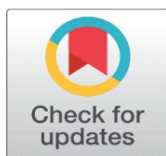# FACTORS INFLUENCING THE GUEST'S CHOICE OF RESORT IN KALAW, MYANMAR

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the decision-making process of tourists when selecting resorts in Kalaw, Myanmar. According to several studies, the selection of domestic travelers is influenced by factors such as the quality of the room, the location of the hotel, the level of security provided, the efficiency and helpfulness of the service staff, the available features, and amenities of the hotel, as well as the ratings and feedback provided by previous guests. This study examines the relationship between these variables through the utilization of non-probability sampling and quantitative research techniques, such as multiple linear regression and descriptive data analysis. The results underscore the significance of guest feedback, hotel amenities, and staff performance. Although the study acknowledges the importance of its findings, it also acknowledges the presence of sampling bias and self-reported social desirability bias. The present study investigates the decision-making process of domestic tourists when selecting resorts in Kalaw, Myanmar. This comprehensive analysis examines the various factors that impact the choices of domestic tourists in Kalaw, Myanmar. The results of this study have the potential to assist resort operators in enhancing guest satisfaction and gaining a competitive advantage. The present study holds considerable importance for the Kalaw resort industry since it specifically examines the preferences and interests of domestic tourists.

Keywords: Guests Choice Decision, Resort in Kalaw Myanmar, Room Quality, Location and Security, Service Staff, Information from Hotel Features, Information from Guest Reviews

1. INTRODUCTION
1.1. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Kalaw is a charming hill town located in the Shan State, 50km from the famous Inle Lake, Kalaw was founded as a hill station by the British during colonial rule. The climate at 1,320 meters had been a cold escape from the tropical heat, and was encircled by beautiful scenery Scott (2017). Kalaw is home to a diverse population of ethnicities such as the Shan, PaO, Dano, Palaung and Taung Yo. The inhabitants of the area are known to have warm hospitality and a lively cultural tradition. An overview of the rich history and religious practices in this region is provided by

traditional festivals such as Fire Balloon Festival Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. (2020).

Kalaw is being visited by a significant number of domestic travelers from different parts of Myanmar. The town is a starting point for treks into nearby villages of ethnic minorities, like the Palaung, Dano and PathanO communities. The tours give travelers an opportunity to experience the cultural heritage of this area, observe its agricultural practice and explore stunning countryside. Kalaw market offers an opportunity for a look at local products, crafts, and interactions with the friendly inhabitants Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. (2020).

Kalaw attracts many locals for its friendly climate, beautiful scenery, and the variety of cultures that it has to offer. Trekking, visits to pagodas and enjoying local cuisine are also popular activities for domestic tourists Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. (2020). Kalaw has taking the traveler away from the tropical heat of the country. It is a small town that is out of the tourist crowd, and it offers pure beauty that's untouched by man's intervention. A large number of hiking activities are carried out in this old British hill town. The city itself is small and can be reached in half an hour. Kalaw's got a couple of trail routes through the scenic Shan Hills, which take you up into the mountains Tourism Myanmar. (n.d.).

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENTS

COVID-19 has destroyed the international tourism and hospitality business in a matter of months, causing significant unemployment and putting airlines, hotels, and travel agencies in serious financial difficulties. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), the worldwide business has never faced a crisis as serious as the current one, with the sector facing a massive 100 million job losses owing to the coronavirus pandemic.

The situation in Myanmar is similar to that in the majority of other countries; industry sources and reports point to a considerable loss in jobs in the sector, the closure of numerous businesses, the future of hotels and restaurants being uncertain, and a recovery that might take years Bharat (2020). COVID-19 has forced the temporary closure of more than half of the total number of hotels and hostels legally licensed by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism until the second week of January 2021 The Irrawaddy (2021). According to all the tourism micro, small and medium enterprises that responded to the survey, the overall performance of their businesses has been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with more than 80% of them seriously affected. The lack of customers, very little income, and the difficulty to obtain finance has had a significant impact on operations Covid-19 Myanmar Tourism Impact Survey. (2020).

Since February 2021, the USA, Britain, and other western countries have imposed travel restrictions on Myanmar due to political violence, public unrest, and insecurity. Commercial international flights to Myanmar have been suspended, with only relief flights allowed. The formation of the People's Defense Forces (PDF) and conflicts with the military have led to in security concerns and travel restrictions, affecting the tourism industry. The COVID-19 third wave in the second half of 2021, as well as stay-at-home township designations, contributed to the tourism downturn Overlapping Crises of COVID-19 and Coup: Impact on Myanmar Business Environment in 2021. (2022).

In order to regenerate domestic tourism, the Minister of Hotels and Tourism hosted a resumption ceremony and encouraged people to take vacations during holidays Myanmar Now. (2021). Some hotels in popular areas for tourism, including

Chaung Thar Beach, Taunggyi, and Inle Lake, have reopened. Hotel and tourism businesses have been granted a one-year license fee relaxation until March 31, 2022 Myanmar Now. (2021).

In summary, the hospitality and tourism industry in Myanmar has been severely affected by both the military coup and the COVID-19 pandemic. The decline in tourist arrivals, reduced consumer spending, and safety concerns have significantly impacted the operations and sustainability of resorts in the region.

However, Domestic travel in Myanmar is showing signs of recovery, particularly during the Thingyan holiday period in April 2022. On the other hand, travel abroad has still difficulty for people in Myanmar as a result of COVID-19 regulations and the recent coup. As a result, many people are seeking safety and relaxation through domestic travel within the country, which provides an opportunity to release stress and pressure during these difficult times. Popular destinations such as Bagan, Kyaiktiyo pagoda, Chaungthar and Ngwesaung beaches, and the Myeik Archipelago saw an influx of visitors during this time. Other attractions like Shwe Settaw, Inle Lake, Pyin Oo Lwin, and Kalaw also experienced increased traveler numbers. On the full moon day of War-So, a religious holiday, there was a significant turnout of visitors at various pagodas across Myanmar. These events indicate a gradual recovery of Myanmar's domestic tourism sector Thuta (2022). Domestic travel in Myanmar has recovered, with travelers coming to popular places and hotels filling up for Thingyan, a week-long vacation in mid-April celebrating Myanmar's New Year The Irrawaddy (2023). Foreign tourists continue to avoid visiting Myanmar, which has led local hotel operators to focus on domestic travellers Nitta (2023).

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The objective of the study is to identify and examine the variables that influence domestic travelers' decision regarding which resort to stay at in Kalaw, Myanmar. In order to help resort operators fulfil the needs and expectations of their target market, the research focuses on these elements in order to offer insights into the preferences and priorities of domestic travelers. The aim of the research is to improve Kalaw's resort sector by highlighting its competitiveness and attractiveness to domestic travelers. In this study, the relation between guests' choice decision and room quality, location, security, service staff, information from hotel features and information from guest reviews are as important factors to be discussed.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Have room quality, location, security, service staff, information from hotel features, and information guest reviews significantly influence on the guests' choice of resort in Kalaw, Myanmar?

1.5. SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

The study on resort choice in Kalaw, Myanmar, for domestic guests is important. Firstly, the study examines domestic visitors' resort choice criteria to gain insight into their preferences, expectations, and decision-making processes. This information can help resort operators tailor their offerings to their target clients, increasing customer happiness and loyalty. Secondly, the study can also help Kalaw resorts compete by identifying key aspects that influence domestic travelers'

choices. The data can help resort operators distinguish their offers, improve their marketing, and provide unique experiences for domestic tourists. This can boost Kalaw's resort appeal and attract more people. Thirdly, resort owners can use the study's findings to inform their amenities, services, pricing, and marketing. By identifying domestic passengers' most important traits, resort operators may better allocate resources, invest in customer satisfaction, and provide a more enticing value proposition.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT
2.1. THEORIES RELATED TO EACH VARIABLE
2.1.1. ROOM QUALITY

According to the Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory, people evaluate their satisfaction with products or services based on a comparison between expectations and actual experience. When it comes to the quality of a guest's room, in terms of cleanliness, comfort, amenities and visual appearance, its performance or failure to fulfil guests' expectations is an important factor influencing their satisfaction and choice of hotel Oliver (1980).

2.1.2. LOCATION

According to the destination image theory, travelers' choices are influenced by how they see a place generally. The image of the destination, and how guests perceive it as desirable, depends on factors such as accessibility, proximity to tourist destinations, nature beauty, cultural heritage, or safety Echtner (1991).

2.1.3. SECURITY

According to the theory of protection motivation, the perception of potential threats and the effectiveness of protective measures influence individuals' decisions. When selecting a resort, guests take into account the level of safety measures taken by the resort to protect them against potential risks such as theft, personal protection and emergency situations. The choice of a resort has an important influence on the guests' sense of security Rogers (1983). The term privacy relates to the protection of user information and the handling of online profiles. Security is characterized as users' awareness of data protection and actions taken to reduce dangers caused by online behaviors Anutarawaykin et al. (2023).

2.1.4. SERVICE STAFF

According to the Service Quality Theory, service encounters are evaluated by customers on the basis of a perception of perceived quality aspects such as responsiveness, accuracy, assurance, sensitivity and tangibles. When choosing a resort, guests are taken into consideration to be of paramount importance factors influencing their decision as regards the service staff behavior, professionalism, and friendliness. The satisfaction and loyalty of customers are enhanced by positive interactions with service staff Berry et al. (1988).

2.1.5. INFORMATION OF HOTEL FEATURES

The adoption of information sources has been suggested as an influence on individuals' decisions by the Information Adoption Model. The hotel's information

about facilities, services, promotions, and any additional features is relied upon by guests when choosing a resort. The availability and clarity of that information is a positive factor in visitors' choices and decisions Moon & Kim (2001).

2.1.6. INFORMATION OF GUEST REVIEWS

The theory of social influence states that the opinion and experience of other people affect individuals' decisions. The online reviews and ratings of previous guests are taken into account by the guests in the choice of the resort. Positive guest reviews, which provide social evidence and reduce perceived risks, create a favorable impression on the part of guests and influence their choice. Cheung & Thadani (2012)

2.1.7. GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

The theory of planned behavior states that individuals' intentions are influenced through their attitudes, subjective standards, and perceived behavioural control. The overall attitude of guests toward the resort, its influence on social norms and their perceived control over decision making processes are decisive factors in deciding which resorts they choose to stay at Ajzen (1991).

2.2. RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW
2.2.1. ROOM QUALITY AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

In the choice of resorts, room quality has long been considered as a critical factor in influencing guests' decisions. A variety of studies have examined the relationship between accommodation quality and guest satisfaction, as well as overall experience research by Ekinci et al. (2013) has shown that guests are significantly influenced by the quality of accommodation as well as their willingness to recommend a resort. The study showed that, in addition to aspects such as cleanliness, comfort, furniture and atmosphere, rooms must be comfortable and well maintained. Similarly, Kandampully & Suhartanto (2000) highlighted the significance of room quality in creating a positive impression and enhancing guests' perceptions of value. They found that their intention of reconsidering and recommending this resort was influenced by guests' satisfaction with room quality. These findings show the need to provide quality accommodation for guests in order to meet their expectations and ensure a positive guest experience.

H1: Room quality has a significantly influence on the guests' choice of resort in Kalaw, Myanmar.

2.2.2. LOCATION AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

In terms of factors that influence the choice of a hotel to be used in Kalaw, Myanmar, the location of the resort is an important factor. According to literature, the location of the resort plays an important role in the preferences of the guests and in the decision-making process. The research showed that when selecting a resort, travelers take into account factors such as proximity to tourist spots, access to transport, safety and security of the surrounding area or natural beauty Kotler et al. (2017). A favorable location, offering guests comfort, scenery, and sense of security, could be a positive influence on their perception of this resort as well as make them decide what kind of place they would like to stay.

H2: Location has a significantly influence on the guests' choice of resort in Kalaw, Myanmar.

2.2.3. SECURITY AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

Security is a crucial factor influencing guests' choice decision when selecting a resort in Kalaw, Myanmar. Literature emphasizes that in determining guest preferences and decision processes, considerations of safety and security must be taken into account. Research shows that guests are most inclined to choose resorts equipped with high levels of security, including qualified personnel, surveillance systems, secure access control and emergency response protocols Mason (2020). The overall satisfaction of customers and their willingness to select a certain resort are heavily influenced by the perception of safety and security. A positive perception of security creates a sense of trust and comfort for guests, enhances the overall experience of the resort and increases the likelihood of repeat visits and positive word of mouth recommendations.

H3: Security has a significantly influence on the guests' choice of resort in Kalaw, Myanmar.

2.2.4. SERVICE STAFF AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

In the literature, there has been a broad discussion on how service staff can influence guest choice when choosing accommodation to stay. A consistent finding in the research was that guests' overall satisfaction and their choices of a particular hotel are influenced significantly by the quality of services provided by staff members Berry et al. (1988).The positive guest experience and a sense of loyalty are fostered by the attentive, helpful staff who offer personalized service. In addition, studies showed that the importance of effective communication, responsiveness to guest needs and capacity for handling complaints from guests were important factors which influenced customer perceptions of service quality (Choi & Chu, 2001). It is more likely that guests will be attracted and retained by resorts that priorities staff training and empowerment in order to provide exceptional service. The study discovered that guests were generally pleased with the quality of resort services Ratanawaraphorn et al. (2018).

H4: Service staff has a significantly influence on the guests' choice of resort in Kalaw, Myanmar.

2.2.5. INFORMATION FROM HOTEL FEATURES AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

In choosing a resort, the availability and presentation of information on hotel features was considered to have an important influence on guests' choice. The literature shows that the information provided by hotels regarding their facilities, amenities and services is of great importance to guests. A study showed that guests' decision making processes are positively affected by clear and comprehensive information on hotel features such as room types, meal options, recreational activities or other services Aragon-Correa et al. (2015). Furthermore, the guests' perception and expectations of a resort can be significantly affected by the way in which this information is provided, e.g., through well designed websites, brochures, or online reviews. An effective communication of hotel characteristics will enhance guests' confidence in the choice, which leads to increased satisfaction and a higher probability of repeat visits. The research found that detailed and accurate, up-to-

date information is important for customers when making the decision Mitchev and Nuangjamnong (2021).

H5: Information from hotel features has a significantly influence on the guests' choice of resort in Kalaw, Myanmar.

2.2.6. INFORMATION FROM GUEST REVIEWS AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

There is considerable attention in literature to the influence of guest reviews on choice by visitors when selecting a resort. Research has shown that guest reviews have a significant influence on guests' perception of and decisions to be made Litvin et al. (2008). In order to evaluate the quality and reputation of a resort, guests often rely upon their experiences and opinions that have been shared by previous guests via online review sites. It is possible for guests to be more confident in the choice of hotel, as positive reviews show aspects such as exceptional service, cleanliness, comfort, and value for money. On the other hand, prospective travelers are discouraged from booking due to unfavorable reviews regarding issues such as poor customer service or facility maintenance. Providing guests with credible and authentic guest reviews provides valuable information to assist them in making informed decisions as well as choosing a hotel that fits their preferences and expectations.

H6: Information from guest reviews has a significantly influence on the guests' choice of resort in Kalaw, Myanmar.

2.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This part shows the conceptual framework which is developed based on the previous two research frameworks. The first theoretical framework is from the article "Factors affecting the selection of domestic hotels with 3/4 star ratings: The case of Da Nang City, Vietnam" Tuan (2019). The researchers provides that room quality, location and service staff had a significant positive influence on decide to choose a 3–4 star hotel. The second theoretical framework is from the article "Predictive Analytics of Customer Sentiments towards Nigerian Hospitality Industry: Case study Approach" Ifeanyi Nwakanma et al. (n.d.). This study shows the factors toward overall influence on customers choice and customers choice influence on positive information from hotel features such as pool, good restaurant, Wi-Fi availability, modern facilities, bar and casino, club house and information from guest reviews. The researcher had developed the conceptual framework by using seven variable factors: room quality, location, security, service staff, information from hotel features, information from guest reviews and guests' choice decision as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1
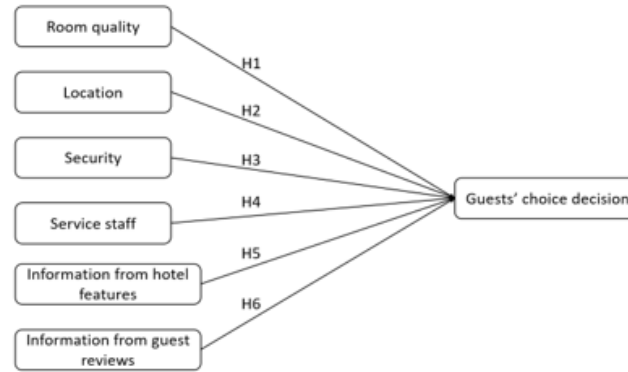
Figure 1 The Conceptual Framework
Source Authors

3. MATERIAL AND METHODS
3.1. SAMPLE

This study used simple random selection to select a sample from a population where every person is equally likely to be determined. This study employed a simple random model to choose survey participants. The target group for this study consists of people who live in Myanmar, have visited to Kalaw, Myanmar, and have previously stayed at a resort during their stay so. The estimated population of Myanmar is 54.6 million people (*Myanmar Population 1950-2023 /* Macrotrends. (n.d.). The target group of visitors who went to Kalaw and stayed in resorts could not be confirmed by the researcher. Due to this, the target population will be classified as unknown in the research. The formula for predicting sample size with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5% yielded 385.

An online questionnaire was used to recruit and target people who live in Myanmar. Age, gender, income, current occupation, price of a resort, family status, lifestyle choice, and kind of transportation you use to travel to Kalaw was conducted in the second part of the survey to explain general information about respondents. There are 38 questions divided into the three sections of the questionnaire. Due to the time limitations, researcher chose to utilize a non-probability sampling method in this study. Since the researcher could easily gather data based on convenience, this method is the appropriate option.

3.2. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Overall, the content validity of this study was ensured through a rigorous research design, systematic data collection, and relevant data analysis techniques. All items have greater than 0.5, which IOC weight by three experts shown in Table 1.

In this study, the researcher conducts a small group of 50 respondents for a pilot test, Cronbach's Alpha, and internal consistency's rules, refer to Cronbach (1951), the reliability α > 0.9 = Excellent; 0.8 < α < 0.9 = Good; 0.7 < α < 0.8 = Acceptable; 0.6 < α < 0.7 = Questionable; 0.5 < α < 0.6 = Poor; and α < 0.5 Unacceptable. The minimum acceptable value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.6 Sekaran (1992), Table 1, the researcher can conclude that Cronbach's Alpha of each variables are Room Quality is reliable with α = .866, Location is reliable with α = .860, Security is reliable with α = .938, Service Staff is reliable with .850, Information from Hotel

Features is reliable with, Information from Guest Reviews is α = .833 and Guest Choice Decision is reliable with α = .924. All factors are above 0.8, which means they are reliable. The variables are ranked from the highest reliability to the lowest reliability.

Table 1

Table 1 IOC Weight Scores by Three Experts				
Variables	**Before**	**After**	**IOC (>0.5)**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
	No. of items	**No. of items**		**(n=50)**
Security	4	4	0.67 – 1.00	0.938
Guest Choice Decision	4	4	0.67 – 1.00	0.924
Room Quality	4	4	0.67 – 1.00	0.866
Location	3	3	0.67 – 1.00	0.860
Service Staff	4	4	0.67 – 1.00	0.850
Information from Hotel Features	4	4	0.67 – 1.00	0.850
Information from Guest Reviews	4	4	0.67 – 1.00	0.833

4. RESULTS
4.1. RELIABILITY TESTING

To ensure the reliability of the 385 respondents, the researcher conducted a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha with all respondents. This test aimed to detect any discrepancies or inaccuracies in the items before performing statistical treatment data.

Table 2, the researcher used the statistical program to analyze Cronbach's Alpha to test the reliability of each group of the variables. There are altogether seven variables in this study. ***Room Quality (α = 0.815)*** - this variable comprises four items, and the high Cronbach's Alpha suggests that these items are consistent and reliable in measuring the aspect of room quality. Respondents' evaluations of room quality are likely to be coherent and dependable. ***Location (α = 0.820)*** – with three items, the location variable also demonstrates a high level of internal consistency. This indicates that the items related to the resort's location collectively measure this aspect reliably and consistently. ***Security (α = 0.866)*** - the security variable, consisting of four items, displays a high Cronbach's Alpha. This implies that the items pertaining to security are congruent and dependable measures of guests' perceptions of safety and security at the resort. ***Service Staff (α = 0.834)*** - the service staff variable, encompassing four items, demonstrates strong internal consistency. This suggests that the items gauging guests' opinions about the service staff are reliable and coherent measures. ***Information from Hotel Features (α = 0.774)*** - this variable, with four items, exhibits a reasonable level of internal consistency. While slightly lower than some other variables, Cronbach's Alpha still indicates that the items related to information derived from hotel features are reliably assessing this factor. ***Information from Guest Reviews (α = 0.731)*** - Similarly, this variable, comprised of four items, shows a decent level of internal consistency. While Cronbach's Alpha is slightly lower, it still indicates that the items measuring information gathered from guest reviews are reasonably reliable. ***Guests' Choice Decision (α = 0.863)*** - lastly, the variable related to guests' choice decisions, consisting of four items, displays a high Cronbach's Alpha. This suggests that the items collectively form a reliable and consistent measure of factors influencing guests' decisions in selecting a resort.

In summary, all the variables in the study exhibit satisfactory levels of internal consistency and reliability based on their respective Cronbach's Alpha values. This implies that the items within each variable are coherent and dependable measures of the underlying constructs they represent. Researchers and practitioners can have confidence in the reliability of the collected data when considering the relationships and interpretations drawn from these variables.

Table 2

Table 2 Cronbach's Alpha			(n=385)
Variables	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**Number of Items**	**Internal Consistency**
Room Quality	0.815	4	Reliable
Location	0.820	3	Reliable
Security	0.866	4	Reliable
Service Staff	0.834	4	Reliable
Information from Hotel Features	0.774	4	Reliable
Information from Guest Reviews	0.731	4	Reliable
Guests' Choice Decision	0.863	4	Reliable

4.2. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution and proportion of 385 respondents: Male respondents made up 192 of 385 total respondents, or 49.9%, compared to female respondents, who made up 193 and 50.1%. With 159 responses, the 18–29 age group has the largest percentage (41.3%), followed by 30–39 (137, 35.6%) and 40+ (89, 23.1%). Employees make up the majority of the sample with 132 respondents (34.3%), followed by Business Owners with 98 (25.5%), Self-Employed with 81 (21%), Professionals with 61 (15.8%), and Students with 13 (3.4%). Of the 385 respondents, 112 have a monthly income of less than 800,000 MMK (29.1%), 89 between 800,001 and 1,500,000 (23.1%), 88 between 1,500,001 and 3,000,000 (22.9%), and 96 over 3,000,000 (24.9%). Of 385 respondents, 202 never consider the price of resort to stay at Kalaw and had the highest percentage of responses (52.5%), followed by 105 who consider rarely and price is not important to them (27.3%), 28 who sometimes and frequently consider the price (7.3%), and 22 who always consider the price in decision making (5.7%). Family status: Single (169 respondents, 43.9%), Family (114 respondents, 29.6%), Married (75 respondents, 19.5%), and Extended Family (27 respondents, 7%), with the fewest replies. Of 385 respondents, 134 had a Simple lifestyle (34.8%), followed by 132 with an Active lifestyle (34.3%), 72 with a Solo lifestyle (18.7%), and 47 with a Luxurious lifestyle (12.2%). 225 respondents (58.4%) drove to Kalaw, followed by express transportation (108 respondents, 28.1%) and train travel (52 respondents, 13.5%).

Table 3

Table 3 Frequency and Percentage of Demographic Information		
Demographic Factors	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Gender		
Male	192	49.9
Female	193	48.4
Total	**385**	**100**
Age		
18-29 years old	159	41.3

30-39 years old	137	35.6
40 years old and above	89	23.1
Total	**385**	**100**
Occupation		
Business Owner	98	25.5
Employee	132	34.3
Professional	61	15.8
Self-employee	81	21.0
Student	13	3.4
Total	**385**	**100**
Income per month		
Less than 800,000 MMK	112	29.1
800,001 – 1,500,000 MMK	89	23.1
1,500,001 – 3,000,000 MMK	88	22.9
More than 3,000,000 MMK	96	24.9
Total	**385**	**100**
How often consider the price of a resort when planning a trip to Kalaw?		
Always - Price is the most important consideration in my decision-making	22	5.7
Frequently - Price is an important concern, but it is not the only one	28	7.3
On sometimes, I consider pricing as well as to other conditions	28	7.3
Rarely - Price is not an important consideration for me	105	27.3
Never - Price has no impact on my resort choice	202	52.5
Total	**385**	**100**
Family Status		
Extended Family	27	7
Family	114	29.6
Marriage	75	19.5
Single	169	43.9
Total	**385**	**100**
Lifestyle Choice		
Active Lifestyle	132	34.3
Lavish Lifestyle	47	12.2
Simple Lifestyle	134	34.8
Solo Lifestyle	72	18.7
Total	**385**	**100**
Mode of Transportation		
By Express	108	28.1
By Own Car	225	58.4
By Train	52	13.5
Total	**385**	**100**

4.3. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS WITH MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION

From Table 4, the highest mean of Room Quality was "When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I look at the pleasant ambiance and attractive room decor" which equals 4.42. The highest mean of Location was "When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check that the resort is located in a secure area" which equals 4.35. The highest mean of Security was "When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I consider whether the resort's level of security can keep me secure" which equals 4.16. The highest mean of Service Staff was "When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I choose a resort that is always ready to satisfy guests" which equals 4.33. The highest mean of Information from Hotel Features was "It is a convenient choice to stay at a resort in Kalaw because the information provided about the resort's facilities is accurate and complete" which equals 4.40. The highest mean of Information from Guest Review was "The resort in Kalaw that I chose for my stay was chosen based on the reviews of previous guests" which equals 4.39. Lastly, the highest mean of Guests' Choice Decision was "The accommodation decision is made because of the location and preference of the chosen resort" which equals 4.40.

Table 4

Table 4 Mean and Standard Deviation of Each Variable		
Room Quality	**Mean**	**S.D.**
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, having a clean room is a priority.	4.31	0.655
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check for comfortable bedding and furniture.	4.06	0.802
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check for excellence in the room's facilities and services.	4.15	0.812*
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I look at the pleasant ambiance and attractive room decor.	4.42*	0.641
Location		
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I look for proximity to restaurants and stores.	3.45	1.38
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check whether there are any other tourist attractions to visit nearby.	3.42	1.450*
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check that the resort is located in a secure area.	4.35*	0.816
Security		
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check whether the surrounding area has security and protection.	4.08	0.763
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check whether the resort's staff is capable of taking responsibility for security.	3.98	0.84
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check how well the resort's security system is up-to-date.	3.92	0.952*
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I consider whether the resort's level of security can keep me secure.	4.16*	0.748
Staff		
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I do so based on the friendliness and courtesy of the staff.	4.23	0.756
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I do so based on the staff's promptness and efficiency in responding to guests' requests.	4.18	0.731
When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I choose it because of the knowledgeable and expert staff available to provide assistance and information.	4.01	0.860*

When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I choose a resort that is always ready to satisfy guests.	4.33*	0.656
Information from Hotel Features		
It is a convenient choice to stay at a resort in Kalaw because the information provided on the resort's website or booking platforms is accurate and complete.	4.34	0.673
It is a convenient choice to stay at a resort in Kalaw because the information provided about the resort's facilities is accurate and complete.	4.40*	0.678
It is a convenient choice to stay at a resort in Kalaw because the information provided about the prices and extra fees is transparent.	4.35	0.716
It is a convenient choice to stay at a resort in Kalaw because the information provided about cancellation and refund policies is accurate and complete.	4.16	0.823*
Information from Guest Reviews		
The resort in Kalaw that I chose for my stay was chosen based on the reviews of previous guests.	4.39*	0.664
The resort in Kalaw that I chose for my stay was chosen based on the reviews of previous guests on travel websites such as Agoda and booking.com as well as on social media channels.	4.12	0.954*
The resort in Kalaw that I chose for my stay was chosen based on the reviews and feedback from travel bloggers.	4.13	0.895
The resort in Kalaw that I selected for my stay was chosen based on positive and negative remarks from multiple guest reviews on the resort's official website and Facebook page.	4.16	0.833
Guests' Choice Decision		
The accommodation decision is made because of the specific attributes and functions of the chosen resort.	4.38	0.690
The accommodation decision is made because of the location and preference of the chosen resort.	4.40*	0.670
The accommodation decision is made because of the security environment and detailed descriptions of the chosen resort.	4.36	0.674
The accommodation decision is made because the chosen resort is located near attractions, shops, restaurants, and so on.	4.39	0.695*

Note * highest mean score and S.D.

4.4. HYPOTHESIS TESTING RESULTS

The variance inflation factor (VIF) has been used to determine the amount of multicollinearity in a series of multiple regression. As according to Team (2022), variance inflation factor is a value that reflects the mutual influence of predictors in the linear model. According to Akinwande, the variance inflation factor value would be better to be less than or equal to 5. R-square value uses to measures the performance resulting mathematical model whether it is consistent with the data. All variables have a VIF lower than 5, as shown in Table 5, indicating that there is no overlap between them. Multicollinearity was not a problem for the independent variables. In addition, the R square at a 95% confidence level was 0.6, indicating that independent factors including Room Quality, Location, Security, Service Staff, Information from Hotel Features, and Information from Guest Reviews can explain the dependent variable, Guests' Choice Decision by about 60%. Therefore, room quality (H_1), service staff (H_4), information from hotel features (H_5), and information from guest review (H_6) have significant influence on the guests' choice of resort in Kalaw, Myanmar as p-value less than .05, while location (H_2) and security (H_3) have insignificant influence on the guests' choice of resort in Kalaw, Myanmar.

Table 5

Table 5 Summary of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 And 6						
Variables	**B**	**SE B**	**β**	**t**	**Sig.**	**VIF**
Intercept	0.588	0.1765		3.331	<0.001	
H_1 - Room Quality	0.1009	0.0461	0.1031	2.188	0.029*	2.10
H_2 - Location	0.0073	0.0176	0.0138	0.42	0.675	1.01
H_3 - Security	-0.0374	0.0445	-0.0456	-0.84	0.401	2.79
H_4 - Service Staff	0.2889	0.0516	0.3099	5.594	<0.001*	2.90
H_5 - Information from Hotel Features	0.3673	0.0478	0.3581	7.679	<0.001*	2.06
H_6 - Information from Guest Reviews	0.1659	0.0402	0.1812	4.124	<0.001*	1.83

Note R^2 = 0.600, Adjusted R^2 = 0.594, *p < .05, Dependent Variable = Guests' Choice Decision

B: The unstandardized beta; β: The standardized beta; t: test statistic; Sig.: ρ-value; VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

5. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS
5.1. DISCUSSIONS
5.1.1. H1; ROOM QUALITY AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

This study showed that Room Quality had a positive and significant relationship with Guests' Choice Decision. The significant value of Room Quality and Guests' Choice Decision is less than 0.001. This implies that Room Quality has a significant influence on Guests' Choice Decision.

By looking in deep detail at a descriptive analysis of Room Quality which came from four questions in the questionnaire we had collected, the statistical data shows that the means of Room Quality was 4.24. The lowest mean among all questions was "When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check for comfortable bedding and furniture" which equals 4.06 which is lower than the average means. The highest mean of Room Quality was "When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I look at the pleasant ambiance and attractive room decor" which equals 4.42. Moreover, for the standard deviation, the highest was "When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I check for excellence in the room's facilities and services" which equals to 0.812. As the results of standard deviation show that the respondent's score is spread out, the resort should provide excellence room's facilities and services.

5.1.2. H4; SERVICE STAFF AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

This study showed that Service Staff had a positive and significant relationship with Guests' Choice Decision. The significant value of Service Staff and Guests' Choice Decision is less than 0.001. This implies that Service Staff has a significant influence on Guests' Choice Decision.

The result of a descriptive analysis of Service Staff which we had collected data from the closed-ended questionnaire, the statistical data shows that the means of Service Staff was 4.19 from four questions. The lowest mean among four questions was "When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I choose it because of the knowledgeable and expert staff available to provide assistance and information" which equals 4.01 lower than average means. Moreover, the standard deviation, the highest was "When I choose a resort in Kalaw to stay at, I choose it because of the knowledgeable and expert staff available to provide assistance and information" which equals 0.86 meaning the respondents´ replies are spread out. So, the resort should provide excellence training to the staffs about the operation processes,

hospitality service, and general knowledge about the Kalaw and tourist attraction places.

5.1.3. H5; INFORMATION FROM HOTEL FEATURES AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

This study showed that Information from Hotel Features had a positive and significant relationship with Guests' Choice Decision. The significant value of Information from Hotel Features and Guests' Choice Decision is less than 0.001. This implies that Information from Hotel Features has a significant influence on Guests' Choice Decision.

The result of a descriptive analysis of Information from Hotel Features which we had collected data from the closed-ended questionnaire, the statistical data shows that the means of Information from Hotel Features was 4.31 from four questions. The lowest mean among four questions was "It is a convenient choice to stay at a resort in Kalaw because the information provided about cancellation and refund policies is accurate and complete" which equals 4.16 lower than average means. Moreover, the standard deviation, the highest was "It is a convenient choice to stay at a resort in Kalaw because the information provided about cancellation and refund policies is accurate and complete" which equals 0.823 meaning the respondents´ replies are spread out.

5.1.4. H6; INFORMATION FROM GUEST REVIEWS AND GUESTS' CHOICE DECISION

This study showed that Information from Guest Reviews had a positive and significant relationship with Guests' Choice Decision. The significant value of Information from Guest Reviews and Guests' Choice Decision is less than 0.001. This implies that Information from Guest Reviews has a significant influence on Guests' Choice Decision.

The result of a descriptive analysis of Information from Guest Reviews which we had collected data from the closed-ended questionnaire, the statistical data shows that the means of Information from Guest Reviews was 4.2 from four questions. The lowest mean among four questions was "The resort in Kalaw that I chose for my stay was chosen based on the reviews of previous guests on travel websites such as Agoda and booking.com as well as on social media channels" which equals 4.12 lower than average means. Moreover, the standard deviation, the highest was "The resort in Kalaw that I chose for my stay was chosen based on the reviews of previous guests on travel websites such as Agoda and booking.com as well as on social media channels" which equals 0.954 meaning the respondents´ replies are spread out.

5.2. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A resort in Kalaw, Myanmar, was studied to understand what characteristics influenced tourists' selections to stay. The parameters evaluated were location, security, service staff, hotel features, and customer feedback. Quantitative methods such as descriptive data analysis, multiple linear regression, and Cronbach's Alpha were employed to assess questionnaire validity. Online questionnaires and non-probability sampling were utilized to collect data, which could bias the results. Additionally, social desirability bias may alter Likert scale judgments of self-reported data. Although insightful, the study has limitations. Convenience and

snowball sampling may restrict generalization to Kalaw resort tourists. The study's undefined target population and short data collection time affect external validity. Quantitative data may overlook qualitative insights on visitor decision-making. Removing additional variables and biases in secondary data sources may also affect the study's understanding of its contributing components. The study highlights the characteristics impacting guests' decision-making at a resort in Kalaw, Myanmar, but its limitations must be considered when interpreting the findings. Future studies should overcome these limitations to better understand visitor decision-making in this setting.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the study's findings, the resort should concentrate on improving the areas that received lower mean scores even though it was discovered that Room Quality significantly influences Guests' Choice Decisions. Guest happiness may be significantly influenced by specifically addressing the topic of "comfortable bedding and furniture". Additionally, it is important to maintain the "pleasant ambiance and attractive room decor" to satisfy guests.

Although a positive and significant relationship between service staff and guests' choice decisions was shown, the study also highlighted the need to improve staff expertise and understanding. The resort should invest money on giving its workers with excellence training in areas like hospitality service, operation procedures, and providing information about Kalaw and close attractions. The entire guest experience can be significantly improved by knowledgeable and attentive staff.

The providing of information describing the amenities and procedures of the hotel is essential in helping customers make decisions. The resort should make sure that all information is accurate and full, especially when it comes to cancellation and refund policies, to further increase guest satisfaction. This will reduce the possibility of miscommunication and assist guests in making accurate choices.

According to the survey, customer reviews have a significant effect on how customers choose. The resort should actively follow and respond to customer feedback on a variety of websites, including Agoda, Booking.com, and social media. Positivity can be achieved by responding to reviews, resolving issues, and expressing appreciation for positive feedback.

Location and security did not significantly affect guests' choice, however that does not mean they are insignificant. For the comfort and happiness of guests, the resort should continue to strive to maintain a safe and secure environment. Additionally, highlighting neighboring tourist attractions and making them easy to reach can improve the overall guest experience.

The resort should concentrate on giving consistently high-quality services across all aspects, including Room Quality, Staff Service, and Information from Hotel Features and Information from Guest Reviews, in order to sustain and improve the Guests' Choice Decision. Maintaining a positive reputation and attracting in more customers can be achieved by routinely reviewing customer feedback and making the required adjustments in accordance with customer preferences.

7. FURTHER STUDIES

Since this study was limited and only focused on six variables which are Room Quality, Location, Security, Service Staff, Information from Hotel Features, and

Information from Guest Reviews which influence Guests' Choice Decision to stay in resort in Kalaw. Further studies could explore additional factors that may influence guests' choice decisions at the resort in Kalaw. Investigating how pricing and promotions influence customer preferences may offer important insights into pricing strategies that attract in more customers without sacrificing service quality. Additionally, investigating how cultural and environmental aspects affect visitors' decision-making may help the resort provide its services to various customer segments.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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