourism and foreign tourists are very positive and they are very hospitable to the Myanmar people.

Transportation to the Salay is performed on the causeway by car or e-Bite. There are also regular boat trips from/to Bagan and Salay. These boat trips from/to Bagan and Salay should be increased.

The beauty of the old houses and the Myanmar architectures that add the authenticity should be protected by preparing residential and architectural plans. Gift shops, cafes, and tea shops should be installed near museum. Shopping items like wooden craft, souvenirs, local product should be promoted. Amenities are sufficient for current population but as population

increases due to the tourism activities some problems like lack of purified water and inadequate sewage system could emerge. Tourism plans should be prepared in a participative manner with the contribution of local people. To get maximum benefit in the study area in terms of tourism facilities, a good relationship between local people and tourism professionals should be established. Small and medium size businesses should be developed for tourists of high quality. Moreover, based on the findings of this paper, a well-defined and economy of destination development could be prepared including all aspects. Among several benefits from tourism industry, one of which is that it creates job opportunities for local people thereby increasing the income of such area which in turn leads to the economic development. Besides, it also promotes the local business of manufacturing and selling local products as well as varieties of other businesses. Furthermore, the country can acquire foreign currency from tourism business and with the flourishing tourism in the area will draw support from authorities and oversea countries so that area will be more developed, raising the living standard of natives living there. The local residents can also learn new vocational fields. People should pay more attention to maintain ecological system and environment or to preserve cultural heritages.

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