

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
Forest Department



**Assessing the Visitors' Willingness to Pay to Generate Revenues for
Managing the Alaungtau Kathapa National Park and Shwe Settaw
Wildlife Sanctuary in Myanmar**



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သဘာဝထိန်းသိမ်းရေးနယ်မြေများတွင် ဝင်ကြေးကောက်ခံခြင်းစနစ်
ကျင့်သုံးနိုင်ရေးအတွက် လာရောက်လည်ပတ်သူများ၏ ပေးချေလိုသည့်တန်ဖိုးကို
ဆန်းစစ်ခြင်း

(အလောင်းတော်ကဿဖ အမျိုးသားဥယျာဉ်နှင့်ရွှေစက်တော်ဘေးမဲ့တောတွင် လေ့လာ
ဆန်းစစ်ခြင်း)

တင်နှောင်းအေး၊ တောအုပ်ကြီး
ဒေါက်တာဖြူဖြူလွင်၊ ဦးစီးအရာရှိ
ဒေါက်တာသောင်းနိုင်ဦး၊ ညွှန်ကြားရေးမှူး

စာတမ်းအကျဉ်း

ယခုစာတမ်းသည် အလောင်းတော်ကဿဖ အမျိုးသားဥယျာဉ်နှင့် ရွှေစက်တော် ဘေးမဲ့
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ကျား/မ၊ ပညာ အရည်အချင်းနှင့် အလုပ်အကိုင်အခြေအနေတို့သည် လွှမ်းမိုးမှုရှိသည့်
အကြောင်းအရာများ ဖြစ်ကြောင်း တွေ့ရှိရပါသည်။

Assessing the Visitors' Willingness to Pay to Generate Revenues for Managing the Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park and Shwe Settaw Wildlife Sanctuary in Myanmar

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Abstract

This study estimates willingness to pay for entrance fees of two protected areas, namely Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park and Shwe Settaw Wildlife Sanctuary in Myanmar. The data were collected from a simple random sample of 518 local visitors in March-April 2019. The study aims to answer the following questions: what is the visitors' willingness to pay for entrance fees for enjoying the environmental and recreational services of PAs and what are the characteristics and factors of the visitors that determine their willingness to pay for conservation of environmental and recreational services of PAs? About 77% of visitors had willingness to pay for entrance fees but 23% had no willingness to pay in visiting the parks. The study found that about 90% of visitors had their willingness to pay for conservation fee ranging from 500-1000 MMK. In order to understand the determinants of the visitors' willingness to pay responses, binary logistic regression analysis was performed to explore variation in various measures of the respondents' willingness to pay. Gender, visitor's education, and work status were significant determinants for the willingness to pay of the visitors.

Key Words: Conservation, Entrance fees, Local visitors, Myanmar, Protected areas

Assessing the Visitors' Willingness to Pay to Generate Revenues for Managing the Alaungtau Kathapa National Park and Shwe Settaw Wildlife Sanctuary in Myanmar

1. Introduction

In last several decades, deforestation and biodiversity loss became a common event throughout the globe. This phenomenon is much more frequent in developing countries like Myanmar. According to Forest Department statistics data, forest cover in Myanmar decreased from 58.00% in 1990 to 51.50% in 2000, 49.30% in 2005 and 47.00% in 2010 (FRA, 2015). At current situation, about 42.92% of the country is covered with the forest (FRA, 2015). As an attempt to address the problems of forest degradation and for biodiversity conservation, many tropical developing countries, where biodiversity is greatest and local communities rely on it for their livelihoods, have expanded the amount of land under protected areas (PAs) (Mukul, 2010). Myanmar has 45 PAs which can be categorized into National Park, Marine National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Nature Reserve, and Zoo Park and cover 5.85% of the total land area of the country (NWCD, 2019). With the exception of areas managed for strict wilderness and nature protection, most PAs allow for recreational and ecotourism activities.

Ecotourism implies a responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people (Khan, 2014). Moreover, ecotourism helps raise funds for environmental protection, research and education through a variety of mechanisms, including park entrance fees, tour companies, hotel, airline and airport taxes and voluntary contributions (Khan, 2014). Globally, it is estimated that there are around eight billion visits to PAs each year and the income generates in excess of USD 600 billion per annum (MOECA, 2015). Like other developing countries, Myanmar is seeking to revitalize its tourism sector, including nature-based tourism to an expanding PAs all over the country. However, Myanmar is a developing country with a limited budget for managing its PAs. Therefore, a well-defined entry fee collection system in the PAs can significantly help to generate revenue for improving the management and conservation of PAs. However, the entry fee amount must be evidence-based and match willingness to pay of the visitors (Shahabuddin, 2013). This study aims to develop entrance fee system in PAs by researching the visitors' willingness to pay to determine a fair and appropriate entry fee in the Alaungtau Kathapa National Park and Shwe Settaw Wildlife Sanctuary in Myanmar.

2. Problem Statement

Public goods like national parks and zoological gardens perform not only ecological functions but also provide recreational facilities to visitors. There are a number of PAs in Myanmar and they face some problems like forest fire, illegal logging, human settlements inside the parks, hunting and encroachment by the local people (BANCA, 2011). Thus, the overall negative and undesirable impact caused by one or another reason may be associated with insufficient funding for managing these parks (Kaosa-ard, 1995). In Myanmar, most PAs face difficult challenges to secure adequate budgets to cover their conservation management costs (MOECA, 2015). Usually, there are two main financial sources for park management: the government budget allocation and revenues generated from park entrance fees. In Myanmar, the government budget allocation for national park management is very

limited while comparing with other sectors like education, health care, defense spending, etc. Therefore, the other alternative should be used to generate more and more revenues for park management. At current situation, the entry into the parks by the visitors is almost free in most parks in Myanmar. Therefore, charging entry fees into these parks can generate sufficient funds for improving the park management. This can be suggested that if the government budget allocation is faced with competition from other sectors, adjusting the park entrance fees may increase park revenue and park development. The present study, therefore, aims to adjust the possible park entry fees to reflect the recreational benefits that the protected areas provide to the visitors.

3. Objectives

- (1) To assess the visitors' willingness to pay for entrance fees for visiting PAs
- (2) To explore the visitors' characteristics and factors that influence their willingness to pay for entrance fees
- (3) To develop an appropriate fee system in PAs

4. Literature Review

4.1 Definitions of Ecotourism

According to the definition of Food and Agriculture Organization, "Ecotourism" is tourism and recreation that is both nature-based and sustainable (FAO, 1997). Some researchers believe that there is an overlap between nature-based tourism and ecotourism. Both types of tourism are ecologically sustainable; but, nature-based tourism only involves experiences in the natural environment, while ecotourism puts emphasis on the 'understanding, appreciation and conservation' of natural areas and environment (Valentine, 1993). Also, compared to ecotourism, nature-based tourism does not necessarily mean sustainable (Goodwin, 1996). However, ecotourism cannot be automatically sustainable. It also has to be economically viable, environmentally appropriate and socio-culturally acceptable. While the ecotourism industry clearly brings numerous benefits to society, there may also be many consequences from the massive growth of ecotourism.

4.2 Contingent Valuation Method (CVM) and Willingness to Pay

CVM is 'a tool to place an amount or value on goods and services that are typically not exchanged in the market place' (Ajzen, 1992). The CVM tool has been the subject of methodological research and applied in estimating both use values and non-use values of environmental goods (Cummings, 1986). CVM is a questionnaire-based approach that is designed to estimate the economic value of non-market goods (Cummings, 1986). One of the most important concepts in CVM is willingness to pay. Willingness to pay is 'the maximum amount consumers are prepared to pay for a good or service' (ADB, 2007). More specifically, willingness to pay is the amount of money that a person is willing and able to pay to enjoy recreational facilities (McConnell, 1985). It measures whether an individual is willing to forego their income in order to obtain more goods and services, and is typically used for non-market goods.

There are many studies for valuation of environmental services in the developing countries but only few studies have used economic approach to calculate welfare

measurement. In Myanmar, there are some studies that have combined the travel cost method (TCM) with the open-ended contingent valuation method (CVM) to assess willingness to pay. Thu (2018) studied the recreational use value of the Hlawga Park in Myanmar by using the application of the Individual Travel Cost Method (ITCM). The study indicated that travel costs and monthly income were found to be significant determinants of demand for outdoor recreation in Hlawga Park. The present study, which is an empirical investigation of willingness to pay for entry into the Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park and the Shwese ttaw Wildlife Sanctuary, can be considered as a pioneering work in PAs valuation in the country.

5. Materials and Methods

5.1 Study Areas

Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park

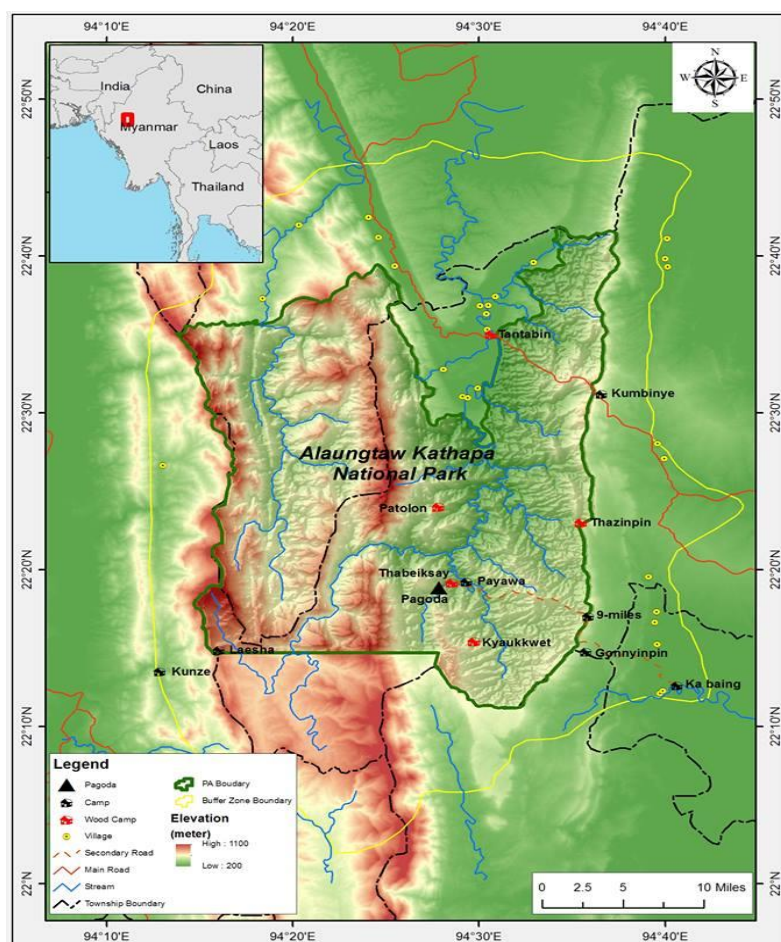


Figure 1. Location of Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park

Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park, one of the ASEAN Heritage Parks in Myanmar, is located in Kani and Mingin Townships of Sagaing Region in upper Myanmar. It was gazetted in 1989 in order to conserve the flora and fauna of the area, the cultural heritage and develop ecotourism. The park covers 1597 km². Average rainfall ranges from 25 to 50 mm and average temperature is recorded as 10 to 40°C (BANCA, 2011). Elevation ranges from 135 to 1,335 m in the site. Two streams, Pahtolone and Taungdwin Chaung Magyi, flow in the park. Mixed deciduous forest (moist upper, dry upper and lower), evergreen forest and pine forest

are the typical forest types in the site (BANCA, 2011). Alaungdaw Kathapa is the name of the legendary monk living there in historical times. The site is famous for the cave and pagoda and receives many local pilgrims and tourists every year, especially during the annual pagoda festival period.

Shwe Settaw Wildlife Sanctuary

The Shwesettaw Wildlife Sanctuary is situated in Minbu, Pwint Phyu, Ngape and Saytotetaya Townships of Magwe Region in middle Myanmar. The wildlife sanctuary covers 553 km². The site boundaries are well marked by the Mone and Mann streams. It was established as a wildlife sanctuary in 1940 in order to conserve the dry zone ecosystem conservation especially the habitat of Eld's deer *Cervus eldii*. Dry and moist upper mixed deciduous forests cover respectively 80% and 20% of the Sanctuary. Shwesettaw pagoda, one of the most famous pagodas in Myanmar, is situated in the buffer zone area. Many local pilgrims and tourists visit the site every year. Private temporary guest houses are built along the Mann Stream during the pagoda festival.

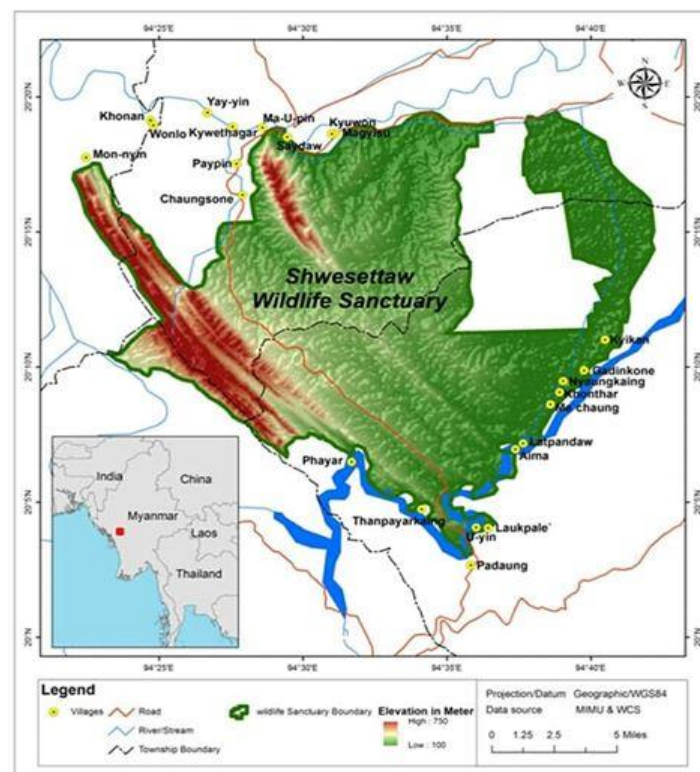


Figure 2. Location of Shwe Settaw Wildlife Sanctuary

5.2 Research Method

The individual visitor instead of households was chosen as respondents for interview for a number of reasons. “Visitors” were broadly defined as those who use these two PAs for recreational purposes. On the whole, 518 local visitors (289 from Alaungdaw Kathapa and 229 from Shwe Settaw) were interviewed for data collection. The visitors were randomly chosen for interviews. And then, they were briefed about the purpose of interview and questionnaire together with the general information and environmental issues of the study areas. The interviews were conducted only to respondents with ages above 14 as they were

considered to include all the decisions of various age classes on valuation for the willingness to pay of conservation in the study areas. The contingent valuation method (CVM) was employed for this study. This method has been extensively used to estimate the value of non-marketed goods and services through interviews using questionnaire survey (Dall'Aste Brandolini, 2003).

This study used semi-structured questionnaire in which the respondents will be asked directly on their basic socio-demographic information and their maximum willingness to pay for visiting the park. The respondents were asked about their personal backgrounds including gender, education, work status, marital status and so on. The most crucial feedback required was on their willingness to pay for conservation fee of the study areas. For this, they were required to answer “Yes” or “No”. If they say “Yes”, the next question was to discover the respondent’s maximum willingness to pay for conservation fee with three levels of prices such as 500-1000 MMK, 1500-2000 MMK and above 2000 MMK. In addition, any comment and suggestion for improvement to the park was accepted. The data derived from the questionnaires were analyzed by using SPSS version 20. Descriptive analysis and Binary Logistic Regression analysis were used for data analysis. Binary Logistic regression is a technique to estimate the probability of a dichotomous or binary variable by a set of explanatory variables. Since some respondents were willing to pay for conservation fee although some were not, determinants of willingness to pay for conservation fee were estimated using the binary logistic model. Due to the nature of binary logistic model, it is required the dependent variable to be a dichotomous variable of the value to be 0 and 1. Therefore, “Yes” willingness to pay of the respondents is defined as 1 and “No” willingness to pay is defined as 0. The respective coefficient of each explanatory variable measures the effect of the variable on the relative likelihood that the respondents had willingness to pay with no or yes amount of conservation fee.

6. Results and Discussions

6.1 Visitors’ Profile

Results of socio-demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in table 1. These show that 57.3 % of respondents were male and 42.7% were female. More than half were married (56.2%). More than half of the visitors came from the near places (51.9%) while the rest were from the distant areas to the parks (48.1%). In terms of educational background, most visitors had the high school and less than high school level of education (72.2%) and the rest (27.8%) were the university students and graduates. From the standpoint of the respondent’s age, the majority (64.5%) were young, between 14 and 40 years of age. Most visitors were self-employee (37.1%) followed by salaried workers (23.2%), farmers (20.5%). students (both high school and university) (15.4%) and the retired persons (3.9%).

Table 1. Profile of Visitors

Characteristics	Percentage (%)	N
Gender		
Male	57.3	297
Female	42.7	221
Marital Status		
Single	43.8	227
Married	56.2	291
Destination		
Border townships	34.9	181
Within the Region	17.0	88
Outside the Region	48.1	249
Education Level		
Less than High School	46.9	243
High School	25.3	131
University students and Graduates	27.8	144
Age Class		
14-20	20.1	104
21-40	44.4	230
41-60	27.2	141
Above 60	8.3	43
Work Status		
Salaried Job	23.2	120
Own Business	37.1	192
Student	15.4	80
Retired person	3.9	20
Farmers	20.5	106

6.2 Characteristics of Visit

Table 2 outlines the characteristics of visits. The results show that the respondents used six kinds of transportation such as hired car, own car, express car, motor cycle, on foot and by elephant for travelling to the parks. More than half of the respondents travelled by hiring car (59.7%) and they brought along their family members to visit the park. The respondents were asked about the frequency of their visits to the parks. 42.5% of the respondents said that the current visit was their first visit to the parks while 57.5% of the respondents had visited the parks before. In terms of the visiting places, more than half of the respondents (55.2%) visited only this place but the others (44.8%) visited other recreational places during their travel. 42.9% of respondents came to the parks only for a day trip but 51.2% of respondents stayed longer and spent one to two nights in the parks. Respondents' main purposes about visiting the parks were asked. Most of the respondents (73.7%) visited the parks for pilgrimage of famous pagodas and cave. Only 7.7 % of the respondents said that they come to the parks for relaxing, 6.6% for swimming at Mann stream, 5.4% for business purposes (car drivers for transportation of visitors and sellers in the pagoda market), 4.4% for sightseeing and enjoying the natural beauty of forest and the rest 2.1% visited the parks for seeing the elephants and riding the elephants especially in the Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park.

Table 2. Characteristics of Visit

Characteristics	Percentage (%)	N
Transportation Mode		
Hired Car	59.7	309
Own Car	18.0	93
Express	8.9	46
Motor Cycle	10.8	56
On Foot	2.1	11
By Elephant	0.6	3
1st Time Visit (yes/no)		
Yes	42.5	220
No	57.5	298
Number of Visits		
1st time	42.5	220
2-5 times	33.6	174
6-10 times	10.8	56
Above 10 times	13.1	68
Only this place visit (yes/no)		
Yes	55.2	286
No	44.8	232
Number of people in your group		
1-5 people	26.6	138
6-10 people	19.1	99
11-15 people	17.4	90
Above 15 people	36.9	191
Duration of Visit		
Only day trip	42.9	222
1-2 nights	51.2	265
3-5 nights	2.5	13
Pagoda Festival Period (4 months)	2.5	13
All over the year	0.9	5
Reasons for Visit		
Pilgrimage	73.7	382
Swimming at Mann Stream	6.6	34
Relaxing	7.7	40
Enjoying Natural Beauty of Forest	4.4	23
Elephant riding/ watching	2.1	11
Business purposes	5.4	28

6.3 Assessing Visitor's Willingness to Pay: Descriptive Analysis

Table 3. Willingness to Pay of the Visitors

Willingness to Pay	N	%
Yes	400	77.22
No	118	22.78
Total	518	100.0

Of respondents who faced with the willingness to pay questions, only 22.78% (118) rejected to pay the entrance fees, while 77.22% (400) accepted it to pay (Table 3).

6.4 Assessing Visitors' Willingness to Pay: Binary Logistic Regression Analysis

Results of the logit model are presented in Table 4. Among five explanatory variables, gender, education and work status of respondents were statistically significant at 1%, 5% and 10% confidence interval (Table 4). The chi-square test showed the overall goodness of fit of the model at 1% significant level. The fitted model also correctly predicted 77% of the observed values (Table 4).

Table 4. Binary Logistic Regression Analysis for Visitors' Willingness to Pay

Explanatory variables	Coefficient	S.E	Wald statistics	Significance	Odds ratio
Constant	1.996	0.605	10.884	0.001	7.358
Gender	-0.501	0.219	5.220	*	0.606
Age	0.001	0.008	0.024	0.876	1.001
Distance (Miles)	0.000	0.001	0.005	0.941	1.000
Education	0.438	0.156	7.831	**	1.549
Work Status	-0.292	0.079	13.576	***	0.747

S.E= Standard Error, N=518, *, ** and *** represent statistical significance at 10%, 5% and 1% respectively

Note: -2 log likelihood = 514.649, Omnibus tests of model coefficients; chi-square = 41.172, Cox and Snell $R^2 = 0.077$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.116$, correctly predicted percent = 77.0

There was a strong negative and significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship between gender of respondents and their willingness to pay for entrance fee (Table 4). This is suggested that male respondents had more willingness to pay for entrance fee than female respondents. This finding is similar to the finding of (Sara et al., 2015) who reported that female visitors had less willingness to pay for entrance fee in their study in national elephant conservation center in Malaysia. Education level of respondents had a positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) effect on the willingness to pay for entrance fee (Table 4). This implies that more highly educated respondents were willing to pay more. Therefore, this finding is consistent with the findings of (Sara, 2015), (Baral, 2014), (Wang, 2012) indicating that highly educated persons were particularly supportive of nature preservation and have higher willingness to pay. Work status of the respondents had a negative and significant ($p < 0.001$) effect on the willingness to pay for entrance fee for visiting the parks. This can be suggested that the respondents who worked as farmers or small-scale cultivators had less willingness to pay for entrance fee than the respondents who work as salaried staffs and do own-businesses.

This study also found that age of respondents had a positive but no significant effect towards willingness to pay. It can be assumed that the older respondents were willing to pay more than younger ones. This finding is also in line with the finding of (Sara et al., 2015) who reported that older visitors had more willingness to pay for entrance fee in assessing the visitors' willingness to pay in the national elephant conservation center in Malaysia. Besides, the distance (miles) from the respondents' native places to the parks had a positive but no significant effect on the willingness to pay for entrance fee for the parks. This means that native respondents were lesser in their willingness to pay for entrance fee than the distant respondents.

6.5 Assessing Visitors' Willingness to Pay in Three Different Levels of Prices

The respondents pointed out their willingness to pay for entrance fee in different level of prices. There are few reasons why the respondents wanted to pay some amount to conserve this park. They said that the payment should be charged to protect the environment and sustainably manage the parks. The study found that about 90% of visitors had their willingness to pay for conservation fee ranging from 500-1000 MMK (Figure 3). And 8% of respondents were willing to pay for entrance fee ranging from 1500-2000 MMK. But only 2% of respondents were willing to pay above 2000 MMK for entrance fee (Figure 3).

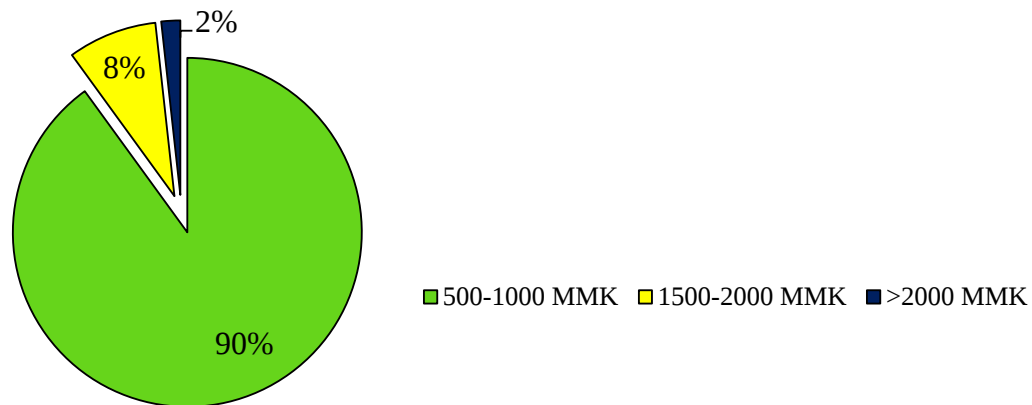


Figure 3. Willingness to pay at three different levels of prices

In assessing the respondents' willingness to pay by gender, age, education and work status, the different level of willingness to pay can be found (Figure 4). The results show that male respondents had more willingness to pay for conservation fee than female respondents. And most male and female visitors were willing to pay 500-1000 MMK for conservation fee.

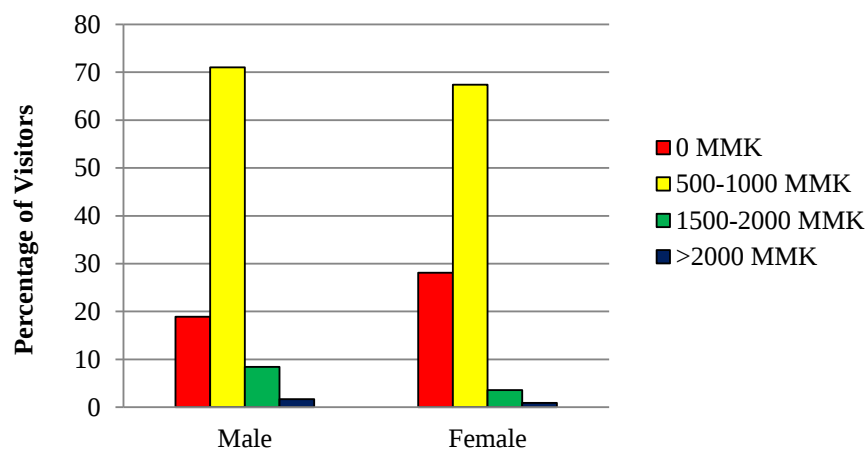


Figure 4. Male and female visitors' willingness to pay at three levels of prices

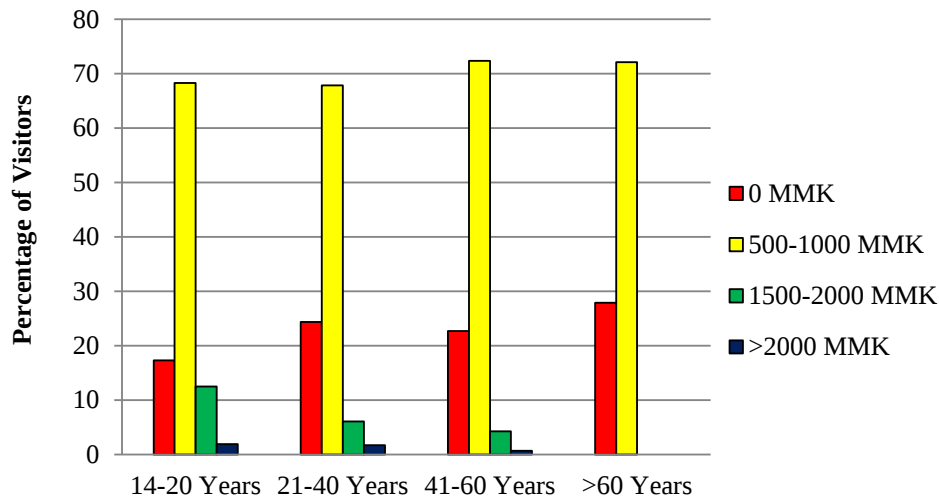


Figure 5. Visitors' willingness to pay at three levels of prices by different age groups

In terms of age groups, most respondents at every age group were willing to pay 500-1000 MMK as a conservation fee (Figure 5). In contrary with the other age groups, above 60 years old age group were willing to pay only for 500-1000 MMK (Figure 5). In terms of educational level, the respondents who had less than high school and high school level of education had less willingness to pay for conservation fee than the respondents who are university students and graduates (Figure 6). Most respondents who work as farmers or small scale cultivators had poor desire to pay for conservation fee as compared to salaried employees, self-employees, students and retired persons (Figure 7).

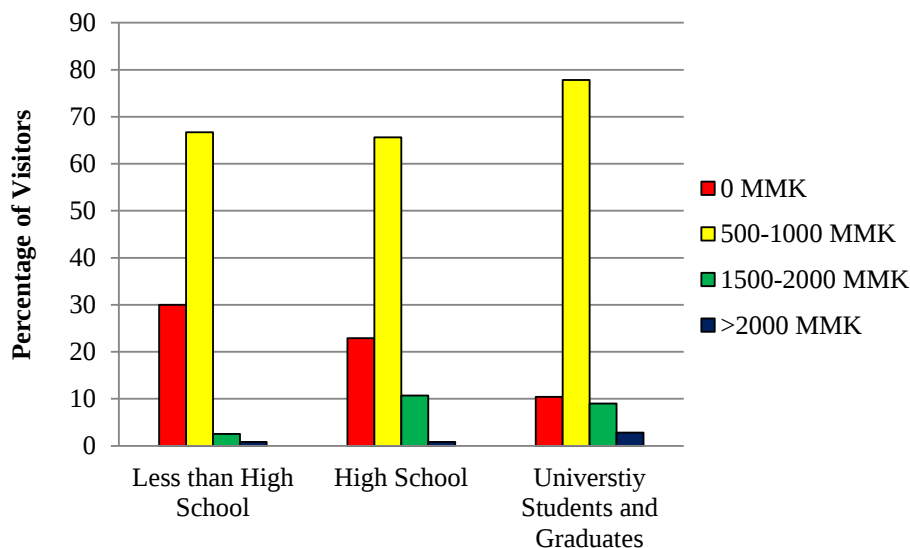


Figure 6. Visitors' willingness to pay at three levels of prices by their educational level

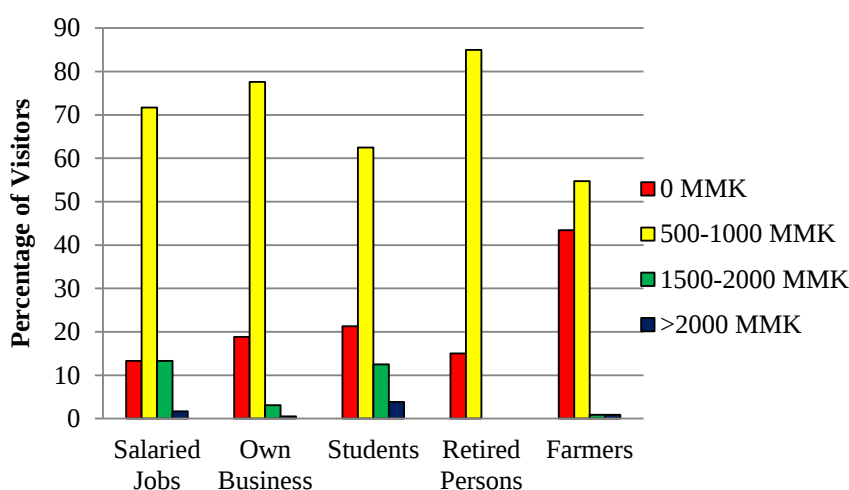


Figure 7. Visitors' willingness to pay at three levels of prices by different work status

6.6 Assessing the Pleasant and Unpleasant Things in Visiting the PAs

Table 5. Pleasant Things for Visiting the Parks

Pleasant things for visit	N	Percent (%)
Beauty of the forest	115	22.2
Alaungkaw Kathapa Cave	41	7.9
Pilgrimage in Pagoda	131	25.3
Swimming at Mann Stream	38	7.3
Nature walk	24	4.6
Elephant Seeing and Riding	44	8.5
Nothing Special	125	24.1
Total	518	100

In assessing the visitors' views on the pleasant things for visiting the parks, the survey team asked the most pleasant and unpleasant thing of visit to each respondent. 25.3% of respondents enjoyed the pilgrimage in pagodas as their main enjoyment of visiting the parks. Among other pleasant things for visit, these included the beauty of forest (orchids, big trees, streams and scenic spots) (22.2%), elephant seeing and riding (8.5%), Alaungkaw Kathapa cave (7.9%), swimming at Mann stream (7.3%) and nature walk (walking in the forest) (4.6%). But 24.1% of respondents had no desire to say their perceptions about the most pleasant thing in visiting the parks. Some visitors also said that everything in the parks was good and they didn't want to mention the most pleasant one for visit.

In terms of unpleasant things, more than half (58.3%) had nothing to say about unpleasant or bad things in visit. Among other motivations for the unpleasant things in visiting the parks were for the bad road (narrow and dusty main road for entering into the Alaungkaw Kathapa National Park) (18.3%), poor recreational facilities (5.8%), plastic waste (5.2%), forest degradation (3.9%), over work load on elephant (3.1%), suppliers (2.9%) and high price of accommodation fee (2.5%).

Table 6. Unpleasant Things for Visiting the Parks

Unpleasant things for visit	N	Percent (%)
Bad road	95	18.3
Plastic waste	27	5.2
Poor recreational facilities	30	5.8
Work load of elephant	16	3.1
Accommodation fee	13	2.5
Forest degradation	20	3.9
Suppliants	15	2.9
Nothing to say	302	58.3
Total	518	100

7. Conclusion

This paper analyses the visitors' willingness to pay for entrance fees in order to support the management of protected areas. The two different parks demonstrate homogeneity in tourist behavior and park attractions and amenities. This investigation utilized a questionnaire survey of 518 visitors to assess their preferences and willingness to pay for entrance fees in the protected areas. The socio-demographics and the views of visitors about conservation of parks and the willingness to pay were assessed. According to the survey, 77.22% of visitors had willingness to pay for entrance fee for their visit. Another 22.78% of visitors didn't have the desire to pay for entrance fee for their visit. The visitors coming to Alaungtaw Kathapa National Park and Shwe Settaw Wildlife Sanctuary were mainly for the purpose of pilgrimage to the famous pagodas and historical cave. The binary logistic regression analysis shows that the gender, education level and work status of visitors were significantly associated with visitors' willingness to pay for entrance fees. The willingness to pay for entrance fee increased with higher level of education and work status. Thus, education plays an important role in environmental conservation. So the government needs to strengthen its efforts in reducing illiteracy. Similarly, the visitors with higher level of work status will bring more revenues for the conservation of natural resources of the parks on sustainable basis.

Using the information gathered from this study, three alternatives for starting the charges of entrance permits are presented. The first option is to keep entrance fees low (500-1000 MMK) for the local visitors. The second option is to keep the entrance fees middle (1500-2000 MMK). The third option is to increase charges (more than 2000 MMK) for the visitors. This study found evidence that 90% of visitors to the parks are willing to pay (500-1000 MMK) especially for the entrance permit. It is suggested that the magnitude of socio-economic problems restricted the visitors in contribution more to conservation. Therefore, the conservation fee to protected areas was given low price (500-1000 MMK) by most of the local visitors. The willingness to pay stated by the majority of local visitors was for contributing to the conservation works and environmental development in the parks. They mentioned that their willingness to pay was to keep the parks beautiful, unexploited landscapes and diversity of flora and fauna that belong to these areas. Most visitors (18.3%) said that the road to parks (especially in the Alaungtaw Kathapa National Park) is too bad and

dangerous for coming to the park and 5.8% stated that recreational facilities inside the park are poor. As the positive points about the parks, 22.2% of the visitors mentioned that the beauty of natural forest is very attractive to them for visiting.

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