

An Investigation of the Potential Attributes for Tourist Destination in Six Selected Heritage Sites of South Gondar, and the Challenges in Availing these Heritage Sites for Tourists

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Abstract

The main initiatives of this inquiry were to investigate the potential attributes of the six selected heritage sites in South Gondar for tourists and examine the challenges for availing them to tourists. Accordingly, a mixed approach of quantitative and qualitative methods was utilized in data collection and analysis procedures. In doing so, a total of 180 participants from the local community, service providers, and district and zone Culture and Tourism Office experts were the respondents of the study. As a result, the potential attributes and push factors in those six heritage sites were identified. Moreover, the findings of the study stated that lack of organized effort to provide opportunities for travel agents, tour operating companies, tourist Information centers, and museums were regarded as challenges for availing these sites for tourists. Based on the findings, some recommendations were forwarded.

Keywords: Heritages; Attributes for tourist destination; Push and pull factors of tourists

Background

Because of people's inclination to seek out novelty, including that of traditional cultures, heritage tourism has become a major "new" area of tourism demand, which almost all policy makers are now aware of and anxious to develop. Heritage tourism, as a part of the broader category of "cultural tourism", is now a major pillar of the promising tourism strategy of many countries. Cultural/ heritage tourism strategies in various countries have in common that they are a major growth area, that they can be used to boost local culture, and that they can aid the seasonal and geographic spread of tourism [1].

According to UNWTO [2], international tourist arrival has grown from 25 million in 1950 to 880 million in 2009. This figure is expected to reach 1.6 billion in 2020. From the above data, it is definitely easy to see how big and expanding the tourism industry is to draw stark attention of world governments to take it as viable investment and economic option.

While recognizing its worldwide significance, it is important to note the abundance of natural resources, heritage, multi-culture and diversity of people, pleasant weather, unspoiled environment, and other attributes make Ethiopia an attractive and charming site for both international and national tourists [3].

Tourism is conceived as an easy means of boosting a national or regional economy, as it may bring investment, create jobs, and promote sales of crafts and local artifacts. Ethiopian tourism policy and strategy of destination management activities are prevailing to have well historical, cultural and natural diversity centers to enhance fast growing tourism sector [4]. Five Years Transformation Plan of the country provided due attention on proper conservation and sustainable utilization of the cultural and historical heritages in the country. To go in line with it, the regional government and respective institutions have been concerned on protection, effective management and sustainable respective utilization of cultural and historical heritages in South Gondar and its surrounding.

The regional bureau of culture, tourism and parks development is striving to assess diverse tourism products in various destinations

and facilitate development option with effective guidelines. Among the tourism destinations in the region, monasteries and peninsulas and scenic areas of South Gondar have been visited since long ago, but tourism facilities and infrastructures are not developed. Hence, expected benefit from the sector is not in a way to support the living conditions of the people and the natural status are not improved and highly devastated respectively. It is believed that if South Gondar zone develops its potential attractions adequately enough to offer them as tourism products, the industry has substantial capacity to serve as a power house in the zonal effort to end poverty and bring about a rapid and sustainable development.

As a matter of fact, there are challenges being felt heavily and these causes a great problem for the promotion and utilization of these heritages in South Gondar as a tourist destination. In this respect, to sustain natural conditions and improve the life of the people of South Gondar in the preparation of tourism destination, critical inquiry in the possible management and utilization challenges of the heritages for tourist attraction is indispensable. An extensive inquiry on the challenges in managing and utilizing the heritages of the zone for tourist attraction will enable us to understand the perennial issues of the sector to clearly implement sustainable tourism for the benefit of the community, the region and nation.

Consequently, in order to achieve the concern of this study, the following specific research questions were addressed:

- What are the potential attributes of the selected historical places for tourism destination?

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- What are the challenges that inhibit the management and utilization of these selected heritage sites for tourist attraction?

Methods

Description of the study area

The study was conducted South Gonder Zone, which is found in the Northern part of Ethiopia. Geographically the South Gonder zone is located between 11° 39' 59.99"N latitude and 38° 00' 000" longitude within the Amhara National Regional State (ANRS) at an altitude range of 500-3,600 m.a.s.l. The annual average rainfall of the area is 700 mm-1300mm. the daily mean temperature ranges from 17-19°C (Figure 1).

With respect to the specific study sites, the focus areas of study were six selected heritage sites that exhibit physical evidence of the past human occupation and activities that have the potential attribute to contribute important information on community's historical and cultural development. In addition, these heritage sites of the study have been selected based on their accessibility to tourists who travel to Gonder and Lalibela as well as based on the desired historical and cultural data available in these historical sites. Thus, the selected sites are; Wanzaye Hot Spring, Tara Gedam, Gafat, Wekro Medehanialem, Washa Endrias, WashaTekelehimanot.

Methods and procedures

The study mainly uses a qualitative approach and is an exploratory research that tries to assess and gives insight to the current state of potential attributes. Besides, quantitative method was employed to address some research questions. The study pursued both primary and secondary sources of data which serve as the basis for discussion and analysis of investigating potential attributes for tourist destination and the challenges in availing these heritage sites in South Gonder and make appropriate suggestions.

The historical sites that are part of the research were selected based on the accessibility that these sites have for tourists and based on the desired historical and cultural data available in those historical sites. 180 informants from three districts named Farta, Libokemkem, and Fogera were selected for this research in which 120 of the respondents were randomly selected from the surrounding community and service providers. Besides, 30 experts were purposively selected from the zone and districts Culture and Tourism offices. Furthermore, 30 key informants were selected by using snowball sampling depending on their proximity to the aforementioned heritage sites. As far as data collecting instruments are concerned, semi-structured questionnaire, observation and document analysis were utilized.

Basically, a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research design was employed in this study. Accordingly, the types of data that are necessary to carry out the study were determined in the light of the nature of the research. Hence, the instruments for collecting the required data and information were selected from the zone on the basis of their potential in enabling to obtain valid, reliable and appropriate information. Consequently, both primary and secondary data were collected through the use of semi-structured questionnaire, interview, observation checklist, and document analysis techniques. Furthermore, official statistics, personal observation and field diaries, recorded documents, newspapers, magazines, and articles were sources of the data and other necessary information for the study.

Frequently used attributes in literature

Hu and Ritchie [5] summarize lists of attributes mentioned above by different scholars and others. These attributes include cultural/heritage attributes as well as infrastructure attributes, such as food, shopping places, accommodations, etc. This illustration was found consistent for the study under investigation, and it was later employed for the analysis section (Table 1).

In brief, as the tourism study in literature is dominated by the developed countries, the commonly attractive attributes used by destinations and the frequently used attributes in previous studies were examined in the broad context. The most common attractive attributes of a tourist destination site were briefly discussed. The literature review also covered the Dann's 'push-pull' framework, which serves as the theoretical foundation for this study [6-8].

Data analysis

The primary and secondary data that were collected at the feasibility study were discussed qualitatively in order to exhibit the potentials of these research sites for tourist attraction. In order to investigate the challenges in managing and utilizing these research sites for tourist attraction and to check the society's awareness on the role of the research sites for the development of tourism in their surrounding area the data gathered through in-depth interview, semi-structured questionnaire, and personal observation were then be discussed by using both qualitative and quantitative method of analysis. There was a normal coding of data. The Challenges in availing these sites for tourist attraction were coded in order to find out the theme. Moreover, there was a numerical discussion of some of the data collected through semi-structured questionnaires. The researchers also discussed different secondary documents to plan certain kind of devices for securing the historical and cultural information of these sites.

Results and Discussion

Potential attributes of the target sites

All target sites were almost shared similar welcoming and

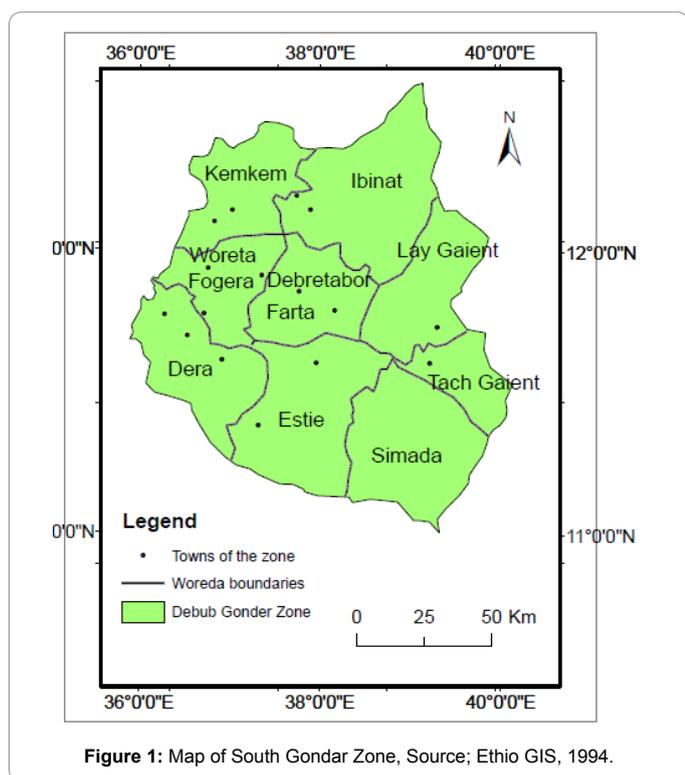


Figure 1: Map of South Gondar Zone, Source; Ethio GIS, 1994.

| Researchers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Haathi (1986) | * | * | | * | | | * | * | * | * | | * | | | | |
| Gartner (1989) | * | * | | * | * | | | | | * | | | | | | |
| Um and Cromptor (1990) | * | * | | * | * | * | * | | * | | | * | | | | |
| Hu and Ritchie (1993) | * | * | * | * | | * | * | * | | | * | * | | | | |
| Phillip (1993) | * | * | * | * | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Milman and Pizam (1993) | | * | * | | | * | * | | * | * | | | | | | |
| Balogulu and Mccleary (1999) | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | | | | | | |
| Chen and Hsu (2000) | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | | * | * | | | |
| Rozak and Rimmington (2000) | * | * | * | * | * | | * | * | * | * | | | | | | |
| Joppe et al. (2001) | * | | * | | | | * | | * | * | | * | | | | |
| Gallarza and Saure (2002) | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | | | | | |
| Johns and Gyimotry (2002) | * | * | * | * | * | | | * | | | | | | | | |
| Kleonsky (2002) | * | * | | | * | * | | * | | | * | | | | | |
| Somez and Sirakaya (2002) | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | | * | * | * | |
| Anwar and Sohali (2003) | * | * | * | | * | * | * | * | | | * | * | | | | |
| Awaritete (2003) | * | * | | * | * | * | | | | | | | * | | | |
| Berckendorff and Pearce (2003) | * | * | | * | * | | | | | * | | | | * | | |
| Cave et, al., (2003) | * | * | * | * | * | | | * | | | * | | * | | | * |
| Pike (2003) | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | | * | | * | |
| Barsal and Eiselt (2004) | * | | | | * | * | | | | | * | | * | | | |
| Obenour et al. (2004) | * | * | * | * | | | * | * | | * | | * | | * | | |
| Pike and Ryan (2004) | * | * | * | | * | * | * | * | | | | | * | | * | |
| Suh and Gartner (2004) | * | | * | * | | | | | | | * | | | | | |
| Bonn et al. (2005) | | * | * | | | * | * | | * | * | | * | | | | |
| Enright and Newton (2005) | * | | * | * | | * | | | * | | * | | | | | |
| Lam and Hsu (2005) | * | * | * | * | | | | | * | | | | | | | |
| O'Leary and Deegan (2005) | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | | | * | * | | | | |
| Yoon and Uysal (2005) | * | * | * | * | | * | * | * | * | * | * | | | | | |
| Total (N=28) | 26 | 24 | 21 | 20 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 1 |

NB – 1: Culture and history; 2: Landscape; 3: Services; 4: Entertainment; 5: Relaxation; 6: Climate; 7: Price; 8: Sport; 9: Safety; 10: Local people's attitude toward visitors; 11: Special events and activities; 12: Accessibility; 13: Adventure; 14: Wildlife; 15: Close to other destinations; 16: Special. *Included in that particular column.

Table 1: Summary of previous research on the attributes of tourist destinations.

| Attributes | Welcoming | Unwelcoming |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| Landscape | * | |
| Culture and history | * | |
| Good nightlife and entertainment, having fun | | * |
| Good services in the site | | * |
| Accessibility (easily to get enough information that may facilitate your trip of the site) | | * |
| Local people's attitude toward visitors | * | |
| Safety (personal safety satisfaction) | * | |
| Relaxation (Are you satisfied with relaxation sites or activities (such as beach, sea, fishing) | | * |
| Climate (the Site's weather) | * | |
| Price (The overall price/cost in of a trip to the site) | * | |

*Included in that particular column.

Table 2: Welcoming and unwelcoming attributes of Cave Endrias, Teklehaimanot, Monastery of Tara, WekroMedhanialem and Gafat.

unwelcoming potential attributes except Wanzaye Hot Spring which have somewhat different attributes with respect to good services in the site, accessibility and climatic scenarios. Therefore, the potential attributes of each target sites were discussion and it is also accompanied by a series of photographs (Table 2).

The cave of Endrias: As you can see from the table above, this site has beautiful scenery and natural attractions that can satisfy any local or foreign visitor of the place. The cave of Endrias is a church which has been serving the local society since 899 GC before the birth of Jesus Chirst. Unlike the other churches, this church is peculiar because it was

built from a natural cave. The roof of this church is made from a natural rock (Figures 2 and 3).

When it comes to history, monument, heritage, arts, handcraft and ways of life of Local people, this site is enriched with these attributes. To start with its history, this place is believed to host different rituals of the god. While this place was worshipped for god, it was believed that there was a python in the place. It is believed that the people who used to dwell in the surrounding area of this cave used to present a sacrifice to the python. This is witnessed by the rock slate that was used for drinking the sacrificed blood as well as the wood soak which was used to splash the blood (Figures 4 and 5).

The cave was found by Abune Endrias. It was believed that the python used to drink water with its tail in the cave from Lake Tana.

When it comes to good nightlife and entertainment, as long as the site is a church, there is no place to spend your time after visiting the cave. To this effect, the visitors may not get the chance to enjoy after visiting the cave nearer to the cave.

Though it is very unsatisfactory that there are no enough shops, restaurants, pensions, and transportations services in the cave, on the side of the main road there are few shops that sell soft drinks, biscuits, mobile cards, bottled spring water and others relevant goods for a short trip. Besides, even Addis Zemen could not accommodate all the kind of services the visitors may need. Therefore, the visitors may not have a difficulty in finding a place to stay after visiting the site.

The accessibility to get enough information that may facilitate



Figure 2: This is the Cave of Endrias.



Figure 3: The roof of the cave.



Figure 4: The soak used for splashing the blood.



Figure 5: The rock slate for presenting the sacrifice.

your trip of the site is also unsatisfactory for the reason that there is no information desk in the cave as well as in the town nearer to the cave. Nevertheless, the people who administer the church are willing to give you a tour in the church as well as provide you the information you need about the cave.

The local people's attitude towards visitor is very satisfactory because the people who dwell around the cave are willing to cooperate and be hospitable from the time someone comes to visit until he/she leaves the site. Some people around the cave are also helpful in guiding you to the cave from the main road.

As long as this site has never been given attention by the

government, there are no scouts assigned to the place. However, as long as the society has good attitude towards visitors, no harm can be done to any visitor who may come to visit the place.

It is obvious that sites such as this don't usually allow the establishments of different recreational centers, so there are no relaxation sites at all. The site is located at a top of a mountain, so it is difficult to find natural relaxation venues around the site.

What anybody will like when he or she visits this site is the weather. It may be very difficult to predict the preference of weather by any visitor, but the weather in this site is moderate, not warm or cold because of its geographical location.

The overall cost someone can spend to visit this place is not exaggerated for both national and international visitors, and it is worth it.

The cave of Teklehaimanot: To start with the landscape of the, this site has a beautiful setting which can be a potential attribute for the satisfaction of any local or foreign visitor of the destination. This church is located 2 kilometers away from the main road. This site's precinct is covered with a forest of different kinds. The peripheral part of the church is surrounded by forests called 'EtsePatos' as can be shown below (Figure 6).

This site is enriched with history, monument, heritage, arts, handcraft and ways of life of local people. The church of cave Teklehaimanot is similar in its history with the church of cave Endrias. The roof of this cave is made of a rock. As to the information gathered from Priest TesfaMekonen, a priest who dwell and serve in the site, the monastery started giving service in the 13th century. The cave is believed to be discovered during the reign of Ezana and Saizana, and it is believed that it was worshiped for its gods for 44 years.

It is very difficult to get good nightlife and entertainment, as long as the site is a church, there is no place to spend your time after visiting the cave. Moreover, the site is 12 kilometers far from Addis Zemen, a small town found in South Gondar, and a two kilometers journey on foot from the main road that takes you from Gondar to BahirDar. Therefore, the visitors may not get the chance to spend their time on resorts after visiting the cave nearer to the cave.

The services that are given in the surrounding area of the church are unsatisfactory. However, on the side of the main road there are few shops that sell soft drinks, biscuits, mobile cards, bottled spring water and others relevant goods for a short trip. Besides, the shops, restaurants, pensions, and transportations in Addis Zemen, the little town nearer to the site, provide all the kind of services the visitors may need. Therefore, the visitors may not have a difficulty in finding a place to stay after visiting the site.

As long as this site is not given attention by the concerned bodies



Figure 6: The picture of 'EtsePatos' Tree.

in the zone as well as the district, the accessibility to get enough information that may facilitate your trip of the site is also unsatisfactory because there is no information desk in the cave as well as in the town nearer to the cave. Nevertheless, the people who administer the church are willing to give you a tour in the church as well as provide you the information you need about the cave.

Due to the similarity of the location between the Church of Cave Endrias and the Church of Cave Wine Teklehaimanot, the local people's attitude towards visitor is very satisfactory because the people who dwell around the caves are willing to cooperate and be hospitable from the time someone comes to visit until he/she leaves the site. Some people around the cave are also helpful in guiding you to the cave from the main road.

For the rest of the attributes provided in the checklist, there is no different explanation for this site because the Church of Cave Endrias and the Church of Cave Wine Teklehaimanot are located in the same ground.

The monastery of Tara: The first attribute any visitor would see when he/she comes to visit this site is its attractive geographical feature which is witnessed in the following picture (Figure 7).

This Monastery is rich in its history and culture. Its richness in history and culture is discussed in detail and supported by visual information as follows. This monastery covers 88 hectares of land in which 85 hectares of it is covered by forests and 3 of its hectares are used for crop production by the monks in the monastery. There are 52 male and 13 female monks who live in the monastery. The nave is believed to be built 460 years ago from now. In side Tara Monastery, there is an AbuneAwsetatiwos church for males built in the 16th century by Abune Gelawdiwos as well as another church of St. Mary in the Monastery which is believed to be built in the 17th century by Empress Mentewab (Figures 8 and 9).

The monastery is believed to be a religious place in which the prayer in this monastery has the power to cure those cursed by the devil. The ration in the monastery is held once at 3:00 PM. The dining style takes place by ringing a bell to inform the monks eat with their own dish. There is a rule that is set for those monks in the monastery.



Figure 7: The top and side view of the forest in the monastery of Tara.



Figure 8: St. Mary's church females' monastery.



Figure 9: AbuneAwstatiwoch males' monastery.

Like the above discussed historical heritage sites, there is an absence of resort for spending a good nightlife and entertainment in this site too. The reason for the absence of a place to spend a good night life and entertainment in this site is similar with the above ones.

As long as the above sites including this one are located on the same territory, it is hard to say that there are there are enough shops, restaurants, pensions, and transportations services in the monastery, on the side of the main road there are few shops that sell soft drinks, biscuits, mobile cards, bottled spring water and others relevant goods for a short trip. Besides, the shops, restaurants, pensions, and transportations in Addis Zemen, the little town nearer to the site, provides all kinds of services the visitors may need. Therefore, the visitors may not have a difficulty in finding a place to stay as well as buy some goods after visiting the site.

There is no place that provides enough information in order to assist your trip of the site for the reason that there is no information desk in the monastery as well as in the town nearer to the monastery. Nevertheless, the people who administer the church and the monks who serve the church are willing to give you a tour in the church as well as provide you the information you need about the monastery.

There is no difference at the local people's attitude towards visitor with the other sites discussed above because the people who dwell around the cave are willing to cooperate and be hospitable from the time someone comes to visit until he/she leaves the site. Some people around the cave are also helpful in guiding you to the cave from the main road.

What might not be certain for visitors in this site is the security system. Due to lack of attention by the concerned bodies, there are no security guards assigned to the place. However, as long as the society has good attitude towards visitors, no harm can be done to any visitor who may come to visit the place.

As a result of the traditional belief in the place, it is difficult to allow the establishments of different recreational centers, so there are no relaxation sites at all. It is believed that monasteries such as this forbid the use of this place other than religious purposes. So it is difficult to find natural relaxation venues around the site.

It is hard to decide the weather preference of the visitors, but according to different scholars the preferred weather is the kind of weather that you can feel when you go to this place.

The overall cost someone can spend to visit this place is not exaggerated for both national and international visitors, and it is worth it.

All in all, though the site doesn't satisfy all the attributes of any destination site, any visitor would be pleased to visit the site for the satisfactory attributes that are potential.

The church of WekroMedhanialem: This site has a manmade church made out of one rock by the old king of Lalibela. This church has a rectangular shape that is 14.60 meters long on the west; 15.20 meters long in the east; 17.80 meters long on the south; 15.20 meters long on the north; the center is 18.20 meters long; and the church is 6.50 meters tall from the ground. This church has main and sub section rooms. The main or large rooms of the church are named: YekeneMahlet (የቅድሚያዎታ), Kidest (ቅድስት), and Mekdes (መቅደስ). And the small rooms are particularly named: the baptism section (የክርስቲናማንሻክፍል), the left overs room (የትራፊቤትክፍል), tomb's law room, (የህገመቃብርክፍል) the mysterious room (ሚስጥርቤትክፍል) the nest's room (ቀፎቤትየሚባሉ) and the home of Senti Mary (ቤተሰማርያም). Besides, when you entered to the last section of the church, there is a path made of rock that takes you to the breathtaking section of the church (Figure 10).

The historical background of this site is discussed as follows. This church was named "WekroMedhanialem Monastery" by Emperor YekunoAmlak in 13th century. This church was named "WekroMedhanialem" for the constructional activities and tools used to excavate the church. Its representation is related to the tools as well as the practical activities of excavation employed to excavate the church from a single rock.

The church is located at 1:30 up to 2:00 hours travel on foot from KemerDingay, a place which is located 30 kilometers far from DebreTabor. Its distance from the nearest town called KemreDingay doesn't make this church a potential place to choose for visit. Besides, as long as churches are ritual places rather than entertainment, the site doesn't allow the establishment of entertainment areas. Therefore, it is hard to say that there are spots where someone can spare some time in outdoor activities and night life activities.

It is very difficult to say that there is a satisfactory service of transportation, shopping, diet, accommodation, and administration. The transportation service from DebreTabor to KemerDingay is available every day from morning till evening. However, any visitor has to walk on foot for about two hours in order to get in to the church because there is no transportation service available from KemerDingay to WekroMedhanialem. Moreover, the other services like shopping, diet, and accommodation are not available in the site, but the visitor can use those services in KemerDingay because they are available.

It is not possible to say that this place is easily accessed by any tourist who wants to visit this site because the place is 30 kilometers far from DebreTabor and a couple of hours travel on foot. Nevertheless, once the visitor arrives at the church, he or she can easily get the information he or she needs about the area from the administrators as well as from the monks who serve in the church.

The fastest impression someone can make when he or she visits this place is the hospitality of the people in the precinct. The attitude



Figure 10: The entrance of Wekro Medhanialem church.

of the people towards any visitor is very satisfactory. Though someone may not be able to find different services in the site, the people will do whatever is possible to be cooperative and enjoy your trip to the site.

Any visitor to this place may not have any threat on his or her safety when he she comes to visit this site. There is no probability of terrorism, prevalence of outbreak of disease, criminal records, political instability, and corruption of police.

As mentioned above, it is very difficult to find any relaxation sites in this area because it is not religious to construct any relaxation centers in churches and monasteries.

The climate in this site is said to be pleasant because warm climate is a pull factor for tourists, so this place has a very moderate climatic condition which is considered suitable for any visitor from across the globe.

The travel cost from DebreTabor to KemerDingay is said to be satisfactory because it is 13 birr which is less than one dollar. There is no additional cost on the goods that someone may consume during a single trip. Therefore, it is fair to say that the travel cost as well as the commodity cost in this area is satisfactory.

Gafat: The beautiful scenery and the historical and cultural background of this site will be discussed at a time. Gafat is the first industrial zone in Ethiopia. Gafat is located 9 kilometers far from DebreTabor town and an hour and half travel on foot. Gafat is a historical place which is administered by DebreTabor town under the kebele of HiruyeAbaregaye. It is believed that pundits used to dwell in this place. This people were also called pundits of Israel.

These pundits of Gafat used to make living with iron works, pottery, weaving, and hiding. They used to lead their life by making and selling necklace, earring, and tweezers to the people who lived in the surrounding of this site. These people used a horse cart for transporting their products from place to place. Nevertheless, these people were discriminated from the activities in the community because they were believed to be evil eyes or blacksmiths. The minute Emperor Tewodros II examined the place for a while, he decided to build a weapon. Then, the Emperor constructed a fence surrounding the area, and he gave an order of protection for the place. Though the Emperor tried to establish a strong and powerful nation by introducing different technologies, he had faced different challenges (Figure 11).

All in all, the stunning historical background of this site is not as it used to be in the past though there are certain remaining proofs that depict the past history. There is some metal evidence mixed with the soil in the place. Though the hoes used for manufacturing the weapon are not completely ruined, they are crumbling, but the fence is in a good condition. People who live around Gafat are observed using the land for agricultural and sheltering purposes. It is observed that there are seven families who live around Gafat, so if this situation continues there will never be a place called Gafat in the future.

As it was said earlier, this place is functioning for agricultural and sheltering purposes, so there is no intention by the people around the



Figure 11: The first industrial place in Ethiopia.

site to utilize it for a tourist attraction site. Therefore, it is impossible for tourists to look for a place for outdoor activities as well as nightlife activities.

As explained above, the site is 9 kilometers far from DebreTabor, and any tourist may not be able to find different sorts of services he or she needs for a single trip. However, any tourist can find different services of shopping, diet, accommodation, and transportation in DebreTabor because it is not far enough from DebreTabor.

The proximity of this site to tourists is not exaggerated because it is 9 kilometers far from DebreTabor, which used to be the capital city of Ethiopia during the reign of Emperor Tewodros. Nevertheless, looking at the accessibility of information about this site, it is hard to find a center that provides information about Gafat though it is possible to get the information from the Museum located in DebreTabor.

Any dweller in this site is happy to cooperate with any visitor who comes to visit Gafat. Anyone is greeted with sincerity beginning from the moment he or she lands his or her feet on the ground of Gafat. This shows the sort of benevolent attitude the local people have towards visitors.

As there are no records of political instability, probability of terrorism, crime, transportation accident, prevalence of outbreak of disease, corruption of police, it is possible to say that this site is safe and secured to visitors.

Due to the reason that the concerned bodies haven't given this site the kind of attention it deserves to get, there are no relaxation sites around Gafat. Thus, visitors may not be able to get any relaxation places in this site. On the other hand, any visitor may be able to access the relaxation spots in DebreTabor before or after his or her trip to Gafat.

As long as this site is nearer to DebreTabor, Gafat has a cold climate which is a pull factor for any visitor to this site. Therefore, any visitor would be satisfied with the climate condition that this site has.

It is fair to say that the overall price for commodity in DebreTabor is cheap for any visitor to this place, but when we look at the travel cost, there is no fixed transportation service to Gafat. Therefore, a visitor may need to let a three wheeler for short period of time and visit this place. Accordingly, the price for letting this three wheeler may be expensive because it is let for an individual.

In general, the overall historical and cultural background of this site is worth visiting though there are some improvements are needed to this place in order to avail it to tourists.

Wanzaye natural spring hot water: This site is located 19 kilometers on the south west of the main street that takes you from Woreta to BahirDar (Table 3). This site has natural hot spring water that can be taken as one natural attribute. This hot spring water is 40-42 degree centigrade hot, and it sprang out from one hole. This hot spring water has five troughs or tanks which are used in four shifts for guests. The long-suffering individuals from around Ethiopia drink the hot water or wash using the hot water, for it is believed to cure diseases. It is understood that there are people who come to this place for curing nerve and other wound problems. Moreover, around this site there is a forest that covers 357 hectare of the land. The forest is covered with several endemic trees like acacia, *warka*, and *banbua*. As an important attribute to a tourist attraction, there are wild animals like monkey, baboon, ape, boar, birds and *sesa* in this site (Figures 12-15).

The culture and history of this site takes us back to a myth told by the far fathers who used to live in this place. The site was invented by

| Attributes | Welcoming | Unwelcoming |
|--|-----------|-------------|
| Landscape | * | |
| Culture and history | * | |
| Good nightlife and entertainment, having fun | | * |
| Good services in the site | * | |
| Accessibility (easily to get enough information that may facilitate your trip of the site) | * | |
| Local people's attitude toward visitors | * | |
| Safety (personal safety satisfaction) | * | |
| Relaxation (Are you satisfied with relaxation sites or activities (such as beach, sea, fishing)) | | * |
| Climate (the Site's weather) | | * |
| Price (The overall price/cost in of a trip to the site) | * | |

*Included in that particular column.

Table 3: Welcoming and unwelcoming attributes of Wanzaye natural hot spring water.



Figure 12: Main source hot main spring water.



Figure 13: Natural forest in Wanzaye.



Figure 14: Hot natural spring shower.



Figure 15: Hot natural spring family bath.



Figure 16: Hotel in Wanzaye.

people who came to this place because the place was surrounded by a tree called **Wanza**. Those people said “I saw a plant (wanz)” which literary means “ዋንዛአየሁ” in Amharic, and the place was named after this incident ‘Wanzaye’. According to the chronicles recorded, elderly people used to live in this place, and one man came to this place in search of his lost ox. When this man arrived at this place, he found the pieces of his ox’s flesh and bones. Then this man accused and killed the monk who used to live at this place for eating the flesh of the dead ox. Finally, vultures spread the flesh of the monk around this place, and a holy water sprang out on the spot/ground where the flesh of the monk landed.

It is hard to see a specific place for outdoor activities, gambling sites, and places to spend a good night life in this site.

In this site there is a hotel that serves the people who come to get a cure from the hot spring water. This hotel I this site gives different as food, drinks and lodging services. This hotel has a big hall that can serve up to 150 people, and it includes 54 double bed rooms and 4 single bed rooms (Figures 16 and 17).

Besides, though the shops that are found around this site don’t provide a satisfactory service, they can give services that are necessary for a short trip. However, there is a problem in transportation because the road that takes you to this site is not an asphalt. Thus, the minibus that goes to this place charges you two folds of the regular fee for transportation. On top of that there is only a one round trip per a day to the site, so it is difficult to get a transportation service in the afternoon.

As mentioned above it is difficult to get a transportation service frequently to this site though it is 19 kms far from the main road to

BahirDar. Nevertheless, once a visitor gets to this place, he or she can get all the information he or she needs about the site easily from the information desk located at the gate of the site (Figures 18 and 19).

It is hard to say that the attitude of the people who live around this site greets you with hostility. The people around this place are very hospitable and friendly. Any visitor would love to spend the day in this site, for the reason that the people are considerate and humble.

It can be self-assuredly said that this place is free from any political instability, probability of terrorism, corruption of police or administrator, and prevalence of outbreak disease. According to the testimonies of the receptionist there were no crimes recorded in this place as well as a record of transportation accidents. Though there are some problems in the quality of sanitation around the site, it doesn’t lead to a sever disease.

It is impossible to point out places that allow the visitor to relax because the people who come to this place for the sake of getting a cure from the natural hot water.

It is believed that warm climate is a pull factor for a tourist destination, thus this place has a warm climate that is considered unsatisfactory for any visitor around the world.



Figure 17: Bed Rooms in Wanzaye.



Figure 18: Information Desk in Wanzaye.



Figure 19: Receptionist in Wanzaye.

The travel cost for visiting this site is considered to be average in relation to the kind of benefit someone can get from visiting it. However, the cost of the commodity supplied in this site is similar with the cost of the commodity in any other places of Ethiopia.

To sum up, looking back at the attributes of this place, taking the unsatisfactory sites into account, it is worth visiting.

In addition to the above qualitative analysis, the remaining three basic research questions were basically designed based on the quantitative data as collected through the questionnaire. Consequently, the quantitative analysis of the data based on the descriptive statistical tools (mean, sum and percentage) is presented through tables, and the interpretation based on the statistical calculations is presented next to each table.

The challenges that inhibit the management and utilization of these selected heritage sites for tourist attraction

The other concern of this study was to identify the challenges in managing and utilizing the selected heritages for tourist attraction, in so doing, seek ways for alleviating or at least, minimizing the possible challenges. To achieve this concern, the data in relation to such issues was collected from the zone and district culture and tourism officers, and the results from the analysis are presented in Table 4.

In addition to the above close ended items, open ended items were used to obtain information in relation to the possible challenges that the respondents may explain in details. Accordingly, the Challenges that inhibit the management and utilization of these selected heritage sites for tourist attraction in the Southern Gondar Zone are found to be;

- Weakness in research and training in the development of rural tourism in south Gondar Zone Province
- Not enough zonal and district advertisement for attracting visitors,
- Lack of cooperation among the organizations for tourism in the province such as: the organizations for cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism with the administration of culture and tourism office at the zone as well as at the wereda level.
- Not having trained employees in tourism throughout the province,
- Not enough financial support for developing and providing equipment for the rural tourist centers,
- Lack of residential facilities in rural areas,
- No private sector inclination to invest in tourism section,

- Lack of service centers,
- Lack of a system for tourist management and IT in tourism,
- Not enough public transportation along with inappropriate roads to access the rural centers,
- No access to needed goods in the villages,
- Incomplete execution of the leading rural plans,
- Lack of attention to the creation of grounds for rural employment and removal of seasonal unemployment of the villagers,
- Lack of attention to the potential opportunities in the villages and designing plans to take advantage of them,
- Not enough appropriate structures and facilities throughout the villages.

Conclusions

The researchers have adapted ten push and pull factors which are qualified by different studies conducted in the developed world that can effectively attract tourists to choose destinations like South Gondar. The push factors are regarded as unwelcoming attributes for tourists, and the pull factors are considered as welcoming attributes in this study. A checklist was developed in order to assess the potential attributes of these six selected sites as tourist destinations. The identification of South Gondar’s important attributes was based on the literature review discussed in Table 2. Ten important attributes were identified, namely, (1) landscape (beautiful scenery and natural attractions); (2) culture and history (monument, heritage, arts, handcraft and ways of life of local people); (3) entertainment; (4) services (shopping, accommodation, food, and transportation); (5) accessibility (information available); (6) local people’s attitude toward visitors; (7) safety (personal safety); (8) relaxation; (9) climate (e.g., pleasant weather); (10) price (e. g., cost, good value for money).

Accordingly, based on the qualitative data gathered through interview and observation, results show that among the ten attributes of a heritage site, five of the selected heritage sites namely: The Cave of Endrias, The Cave of Tekelehaymanot, The Monastery of Tara, The Church of WekroMedhanialem, and The First Industrial Zone Gafat have the following six welcoming attributes towards tourists namely: Landscape, culture and history, local people’s attitude towards tourists, safety, climate, and price. Nevertheless, these five sites have the following four unwelcoming attributes namely: Good service in the site, Good night life and entertainment, accessibility, and relaxation. Whereas the sixth selected site namely Wanzaye Hot Spring has seven

| Items | Responses under each scales (N=30) | |
|--|------------------------------------|-------|
| | Yes% | No% |
| 1 South Gondar Heritage sites are identified. | 80 | 20 |
| 2 There are organized travel agents and tour operating companies in the target area. | 16.66 | 83.33 |
| 3 There is tourist information center in South Gondar Zone. | 43.33 | 56.66 |
| 4 A museum that entails the historical, cultural heritages of the Zone is available. | 26.66 | 73.33 |
| 5 Hotels and resorts that accommodate the needs of tourists are available. | 16.33 | 83.33 |
| 6 The local communities get informed about the tourist sites in the target zone. | 30 | 70 |
| 7 Different methods have been utilized to promote the heritages available in the South Gondar Zone. | 60 | 40 |
| 8 Sufficient amount of budget is allocated to promote tourist sites in the target zone. | 43.33 | 56.66 |
| 9 Significant numbers of researches are carried out relying on tourist destinations in the target zone. | 10 | 90 |
| 10 People who are working at the zonal and wereda culture and tourism offices are qualified in the tourism sector. | 66.66 | 33.33 |
| 11 All stakeholders of in the Zone are working together for sustainable tourism development. | 30 | 70 |

Table 4: Summary of the challenges in managing and utilizing heritage in %.

of the welcoming attributes namely landscape, culture and history, local people's attitude towards tourists, good services, accessibility, safety, and price. Nonetheless, Wanzaye Hot Spring has the following unwelcoming attributes namely: good night life and entertainment, relaxation, and climate.

Relying on the challenges in availing the heritages to tourists, although many of South Gondar cultural and historical heritage sites are tried to be identified by the Zone culture and tourism office, a lot of problems are exhibited. In line with this, it was evident that there are very few hotels that can accommodate the needs of the tourists. Nevertheless, it was found that there are no organized travel agents and tour operating companies, tourist information centers as well as museums that entail the historical and cultural heritages in the target zone.

Similarly, it can be noted that the local communities have enough knowledge about cultural and historical heritages in their area. However, the result revealed that the cultural and historical heritages found in South Gondar are not highly exposed to the tourists. Hence, we can deduce that the role of the tourism sector has insignificant contribution to the development of the target zone. The result is consistent to the data gathered from south Gondar revenue office. It was reported that only 1.5% of the total revenue was collected in the year 2006E.C..

Furthermore, lack of a system for tourist management and IT in tourism, insufficient public transportation along with inappropriate roads to access the heritage sites, lack of access to needed goods in the villages, lack of attention to the potential opportunities in the villages and designing plans to take advantage of them, are found to be among the dominant challenges in managing and utilizing the selected heritages for tourist attraction.

With regard to the promotion activities of the aforementioned heritage sites, it was observed from the data that very little has been done. Different methods have not been utilized to promote heritages available in South Gondar zone. This, in turn, leads the sustainability of the tourism sector in question.

Findings of the study also proved that the tendency of financial support as well as allocating the appropriate budget for the tourism development is found to be in significant. Even, it can be noted that almost no private sector inclination to invest in tourism in the target zone. In addition, the result revealed that the sector is not run by qualified personnel.

Stakeholders in the target zone are not working together for sustainable tourism development. According to the data gathered from the culture and tourism officers, the task of tourism development is mainly left for culture and tourism offices. However, it is worth noting that developing the tourism industry has inseparable link with a number of organizations. The coordination of those stakeholders is inevitable as the tourism industry requires support from different stakes.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions made above, the following recommendations are forwarded for those concerned bodies:

- The study revealed that the push factors which are considered as unwelcoming for tourists in the target sites were related to good night life, good services, accessibility, and relaxation. The destination attributes which are rated as unwelcoming for tourists should be given attention to maintain or enhance the competitiveness of the sites with other destinations.

- It has been stated that the local people and the private sectors involvement in heritage management and utilization is very poor. This informs one that the office of culture and tourism of South Gondar should prioritize raising awareness and creating a joint collaboration with local communities and service providers and their involvement in site management and utilization. Interventions could involve strategies that raise the awareness and knowledge of the local people, civic society and other stake holders in the area should play a key role in taking ownership of their heritages and related tourism projects. Therefore, strategies such as training scheme, better communication techniques both formal and informal, and information campaign could be designed for future intervention.

- It is recommended to the South Gondar Administration to establish an advisory board, harnessing all stakeholders including culture and tourism officers, local communities, community elders, service providers, civic organizations, DTU and other concerned bodies, therefore, the plans, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation are put the disposal of all actors for sustainable tourism development.

- The zone administration along with the regional government should plan to access the necessary infrastructure in the aforementioned heritage sites. Besides, to equip other facilities, the zone administration should devise strategies for building organized tourist information centers and travel agents by encouraging the private sectors and micro and small enterprises involving in the tourism industry.

Another point of recommendation could be that department of Hotel and Tourism Management of Debre Tabor University should design a training package to service providers, site managers and culture and tourism office experts about provision of quality service, preparation of tourist guide map, publication of accommodation guide and tourist handbooks and other related issues like planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation activities the tourism industry.

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