

Urban Tourism Potential of Hawassa City, Ethiopia

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Urban tourism is the new phenomenon in Ethiopia in general and in Hawassa in particular. The main aim of this research was assessing urban tourism potential of Hawassa city. In order to gather necessary data observation, informant interview, visitor questionnaire survey and secondary review method of data collection were used. Data collected from visitors were coded, entered and analyzed using SPSS version 20. Other data were analyzed through explanatory and descriptive method of data analysis. The result revealed that lake Hawassa and its surrounding, Gudumale recreational area, monuments of Smuda and Woldeamanuel, Loke Palace, Mount Alamura and Tabor and others were identified as tourism attractions of the Hawassa city. Lake Hawassa was the most known and visited attraction whereas Loke Palace and Burkita hot springs were the least known and visited resources because they were not accessible. Hence, in these resources require immediate intervention on these resources by concerned body so as to increase tourism attraction varieties in the city.

Key Words: Urban tourism, Potential, Hawassa

Introduction

Urban tourism is the practice of having a vacation and visiting a city, as opposed to visiting places as historical sites and natural features (King and Jago, 2003). This can include visiting football stadiums, a particular city block or feature, friends and family and amazing architectural creations (Asadi, 2011; Beioley, 2002). Though it is the oldest form of tourism (Beioley, 2002), it has been emerged and grown as one form of tourism in 1970s' as defensive approach to tourism in city when tourism was seen as a danger (Ismail and Baum, 2011). Urban tourism is main element of cities economic base in some places. It was used as a catalyst to boost cities economy of UK during their economic decline (Ibid). It became one of the research areas since 1980s (UNWTO, 2012). Medlik (2003) defined urban tourism as it is trip and visit with a focus on town and city destination. He also noted that urban tourism is fast growing form of tourism catalyzed by historical and cultural attractions as well as shopping and event attractions.


For two reasons cities are the most visited and first choice destinations by tourists (Estelaji, Sadeghian and Beyhaghi, 2012). On one hand; because, cities are one of the most attractive places, on the other hand by reason of having good facilities and services, cities are the first destinations of many tourists. Estelaji *et al.*, (2012), noted that urban development creates conducive environment for the formation of tourism.

According to UNWTO (2011), city tourism has generated huge amount of money each year. Majority of tourism activities undertaken in cities, for example 60% of the tourism takes place in cities in UK (Beioley, 2002). However, there hasn't been clear information regarding urban tourism in Africa cities but tourism in the region is showing rise. Especially during FIFA world cup of 2010, tourist arrival to South African cities was about 50% of tourist who visited Africa (ibid). Master Card (2014) reported that cities such as Johannesburg, Cape Town and Cairo were three top city tourism destinations in Africa by the year 2014.

As Akis (2009) noted, urban tourism is given very less attention than other forms of tourism in developing countries. In Ethiopia, not only it has given less attention but also its concept is new. Government attention to urban development in these days is ever grater which is an opportunity for urban tourism development in Ethiopia. As urbanization expands throughout the country, Ethiopia would therefore have urban tourism destinations more in the future.

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According to CSA report of 2013, Hawassa is the sixth biggest city in Ethiopia next to AA, Mekele, Nazreit, Dire Dawa and Gondar with total population of 225,700. Though there are tourism attractions in the city only lake Hawassa was being promoted due to absence of attention given and lack of strong promotional campaign from stakeholders.

Cities like Bahirdar and Hawassa have been attracting tourists because of their own unique attractions that differentiate them from other cities of Ethiopia. Obviously, the international visitors to these cities are bigger than other cities. Biruk Gebremedhin (2011) noted that urban tourism is being exceedingly big industry in that it has played role in socio-economic role of Addis Ababa.

Though there have been research carried out on tourism especially on ecotourism and nature based tourism (Mulugeta Feseha, 2012; Mezmur Tsegaye, 2011; Gebeyaw Ambelu, 2010; and Kauffmann, 2008), so far there hasn't been research carried out in this area in Ethiopia in general and in Hawassa in particular. Urban tourism research is one of the untouched research areas. Therefore, there is a research gap which should be filled through thorough investigation in order to document urban tourism potential of Hawassa. Moreover, it is important to know what potentials the city has for development of tourism

and suggest how the city can be benefit from tourism. The objective of this study was to identify the urban tourism potential of Hawassa city

Site Description

Hawassa city is located southern Ethiopia, on the shores of lake Hawassa which is one of the Great Rift Valley lakes. The city has an area of 47.66km² comprising more than 225,700 people. This means 4735 people live within one square kilo meters (CSA, 2013). The city is located 270 km south of Addis Ababa via Debre Zeit-Mojo, 130 km east of Sodo, 75 km north of Dilla and 1125 km north of Nairobi. Hawassa is the capital of the Southern Nation Nationalities and Peoples regional state and Sidama Zone and is a special zone of this region. The city lies on the Trans African highways 4 Cairo-Cape Town, with a latitude and longitude of 7⁰3'N 38⁰28'E coordinates and an elevation of 1708 meters. Hawassa is the second diverse city in terms of population ethnicity next to Addis Ababa. Different languages are spoken in the city but majority constituting 50% of the population speaks Sidamigna. Hawassa gets an annual average rainfall of 945 mm and has average temperature of 19.5⁰ C and humidity of 70-80%.

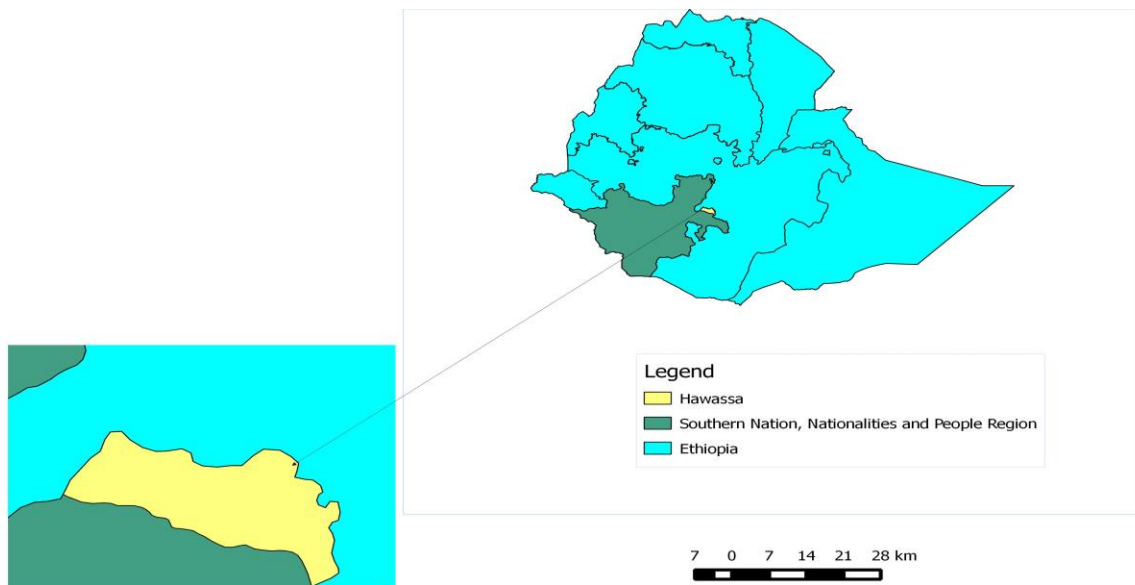


Figure 1: Geographical Location Map of Hawassa (developed by Ermias Kifle, 2014).

Methodology

The research design that was used in order to undertake this research was both qualitative and quantitative research design. According to Sigh (2004), using qualitative and quantitative research design gives the research sounder and better in quality especially for tourism research.

Both simple and participant observations were used in order to enumerate experience and analyze the city's tourism attractions. Simple observation technique was used just for enumeration of urban tourism resources. This technique was supported through digital cameras. The participant observation was used in order to taste the attraction level of appealing tourist. As cited in Pathof (2006), participant observation is important in tourism research where there is a need to interpret events such as festivals that are unique to some particular small group. Hence this method was used to interpret events and festivals that are taking place in Hawassa.

Self-Administered Questionnaire Survey was used in order to obtain data from tourists. The questionnaire survey that was made with tourist answered questions related to motivation, length of stay, the most appealing attraction in the city, their source of information, and their level of satisfaction etc. Tourists were chosen none randomly using convenient sampling available techniques. The sample size was determined after the preliminary survey was being made. Participants in visitor questionnaire survey were chosen through available sampling technique. This technique was used because unlike residents visitors have temporary stay. Questionnaires were distributed at different purposely selected tourist hotels and resorts and visitor attraction sites. Questionnaires left at receptionists of different commercial accommodation establishments to pass the questionnaire for guest had negligibly low response rate. Understanding the problem, researcher, waited until guest entered hotels or guest houses and then filled 55 questionnaires by asking their consent. In order to include tourist who uses non-commercial accommodation type researchers distributed 35 questionnaires at recreational sites such as fish market, *fikir haik* (adorable lake) and *Gudumale*. Besides to places differentiation in distribution of questionnaire, researcher was also distributed the questionnaires in different seasons on February-May, 2014 and September-November, 2014 in order to include tourists that may possibly be available at extended period of time.

In-depth informant interview was made in order to obtain detail information about each resources/attractions. Local elder and tourism and culture experts who have knowledge about the tourism

resources were semi structurally interviewed by selecting them purposely.

All data collected from visitors were coded, entered and analyzed in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. Frequency distribution, cross-tabulation, and percentage were computed using this software. Graphs and charts were developed using Microsoft excel program.

Information gathered through informant interview, observation and review of secondary sources were analyzed qualitatively descriptive and explanatory methods of analysis. Qualitative data were supplemented by figures and secondary data evidences. Information obtain by personal observation were analyzed using narrative and descriptive method of analysis.

Result and Discussion

Respondent Characteristics

Out of the 90 respondents 68 (76%) were male while the rest were female. Vast majority of respondent comprising 80% were between the age of 24 and 60 which is productive and more active part of the society and 15% of respondent were below 24 years old. In terms of from where they came 62 (70%) were from different parts of Ethiopia while 28 (30%) were from abroad. Urban tourists are motivated by business, conference, leisure, VFR and special interest such as sport, education or culture (King and Jago, 2003). Majority of tourists visiting Hawassa were motivated by recreation and leisure comprising 42% of respondents. Next to it business was the second major motivating factor for visitors to Hawassa (20%). The remaining visit Hawassa for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives (11%), religion (10%), education and research (9%) and other (8%).

Urban Tourism Potential of Hawassa

According to World Bank (2012), Ethiopia's tourism competitive market in terms of unique resources presence revealed, there is huge but in term of accessibility, infrastructural development and tourism product development, Ethiopia has a lot to improve. Morphological features of a place such as built environment, architecture, urban form, artifact and public spaces in both heritage-based and purposefully developed tourism precincts are the main 'pull' factors of urban tourist (Hayllar *et al.*, 2008).

Hawassa is endowed with different types of tourism resources: natural, cultural and religious resources. Some of the resources are well recognized and others are less recognized. Comparing with other

urban areas in Ethiopia, identified resources are unique to Hawassa. For instance, though there are lakes in cities like *Bahirdar* and *Bishoftu*, chemistry of the lakes and weather condition where the lake located, population, the setting and buildings makes Hawassa different.

Comparatively Hawassa is a young city that was established fifty years ago with fastest urbanization rate of 6.4% registered last year (CSA, 2013). Since its establishments especially since current govern-

ment of Ethiopia had come to power tourism resources, products and infrastructures have been developing (observation and interview, 2014).

Tourism resources of Hawassa can be categorized in to natural, cultural, festival, events, and other. Under this sub topic descriptions are given on the potential and existing tourism resources of urban tourism based on interview, observation and secondary data review used.

Table 1: Opinion of Visitors over tourism resources of Hawassa

Have You Visited?	YES	NO	Relative frequency	N	Rank
Lake Hawassa	76	14	62	90	1
St Gabriel church	59	31	28	90	2
Amora Gedel	59	31	28	90	2
Hawassa University	49	41	8	90	3
Sidama Cultural Hall	44	46	-2	90	4
Mount Alamura and Tabor	43	47	-4	90	5
Historical building and villages	38	52	-14	90	6
Fiche Chembelala Festival	27	63	-36	90	7
Monuments	25	65	-40	90	8
Sport events	19	71	-52	90	9
Loke Hailesillassie Palace	15	75	-60	90	10
Residential palace of Ras Mengesha Seyoum	14	76	-62	90	11
Burkita Hotspring	11	79	-68	90	12

Table 1 shown above revealed that tourism resources ranked from 1-3 were known and most visited resources by more than 50% of respondents but the rest were known and visited by less than 50% of respondents. This indicated that the city has a lot to do more in promoting most of its tourism resources.

Lake Hawassa

Lake Hawassa is one of the smallest rift valley lake created due to volcanic eruption (Zinabu Gebremariam, 2010). This lake is top attraction site for both international and domestic tourists in the city. Its economic contribution is huge; created many job opportunity; fishing opportunity etc. Many hotels and resorts have been built along coastal area of the lake (observation, 2014). Informants from academic institution, government office and tour guide association said: "Lake Hawassa is responsible for establishment of Hawassa before 53 years and for tourism development in the city" (interview, January 2014; Felege Hawassa, September 2012). Except service such as boating and hospitality services, entrance is free. There are three ways where visitors can enter freely and have experience on the lake: *Fikir Haik*, *Amora Gedel* and through resorts. Compared with other twelve purposely chosen tourism resources of the city, Lake Hawassa was most visited resources in the

city (table 1). Due to salty nature of Lake Hawassa and absence of sands on the shore in addition to absence of buffer zone, swimming and playing on beach are not possible like in Lake Langano (Kauffmann, 2008). Despite this, tourist and residents have been usually enjoying the sun set and rise from the lake at the early morning and late afternoon.

Lake Hawassa comprises Small Island called *Teha Goda* Island, which located at center of the northern direction of the lake. This island is home to many aquatic birds whereby ornithologist can spot different species of birds. The lake is rich in aquatic birds and hippopotamus. Hence, tourist can spot and watch hippos and birds respectively.



Figure 2: Lake Hawassa (photo by Ermias Kifle, 2014).

Gudumale Recreational Area

Officially *Amora Gedel* is called *Gudumale*, but locally *Amora Gedel* is different from *Gudumale*. Residents and visitors told, “*Gudumale* is place where *fiche* festival is celebrated whereas *Amora Gedel* is the recreational area everyday accessible to anyone”. Indeed, it seems respondents are correct; while this research was conducted, *Gudumale* was only accessible on ‘*fiche* Chembelala’ but *Amora Gedel* was open every day throughout the year. In *Amora Gedel*, some people usually use it to spend their day chewing *Khat* and some other having fresh air on shore of the lake. Residents of the city who are getting married used *Amora Gedel* for their wedding ceremony. Every weekend on Saturday and Sunday except on fasting seasons seeing and attending wedding ceremony in this recreational area is very common activity of resident and visitors. During wedding time boating, dancing, singing, eating and photographing are some of visitors activities in *Amora Gedel*. *Amora Gedel* is the only recreational place with entrance fee of 5-10 birr per individual in the city, which was owned and administered by Sidama Development Association. Old aged tree species considered as natural heritages of the city are found in this area. Most of them were indigenous trees such as *Ficus Vasta*. *Amora Gedel* and the nearby fish market were the second most visited tourism resources next to Lake Hawassa in the city (Table 1).



Figure 3: Amora Gedel (Photo by Mesasu, January 2015).

In front of *Amora Gedel*, there is well-known and daily visited site by both residents and visitors called fish market (*Assa gebeya*). People every day visit this area to eat roasted and fresh fishes especially on morning and lunchtime. Fish market (*Assa Gebeya*) was an attraction site whereby majority of tour operators sell to their clients. It is one of the attractions packaged under the southern route. For many tourists who use tour operation service, visiting fish market at morning is most common practice.

Areas including *Gudumale* recreational area and *Amora Gedel* pooled were used to be **palace of Ras Mengesha Seyoum** built in 1969. The building was demolished before 40 years due to over-flooding, some walls of the palace are still there inside this recreational area (see figure 3). It was built by the order of Ras Mengesha Seyoum who was the fourth grandson of Emperor Yohanis IV, governor of *Sidamo* province and developed master plan of Hawassa before 53 years ago (Felege Hawassa 2005 EC). Remaining walls stands in lakeshore; it was built on the shore at the time when shore was not covered with water as today. This resource is very important historical tourism resources located at strategic place (a place whereby other tourism resources are nearby located; suitable for packaging). Nevertheless, this resource was not being known and visited by majority of visitors and or residents perhaps due to absence of interpretation media, lack of attention given to the resource from concerned government body and lack of accessibility inside the recreational area. This resource was the second least visited and known resources ranked 11th with respondents of 15% (Table 1).

As personal observation and interview revealed that, there was no any heritage conservation and preservation endeavors. Nobody was concerned on loss and deterioration of historical heritages except promotion, which should come later. An informants from zonal and city tourism department commented that building is already ruined and even themselves looked over the resource as nothing worth. Our argument here is that before government making promotion preserving, maintaining and conserving the resources to make utilizable for tourist is the first and most important practice.



Figure 4: Gudumale recreational and remnants of Ras Mengesha Seyoum presidential palace

Fiche Festival is *Sidama* ethnic people's new year annual festival. The fiche is beautifully celebrated at Hawassa city in particular place called *Gudumale*. The New Year is varying every year; it could fall on either of the following months: July, August and September. For example, New Year of last year was celebrated on August but this year it was celebrated on July. The festival is celebrated by *Sidama* ethnic group for about two weeks. Nevertheless, officially, it is celebrated for two consecutive days at *Gudumale*. The first day, the eve of the New Year is called *Fiche* and the second day; New Year day is called *Chembelata*. It is in these two days people gathered at *Gudumale* which enable tourist experience and attend the event (fig. 4). Elders come from the different districts of *Sidama* zone and show performance in front of people gathered.

To the question whether it is possible to make the festival a week or three days festival by including some components that could enable to increase length of stay in Hawassa, an informant from Sidama Zone culture and tourism department replied as follow;

No, it is impossible to do this. This is culture, which should continue to exist as today. If it has to be modified, it is not we or someone that should modified rather the people and generation. Besides, if we

are going to add some more days of celebration for the purpose of tourism, this means we are losing authentic nature of the festival.

Governor of Sidama said, "Soon Fiche will become 11th Ethiopia's world heritage and 2nd intangible world heritage registered by UNESCO" in his speech to the crowd during this year's fiche celebration at *Gudumale*. This shows that there is an ongoing effort by government making the resource world heritage. Another informant confirmed, "Diplomatic and technical aspects of registering have already made by government. We are hoping to listen good news on the coming September."

Possible tourist activities include photographing, dancing and singing, and dressing *Sidama* people cloths etc. Building some kind of stage for tourists to see ceremony enhances tourist experience; hence, organizers of the event should plan and have it in place. Besides having interpretation through international language during the ceremony gains full attention of international tourists. In addition to this creating innovative ideas and strategies to make, the festival very important tourism product is vital.

According to the informant, a year comprises 10 months, 1 month is equal to 7 weeks and 1 week has 4 days.



Figure 5: Fiche Festival at Gudumale (Photo by Ermias Kifle, 24/07/2014)

Monuments

Monument is something erected in memory of a person, event, etc, as a building, pillar, or statue which has become important to a society as a part of remembrance of historic times or cultural heritage, or as an example of historic architecture (Oxford dictionary). Most monuments erected throughout the world are considered as heritage at different scale from local through global. They are important tourism attraction in historic cities, thus are urban tourism resources.

In Hawassa there are two monuments; Woldeamanuel Dubale memorial monument (see fig. 6) and Sidama *Smuda* (see fig. 5) situated at different locations. Woldeamanuel Dubale memorial monument is located around *Atote* whereas the Sidama *Smuda* (Sidama people statue) is located in front of Saint Gabriel church. Woldeamanuel Dubale was a Politian who led Sidama People Liberation Front (SPLF), which is now an opposition political party in the zone during their fight to over through the *Derg* regime. In recognition of his contribution, his family and inhabitants of the city built the monument. Except historian, politicians and friends, Woldeamanuel was not popular among Ethiopians. The monument has its own architectural design and innovation that makes it

unique. A resident who is at the age 40 living in Hawassa since kid told me that erecting monument for persons like Woldeamanuel add more tourism resources to the city and can motivate people to visit the city. This monument is registered by zonal tourism and culture department as one of the heritages Hawassa. However, Woldeamanuel Dubale's monument was not as such well known and visited by many tourists perhaps due to its location and absence of promotion. As personal observation revealed very few people from the city were around the monument taking picture.

Comparatively, *Sidama* people's statue has been visited and has been city's logo; at front page of city municipal's website reader sees the monument since it was inaugurated. The monument represents *Sidama* people's cultural, political, economic and traditional practice.

Unlike monuments such as Emperor Minilik II and Karl Marx in Addis, which are visited every year by both international and domestic tourists, these two monuments are looking for tourist to visit them. Lack of promotion and being new could perhaps the main reasons for these monuments not to be known. Therefore, keeping clean and accessible besides promotions are must do activity of the tourism department in making these two monuments tourism products.



Figure 6: Sidama Sumuda



Figure 7: W/Amanuel Dubale Monument

Events and Festivals (Sport)

Irregularly hosted sport events such as great run, football games of Ethiopian premier league clubs, religious events and trade shows are part of the main attraction for tourists visiting cities. Annual, quarterly held, conferences and meeting of different governmental and non-governmental organization usually attracted domestic and international business tourists. These events are usually seasonal with short length of stay.

Presence of standard meeting and conference hall is determinant factor for business tourist to visit city (Yeoman *et al.*, 2003). In this regard there are privately owned and government owned meeting and conference halls in the city serving business tourists as well as residents. Nearly 15 hotels and resorts were identified as they provide meeting services through their small to large size rooms. Three governments owned halls called mesqel square, University and Sidama cultural hall have been used for meeting purposes.

Sport festivals are core and main urban tourism products in developed countries (UNWTO, 2001). For instance, European Champions League competition is most popular urban tourism attraction in Europe, NBA is popular in USA, Olympic game tournaments and World Cup tournament are other attraction that draws tourists from different countries of the world (UNWTO, 2001; Yeoman *et al.*, 2003). In this regard though Ethiopia had hosted African Cup of Nations three times before three decades, Ethiopia could not benefit a lot from sport tourism. For so long Ethiopia has been stayed with only two international stadiums built in the capital but now five stadiums are being constructed in different cities of Ethiopia. Of the stadiums that are being constructed, Hawassa stadium is among them, which will be completed by the end of 2015. It is hoped that the stadium host re-

gional and international football games and other Olympic games, which would increase flow of international tourists to the city.

Annual grate run organized by Coca-Cola have been drawing international tourist every year. Weekly football match between Hawassa city football clubs with 13 football clubs have been also drawing domestic tourists to the city irregularly. Other sport events such as Women football tournament, traditional sport festivals and Athletics competitions were some of the sport events that have been hosted in the city irregularly.

Research on economic contribution KwaZw Natal depicted that event has contribution to the development of the region (Esu, Arrey, Basil, and Eyo, 2011). Events are attractions, development catalysts and image builds for destination area (Esu *et al.*, 2011). Event can stimulate planning to improve amenities and business in a city or region, improve a city's or regions position the market increase aggregated number of tourist to city (cited in Esu *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, creating and having different types of event in Hawassa is needed to gain fore-mentioned benefits of events.

International political and academic meeting and conferences are possible events that have been drawing people visit Hawassa every year. As Hawassa is political center and is fast growing city, different organizations have been holding their workshops, meeting, conferences and training events in Hawassa. National and regional trade fares organized at *Mesqel* square every holy day have been drawing domestic tourists and has been created international tourist another attraction to visit.

Loke Palace of Emperor H/Sillassie

Palaces are important historical tourism resources pull people to visit and to know who construct them,

why constructed and what do they comprise. Palaces are homes and offices of nation (they are offices where big decisions were being made), town, and region leaders. Buildings are constructed with better architectural designs. In Ethiopia due to absence of non-mobile capital city emperors had been usually built new palaces at places where they wanted (Tadesse Tamirat, 1970; Bahru Zewdie, 1998). For instance when emperor Menilik II becomes king, he established Ankober as his residential palace which later transferred to Addis Ababa. However, emperor Hailesillassie, the last Solomonic dynasty had permanent palace at Addis but while he was moving, he used to build temporary palaces in different parts of Ethiopia, such as Shebele in Wondo Genet, Bezawit Mariam palace in Bahirdar and Loke palace in Hawassa. The former two are well preserved and visited by tourist every year but not the latter.

Loke palace is located 7 km away from the main road of referral hospital. This palace became theological school of *Birhane Hiwot* church, which is now the owner. According to informant, the palace has not been accessible for tourists neither for culture and tourism department's staffs (interview, February 2014). People are allowed to visit for religious purpose with special permission from the church. However, the local government has recognized this resource as the city tourist attraction, yet making it accessible to tourist is the job left behind to the government. An informant who disappointed with the decision of government transferring ownership to religious institution that does not allow any visitation to the palace was the big mistake (interview, 2014). He said in his recommendation, "the resource should either be accessible by the current owner or took the resource itself to make it accessible for visitors". The palace should belong to government since it comprises historical evidences of Ethiopia and Hawassa. As displayed below in figure 6 the palace was used to be temporary accommodation for the majesty emperor Hailesillassie in 1956. In it, there are materials that were used by the majesty during his stay in the city (interview, January 2014). Interpretation media such as signboard, brochure, guide and electronic material are needed to make this resources utilized by tourist.

Aint Gabriel Church and Its Feast

The first church was built in 1958/9 following the establishment of Hawassa as a city at the place where now is burial ground and shelter for church servants. The first church was rebuilt in 1970s at a place where Bethlehem of the current church is located. Current church building was then began on 28th of September 1984 and completed on 27th of May 2003. The

church building was completed after twenty year costing 20 million Birr collected from EOTC followers. Though there is similar design saint Gabriel church in Addis people prefer to come to Hawassa for other secondary reasons, which could be to see the city, recreate and visit family and friends.

Massive beautifully constructed and decorated church that has been icon for the city is called Saint Gabriel Monastery (see Figure 7).

Each year on December 27 and July 27 people from different corner of Ethiopia especially from neighboring towns and Addis Ababa gathered at Hawassa in order to commemorate annual feast of the Archangel Saint Gabriel. In these occasion people from abroad whose primary motive is not religion got opportunity to attend the feast and have colorful religious celebration. Since the building is so massive and beautiful, tourist usually takes picture in front of the church. Mass service, health service treatment through holy water, baptizes and wedding services are given by the church. Except wedding services, other services are given every day because church structure is monastic church structure which leads by monk priest.

The church is always open for anyone, no entrance fee and check in. It is the most popular church in Southern Ethiopia. Moreover, it is second most visited church named by Saint Gabriel in Ethiopia next to *Qulubi* Gabriel (one of top ten pilgrimage sites in Ethiopia located east of Addis Ababa (WHO, 2010)). It is one of the largest church buildings in Hawassa and even in Southern Ethiopia. According to Ashworth (2012), churches and cathedrals are part of urban tourism attraction. Hence St. Gabriel should be preserved and promoted to continue be tourist attraction.

Every weekend Sunday school is open. For someone who wanted to see how Sunday school look like can go and experience it. For others who wanted silence and meet with God can also have such environment in the church.



Figure 8: Saint Gabriel church

Burkita Hot spring

Burkita hot spring is newly discovered tourist attraction located at 10 km distance from Hawassa. As shown in figure 8 it has been used by domestic tourist and local people for its healing power. Local people called the hot spring *Tsebel* (meaning holy water). It has been providing the following services; steam bathing, swim bathing and drinking for local and surrounding people. The area around the hot spring used for various cultural and spiritual ceremonies by Sidama people. In the surrounding different types of lodging were being established to provide accommodation and other service to visitors. Such practice indeed, could increase people's length of stay in destination.

Due to over utilization of the hot spring the water was polluted. As a result, aesthetic nature of hot spring was reducing which might perhaps prevented tourist to visit frequently, swim or wash their body etc. Despite this Burkita has huge potential to attract both international and domestic tourists if controlled and properly managed and utilized.

This tourist attraction was rated as not known by majority of respondents representing 87.7% (Table 1). Only 12.3 % of respondents who were domestic knew it. From this, it can be concluded that the hot spring was not visited by international visitors. All three local guides interviewed said that they used to take to the hot spring before months, however due to disallowing of taking pictures they are now being stopped taking tourist to the hot spring. Interview made with concerned government body representative revealed that such problem was happened because local had a threat of losing their free access to the resource which caused by the news that says the hot spring is to be sold to investor. According to him, the resource was supposed to be sold to investor, but eventually due to local people claim and comment, decision was made in favor of local.



Figure 9: Burkita Hotspring

Mount Alamura and Tabor

In the city there are two mountains situated at different part of the city giving reimbursement. Mount Alamura is located southeast of the city and Lake Hawassa. It is the tallest mountain on which anyone can see and enjoy the city from the top. Hiking is the possible activity of tourist. Despite hunger of tourist visiting it, the mountain has potential for tourism in the city. The second mountain called Mount Tabor is located near Lake Hawassa. This mountain is home to Hyenas and some other mammals and birds. From it, one can see the city and can have trekking experience over there. Besides tourist can have bird watching experience.

These two mountains were known and visited by 48 percent of respondents and ranked fifth resource to be known and visited. Local guide who worked in the city said that he usually took tourist to mount tabor than mount Alamura. In giving reason, the local guide said that mount Alamura have never been accessed to tourists and visitors. An informant from Hawassa city culture, tourism and government communication affaire department confirmed that the mountain has been inaccessible due to absence of road and transport infrastructure though declared as tourist attraction site in the city. According to the informant from the concerned culture and tourism department the mountain would be accessible after road is just constructed on the southern part of the mountain (interview, 2014).

Others

Being the capital city of region state of SNNP and zonal administration of Sidama itself gives an opportunity for the city to be visited by people from towns of the region and neighboring town for business purpose. Millennium Park, Hawassa University, market places and old villages such as Arab sefer, are some of the potential urban tourism resources that need to be developed in to urban tourism product in the near future.

Hawassa University is one of the universities established before 11 years. The university has been main tourist destination for tourists whose motivation is education and research. College of Agriculture is one of the famous colleges in the city that has collaboration and partnership with abroad universities. Because of this, people have been coming from abroad in order to teach, give advice and get advice or in order to use the University for Different Reasons. The university has teaching hotel that provides tourist standard services and two stadiums, one of which has been used by different Ethiopian premier league clubs and Ethiopian football national team as their

training ground. And the other stadium which is now nearly completed is located at the main campus and has potential to host national sport festivals.

Historical Buildings and Villages: However, Hawassa has First *Woreda* office built in 1966 located back of Tadesse Injori hotel, which became Hawassa *Zuria Woreda* police station, but it was not registered as heritage of the city. There are old villages and buildings that were built before 50 year during Hawassa establishment by first inhabitants of the city called *Korem*, Arab, Harer, Addis Ababa etc. People want to see the city that focuses on the environment and on modern building styles, and this fact has become a tourist attraction by itself (Gotland, 2010). As Gotland (2010) noted Hawassa should register and preserve old buildings and villages to attract more tourist in the future.

Millennium Park is protected area located at the gate of the city. It has an area of 44000 m². The park covered by various tree species supporting number of wildlife species. While this study was conducted, the park was not accessible for tourist. As informant told the Millennium park is open for those who would have permission from government office to enter. If accessible bird watching and forest walk, are possible tourism activities in the park. The park has been providing wedding ceremony and picnic services for the residents of the city.

Open Air Market: like everywhere in Ethiopia buying and selling is take place in open air market. Market places have two important purposes; one, they served as destination for business tourist, and second they are source for tourist to buy some souvenir material and other items important for their trip. In Hawassa there were two market places situated at different location. They were open which give appeal to international tourist. Tourist preferred going for shopping in open market than shopping mall which is not new for them, what is important for them is buying something from place unique to them i.e., open market. A tourist who was shopping in one of the two markets said, "This is a unique experience for me. I did not see such kind of market in my life. Goods, materials and people here are really unique and nice to see." It is not only being open market that attract tourist but also commodities sold in the market are appealing tourist. One tourist answered to the question why he come to the open market located in front of Agri campus as; "I come here to see the market, the people and items sold in this market."

Sidama Cultural Hall is another attraction located at the heart of city. This hall with 1500 seats was first built in 1984 during the *Derg* regime to provide services such as cinema and conference for residents of Hawassa. In the compound different statues are

erected in memory of Sidama patriots who lost their life during the fight against *Derg* regime and Sidama cultural house seen near to the hall representing culture of the ethnic group. Inside the hall queen Fura picture is drawn on the wall. Now a day the hall is fully providing the intended services for both residents and visitors.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Hawassa city is sixth populated city with total population of nearly 250 thousands and is fastest growing city in Ethiopia. Finding shows that Hawassa is endowed with natural, cultural and historical tourism resources. Of which Lake Hawassa is the most visited resource which many agreed that it is the main contributor for urban development in Hawassa. Though the city has comprised different tourism resources, some of them such as *Loke* Palace (10th of 13), Mount *Alamura* and other were not yet changed into tourism product. *Burkita* hot spring is not attractive because it is polluted due to over utilization of the resources. As shown in table 1, this resource was only known and visited by 12% of respondents, most of which were domestic visitors.

Thus in order to have urban tourism development in the city making accessible to the resources that were not yet accessible through the development of road infrastructure and interpretive media is must do activity of concerned government organization. Besides to this, if *Burkita* hot spring is continued to be urban tourism attraction of Hawassa, the resource should either be owned or administered by government or sold to private investors.

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