
**ASSESING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TRAVEL AGENCY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF
TOURISM INDUSTRY IN UGANDA, A CASE STUDY OF GREAT LAKES SAFARIS**

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at assessing the contributions of travel agency on the development of tourism industry in Uganda and it was guided by the following objectives; To examine the contributions of travel agencies to the development of the tourism sector, to examine the effect of tourism industry to the economy of Uganda and to identify the different types of tourism products. The majority of the participants, or 30%, feel that travel agencies make a positive contribution to travel knowledge, which is then followed by itinerary planning (21%), airline booking and registration (16%), tour packing (15%), and travel insurance (8%), in that order. Poor working relationships can be remedied by fostering cooperation at the tour site and establishing a foundation of strong interpersonal abilities to make relationships between the tour operators and the authorities easier.

Key words: travel agency, development and tourism industry

Background to the Study

Travel companies are associated with initiative locations in the travel and tourism sector, and their primary duty is to offer clients retail travel amenities (Weaver & Lawton, 2006). The middleman function of travel companies in the tourism industry stayed essentially unchanged from the founding of the first travel agency in 1841 to the setting up of the initial group travel by Thomas Cook in the entire globe, by means of the company of the first package agreement in the USA (Subcounty et al., 2022), as long as today. However, they have greatly expanded and worsened their commercial operations. In order to provide today's current amenities, such as a variety of packages, they started out by providing conventional services like providing tourism knowledge and travel organizations. Travel agencies today constitute an essential component in facilitating the growth of selective tourist types, just as they once represented a very important factor in the establishment of mass tourism. Solutions tourism, which Weaver (2016) describes as a

type of tourism meant to combat the negative effects of mass tourism, and special interest tourism, which Trauer (2017) describes as an occurrence of the twenty-first century used for studies and to meet the needs of particular people and organizations. There are a number of highly significant market sections, and it is anticipated that by 2020, the categories that follow will dominate: Adventure tourism, sustainable tourism, cultural tourism, and thematic tourism (Christopher & Felex, 2022).

Statement of the problem

One of the most prominent companies in the tourism industry's independent travel agencies are essential to the process of fostering and advancing travel inside a nation or to a particular location. It is a travel agency that sets up and presents to travelers all of the tourist destinations' tourist attractions, access points, resources, and additional services.

It is important to examine the achievements of travel companies in Uganda using a case study of the Great Lakes safari since notwithstanding all of its achievements to the industry, scholars have not been able to develop a clear vision for evaluating its function in the sector.

Specific objectives

- 1. To examine the contributions of travel agencies to the development of the tourism sector.*
- 2. To examine the effect of tourism industry to the economy of Uganda.*
- 3. To identify the different types of tourism products*

Research questions

- 1. What are the contributions of travel agencies to the development of the tourism sector?*
- 2. How has the tourism industry affected the economy of Uganda?*
- 3. What are the different types of tourism products in Uganda?*

Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive survey design was employed for the investigation. The design was employed because it takes a realistic approach to phenomena, problems, and events (Mugenda &

Mugenda, 2003). The design was chosen due to the fact that it provides a complete explanation of the issue at hand, helping to identify it, illustrate it, and gather useful data for technical education participants. The design is good for generalizing results and can handle huge sample numbers. It is also simple to conduct and record responses in this style.

Target Population of study.

According to Ogula (2005), a population refers to a group of institutions, people, or objects that have a similar characteristic. This focused on 20 respondents from Great lakes safari.

Sampling Design

Identification of people from the sampling frame who are aware about domestic tourism or who have fortunately engaged in domestic tourism activities was requested of research helpers. Interviews will be conducted with those most inclined to engage in domestic travel. The few previously determined people were asked to recommend acquaintances, employees, or other people they are acquainted with who could give the necessary information regarding the investigation issue using the method known as snowball sampling. Through the use of a standard survey that was distributed to the participants using the gathering and pick later approach, as well as emails when appropriate, qualitative data was gathered. Data was presented in form of charts, tables and percentages.

Data Analysis

Prior to analysis, the obtained data needed to be cleansed. Cleaning entails deleting unwanted dejections from the list. For example, the final analysis included answers from participants who provided less than a third of the whole answer and those who's answers contain grave discrepancies. Pre-analysis, which entails investigating the data and brief explanations, necessitated entering data in Microsoft Excel 2010. To evaluate qualitative data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used. The best tool for assessing non-numerical experimental data is this one. Graphs and tables with data were provided using measurements of central tendency from SPSS (Nelson et al., 2022).

RESULTS

The contributions of travel agencies to the development of the tourism sector. The first objective of the study was to examine the contributions of travel agencies on the development the tourism sector in Uganda. The findings from the respondents are tabulated here under in table 1.

Contribution (%)	Percentage of contribution
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provide travel information	30
Itinerary preparation	21
Airline ticketing and reservation	16
Tour packaging	15
Travel insurance	8

Source: primary data 2022

The research findings in Table 1 above show that travel agencies have positive contributions to development of the tourism sector. According to the results majority of respondents 30% say travel agencies positively contribute towards travel information followed by itinerary preparation with 21%, Airline ticketing and reservation with 16%, Tour packaging with 15%, and travel insurance with 8%.

The effect of tourism industry to the economy of Uganda

The second objective of the study sought to examine the effects of the tourism industry on the economy of Uganda, the findings from the respondents were analysed in the table below.

Table 2 showing the effects of tourism industry on the economy of Uganda

Effect	Percentage
Employment	30%
Foreign exchange	21%
International relations	16%
Economic development	15%
Small business development	8%
Technology and infrastructure	5%

Source: field research 2022

The research findings in Table 2 above show that the tourism industry has positive contributions Uganda's economy, according to the results majority of respondents 30% say tourism positively contribute towards employment followed by foreign exchange with 21%, promotion of international relations with 16%, economic development with 15%, Small scale business with 8% and then followed by promotion of technology and infrastructure with 5%.

Conclusion

The study's findings also showed that, although work was the main benefit, travel agencies also promoted small businesses, employment, economic growth, understanding between cultures, foreign exchange earnings, technology, and the infrastructure. Employment was, of course, the biggest benefit. Aside from investments, issues faced by travel businesses include political unrest, security threats, ignorance of the issue, inflation, and the site's brittleness, which was the biggest problem for travel companies.

Recommendations

Poor working relations, this condition can be improved by providing a basis of good communication skills at the tour site and encouraging team work in order to facilitate interactions between the tour operators and the government.

Skilled personnel/staff, Fort Jesus tour site should also train workers in order to gain professionalism in their work and also equip them with the best skills to perform their

work effectively.

References

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