

The Influence of Tourist Attractions on the Performance of Tourism Industry in Arusha, Kilimanjaro and Manyara Regions in Tanzania

Glory D. Nnko¹ Andrew Mbwambo²

¹Department of Tourism, University of Iringa

² Department of Business Studies, University of Iringa

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of tourist attractions on the performance of tourism industry in Arusha, Kilimanjaro and Manyara in Tanzania. Utilizing a quantitative approach, data were collected through questionnaires administered to a sample of 76 registered tourists across the Arusha, Kilimanjaro, and Manyara regions. The research employed a cross-sectional design and simple random sampling technique, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the respondents' perceptions and experiences. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted, with validity and reliability assessed through factor analysis (KMO) and Cronbach's alpha tests, respectively. The findings reveal that tourist attractions, including wildlife, cultural heritage, historical sites, landscapes, and vegetation, significantly influence tourists' decisions and satisfaction levels. The study concludes by emphasizing the importance of enhancing tourist attractions to foster sustainable tourism development in Tanzania. Recommendations are provided for government stakeholders to improve infrastructure and marketing efforts, for tourists to engage more with local communities, and for future research to explore emerging tourism trends and technologies. Overall, this study contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of Tanzania's tourism industry, highlighting the interplay between various factors that collectively enhance the sector's performance.

Keywords: Tourist; Tourist Attractions; Tourism Industry Performance

INTRODUCTION

Tourism, as it is known today, has undergone several phases in its history. The evolution of tourism can be traced back to ancient times, where travel was mostly for religious or trade purposes (UNWTO, 2022). However, modern tourism has its roots in the 19th century, and since then, it has experienced several phases of development. Tourism, as a global phenomenon, has evolved over centuries, transforming from a niche activity to a major industry driving economic growth and cultural exchange (UNWTO, 2022). Originating from the travels of ancient civilizations for trade, exploration, and cultural exchange, modern tourism has become a pivotal component of global economies, fostering cross-cultural understanding and generating substantial revenue (Sharma & Nayak, 2019).

The tourism industry is considered the most profitable and financially attractive business in the country (Ololo and Dieke, 2020). In recent years, nations worldwide are increasing their investments in the tourism industry and making it to contribute to the growth of the global economy and nations (Guimaraes & Silva, 2016; Rahman et al., 2018; Sharma & Nayak, 2019). According to Ololo and Dieke (2020), the advantages of the tourism industry can be compressed in six areas which are: earning of foreign exchange, contribution to government revenues, creation of employment, generation of income, and stimulus to inward investment as well as regional development. UN-World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and indicate that, more than 1,323 million tourists traveled globally in 2017, which was 84 million more tourists than the previous year and a new record (Emerald insight 2019). This was an increase of 7% increase to the 2016 figures, the highest growth rate since 2010.

In Africa, tourism plays a significant role in economic development, cultural preservation, and environmental

conservation (African Development Bank, 2021). The continent's diverse landscapes, rich history, and vibrant cultures attract millions of visitors annually, contributing to job creation, infrastructure development, and foreign exchange earnings. Within East Africa, countries like Tanzania boast iconic attractions such as the Serengeti National Park, Mount Kilimanjaro, and the Zanzibar archipelago, drawing tourists seeking wildlife safaris, adventure tourism, and beach holidays.

Within Africa, international tourist arrivals in 2017 increased by 9% and tourism receipts increased by 8%. In northern Africa Tunisia and Morocco enjoyed an increase in tourists with a 23% growth in arrivals while in Sub-Saharan Africa strong performance continued in large destinations like Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritius, and Zimbabwe whereas the Island destinations Seychelles, Cape Verde, and Reunion, all reported double-digit growth in arrivals, benefiting from increased air connectivity.

Similarly, the tourism industry in Tanzania has experienced remarkable growth over the past decade, making it a significant contributor to the GDP. However, the tourism industry performance in Tanzania varies from region to region with some regions experiencing more significant growth than others (Bujuru and Mavula, 2021). The northern circuit which is comprised of Kilimanjaro, Arusha, and Manyara regions has experienced a tremendous growth in the tourism sector as compared to the southern circuit which is comprised of Iringa, Mbeya, Njombe, and Ruvuma regions. Differences in performance is a function of various factors including the infrastructures, government policies, marketing and socio-cultural factors (Mwaiselage and Butamanya, 2021). Tanzania views tourism as a significant industry in terms of job creation, foreign currency generation and poverty alleviation and hence the sector is now receiving greater attention than ever before from the government and international agencies. Recently, in 2022, the president of the United Republic of Tanzania launched a Royal Tour film showcasing the tourist attractions in Tanzania to the world. This is but among many initiatives done by the government of Tanzania to promote the tourism industry worldwide.

It is important to note that, existing studies in tourism industry in Tanzania fall short of empirical verification of the pillars upon which tourism demand rests. Lack of such knowledge can lead to theoretically correct but practically unfounded arguments with regard to tourism and growth demand in Tanzania. It is therefore important to conduct a study to fill this gap of literature specifically in the northern circuit of Tanzania and obtain findings to help improve the whole tourism industry in Tanzania (African Development Bank, 2021).

However, despite the immense potential of the tourism industry in Tanzania, various factors influence its performance, shaping visitor experiences, industry competitiveness, and socio-economic impacts. These factors encompass a wide range of dimensions, including: **Natural Resources and Attractions:** Tanzania's abundant natural resources, including wildlife, landscapes, and marine ecosystems, form the cornerstone of its tourism industry (African Development Bank, 2021). The preservation and sustainable management of these assets are crucial for maintaining visitor interest and environmental integrity. **Infrastructure and Accessibility:** Adequate infrastructure, such as transportation networks, accommodation facilities, and tourist amenities, is essential for facilitating travel and enhancing visitor satisfaction. Improved accessibility to tourist destinations can unlock new market segments and extend the tourism season. **Regulatory Framework and Governance:** Effective governance, policy frameworks, and regulatory mechanisms are vital for promoting responsible tourism practices, ensuring visitor safety, and fostering industry sustainability. Clear guidelines for tourism development and management help mitigate negative impacts and enhance destination competitiveness (African Development Bank, 2021).

Market Demand and Trends: Understanding consumer preferences, market trends, and emerging travel patterns is essential for aligning tourism products and services with evolving visitor expectations (Govers & Go, 2023). Anticipating and responding to market demand can drive innovation and diversification within the tourism sector. **Cultural Heritage and Community Engagement:** Cultural authenticity, heritage preservation, and community involvement are integral to creating authentic and memorable visitor experiences. Empowering local communities through tourism initiatives can foster socio-economic benefits and promote cultural exchange.

Exploring the unique socio-economic, environmental, and cultural dimensions of tourism in Tanzania, this research seeks to address the gap in existing literature and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding

of tourism dynamics in the region. Through empirical analysis and stakeholder engagement, the study aims to identify opportunities for enhancing destination competitiveness, promoting sustainable tourism practices, and maximizing the socio-economic benefits derived from tourism activities.

Theoretical Framework

In this paper, The TALC model proposed by Butler (1980) was used whereby it offers valuable insights into the evolution and dynamics of tourism destinations, providing a framework for understanding the performance of tourism in Tanzania. According to the TALC model, tourism destinations undergo distinct stages of development, including exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and decline. Each stage is characterized by varying levels of tourism activity, infrastructure development, and environmental impacts.

In the context of Tanzania, the application of the TALC model highlights the country's position within the tourism lifecycle and the challenges it faces at different stages. For instance, Tanzania may be currently experiencing the consolidation stage, where the focus shifts towards sustaining growth and optimizing benefits while managing potential negative impacts. This stage emphasizes the importance of strategic planning, sustainable tourism development, and effective destination management to ensure the long-term viability of the industry.

In conclusion, the TALC model provides a useful framework for analyzing the performance of tourism in Tanzania and guiding strategic decision-making to foster sustainable development. By applying the principles of the TALC model, Tanzania can navigate through the different stages of tourism development, maximize its competitive advantage, and realize the full potential of its tourism industry for economic, social, and environmental benefits.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Smith, (2018) conducted a study on "The Role of Tourist Attractions in Enhancing Tourism Performance: A Case Study of Spain". A cross-sectional research design was used, whereby a sample of 60 tourists visiting various attractions in Spain Surveys were administered to tourists, and responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The study found a significant positive correlation between tourist attractions and tourism performance in Spain. Specifically, the presence of iconic attractions contributed to increased visitor numbers, longer stays, and higher tourist expenditure, thereby enhancing the overall economic impact of tourism.

Kihwele, (2019) conducted a study titled "The Role of Historical Sites in Enhancing Tourism Development in Tanzania," employing a qualitative research design. Data was collected through interviews with 50 stakeholders, including tourism operators and local community members, as well as site assessments of 15 historical sites across Tanzania. The study utilized thematic analysis to explore the significance of historical sites in attracting tourists and promoting local culture. The findings revealed that well-preserved historical sites contribute positively to the tourism sector by enhancing cultural heritage awareness and attracting international visitors. However, the study also highlighted challenges related to inadequate marketing and preservation efforts, suggesting that strategic improvements in these areas could further enhance tourism development.

Kumwenda, (2018) studied "Landscape Diversity and Its Impact on Tourism in Tanzania," utilizing a comparative analysis of tourist perceptions and landscape features. The research involved surveys of 250 tourists visiting diverse landscapes, including mountains, lakes, and parks. Descriptive statistics and factor analysis were used to examine the relationship between landscape diversity and tourist satisfaction. The findings demonstrated that varied landscapes are key attractions for tourists and significantly enhance their overall travel experiences. The study advocates for infrastructure development to improve access to these natural attractions.

Lema, (2022) focused on "Vegetation and Eco-Tourism Opportunities in Tanzania," employing a qualitative research design involving interviews with 30 eco-tourism operators and local communities. The study utilized

content analysis to explore the role of vegetation in promoting eco-tourism. Findings indicated that unique vegetation types play a significant role in attracting eco-conscious travelers and enhancing sustainable tourism practices. The study emphasizes the need for targeted marketing strategies and conservation efforts to capitalize on the potential of Tanzania's rich biodiversity.

Mansour, et al., (2020) conducted research titled "Cultural Heritage and Its Impact on Tourism Development in East Africa: A Case Study of Tanzania," employing a cross-sectional survey design. Data was collected from 500 tourists visiting cultural heritage sites in Tanzania. Statistical analysis was performed to assess the relationship between cultural heritage awareness and tourism development. The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between the promotion of cultural heritage and increased tourist arrivals, suggesting that effective marketing of cultural sites is essential for enhancing tourism development in the region.

Mugisha, (2021) conducted a study on "Wildlife Tourism in East Africa: Trends and Challenges," utilizing a longitudinal research design that analyzed data from tourism statistics over a decade. The study examined trends in wildlife tourism across Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania through descriptive statistics and trend analysis. Findings indicated that wildlife tourism is a significant driver of economic growth in the region, but challenges such as poaching and habitat loss threaten its sustainability. The study advocates for improved conservation strategies to protect wildlife and ensure the long-term viability of tourism in East Africa.

Garcia and Martinez (2020) conducted a study on "Impact of Tourist Attractions on Destination Competitiveness: Evidence from Thailand". A longitudinal research design was used, whereby a sample of 50 tourists visiting various attractions in Thailand were involved. Surveys and interviews were conducted with tourists, and data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis and statistical techniques. The study revealed that tourist attractions play a crucial role in shaping destination competitiveness in Thailand. Attractions that offer unique experiences, cultural authenticity, and natural beauty were identified as key factors influencing tourist satisfaction, repeat visitation, and positive destination image.

Wang and Liu (2019) conducted a study on "Exploring the Relationship between Tourist Attractions and Destination Loyalty: A Study of Italy". A mixed-methods research design was used and a sample of 150 tourists visiting various attractions in Italy. Surveys, focus groups, and observations were used to collect data, which were analyzed using thematic analysis and structural equation modeling. The study found a significant positive relationship between tourist attractions and destination loyalty in Italy. Attractions that offer unique experiences, cultural heritage, and high-quality services were identified as key drivers of tourist satisfaction and loyalty, leading to positive word-of-mouth recommendations and repeat visitation.

Chen (2021) conducted a study on "The Impact of Tourist Attractions on Economic Development: A Case Study of Malaysia". A case study research design was employed. Data collected from 10 tourism agencies, local businesses, and government sources in Malaysia. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted, including economic indicators, tourism statistics, and visitor expenditure data. The study demonstrated the significant contribution of tourist attractions to economic development in Malaysia. Attractions such as cultural heritage sites, natural landscapes, and theme parks were identified as key drivers of tourism revenue, job creation, and infrastructure development, highlighting their importance in supporting sustainable economic growth.

METHODOLOGY

This paper utilizes a quantitative approach, data were collected through questionnaires administered to a sample of 76 registered tourists across the Arusha, Kilimanjaro, and Manyara regions. The research employed a cross-sectional design and simple random sampling technique, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the respondents' perceptions and experiences. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted, with validity and reliability assessed through factor analysis (KMO) and Cronbach's alpha tests, respectively.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study intends to examine the influence of tourist attractions on the performance of the tourism industry in

Tanzania and it was examined through a series of statements in the questionnaire, which were rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The data collected was analyzed to determine the level of agreement among respondents regarding various aspects of tourist attractions, including cultural heritage, wildlife, historical sites, landscapes, and vegetation.

The analysis of the data reveals that tourist attractions are perceived as significant factors influencing the performance of the tourism industry in Tanzania. The majority of respondents expressed strong agreement with the statements concerning cultural heritage, wildlife, landscapes, and vegetation, suggesting that these elements are crucial in shaping their travel experiences and overall satisfaction.

Table 1: Cultural Heritage

The availability of cultural heritage sites significantly enhances the attractiveness of Tanzania.						
1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	SD
4 (5.3%)	3 (3.9%)	10 (13.2%)	35 (46.1%)	24 (31.6%)	4.00	1.05

Source: Filed Data (2024)

Cultural heritage is a vital component of Tanzania's tourism landscape, significantly influencing the country's appeal to both domestic and international tourists. The mean score of 4.00 indicates a strong consensus among respondents that cultural heritage sites enhance Tanzania's attractiveness as a tourist destination. Specifically, 46.1% of respondents agreed, and 31.6% strongly agreed that the availability of cultural heritage sites significantly enhances the attractiveness of Tanzania. This underscores the perception that cultural heritage is not only a draw for visitors but also a crucial aspect of the nation's identity and a testament to its rich history and diverse cultures.

The findings are consistent with the research by Mansour et al. (2020), which emphasizes the importance of cultural heritage sites in promoting tourism and enhancing the overall image of destinations. Cultural heritage includes various elements such as historical monuments, traditional arts, music, dance, festivals, and indigenous practices. These components offer tourists a deeper understanding of Tanzania's cultural identity and create memorable experiences that resonate beyond the physical attractions. As noted in the study, the preservation and promotion of these heritage sites contribute significantly to the development of a unique tourism experience that differentiates Tanzania from other destinations.

However, the 13.2% of respondents who remained neutral about the promotion of cultural heritage highlights an important area for development. This percentage indicates a potential gap in awareness and engagement strategies that could be addressed through targeted marketing initiatives. Improving the visibility of cultural heritage sites and promoting them effectively can help to convert neutral perceptions into stronger endorsements, potentially increasing tourist interest and visitation rates. Strategies may include enhancing online presence, engaging with local communities to showcase their cultural assets, and organizing cultural events that draw both local and international tourists.

Moreover, engaging communities in the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage can foster a sense of ownership and pride among local populations, leading to sustainable tourism practices. Community-based tourism initiatives can be instrumental in highlighting cultural heritage while ensuring that the benefits of tourism are shared with local communities. As highlighted by Mansour et al. (2020), integrating local narratives into the tourism experience can enrich visitors' understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage, further enhancing Tanzania's attractiveness as a destination.

Thus, while the findings indicate a strong belief in the importance of cultural heritage sites for enhancing Tanzania's attractiveness, the neutral responses point to an opportunity for improvement in marketing and engagement strategies. By leveraging the unique cultural elements of the country and enhancing their visibility, Tanzania can attract more tourists and maximize the potential benefits of its rich cultural heritage in

the tourism sector. This approach will not only improve the performance of the tourism industry but also contribute to the preservation of the country’s cultural identity for future generations.

Table 2: Wildlife

Tanzania's wildlife plays a crucial role in attracting international tourists.						
1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	SD
2 (2.6%)	2 (2.6%)	8 (10.5%)	30 (39.5%)	34 (44.7%)	4.20	0.75

Source: Filed Data (2024)

Wildlife is undeniably one of the most significant attractions in Tanzania, which is renowned for its rich biodiversity and unique ecosystems. The mean score of 4.20 indicates a strong positive sentiment among respondents regarding the influence of Tanzania's wildlife on their decision to visit the country. Specifically, 39.5% of respondents agreed, and 44.7% strongly agreed that Tanzania's wildlife plays a crucial role in attracting international tourists. This overwhelming endorsement highlights how the country’s reputation for diverse and abundant wildlife significantly contributes to its appeal as a premier tourist destination.

The findings align closely with the research conducted by Mugisha (2021), which emphasizes the pivotal role of wildlife in tourism development within East Africa. The study underscores that wildlife tourism is not only a major economic driver for the region but also essential for fostering cultural exchange and environmental awareness. The presence of iconic species, such as the African elephant, lion, and rhinoceros, in protected areas like Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Crater, draws millions of tourists annually, further solidifying Tanzania's status as a global wildlife tourism hotspot.

Moreover, the substantial percentage of respondents affirming the importance of wildlife tourism indicates a robust market potential for developing tourism products centered around wildlife experiences. However, the reliance on wildlife as a central attraction necessitates effective conservation strategies to ensure that these resources remain sustainable and accessible. As highlighted by Mugisha (2021), the success of wildlife tourism is intrinsically linked to the health of ecosystems and the populations of wildlife species. This connection emphasizes the need for responsible tourism practices that prioritize conservation, community involvement, and environmental stewardship.

Additionally, enhancing wildlife tourism through innovative approaches, such as eco-tourism and community-based wildlife initiatives, can provide long-term benefits for both local communities and the tourism industry. These initiatives can empower local communities by offering them economic incentives to engage in wildlife conservation, thereby creating a win-win situation where tourism supports conservation efforts while providing unique experiences for visitors.

Therefore, the strong association of Tanzania's wildlife with tourist attraction underscores its importance in the overall performance of the tourism industry. The findings not only affirm the critical role of wildlife in drawing international tourists but also highlight the need for sustainable practices to protect these natural resources for future generations. By prioritizing conservation and community engagement, Tanzania can continue to leverage its wildlife as a key asset in enhancing tourism performance.

Table 3: Historical Sites

Tanzania's historical sites are well-preserved and contribute to tourism growth.						
1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	SD
5 (6.6%)	7 (9.2%)	15 (19.7%)	25 (32.9%)	24 (31.6%)	3.74	1.10

Source: Filed Data (2024)

The role of historical sites in Tanzania's tourism landscape presents a more nuanced perspective compared to other attractions, as indicated by the mean score of 3.74. This score reflects a mixed response from the survey participants regarding the preservation and contribution of historical sites to tourism growth. Specifically, 32.9% of respondents agreed, and 31.6% strongly agreed that Tanzania's historical sites are well-preserved and contribute to tourism growth. However, the 19.7% of respondents who remained neutral and the 6.6% who strongly disagreed suggest a level of uncertainty regarding the effective utilization of these sites compared to the more prominent wildlife and cultural attractions.

These findings echo the research conducted by Kihwele (2019), which highlights the potential of historical sites to attract tourists but also points to the challenges posed by inadequate marketing and preservation efforts. Many historical sites in Tanzania, such as the Olduvai Gorge and the historic city of Bagamoyo, are rich in heritage and have the potential to provide visitors with unique insights into the country's past. However, without proper management and promotional strategies, these sites remain underutilized, failing to draw the same level of interest as wildlife attractions.

The relatively high percentage of neutral and strongly disagreeing responses indicates a critical gap in the public perception and awareness of historical sites. This situation calls for concerted efforts to improve marketing initiatives that showcase these sites' historical significance and unique narratives. Engaging storytelling and immersive experiences can enhance visitors' understanding and appreciation, leading to increased interest and visitation.

Moreover, enhancing site management is crucial for the preservation of historical sites. Investing in conservation efforts, providing adequate infrastructure, and ensuring that sites are accessible and well-maintained can significantly improve the visitor experience. Collaborating with local communities and historians can also enrich the storytelling aspect, providing authentic and engaging insights into the cultural and historical context of these sites.

Therefore, while the findings indicate that historical sites have the potential to contribute to tourism growth, the mixed responses highlight the challenges that need to be addressed. By focusing on effective marketing and preservation strategies, Tanzania can better utilize its historical sites as valuable assets in the tourism sector. Enhancing the visibility and accessibility of these sites can create a more balanced tourism portfolio that includes wildlife, cultural, and historical attractions, ultimately leading to a more robust and sustainable tourism industry.

Table 4: Landscape

The diverse landscapes in Tanzania contribute significantly to the overall tourism experience.						
1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	SD
3 (3.9%)	3 (3.9%)	12 (15.8%)	28 (36.8%)	30 (39.5%)	4.10	0.92

Source: Filed Data (2024)

The findings regarding the significance of Tanzania's landscapes are striking, with a mean score of 4.10 indicating a strong consensus among respondents about the positive impact of the country's diverse geographical features on the overall tourism experience. Specifically, 36.8% of respondents agreed, and 39.5% strongly agreed that the varied landscapes in Tanzania significantly enhance the tourist experience. This strong sentiment underscores the importance of landscapes as integral components of the country's tourism appeal.

Tanzania is home to a remarkable variety of landscapes, including iconic features such as Mount Kilimanjaro, the Serengeti plains, and the lush forests of the Ngorongoro Crater. These geographical attributes not only provide stunning visuals but also offer unique experiences for tourists, ranging from hiking and wildlife safaris

to cultural immersion in local communities. The diversity of these landscapes plays a crucial role in shaping the overall experience of visitors and contributes to the growing popularity of Tanzania as a travel destination.

The findings align well with Kumwenda's (2018) research, which highlights the importance of varied landscapes in attracting tourists and enhancing their experiences. Kumwenda emphasizes that the natural beauty and ecological diversity of Tanzania are key factors that contribute to positive tourist experiences. However, while the respondents recognize the value of these landscapes, the study also indicates a pressing need for infrastructure investments to enhance accessibility to these areas. Improved transportation networks, well-marked trails, and visitor facilities are essential to ensure that tourists can fully engage with and appreciate the natural beauty of Tanzania.

Additionally, the investment in infrastructure not only benefits tourists but can also support local economies by increasing visitor numbers and encouraging spending in surrounding communities. Furthermore, promoting eco-tourism initiatives that leverage the landscapes can lead to sustainable tourism practices that prioritize conservation and community involvement.

Therefore, the high ratings for the significance of Tanzania's landscapes in enhancing the tourism experience highlight a valuable opportunity for the tourism industry. By investing in infrastructure and promoting eco-friendly tourism practices, Tanzania can capitalize on its diverse landscapes to attract more visitors and improve overall tourism performance. The findings underscore the need for a strategic approach that balances tourist accessibility with environmental conservation, ultimately fostering a sustainable tourism industry that benefits both visitors and local communities.

Table 5: Vegetation

The unique vegetation in Tanzania enhances eco-tourism opportunities.						
1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	SD
4 (5.3%)	5 (6.6%)	14 (18.4%)	30 (39.5%)	23 (30.3%)	3.88	0.99

Source: Filed Data (2024)

The findings regarding Tanzania's unique vegetation are promising, as indicated by a mean score of 3.88, suggesting a positive perception among respondents regarding its role in promoting eco-tourism. Specifically, 39.5% of respondents agreed, and 30.3% strongly agreed that the unique vegetation in Tanzania enhances eco-tourism opportunities. This sentiment reflects an awareness of the ecological diversity present within the country, which includes distinct flora that can attract eco-conscious travelers seeking authentic and sustainable travel experiences.

The significance of vegetation in eco-tourism is well-documented, as highlighted by Lema (2022), who emphasizes its critical role in promoting sustainable tourism practices. Lema's research points out that vegetation not only supports biodiversity but also serves as a habitat for various wildlife species, enhancing the overall eco-tourism experience. Tourists often seek destinations that provide opportunities for nature exploration, and the rich flora of Tanzania offers a unique backdrop for activities such as hiking, bird watching, and nature photography.

Despite the positive mean score, the findings also indicate a need for further development and marketing of eco-tourism initiatives centered around Tanzania's unique vegetation. While many respondents recognize the potential, this suggests that existing marketing efforts may not fully convey the richness of Tanzania's natural landscapes or the eco-tourism experiences available. Developing targeted marketing campaigns that highlight the unique vegetation and its significance to eco-systems can help attract a growing demographic of environmentally conscious travelers.

Moreover, enhancing eco-tourism initiatives could involve partnerships with local communities to create

authentic experiences that educate tourists about the importance of vegetation and conservation efforts. By integrating community-led initiatives, the tourism sector can foster a deeper connection between visitors and the environment, promoting sustainable practices that benefit both the economy and ecological health.

Therefore, the findings on Tanzania's unique vegetation illustrate a valuable opportunity to enhance the country's eco-tourism offerings. By investing in the development and marketing of eco-tourism initiatives that leverage the unique flora of the region, Tanzania can appeal to eco-conscious travelers and position itself as a leader in sustainable tourism practices. This approach can lead to increased visitor numbers while also promoting conservation efforts, ensuring the protection of Tanzania's rich biodiversity for future generations.

The findings reveal that tourist attractions significantly influence the performance of the tourism industry in Tanzania. The positive perceptions of cultural heritage, wildlife, landscapes, and vegetation underscore the need for targeted marketing and strategic development of these attractions to enhance the overall tourism experience and performance. This aligns with the study's aim to explore factors influencing tourism performance, emphasizing that a holistic approach to managing and promoting these attractions is vital for sustaining and improving Tanzania's tourism industry.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that tourist attractions play a pivotal role in influencing the performance of the tourism industry in Tanzania. The high mean scores associated with the perceptions of tourists regarding the significance of cultural heritage sites, wildlife reserves, and natural landscapes indicate that these attractions are not merely supplementary elements of the tourist experience; they are fundamental to the appeal of Tanzania as a destination. The overwhelming agreement among respondents regarding the importance of these attractions highlights their role in drawing visitors and enhancing their overall satisfaction.

Furthermore, the data reveals that well-preserved and accessible attractions significantly contribute to repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations, which are critical for the sustainability of the tourism sector. Tourists are increasingly seeking authentic experiences that connect them with the rich cultural and natural heritage of a destination. As such, the government and relevant stakeholders must prioritize the conservation and promotion of these attractions to ensure their continued viability and attractiveness to tourists.

Moreover, the successful marketing and development of these attractions are vital for positioning Tanzania competitively within the global tourism market. Enhancing the quality of tourist experiences through improved facilities, services, and infrastructure will likely yield higher satisfaction levels among visitors. This, in turn, will lead to greater economic benefits, including increased revenue generation and job creation within the tourism sector. Thus, it is essential to foster collaboration between government agencies, local communities, and private sector stakeholders to maximize the potential of tourist attractions in driving industry performance.

In conclusion, the study affirms that the effective management and promotion of tourist attractions are critical to the performance of Tanzania's tourism industry. By investing in the preservation and enhancement of these sites, Tanzania can continue to attract a diverse range of tourists, bolster its economy, and ensure the long-term sustainability of its tourism sector.

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