

THE FACTORS HINDERING THE PERFORMANCE OF TOUR OPERATIONS IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN RWANDA: A CASE STUDY OF PRIMATE SAFARIS
IN KIGALI, RWANDA

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at exploring the factors hindering the performance of tour operators in the development of tourism in Kigali city, Rwanda. The study was guided by three objectives namely: to identify the various activities performed by tour operators in the development of tourism in Kigali city; to establish the challenges affecting the performance of tour operators in the development of tourism in Kigali city; and to suggest possible measures to address the challenges affecting the performance of tour operators in the development of tourism in Kigali city, Rwanda. The study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The researcher used the questionnaire, interview guides and observation checklists to collect primary data from the field. Both simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select a total of 50 respondents for the study. Data was analyzed using excel, a Microsoft based computer statistical package.

The study findings revealed that the majority of respondents (98%) were aware of the various activities performed by tour operators in the development of tourism in Kigali City. Among them included transportation of tourists in their business of tour, travel and safaris from one destination to the other and issuing of booking tickets and permits to the tourists in the development of tourism in Kigali City. The study results also indicated that all the 100% of the respondents were aware of the challenges affecting the performance of tour operators in the development of tourism in Kigali city. Among the challenges included high taxation by the government that hindered the work of tourism and poor customer care skills that affected the performance of tour operators in development of tourism in Kigali city in that it hindered the modes of attraction and retainability of the tourist in the study area.

Basing on the study findings, it was concluded that the majority of the respondents (94%) were aware of the measures in place for to address the challenges affecting the performance of tour operators in the study area. Among the measures that were in place included better road networks, hotels and resorts among others and good customer care and hospitality that attracted and retained tourist into the country especially in the study area. The study was further concluded by requesting respondents to suggest possible measures to address the challenges affecting the performance of tour operators in the development of tourism in Kigali city Rwanda whereby conservation of the abundant resources and preservation of fragile ecosystems and the need to recruit multi-linguistic staff among the tour operators in order to meet the demands of tourists with different languages were suggested.

Basing on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended that the administrative hierarchy in the tourism industry has some unnecessary protocols which act as obstacles in dealing with issues of tour operators which require immediate solutions also the government should establish some incentive programs to assist tour operators in their business operations, among others.