

Assessment of Tourism Stakeholders' Involvement Towards the Outcomes of Tanzania's Royal Tour Film

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Abstract

Inadequate involvement of tourism players impedes realisation of the Royal Tour Film initiatives in Tanzania. The film was one of the government's efforts to revitalize the Tourism Industry after the COVID-19 pandemic. Through qualitative and quantitative methods, it was revealed that there was inadequate awareness of the expected impact of the film amongst the tourism players, which leads to lack of preparedness for receiving, hosting and handling massive numbers of tourists at the destination. The majority of tourism players face serious capacity issues, including little understanding of the legal and policy issues governing tourism businesses. This calls for the government and private sector intervention to mitigate the existing gaps if Tanzania wants to maintain its tourism competitiveness. Future studies may focus on the need to assess the capacity gaps in Tanzania's missions abroad for effective implementation of similar initiatives.

Key words: *Tourism players, Royal Tour Film, Tanzania, Tourism businesses*

Introduction

Tanzania: The Royal Tour film is a maiden film that features President Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania showcasing Tanzania's richness in natural and cultural, heritage as well as the diversity of investment potentials. The film was launched in New York, U.S on April 18, 2022, and in Arusha and Zanzibar, Tanzania on 28 April and 7 May 2022 respectively (Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism [MNRT], 2022). Tanzania the Royal tour series is unique. Apart from presenting an informal and personal side of the President of Tanzania, the film focuses on great attractions of Tanzania. The film also shows Tanzania as the

number one home of Safari destination in the World which houses four of the most coveted adventure hotspots on earth: the Serengeti National Park, Mount Kilimanjaro in Kilimanjaro National Park, Island of Zanzibar, and the Ngorongoro Crater compounded by the kind-hearted people of Tanzania (MNRT, 2022).

According to MNRT (2022), the Tanzania's Royal Tour film content, through the strategic premiere USA market and timing have started paying dividends in terms of attracting significant inbound arrivals to the country. For example, a digital safari-marketing platform selling the East African region based in Copenhagen in Denmark, reported on the massive travel booking enquiries from USA, two months after the film was launched in the American market. This supports the previous study by Mkwizu (2020) which advocated for digital marketing and tourism as opportunities for African countries including Tanzania to lure international tourist arrivals to the continent. In 2021, Mr. DiGregorio's firm was engaged by the Tanzania Association of Tour Operators (TATO) with the support of UNDP to promote Tanzania across the Northern America of which he said that as the home of the Great Migration, Kilimanjaro, the Serengeti and Zanzibar, there's no doubt that Tanzania is and will continue to be in high-demand with American travellers eager to take their first long-haul post-COVID-19 adventure (MNRT, 2022).

For her part, the Association of Black Travel Professionals (ABTP) CEO, Ms Shawnta Harrison said the Tanzania Royal Tour film has moved the majority of African-American travellers who are planning their holiday elsewhere in Africa and the Caribbean (APTA News, 2022). Back home, the tourism players are busy rolling out a red carpet, refurbishing tourist vehicles, and renovating accommodation facilities as part of the grand preparation to welcome the imminent influx of tourists. The Tanzania Royal Tour Film is an apt branding strategy that will help in stimulating tourism, thus putting the Tanzania destination into a better position to achieve its five (5) million visitors target by 2026. The choice of the debut country and timing were extremely imperative for promoting the tourism industry in the aftermath of the Corona virus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

In preparation of the film, President Samia took the risk of informing millions of potential domestic and international tourists across the world that Tanzania is next to none, when it comes to spending their holidays. "We are very welcoming people. You will never regret visiting the Tanzania destination," President Samia added. It is envisaged that, the viewers'

interest in visiting the country will be higher than before they had watched *Tanzania: The Royal Tour* film. The film also portrays the Tanzania's familiar and unfamiliar aspects are enhanced since everything is shown from the personal perspective of the eye of the country's top citizen. Majority of tourists, especially those originating from the Americas, associate Tanzania with safaris and, perhaps, Mount Kilimanjaro, that is why almost 50% of "Tanzania: The Royal Tour" explores parts of the country that intend to expand viewers' comprehension and understanding of the Tanzania destination.

Statement of the Problem

Several scholars such as Nakayama (2023), Mkwizu (2022a) and (Teng & Chen, 2020) believe that films and the movies induce tourism at the destinations. Initial studies on assessing the effect of films on destinations, date back to the late 1990s (Fansler, Trujillo, & Curtis, 2020). Since then, there is an interest in understanding more complex issues with regard to film-induced visitation (Marafa, Chan, & Li, 2022; Ng & Chan, 2020). Nonetheless, there is a gap in literature, especially in understanding the effect of films at destination (Wong, Song, & Zhang, 2021). There is scanty information on the response of tourism stakeholders at destinations as a result of films (Cheng, Wei, & Zhang, 2020; Nunes, 2022). While majority of the studies on the film-induced tourism have been focusing on the theoretical part of film tourism, this study finds a need for examining the response, behaviour, and experience of various tourism players at destinations (Koh & Fakfare, 2020; Sousa, Malheiro, Liberato, & Liberato, 2021). This study assesses tourism stakeholders' response as the result of the Royal Tour Film in the Tanzania destination

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to assess tourism stakeholders' response as the result of the Royal Tour Film in the Tanzania destination.

Literature Review

Films and travel decision are two concepts that are interrelated. This implies that, both films and travel decision affect one other in a direct or indirect way. Domínguez-Azcue, Almeida-García, Pérez-Tapia, & Cestino-González (2021) found that films may influence someone desiring to visit a destination. Motivation for travelling is influenced by a number of factors,

including; personality, learning, motivation, perception, and attitude (Bismala & Siregar, 2020; Humagain & Singleton, 2021) (Figure 1)

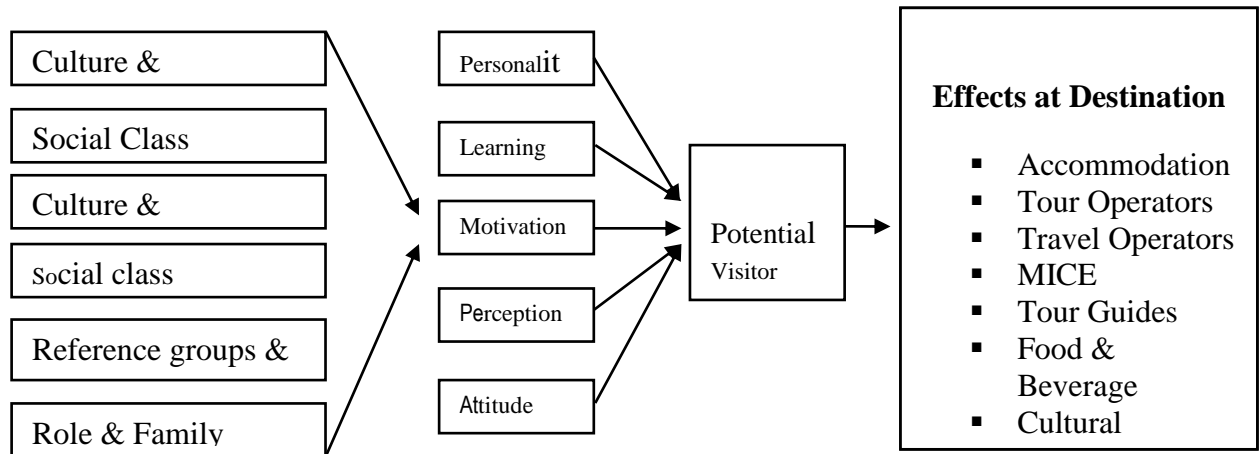


Figure 1. Impacts on Individual Travel Behaviour

Source: Adopted from Humagain & Singleton, 2022

Figure 1 shows that the behavioural aspects and impact of tourism at destination are determined by previous experiences; affecting the motivation for travel of an individual. Appropriate marketing strategies and campaigns entail, a deeper understanding on how tourism stakeholders behave at destinations (Humagain & Singleton, 2021).

Impact of Film-induced Tourism

One of the major impacts of film-induced tourism is that it reduces seasonality issues at the destination since it accelerates visitation throughout the year (Oshriyeh & Capriello, 2022). Also, film-induced tourism has a tendency of rebranding physical structures such as buildings, scenery, and streets (Bonelli, 2022; Póvoa, Reijnders, & Martens, 2021). Another important aspect of the film-induced tourism is its tourists' endurance to the destination, in the sense that it keeps attracting visitors each year (generations after generations). For example, Riley *et al.* (1998) conducted a study on the outcomes years after 12 different films were released. The scholars found that, there was an average of 54% increase in visitation to the destinations five years after the films were released. Also, Rewtrakunphaiboon (2009) and Póvoa, Reijnders, & Martens, (2021), in their studies on the length the images of the destinations that would be stored, and found that the images were retained for a very long period or even indefinitely, proving the school of thought of visitors' endurance. Table 1 shows the relationship between the film-induced tourism and number of visitors at the destination.

Table 1**Film-induced Tourism and number of Visitors at Destination**

Film	Location	Impact of visitor number
<i>Pride and Prejudice (2005)</i>	<i>Lyme Park, England</i>	<i>150% increase</i>
<i>Mission: Impossible 2 (2000)</i>	<i>National Parks in Sydney</i>	<i>200% increase</i>
<i>Troy (2004)</i>	<i>Çanakkale, Turkey</i>	<i>73% increase</i>
<i>Harry Potter (2001)</i>	<i>Various locations around the UK</i>	<i>Increase of 50% or more in all filmed locations</i>
<i>The Beach (2000)</i>	<i>Thailand</i>	<i>22% increase in youth market</i>
<i>The Lord of the Rings (1998)</i>	<i>New Zealand</i>	<i>10% increase every year 1998 to 2003 from UK</i>
<i>Gorillas in the Mist (1998)</i>	<i>Rwanda</i>	<i>20% increase</i>
<i>Miami Vice (1995)</i>	<i>Miami</i>	<i>150% increase in German visitors</i>
<i>Sense and Sensibility (1995)</i>	<i>Lyme Park in Cheshire, U.K.</i>	<i>150% increase in visitors</i>
<i>Braveheart (1995)</i>	<i>Wallace Monument, Scotland</i>	<i>300% increase a year after release</i>

Source: Elaborations from: Riley and Van Doren (1992); Tooke and Baker (1996); Grihault (2003); Walker (2003); Cousins and Aderek (1993); Busby, Brunt and Lund (2003); Riley and Van Doren (1998); Hudson and Ritchie (2006a) cited in Rewtrakunphaiboon (2009)

Methodology

This was a cross-sectional study, in which data were collected from several informants in the tourism ecosystem in Tanzania. The research adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods, involving 117 tourism respondents who were randomly drawn from over 1,200 tourism stakeholders including the sub-sectors of accommodation, tour operations, tourism investors, travel operators, tour guiding, arts and crafts in the country. Data were collected through focus group discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and field observations. The data were processed and analyzed quantitatively using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Qualitatively, the author initially translated and categorized data into various themes and sub-themes basing on the study objective. Also

some data from in-depth interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic content analysis.

Findings and discussions

Tanzania's Tourism Players

Majority of the tourism stakeholders subscribe to a confederation known as the Tourism Confederation of Tanzania (TCT). TCT is an apex organization for the private sector operators of the tourism businesses in the country (Pers.com Executive Secretary for TCT, 2021). Furthermore, TCT members constitute; the Tanzania Association of Tour Operators (TATO); Tanzania Society of Travel (TASOTA); Tanzania Air Operator Association (TAOA); Hotels Association of Tanzania (HAT); Tanzania Hunting Operators Association (THOA); Tanzania Professional Hunters Association (TPHA); Tanzania Tours Guides Association (TTGA); Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors (ZATI); and Tanzania Association of Cultural Tourism Organizers (TACTO) (Figure 2).

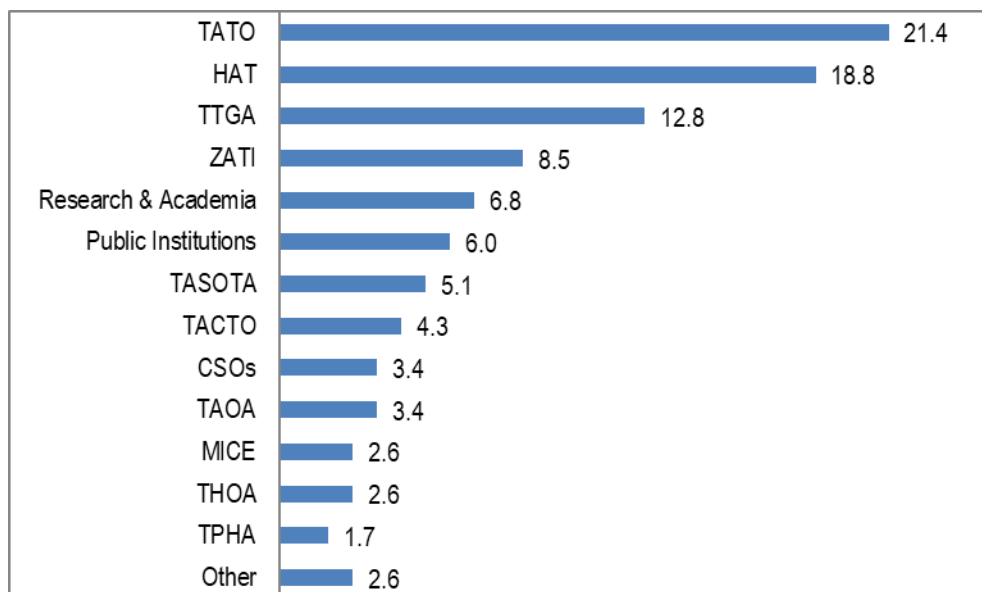


Figure 2. Percentage distribution of Tourism Players in Tanzania

This apex organization has not been able to bring together all tourism players in the country. For example, the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events (MICE) organizers; Arts and crafters; Food and Drinks providers; transporters; Diving and Marine Sports Tourism; Research & Academia, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are not represented in the current TCT setup. As such, majority of individual tourism organizations and players operate in isolation from the other players at the regional, district and local levels. There is minimal

vertical, diagonal and horizontal inter-organizational linkage along the tourism ecosystem in Tanzania. However, the findings of this study show that tourism players subscribing to TATO are the majority (21.4%), followed by the players under HAT (18.8%), and 12.8% for TTGA as stated in Figure 3.

Level of Awareness on the Tanzania Royal Tour Film

Figure 3 shows that 68% of the tourism stakeholders are aware of the Tanzania Royal Tour Film while 49% are not. This implies that there is a reasonable level of awareness among the key tourism stakeholders in regards to Tanzania's Royal Tour Film.

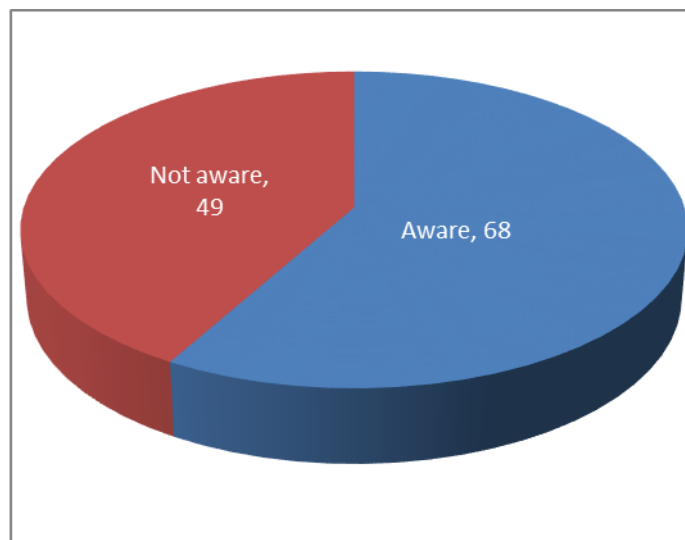


Figure 3. Percentage Distribution of the Level of Awareness on the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film

Level of Awareness by Sub-Sector

The study reveals that the level of awareness by tourism subsector was relatively high for TATO and ZATI (each 12.0%), followed by TTGA (10.3%) and HAT (9.4%) constituents. This is probably due to their level of organization and the way they operate, especially in terms of communication among their members. However, the study established that the level of unawareness on issues related to the Royal Tour Film among the tourism players was high on side of the Local Government Authorities (LGAs) (14.5%), followed by HAT (13.7%), other actors (12.8%) and CSOs (12.0%). This implies that there is a need to raise awareness among tourism stakeholders on the Royal Tour Film particularly among the LGAs, HAT, other tourism players (such as food & beverage operators, art & crafts, etc), and CSOs in Tanzania and beyond (Figure 4).

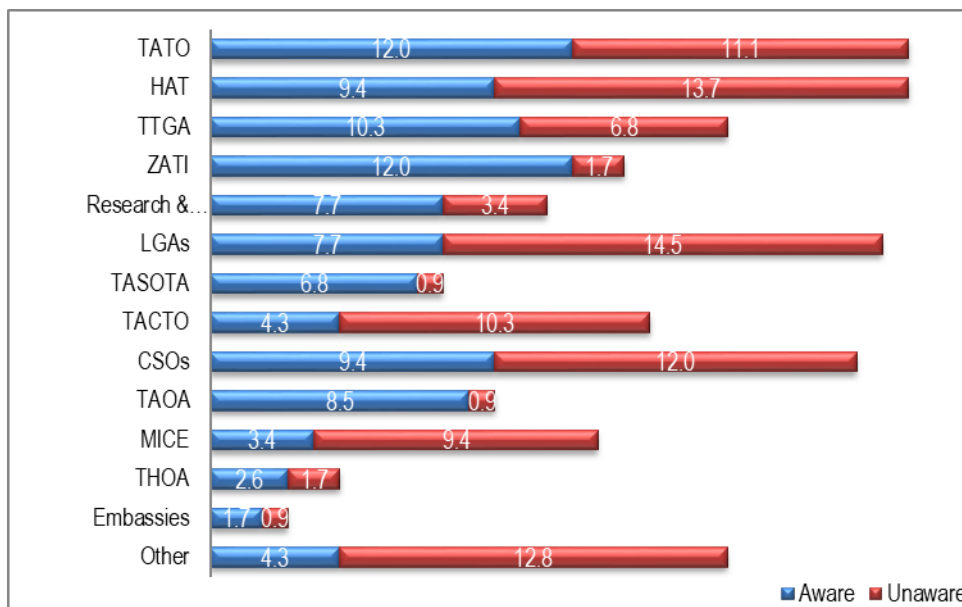


Figure 4. Percentage Distribution on the Level of Awareness on the Tanzania Royal Tour Film by Sub-sector

Level of Preparedness for Handling Tourists

Analysis by level of preparedness among key tourism players for handling tourists as a result of the Tanzania Royal Tour Film is presented in Figure 5. Accordingly, ZATI (16.2%) demonstrated high level of being prepared followed by TATO (14.5%), and TAOA (12.8%). On the other hand, LGAs (16.2%) indicated low level of preparedness followed by other tourism players (13.7%) and TATO (12.8) members. Generally, the study findings imply that the majority of the key tourism players in the country have low level of preparedness for handling large numbers of tourists, if the situation is left unattended.

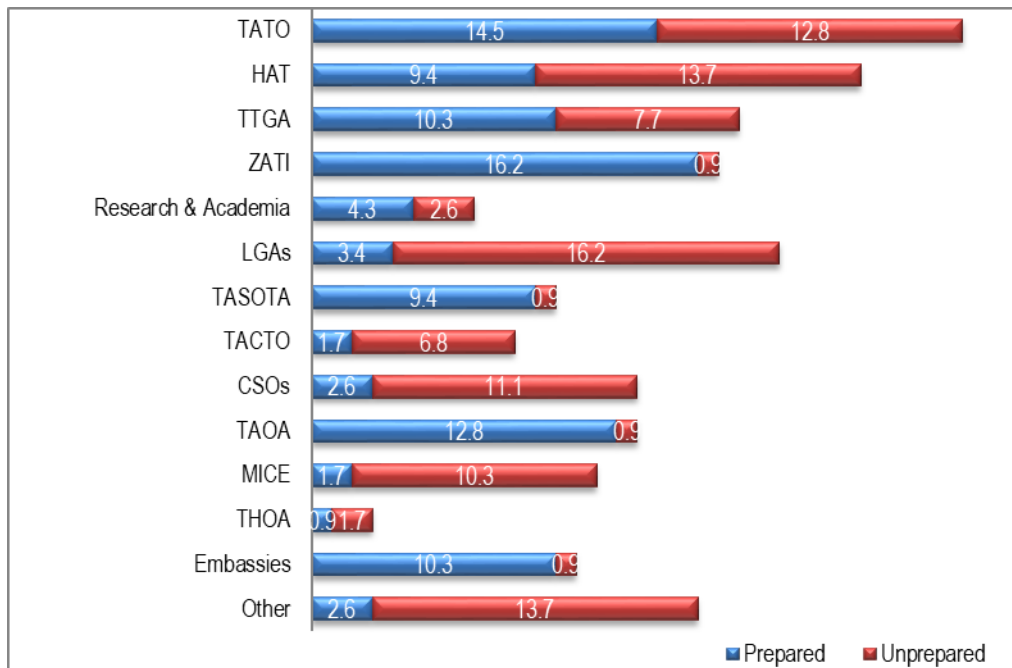


Figure 5. Percentage Distribution on the Level of Preparedness among Tourism Players

Capacity Building on Tourism and Hospitality Issues

Analysis of capacity building by tourism players show that TAOA (each 72.0%) were the most trained stakeholders followed by TASOTA (17.6%) and CSOs (15.8%). On the part of those tourism players, which have not had training on tourism and hospitality issues, included LGAs (68.2%), embassies (60.0%), and TTGA (55.0%), among others. Furthermore, THOA (57.1%), HAT (40.7%), and TATO (40.0%) indicated that they have had partial training on tourism and hospitality issues in the past (Figure 6). The findings suggest that there is a need for training on tourism and hospitality aspects among tourism players in order to strengthen their capacities for providing best services to the visitors in Tanzania.

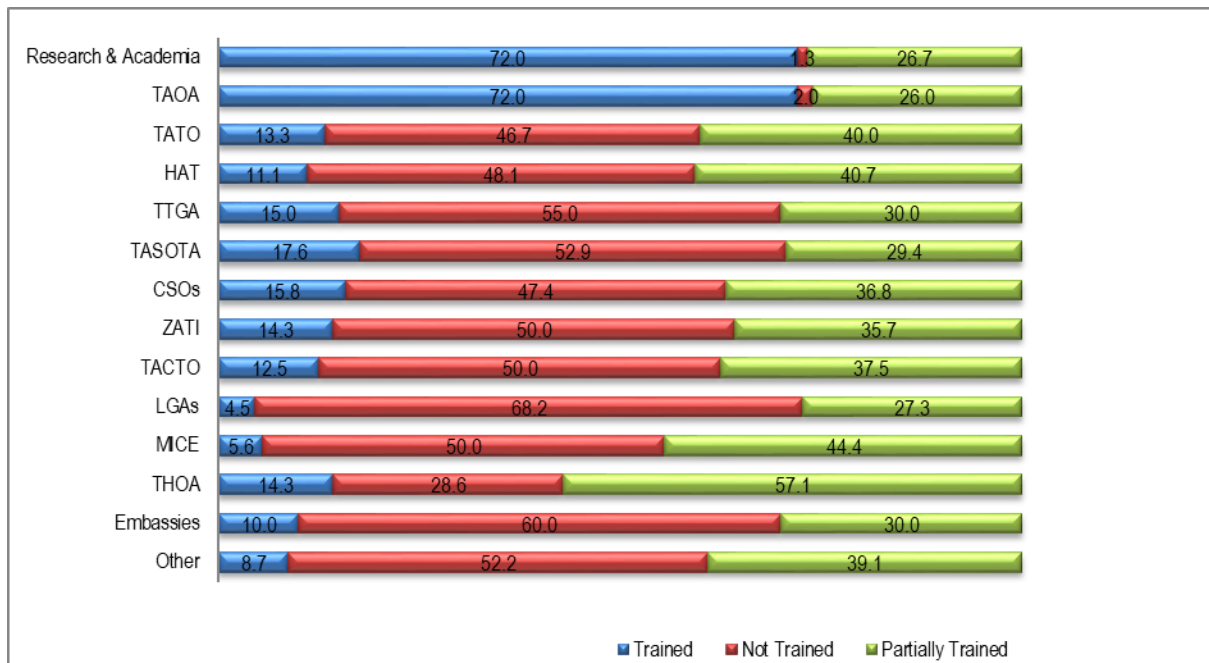


Figure 6. Percentage distribution of capacity building among tourism players

Proposed Model for Scaling up Tanzania’s Royal Tour Film

Given that the Tanzania’s Royal Tour Film is the first initiative of its kind in the Tourism Sector in the history of Tanzania, therefore, efforts for scaling it up should be well planned by the tourism and hospitality professionals. This study finds a need for allocation of resources and establishing a department at MNRT solely for ensuring that the Tanzania Royal Tour Film becomes a success. All existing and future projects and programs of the same nature and scope may subscribe to the same department. Currently, Tanzania lacks such an entity that is exclusively responsible for the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and coordination of programs at the national and international levels. From a scholarly level with empirical evidence, this recommendation is similar to past studies such as the study by Mkwizu (2018) conducted in Tanzania which had recommended and advocated for the establishment of a TV channel dedicated to tourism. Therefore, a similar approach may apply in establishing a department within MNRT to the effect in reference to the Tanzania Royal Tour Film. Among the other objectives of the proposed unit/department will be mobilization of resources.

Tourism Players with Policy and Legal Awareness

Figure 8 presents the level of awareness on tourism policy and legal issues among tourism players in the country. Accordingly, Research and Academia (64.0%) members seem to have high level of legal and policy awareness, followed by TAOA (52.0%), and HAT (29.6%)

constituents. Tourism players without adequate tourism policy and legal awareness included embassies (60.0%), TTGA (55.0%) and LGAs (54.5%). Furthermore, a number of the tourism players stated they do have partial awareness on tourism policy and legal issues. These included; THOA (57.1%), MICE (44.4%), and LGAs (40.9%). The findings demonstrate the need for awareness campaigns on legal and policy issues for the tourism players in the country.

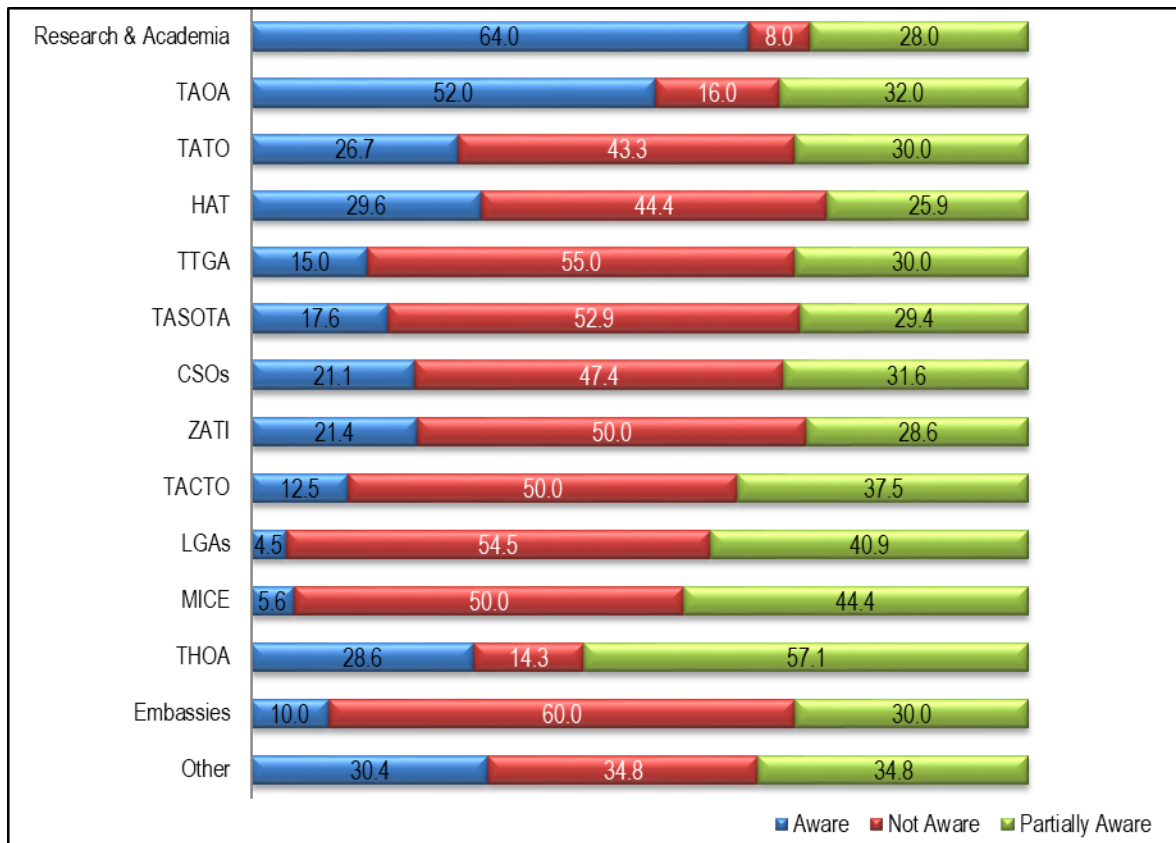


Figure 7. Percentage distribution of Tourism Players by Policy and Legal Awareness

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study presents status of awareness and preparedness among the key tourism stakeholders following the release of Tanzania’s Royal Tour Film in the U.S and in Tanzania in April and May 2022, respectively. The film aims to promote Tanzania’s tourism attractions and investment potentials across the world. Given the visitors arrivals records since the launch of the Film, and the empirical evidence, no doubt show that visitors’ records will significantly continue to increase. However, this study notes that there is inadequate awareness of the expected impact of the Tanzania Royal Tour Film among the tourism players, leading to lack

of preparedness for receiving, hosting and handling massive numbers of tourists in the country. The study also found that majority of the tourism players face serious capacity issues, especially in managing large numbers of visitors, especially international tourists. Furthermore, it has been established that the majority of tourism players have little understanding of the legal and policy issues governing tourism and hospitality services in the country. In view of these findings, there is need for the government in collaboration with the private sector, and other tourism stakeholders to jointly work together to mitigate these gaps in order to ensure Tanzania maintains its reputation as one of the mostly visited tourism destinations in the world. In light of the findings, this study recommends the following:

Developing a Comprehensive Strategy for the Promotion of the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film

In order to successfully promote the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film, there is a need for developing a comprehensive strategy in two (2) consecutive phases of five (5) years each starting from July 2022-July 2027 (Phase 1), and July 2027 to July 2032 (Phase II). The envisaged Tanzania Royal Tour Film Strategy will provide a general direction set for this initiative and its subsequent components to ensure Tanzania destination receives 5,000,000 tourists by 2026, and 10,000,000 tourists by 2030; so as to enjoy the outcomes of the film such as attracting more foreign investments from across the SADC, the entire African region and from the outside of Africa..

Promoting Tanzania's Tourism attractions in Domestic and Non-Domestic Tourist Sources

The Tanzania's Royal Tour Film was launched in the USA and Tanzania. There is a need to promote Tanzania's tourism attractions in traditional and non-traditional tourist source countries, especially China, South Africa, United Kingdom, Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Italy, Israel, Turkey, Germany, Russia, South Korea and Japan. It is therefore recommended that Tanzanians should be well positioned to carry out promotion of the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film.

Engagement of Competent and Experienced Tanzanian Tourism Professionals

Existing competent and experienced tourism professionals in Tanzanian Public Service and even those from the private sector that are scholarly and professionally competent need to be transferred to the President's Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East Africa Cooperation for coordination and implementation of the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film initiatives. In addition, there is a need for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the East African

Cooperation to recruit tourism professionals and place them at the strategic Tanzanian Embassies and consulates as Tourism Attachés. The Tourism Attachés will be solely responsible for promoting tourism and investment potentials, especially the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film in countries under representation.

Allocation of Adequate Resources

The implementation of the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film requires adequate resources, especially the financial resources. Its implementation should be done in two consecutive phases of five (5) years each, starting from July 2022-July 2027 (Phase I), and July 2027 to July 2032 (Phase II). Apart from the government subventions, the financial resources may be outsourced from the private sector, voluntary contributions, and bilateral and multilateral donor agencies. Also, financial resources may be raised through fundraising on various events.

Promotion of Other Tanzania's Tourism Attractions and Investment Potentials

Tanzania has abundant natural and cultural tourism attractions and investment potentials which were not featured in the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film. There is a need for ensuring that all key natural and cultural tourism attractions and investment potentials in the country are included in the Tanzania's Royal Tour film promotion strategy. This requires multisectoral engagement where various sectors across the country will be engaged in the process.

Awareness on the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film

The Tanzania's Royal Tour Film if well promoted across the world will significantly increase the numbers of international tourist arrivals in the country. However, due to the existing poor coordination and collaboration among the tourism players, there are chances that the inbound tourists may not get the chance to see all of what has been featured in the Royal Tour film. Also, despite the government's sustained fight against corruption among government officials, there are still few unethical individuals who may derail the investors interested to bring their capitals to Tanzania. In light of this, there is a need to raise awareness among the key tourism stakeholders in the country on the expected outcomes of the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is an essential component to be included in this program. Through this process, the Government will be able to collect, analyze data, and determine if the envisaged Unit/Department is fulfilling its goals. Monitoring should be continuous throughout the program and evaluation should be conducted twice, particularly after

completion of Phase I and Phase II. Monitoring and Evaluation will help to assess how well the program performed in Phase I and Phase II and hence, to see if there would be any improvements to be made on the program across different phases of implementation.

Practical Implications

Tourism stakeholders, especially the private sector, CSOs, NGOs, government, and the general public should join hands in ensuring that the positive outcomes of the Tanzania's Royal Tour Film are beneficial not only to the economy, but also to the host community, and the environment. Similarly, the parties should be in position to mitigate all negative outcomes which may arise as a result of the film.

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