

## **FACTORS INFLUENCING DOMESTIC TOURISTS' PREFERENCES FOR BAGAN DESTINATION**

Su Pyae Thada Htet<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

This study was conducted with the objective of identifying the determinants that shape domestic tourists' preferences for Bagan, Myanmar. The research focused on delving into the varying degrees of importance that domestic tourists attributed to the physical and cultural aspects of the destination, as well as the interpersonal, status and prestige motivators, and the influence of word of mouth and group dynamics within their social circles. A total of 212 representative data was collected through questionnaire surveys from a sample of domestic tourists who had visited to Bagan during the period of 2021 to 2023. Due to the outbreak, visitor preferences and behaviors have completely changed, making an in-depth investigation of the dynamic factors impacting domestic tourism in Bagan region is required. Moreover, the absence of significant and up-to-date research associated to this particular setting highlights the necessity of thorough investigation. The finding from this research show that psychological factors such as physical motivators of a destination show significant influences in preferences for Bagan destination but some factors like word of mouth, group influences show a slightly difference gender of domestic travelers.

**Key words:** preferences, domestic tourists, Bagan

### **Introduction**

Domestic travel has become increasingly important over the post pandemic period, acting as a lifeline for numerous locations and a driving force behind the travel's industry's revival and sustainability. There has also been a noticeable drop in the number of foreign visitors visiting Bagan, which is one of the most popular tourist destinations, with its great historical heritage and civilizational importance. To recover and thrive for Bagan destination in the long run following the epidemic, it is essential to comprehend the elements that drive domestic travelers' inclination toward the place. It is necessary for tourism professionals and policy makers to understand factors that affect domestic tourist's preferences of a Bagan destination, so that they can develop an efficient marketing strategy and provide tailor made experiences. In this study, a number of psychological and social factors are examined to determine the preferences of domestic tourists along with the relation of gender are measured. Personal factors have long been considered as influential factors in shaping individuals' travel preferences and decision-making. This may include considering of many essential dimensions such as gender, age, occupation, income, and education level.

Gender may play a role in having distinct travel motivations and preferences. For example, women travelers may prioritize cultural immersion and activities, while men may seek relaxation and leisure experiences. Physical motivators, such as the desire for outdoor activities like hiking, biking, or exploring temples and pagodas, can influence the choices of adventure-seeking tourists. Cultural motivators, encompassing the interest in experiencing local customs, traditions, and historical significance, often attract tourists seeking a deeper engagement with the destination. Interpersonal motivators, including the eagerness to interact with the local community and participate in local activities, can further shape tourists' preferences. Additionally, status and prestige motivators, where tourists seek to visit popular or exclusive destinations to enhance their social status or gain recognition, can also impact preferences for the Bagan destination. Social factors such as word-of-mouth recommendations and group influence have a significant impact on tourists' preference for Bagan destinations. Through word of mouth,

---

<sup>1</sup> Department of Tourism, National Management Degree College.

positive recommendations from friends, family, or online influencers can increase the interest and trust among potential tourists, which may influence their decision to visit Bagan. Likewise, group influences, including the preferences and interests of family and friends, can shape tourists' decisions through shared experiences and collective decision-making.

Understanding and investigating these factors that influence domestic tourists' preferences in Bagan destination can provide various tourism stakeholders with valuable insights to carry out effective destination marketing and development strategies. By identifying the key drivers that influence tourist preferences, policymakers can create tailored products that meet tourists' diverse needs and maximize tourist satisfaction. The study will collect comprehensive data through surveys questionnaires that focus on personal, psychological and social factors that influence domestic tourists' preference for the captivating Bagan destination. By illuminating these variables, this study hopes to provide a significant perspectives to pertinent parties, decision-makers, and travel agencies in order to develop strategies and policies that will significantly revitalize Bagan's tourism industry and provide domestic tourists with a memorable experience in the post-pandemic period.

### **Review of Literature**

As one of the most popular tourist destinations in Myanmar, the Bagan region attracts a considerable number of domestic tourists every year. For the improvement of the tourism sector in Bagan, it is vital to understand tourist behaviour which helps to identify tourist destination selection, evaluation, and future tourist behaviour intentions. Travel behaviour refers to a traveler's complex decision-making process during a trip, including travel mode selection, route selection, departure time selection, destination selection, and so on (MengLi et. al, 2019). Motivation is a driving force that stimulates consumers' behaviour (Fodness, 1994). Consumers are unique people with a wide range of behaviours that are influenced by both internal and external forces. Tourist behaviour is the combination of interactions between internal factors (motivation, attitudes, beliefs, etc.) and external factors (economic environment, security, socio-cultural environment, etc.) (Andrades, Dimanche, & Ilkevich, 2015). Factors influencing domestic tourists' preferences for the Bagan destination are varied and encompass personal, psychological, and social aspects. There are theoretical models using demographic or personal factor categories aim to discover the influences on consumer behavior (Kotler, P, & Keller, K.L 2012). Even though marketers have little to no control over these factors, they nonetheless have a significant impact on consumer behavior and should be considered when anticipating how consumers will make decisions (Kotler, P, & Keller, K.L 2012). The model presents four types of characteristics: psychological, social, cultural, and personal. Gender, as a personal factor, has been found to influence the travel motivations and preferences of domestic tourists (Kim. K, 2008). The presence of hot balloon riding, biking routes, and opportunities to explore the ancient temples on foot can attract adventure enthusiasts seeking active leisure experiences. Cultural motivators are also significant in shaping tourists' preferences for domestic tourist (Andrea.Ha 2007). The rich cultural heritage of Bagan makes it an attractive destination for tourists seeking authentic cultural experiences. Interpersonal motivators, such as the desire to build connections with others, can also influence tourists' preferences (Camilleri, M.A.2018). The opportunity to engage with the local community, participate in local activities, and establish connections with fellow travelers can enhance the overall experience in Bagan. Additionally, status and prestige motivators play a role in tourists' preferences, particularly for those seeking exclusive or unique experiences (Camilleri, M.A. 2018). By visiting iconic or world-renowned destinations like Bagan, tourists can enhance social status and gain recognition. Social factors which include word-of-mouth recommendations and group influences, significantly shape domestic tourists' preferences for the Bagan destination. Word-of-mouth recommendations from friends, family,

and online influencers have a strong impact on tourists' preferences (Kotler, P, & Keller, K.L 2012). Positive recommendation and personal experiences which are shared through word-of-mouth communication will have a significant impact upon visitors' perceived trust and credibility, positively influencing their decision to visit Bagan. Furthermore, group influences, including family and friends, play a significant role in shaping tourists' preferences (Kotler, P, & Keller, K.L 2012). The experiences and preferences of family members or friends often influence decision-making processes, as shared experiences and collective decision-making influence the choice of destination. By reviving previous literature, it can be known that numerous social and psychological, affect the preferences of domestic tourists in Bagan. The preferences of domestic visitors are also influenced by psychological elements, such as status and prestige motivators, cultural motivators, physical motivators, and interpersonal motivators. Social elements are equally important as these include group effects and word-of-mouth recommendations. Recognizing these variables is essential for Bagan's tourism various stakeholders to develop concentrated approaches to meet the heterogeneous requirements and preferences of local travelers, concluding in increased guest satisfaction and persistent growth in tourism.

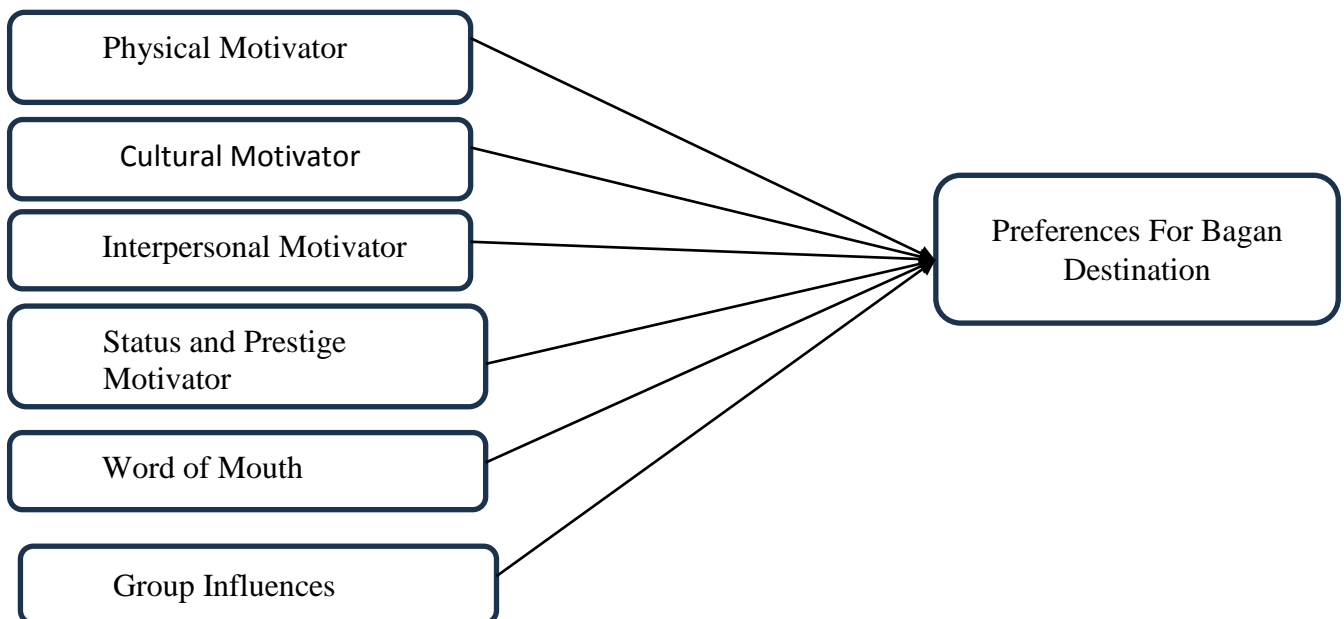
### Research Objective

The objectives of this study are as follow

1. To examine the factors affecting domestic travelers' preferences of Bagan destination.
2. To provide insights into the psychological motivation and social influences of domestic travelers in relation with gender.

### Conceptual Framework

Based on the previous research and literature, the following framework is developed to fulfilled the objectives of this study.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework of the Study

**Physical Motivator:** Physical motivator in this study refers to the factors that directly relate to the tangible and visible aspects of a person's environment or surroundings, such as the quality of accommodation, accessibility of transportation, and availability of recreational facilities.

**Cultural Motivator:** Cultural motivator in this study refers to factors that are influenced by a person's cultural background, values, beliefs, and traditions that drive their behaviors or preferences when selecting a travel destinations.

**Interpersonal Motivator:** Interpersonal motivator in this study refers to aspects of a person's relationships and interactions with others that influence their behaviors and motivations in choosing a travel destination. This may include seeking social connections, shared experiences, or group travel opportunities.

**Status and Prestige Motivator:** Status and prestige motivators in this study refer to the desire for recognition, respect, and admiration in society, which can influence individuals' travel destination choices based on perceived social standing.

**Word of Mouth:** Word of mouth in this study refers to the act of people sharing information, recommendations, or opinions about a destination through verbal communication, influencing the travel decisions of others based on personal experiences and social interactions.

**Group Influencers:** Group influences in this study refer to the impact that social groups have on individuals' attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and decision-making processes when selecting a travel destination. This may include peer recommendations, family preferences, or group travel dynamics that shape individual choices.

### **Method of the Study**

This study employed quantitative research methods to examine the objectives of understanding domestic tourists' preferences for the Bagan destination. Descriptive statistics and cross tabulation were applied to analyze the collected data. In this study, about gender and domestic tourist preferences for Bagan, crosstab analysis is used to check the connection between gender and other factors. It helps researchers compare, understand correlation and learn how gender affects what tourists like and choose when visiting Bagan. By using crosstab, the study wants to see how gender influences tourist preferences to help create better marketing strategies and experiences for different genders at Bagan. The target population for this study consisted of individuals who visited Bagan within the years 2021 to 2023, which is considered as the post-pandemic period. Due to the lack of available statistical data on the specific domestic tourist population, the total population size was assumed to be unknown. The sample size is 323, a result from the Cochran's sample size formula, were distributed online, out of which 220 questionnaires were returned. Eight incomplete or inappropriate responses were eliminated from the analysis. Therefore, a final sample size of 212 respondents, representing 65.5% of the targeted sample size, was used for the analysis. Convenience random sampling technique was employed to select the respondents for this study. This method was chosen as it allows researchers to collect data from a conveniently available pool of respondents. As a non-probability sampling method, the probability of each case being selected from the population is not known. The survey was conducted through online platforms, and respondents were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. The data collection period for this study was from October 28 to November 10, 2023. The most obvious limitation for this research is small sample size due to cost and time limitation. A structured questionnaire was used to collect

primary data, which consisted of demographic factors, psychological factors, and social factors. The questionnaire included multiple-choice questions and a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. The questions include respondent's gender, age and highest education completed. For Section B, the questions based on dependent variable and independent variables are formed. The independent variables are physical motivator, cultural motivator, interpersonal motivator, status and prestige motivator, word of mouth and group influences.

**Table 1: Measurement of Variable**

Variables	Categories	Measurement	Measure
Physical Motivators	Independent Variable	Attraction and Activities of the Bagan Destination	-3 items with 5 points Likert scale
Cultural Motivators	Independent Variable	Festival and Cultural Spirit of Bagan Destination	-3 items with 5 points Likert scale
Interpersonal Motivators	Independent Variable	Traveler's value toward the Bagan destination	-3 items with 5 points Likert scale
Status and Prestige Motivator	Independent Variable	Traveler's choice of luxury service in Bagan Destination	-3 items with 5 points Likert scale
Word of Mouth	Independent Variable	Influence of social media and Past experience Recommendations in Traveler's Preferences of Bagan Destination	-3 items with 5 points Likert scale
Group Influences	Independent Variable	Influence of friend, family and their references group in Traveler's Preferences of Bagan Destination	-3 items with 5 points Likert scale
Preferences For Bagan Destination	Dependent Variable	Willing to choose Bagan Destination as a End Destination	-3 items with 5 points Likert scale

Source: Conceptual Framework

### Analysis and Finding

The demographic characteristics of respondents in accordance with, the gender, age and educational level are studied and are shown as follows.

**Table 2: Socio Demographic Character of Respondents**

Socio-Demographic Characteristics		Number of Respondents	Percent
Gender	Male	104	49%
	Female	108	51%
Age	Under 16	4	2%
	16-25	60	28%
	26-35	80	38%
	36-45	30	14%
	46-55	26	12%
	Over 55	12	6%
Education Level	High School or Below	28	13%
	Bachelor Degree	118	56%
	Master Degree	47	22%
	Doctorate (Ph D)	19	9%

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Among the 212 respondents surveyed, 108 identified themselves as female while the remaining 104 identified as male. This distribution results in females comprising 51% of the total sample, while males make up the remaining 49%. The respondents' ages were classified into six categories: under 16 years old, 16-25 years old, 26-35 years old, 36-45 years old, 46-55 years old, and over 55 years old. The largest proportion of respondents, representing 38% (80 individuals), fell within the 26-35 age range. The next highest age group was 16-25 years old, accounting for 28% (60 individuals) of the total sample. Other age groups had smaller percentages, with 14% (30 individuals) in the 36-45 age range, 12% (26 individuals) in the 46-55 age range, and approximately 6% (12 individuals) over the age of 55. The smallest age group represented in the sample was individuals under 16 years old, comprising only 2% (4 individuals). The educational qualifications of the respondents varied, with the majority holding bachelor's degrees, making up 56% (118 individuals) of the total sample. Those with master's degrees accounted for 22% (47 individuals), while 13% (28 individuals) had completed high school or below. The remaining 9% (19 individuals) of respondents possessed a Ph.D. degree. Therefore, the majority of respondents had graduated, with bachelor's degrees being the most prevalent qualification.

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation for Independent Variables**

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Physical Motivators</b>		
Seeing the sunrise or sunset over the Bagan temples is an important motivation for visiting.	4.01	0.96
Having motivation to explore the temples and pagodas on foot or by bicycle.	3.77	0.85

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
Engaging in adventurous activities like hot air balloon rides in Bagan appeals to me.	3.73	0.86
<b>Cultural Motivators</b>		
Experiencing the local customs and traditions in Bagan is an important aspect of my visit.	3.93	0.82
Visiting the historical sites and learning about their significance is a priority for me.	3.88	0.86
Having interested in attending cultural events and festivals in Bagan.	3.70	0.97
<b>Interpersonal Motivator</b>		
Being want to go to Bagan with friends and/or family.	4.08	0.97
Interacting with the local community and engaging in local activities is important to me.	3.56	0.85
Sharing my Bagan travel experiences with others enhances my enjoyment of the trip.	3.66	0.89
<b>Status and Prestige Motivator</b>		
Traveling to high-end and exclusive accommodations in Bagan is important to me.	2.87	1.08
Showcasing my social status through my travel experiences in Bagan is a priority.	2.81	1.05
Participating in unique and expense events or tours in Bagan is highly appealing to me.	3.08	1.03
<b>Word of Mouth</b>		
Getting recommendations from friends, family, or online influencers greatly influence my preferences Bagan Destination.	3.83	0.96
Having positive experiences shared by others encourage me to choose Bagan as my destination.	3.82	0.84
Relying on word of mouth to help me select Bagan as my travel destination.	3.72	0.92
<b>Group Influences</b>		
Having preferences and interests of my family play a significant role in choosing Bagan as our destination.	3.81	0.96
Getting the opinions and recommendations of my friends influence my decision to visit Bagan.	3.75	0.92
Being important when selecting Bagan as a destination for group travel.	3.84	0.83

Source: Survey Data (2023)

In the statistical analysis of motivators for visiting Bagan, the physical motivators category received an average score of 4.01 (SD = 0.96). This indicates that seeing the sunrise or sunset over the Bagan temples is deemed an important motivation for visitors. Additionally,

exploring the temples and pagodas on foot or by bicycle received an average score of 3.77 (SD = 0.85), suggesting a moderate level of motivation in this aspect. Engaging in adventurous activities, such as hot air balloon rides, also appealed to visitors with an average score of 3.73 (SD = 0.86). Moving on to cultural motivators, experiencing the local customs and traditions in Bagan was considered important by respondents, as indicated by an average score of 3.93 (SD = 0.82).

Similarly, visiting the historical sites and learning about their significance was also prioritized, with an average score of 3.88 (SD = 0.86). Attending cultural events and festivals in Bagan, however, received a slightly lower average score of 3.70 (SD = 0.97), indicating a moderate level of interest in this aspect. In terms of interpersonal motivators, traveling to Bagan with friends and/or family was enjoyed by respondents, as evidenced by an average score of 4.08 (SD = 0.97). Additionally, interacting with the local community and engaging in local activities was considered important, receiving an average score of 3.56 (SD = 0.85). Sharing Bagan travel experiences with others also contributed to the enjoyment of the trip, with an average score of 3.66 (SD = 0.89).

Lastly, the category of status and prestige motivators demonstrated lower levels of motivation. Traveling to high-end and exclusive accommodations in Bagan was deemed important by respondents, but received a relatively low average score of 2.87 (SD = 1.08). Showcasing social status through travel experiences in Bagan was also considered a priority, but received a similarly low average score of 2.81 (SD = 1.05). This statistical analysis suggests that physical motivators, cultural motivators, and interpersonal motivators play important roles in motivating visitors to travel to Bagan, while status and prestige motivators have lower significance.

The data from word-of-mouth categories reveals that recommendations from friends, family, and influencers hold significant influence over individuals' preferences for Bagan as a post-COVID-19 destination, with a high average score of 3.83. Positive shared experiences act as strong motivators, scoring 3.82, indicating the influence of social proof on decision-making. Trust in word of mouth is evident with a score of 3.72, emphasizing the importance of social trust in travel decision-making. In terms of group influences, familial preferences (3.81) and friends' recommendations (3.75) hold weight in choosing Bagan, highlighting the impact of social networks. Group dynamics and consensus (3.84) are vital for selecting Bagan for group travel. Overall, recognizing and leveraging these social influences can shape effective destination marketing strategies for Bagan, catering to travelers' preferences.

To fulfill the second objective of the research, cross-tabulation was performed to examine the gender differences in relation to various motivator factors for visiting Bagan. The tabulations below provide the results for each motivator factor and its connection with gender.

**Table 4.1 Gender in relation with Physical Motivator Factor**

Physical Motivator Factor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
Female	0.47%	2.14%	3.56%	28.47%	14.83%	49.47%
Male	0.24%	0.47%	2.85%	30.37%	16.61%	50.53%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>0.71%</b>	<b>2.61%</b>	<b>6.41%</b>	<b>58.84%</b>	<b>31.44%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Survey Data (2023)



Table 4.1 displays the relationship between gender and the physical motivator factor. Both female and male respondents showed agreement in their preference to travel to Bagan due to its physical attributes. Among female respondents, 28.47% agreed along with this factor while among male respondents, 30.37 % did the same.

**Table 4.2 Gender in relation with Cultural Motivator Factor**

Cultural Motivator Factor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
Female	0.23%	1.17%	5.96%	29.47%	12.28%	49.12%
Male	0.35%	0.23%	26.20%	2.46%	21.64%	50.88%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>0.58%</b>	<b>1.40%</b>	<b>32.16%</b>	<b>31.93%</b>	<b>33.92%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Table 4.2 examines the gender differences regarding the cultural motivator factor. A higher percentage of male respondents 26.20% stay in neutral and they still don't know exactly that they preferred to visit Bagan because of its cultural attributes. In comparison, 29.47% of female respondents shared that cultural attribute is the mainly reason that they prefer Bagan with agree level.

**Table 4.3 Gender in relation with Interpersonal Motivator Factor**

Interpersonal Motivator Factor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
Female	0.62%	1.73%	7.05%	29.21%	11.14%	49.75%
Male	0.25%	0.74%	8.91%	24.26%	16.09%	50.25%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>0.87%</b>	<b>2.48%</b>	<b>15.97%</b>	<b>53.47%</b>	<b>27.23%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Table 4.3 presents the relationship between gender and the interpersonal motivator factor. Results indicate that 29.21% of female respondents and 24.26 % of male respondents agreed that they preferred to travel to Bagan to improve their interpersonal attributes.

**Table 4.4 Gender in relation with Status and Prestige Motivator Factor**

Status and Prestige Motivator Factor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
Female	1.73%	5.02%	20.09%	20.25%	4.71%	51.81%
Male	1.73%	6.28%	21.19%	11.93%	7.06%	48.19%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3.45%</b>	<b>11.30%</b>	<b>41.28%</b>	<b>32.18%</b>	<b>11.77%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Table 4.4, presents the impact of gender on the status and prestige motivator factor. Among female respondents of 20.25 % agreed that they preferred to travel to Bagan to show their status and prestige while male respondents, 21.19 % still share in neutral situation.

**Table 4.5 Gender in relation with Word-of-Mouth Factors**

Word-of-Mouth Factors	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
Female	0.63%	2.01%	7.53%	9.41%	30.11%	49.69%
Male	0.38%	1.25%	3.76%	36.14%	8.78%	50.31%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1.00%</b>	<b>3.26%</b>	<b>11.29%</b>	<b>45.55%</b>	<b>38.89%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Table 4.5 investigates the influence of gender on the word-of-mouth factor. The data reveals that most of the female 30.11% think that they strongly prefer word of mouth factor of others while and male 36.14% agreed that their preferences regarding the Bagan destination had a significant impact on the word-of-mouth factor form others.

**Table 4.6 Gender in relation with Influences of Group Factor**

Group Influences	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
Female	0.37%	1.23%	9.20%	28.96%	9.82%	49.57%
Male	0.37%	0.98%	3.68%	31.90%	13.50%	50.43%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>0.74%</b>	<b>2.21%</b>	<b>12.88%</b>	<b>60.86%</b>	<b>23.31%</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Lastly, table 4.6 explores the influence of gender on the group influences factor. Results show that both female 28.96% and male 31.90% respondents agreed that their preferences for the Bagan destination had a significant impact on group influences like from their family and friend group.

## Discussions

Understanding the factors that influence domestic tourist preferences for the Bagan destination is crucial for the development and success of the tourism industry. Through the research, it can be seen that psychological factors have a most significant impact on the appeal of Bagan as a tourist destination with total. Physical motivators, such as beautiful landscapes and recreational activities, emerge as the most significant drivers, indicating the intrinsic allure of the destination. Cultural motivators, centered around experiencing local customs and traditions, notably shape preferences, particularly for men.

Interpersonal motivators highlight the importance of family and friends in domestic tourists' choice to visit Bagan, underscoring the role of shared experiences. Status and prestige, contrary to initial assumptions, hold limited sway among travelers, with a preference for authenticity over luxury. Word of mouth emerges as a powerful influencer, with recommendations from friends, family, and online influencers significantly impacting destination preferences, particularly among women. Group influences play a pivotal role, emphasizing the importance of consensus and dynamics in choosing Bagan as a destination.

The results further highlight the significance of cultural activities in influencing preferences, especially in the case of men. It is necessary to expand these activities to include traditional hand painting and incorporate technological aspects. These improvements not only suit the tastes of men, but they also make the destination much more appealing overall.

### **Suggestions**

Based on these factors, it is recommended that stakeholders in the Bagan tourism industry consider incorporating them into their marketing strategies. By highlighting physical motivators, cultural motivators, interpersonal motivators, status and prestige motivators, and leveraging positive word of mouth and group influences, they can create compelling and tailored experiences for domestic tourists.

In addition, most of the travelers prioritize leisure travel above luxury one when come visiting to Bagan destination, it is advised to launch targeted marketing initiatives. Emphasizing 3–4-star hotels and mid-range tour packages should develop in line with the majority of visitors who want to have a well-rounded experience while in Bagan. Moreover, the study acknowledges the significant impact of word of mouth, especially on women's preferences. To use this influence as a competitive advantage, strategic initiatives aimed at encouraging positive recommendations should be explored, recognizing the positive factors that shape women's choices in travel destinations.

Finally, as many tourists choose to visit Bagan in groups, it is critical to customize tour packages to suit the needs of the group and the traveler's budget. Budget-conscious customers' preferences are well-suited to the idea of giving dominating room types over luxury lodging, which makes for a more welcoming and inclusive travel experience. These are the recommendation, which were found after a thorough this research, to provide insightful advice for Bagan's sustainable growth as a top tourist destination in Myanmar by understanding and catering to the identified psychological and social factors that influence domestic tourist preferences for the Bagan destination, tourism stakeholders can create a unique and attractive experience. This will contribute to the overall growth and success of the Bagan tourism industry, making it a preferred choice for domestic tourists seeking an unforgettable travel experience.

### **Needs for Further Studies**

Based on the research results and findings discussed on "Factors Influencing Domestic Tourists' preferences for Bagan destination," several avenues for further academic inquiry become apparent. Firstly, it would be more beneficial to conduct a more in-depth qualitative study to explore the underlying motivations and emotions that drive domestic travelers' preferences. This could involve interviews or focus groups to uncover the intricacies of travelers' thought processes and how they align with the identified factors. Secondly, a comparative study between different regions within Myanmar could shed light on regional variations in travelers' preferences and perceptions. This could contribute to a more understanding of destination-specific influences on decision-making. Lastly, a longitudinal study tracking changes in preferences over time could reveal evolving trends and patterns in domestic travelers' decision-making, considering external factors like economic shifts, global events, or changes in tourism policies.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of my teachers who have taught me and guided me throughout my study life. I would like to express my respectful thanks to Professor Dr.Ni Lar Myint Htoo, Principal of National Management Degree College, and Professor Dr San San Myint, Head of the Department of Tourism for giving me valuable support and permission to submit this paper. I would like to thank my coworkers in Department of Tourism and Master of Hospitality and Tourism Management class mates who helped in data collection and finding any resources which might have been helpful to this paper. Without the support from these people, I would not be able to complete the paper. Finally, I would like to tender my deep thanks to my parents and my sister for their care, continuous support, understanding and encouragement throughout my life.

### References

- Andrades, L., Dimanche, F., & Ilkevich, S. (2015). *Tourist behaviour and trends* In book: *Tourism in Russia: A management handbook* Chapter 4. Emerald Editors [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Frederic-Dimanche/publication/302139612\\_Tourist\\_Behaviour\\_and\\_Trends/links/572e5d2f08aeb1c73d129655/Tourist-Behaviour-and-Trends.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Frederic-Dimanche/publication/302139612_Tourist_Behaviour_and_Trends/links/572e5d2f08aeb1c73d129655/Tourist-Behaviour-and-Trends.pdf)
- Andrea. A (2007). *Cultural Tourism: Marketing Challenges and Opportunities for German Cultural Heritage*. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 13(2):170-184
- Camilleri, M.A. (2018). *The Planning and Development of the Tourism Product*. Chapter(1) pg 25.
- Fodness, D. (1994) *Measuring Tourist Motivation*. *Annals of Tourism Research*, vo.21 no.3, page 555 – 581
- Kim, K. (2008). *Analysis of structural equation model for the student pleasure travel market: motivation, involvement, satisfaction, and destination loyalty*. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*. 24 (4), 297–313.
- Kotler, P, & Keller, K.L (2012). *Marketing Management: Philip Kotler, Kevin Lane Keller*, Pearson. Upper Saddle River, NJ
- MengLi et. al (2019). *Urban Travel Behavior Study Based on Data Fusion Model* (Chapter 5). Elsevier <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-817026-7.00005-9>