THE EFFECTS OF MARKETING MIX ON TOURISTS' CHOICE OF DESTINATION: A CASE STUDY OF UDZUNGWA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK IN TANZANIA

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF TOURISM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT (MTPM)
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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend this work for acceptance by The Open University of Tanzania a dissertation entitled: **The effects of marketing mix on tourists' choice of destination**: **A case study of Udzungwa Mountains National Park in Tanzania** as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Tourism Planning and Management (MTPM).

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DECLARATION

I **Richard Askwar,** declare that the work presented in this dissertation is original. It has never been presented to any other University or Institution. Where other people's works have been used, references have been provided. It is in this regard that I declare this work as originally mine. It is hereby presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Tourism Planning and Management of the Open University of Tanzania.

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Signature

………………………

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely wife Flora, sons Reinhard, Reagan Joshua, and Ryan; and my daughter Peace as well as my nephew Denis for their moral strength during this long academic journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of marketing mix elements on the customer's choice of destination using a case study of Udzungwa Mountain National Park in Tanzania. The study addressed four specific objectives, namely; to identify the key product attributes within the marketing mix that influenced tourists' choice of (UMNP), to determine the extent to which price affects tourists' decision-making process when selecting (UMNP) as a destination, to evaluate the impact of location and accessibility on the attractiveness of (UMNP), and to measure the effectiveness of various promotion strategies in enhancing the appeal of (UMNP) to potential tourists. Porter's five forces theory was adopted to guide the study variables. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design using questionnaires and interviews. The sample size of 110 tourists and 14 key informants participated in the study. The results showed that promotional campaigns and accommodation exceeded expectations (50% and 48%, respectively). Interview participants viewed the promotions as lagging. The destination's attractiveness was primarily driven by the unique and diverse attractions in UMNP, as well as the safety and security of the area. Price and sustainability practices were the least factors influencing travelers' choice of destination. The study recommends an improvement and promotion of (UMNP) unique natural and cultural attractions and making information about the destination easily accessible through online platforms, travel agencies, and partnerships with tour operators by utilizing a mix of traditional and digital marketing channels.

Key words: *Marketing Mix, Tourism choice, Tourism Destination, Udzungwa Mountains National Park*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ACC	: Assistant Conservation Commissioner
ANAPA	: Arusha National Park
AAI	: Awesome Africa Initiative
AM	: Association Mazingira
BBC	: British Broadcasting Company
COSTECH	: Commission for Science and Technology
CTC	**:** Travel Track Company
CPA	: Competitive Position Analysis
EAMCEF	: Eastern Arch Mountains Conservation Endowments Funds
GDP	: Gross Domestic Products
ITV	: Independent Television
IDA	: Index of destination attractiveness
KNR	: Kilombero Nature Reserve
MTPM	: Master of Tourism Planning and Management
MNRT	: Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism
MEM	: Moshi Expedition and Mountaineering
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
NCA	: Ngorongoro Conservation Area
PCO	**:** Principal Conservation Officer
PGT	: Pamoja Green Tanzania
RA	: Reforest Africa
REGROW	: Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and Growth
SACC	: Senior Assistant Conservation Commissioner

STO   : Senior Tourism Officer

SUA   : Sokoine University of Agriculture

SPSS   : Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

SEO   : Search Engine Optimization

SDI   : Sustainable Destination Image

TTB   : Tanzania Tourism Board

TSC   : Tanzania Safari Channel

TBC   : Tanzania Broadcasting Company

TAZARA   : Tanzania Zambia Railway

TAWIRI   **:** Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute

TFS   : Tanzania Forests Services

TANESCO   **:** Tanzania Electric Supply Company

TANAPA   : Tanzania National Parks Authority

UNWTO   **:** United Nation World Tourism Organization

UCOBAT   : Udzungwa Community Based Tourism Network

UMNP   : Udzungwa Mountain National Park

UOI   : University of Iringa

UEMC   **:** Udzungwa Ecological Monitoring Centre

UGC   : User-Generated Content

USAID   : United State Agency for International Development

USD   : United State Dollars

USP   : Unique Selling Point

VAT   : Value Added Tax

WTTC   : World Travel and Tourism Council

WWF   : Worldwide Funds

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   An Overview of the Chapter

This chapter provides an overview of the background information and a problem statement. It also outlines the research objectives and questions, as well as the significance, scope, and limitations of the study.

1.2 Background to the Study

The tourism industry is a powerful driver of economic growth, capable of creating jobs, launching new businesses, and improving a country's social infrastructure. Simultaneously, it serves to combat poverty (Kassim, 2020). Many of the world's top tourist destinations rely heavily on tourism as a source of foreign exchange, job creation, and infrastructure enhancement (UNWTO, 2015). For instance, in 2022, the travel and tourism industry contributed 7.6% of global GDP and created 22 million new jobs, marking a 7.9% increase from 2021 globally. Additionally, international visitor spending surged by 81.9% in 2022, compared to a 40.9% increase in 2019 (WTTC, 2022).

A tourist's decision to visit a certain destination is influenced by several factors, including: - accessibility, visit timing, cost, available facilities, ecological aspirations, and opportunities for knowledge gathering (Lyngdoh *et al.,* 2017). According to Akama and Kieti (2003) and Tyrvainen *et al.* (2014), there are seven dimensions for measuring visitors' satisfaction namely: assurance, price, tangibles, dependability, empathy, perceived value, and responsibility. Furthermore, other

attributes are such as simple access, comfortable facilities for senior and disadvantaged tourists, and conservation activities are also significant in destination selection (Tyrvainen *et al.,* 2014; Ardoin *et al.,* 2015).

Marketing mix elements, including price, place (location), products or services, physical (tangible) evidence, people, processes, and promotions, play a significant role in influencing travelers' destination selection through destination marketing planning (Jani & Minde, 2017; Seyidov & Adomaitien, 2016; Rahman *et al.,* 2019). Destinations with favorable perceptions are more likely to be considered in travelers' decision-making processes (Hossain & Khan, 2018). However, one of the primary challenges consumers face when selecting a destination is making a product selection and avoiding cognitive dissonance (Relifra & Wardi, 2022).

Tourism destinations in developed countries like France, Spain, Britain, and Turkey have adopted marketing strategies built on public sector policy, information technology, and new media to promote their destinations (Le & Le, 2020). In the African context, Rwanda has linked the success of its destination marketing to the country's blueprint for high-end products such as gorilla tourism (Rwanda Developed Board, 2021). Kenya's destination marketing is anchored on the international marketing strategy known as "Magical Kenya," which has successfully promoted its destinations in international markets (Ndegwa, 2021). Egypt has utilized smart marketing methods, including all digital marketing tools (Internet, social networks, mobile, augmented reality, wearable technology-virtual reality), which have proven successful (Abdel & Khalf, 2019). Digital promotions have also been effective in

promoting destinations in South Africa. Botswana and Namibia during the post-COVID-19 era (Kavita & Saarinen, 2016; Leechor, 2017; Moodley & Naidoo, 2022).

As a tourism destination, Tanzania is endowed with natural, cultural, and manmade resources (Mariki *et al.,* 2011). Despite abundant tourism resources such as wildlife, landscapes, natural heritage, and cultural history, the country has not fully utilized its tourism potentiality. The country continues to receive low income from tourism due to insufficient or inappropriate marketing strategies (Wamboye *et al.,* 2020). Despite being an attractive tourist destination, Mkwizu (2019) highlighted that Tanzania still lags far behind regional competitors such as Kenya, Egypt, South Africa, and Botswana.

Understanding the destination marketing mix and the factors influencing destination choices at Udzungwa Mountains National Park is crucial in achieving high tourist flow and satisfaction. In this study, Michael Porter's Five Forces model is used to analyze the competitive environment of the tourism industry at Udzungwa Mountains National Park. The Five Forces model contains five components: competitive rivalry, threats of new entrants, the power of suppliers, the bargaining power of customers, and the threats of substitutes. The competitive rivalry reflects the competition among existing tourism providers, while the threat of new entrants evaluates the ease with which the new competitors can enter the market. The bargaining power of suppliers illustrates the influence suppliers have over the tourism offerings and market, and the bargaining power of customers analyzes the power customers have in demanding better services or lower prices. Finally, the

substitutes' force helps to identify the risk of alternative activities or destinations that could attract potential visitors away from Udzungwa Mountains National Park. This theoretical framework has helped to understand the market dynamics and strategic positioning of Udzungwa Mountains National Park within the broader tourism industry.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

Although Tanzania is one of the top travel destinations in sub-Saharan Africa, it lags behind regional competitors like Kenya, Botswana, and South Africa (Mkwizu, 2019). Ineffective marketing strategies, unreasonable prices for services and facilities, and unskilled staff in international markets contribute to this poor performance (Safari *et al.,* 2015). Furthermore, tourism destinations in Tanzania's northern circuit attract more visitors yearly than those in the southern part, including Udzungwa Mountains National Park (Wamboye *et al.,* 2020). Even though the southern tourist circuit is home to several natural, cultural, and historical sites, most of these attractions are not well known to potential domestic and international visitors. This makes them being infrequently visited for amusement and education (Nyamweno *et al.,* 2016).

Several studies have demonstrated issues related to tourist marketing performance and the roles of tourism in development, as well as tourists' choice attributes for visiting destinations (Lyngdoh *et al.,* 2017; Akama & Kieti, 2003; Tyrväinen *et al.,* 2014). Other studies have focused on the impacts of knowledge on tourists' destination choices and satisfaction (Prebensen *et al.,* 2014), the substantial

correlation between Tanzanian niche tourism industry competitiveness and marketing mix tactics, strategies to promote destination image, and increase visitor satisfaction (Komppula, 2016; Chengula, 2013; Kwok *et al.,* 2020; Setiawan *et al.,* 2021). There is broad scholarly acceptance that the marketing mix directly affects destination choice performance (Mayer *et al.,* 2021). In Udzungwa Mountains National Park, the ideal attraction has not been achieved, and the destination continues to attract few tourists. Compared to destinations such as Serengeti and Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA), which receive significantly high numbers of tourists annually, Udzungwa Mountains National Park attracts a low volume. It is unclear whether this is due to inappropriate or underdeveloped marketing mix elements. To the best of this researcher's knowledge, no studies in Tanzania have investigated the effects of the marketing mix on tourists' destination choices. This study therefore aimed to fill both theoretical and contextual gaps.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General Objective

To assess the effects of marketing mix elements on tourists' choice of destination, a case of Udzungwa Mountains National Park in Tanzania.

1.4.2 Specific Research Objectives

   i. To identify the impacts of the product attributes of the marketing mix on tourists' choice of Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

   ii. To determine the influence of price on the decision-making process of tourists selecting Udzungwa Mountains National Park as a destination.

iii.	To evaluate the role of place (location and accessibility) in determining the attractiveness of Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

iv.	To measure the effectiveness of promotion strategies in enhancing the appeal of Udzungwa Mountains National Park to potential tourists.

1.5 Research Questions

i. How do product attributes of the marketing mix affect tourists' choice of Udzungwa Mountains National Park?

ii. How does price affect the decision-making process of tourists selecting Udzungwa Mountains National Park as a destination?

iii. What are the roles of the element of place (location and accessibility) in determining the attractiveness of Udzungwa Mountains National Park?

iv. How does the effectiveness of promotion strategies enhance the appeal of Udzungwa Mountains National Park to potential tourists?

1.6 Significance of the Study

From a theoretical point of view this study might extend the marketing mix model by using the strength and positioning of Udzungwa Mountains National Park tourism. Furthermore, it might strengthen the theoretical foundation of the relationship between attributes of the marketing mix and choice of a tourist destination and the perceived value of quality of products in measuring tourist perception. In the perspective of tourism, this study remains one of the fewest studies conducted in the East African region that analyzes the significance of marketing mix in selecting a tourist destination. Thus, the findings might aid in increasing the number of visitors

to the southern circuit, Udzungwa Mountains National Park. Also, it will facilitate the development of the project areas and boost revenue returns. And from a policy standpoint, the findings of this study might assist policymakers in devising marketing mix development initiatives that facilitate the development of the southern tourism circuit in Tanzania.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter discussed the study's context, the research problem, the research objectives, and the justification for the study. The second chapter comprises a review of the theoretical and empirical literature. In addition, conceptual and theoretical frameworks and research gaps are presented in this chapter. Chapter three discusses the applied research methodology. The fourth chapter presents the study's findings and their discussion, while the fifth chapter contains the conclusion, study implications, and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This section provides theoretical and empirical literature with a view to providing an in-depth account of research gaps. The section provides conceptual definitions, underlying theories, and an overview of relevant empirical research. In the end, a summary of research gaps is provided.

2.2 Definition of Key Terms

2.2.1 Tourism

UNWTO (2005) defined tourism as the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes. Goeldner and Ritchie (2006) define tourism as the processes, activities, and outcomes arising from the relationships and interactions among tourists, tourism suppliers, host governments, host communities, and surrounding environments involved in attracting and hosting visitors. Above, Smith (1988) describes tourism as a temporary, voluntary movement of people to destinations outside their usual places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs.

The definition by UNWTO (2005) is the most suitable for this study as it is concise and encompasses various purposes of travel, making it relevant to the diverse nature of tourism activities.

2.2.2 Tourist Destination

UNWTO (2019) defined a tourist destination as a physical space that includes tourism products such as support services, attractions, and resources. Leiper (1990) defines a tourist destination as a geographical area within the distance a tourist is willing to travel that provides sufficient attractions to prompt an overnight stay. Cooper *et al.* (2008) define a tourist destination as a place that attracts visitors due to its inherent or exhibited natural or cultural value, historical significance, leisure amenities, or entertainment opportunities. The UNWTO (2019) definition is chosen for its comprehensive inclusion of tourism products, services, and resources, aligning well with the scope of this study on marketing strategies.

2.2.3 Marketing Mix

UNWTO (2019) defined marketing mix as marketing variables that consist of the 7Ps: price, product, process, physical evidence, people, promotion, and place. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) describe the marketing mix as the set of controllable, tactical marketing tools - product, price, place, and promotion - that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market. Borden (1964) introduced the marketing mix concept, initially focusing on the 4Ps: product, price, place, and promotion. The UNWTO (2019) definition is most appropriate for this study as it incorporates the 7Ps, offering a more detailed and contemporary perspective relevant to modern marketing strategies.

2.2.4 Perceived Value

UNWTO (2005) defined perceived value as the subjective assessment of customers

regarding the worth or benefits they expect from a product, service, or brand. Zeithaml (1988): Defines perceived value as the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given. Woodruff (1997) describes perceived value as a customer's perceived preference for and evaluation of those product attributes, attribute performances, and consequences arising from use that facilitate achieving the customer's goals and purposes in use situations. The Zeithaml's (1988) definition is chosen as it clearly outlines the balance between what is received and what is given, aligning with this study's assessment of marketing mix elements.

2.2.5 Marketing Strategy

UNWTO (2005): refers to a comprehensive plan or approach designed to promote a product, service, or brand to a target audience to achieve specific marketing objectives. Kotler (2001) describes marketing strategy as the marketing logic by which the business unit hopes to achieve its objectives, involving decisions on the market position and the marketing mix. Porter (1980) defines marketing strategy as the broad formula for how a business will compete, what its goals should be, and what policies will be needed to carry out those goals. Kotler's definition (2001) is most appropriate as it aligns well with the broader strategic goals and specific objectives examined in this study.

2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

2.2.1 Porter's Five Forces

Michael Porter established Porter's Five Forces, also known as the Competitive Position Analysis Theory (CPA), in 1979. This framework assesses a sector's

attractiveness and competitive dynamics, helping businesses understand their competitive standing in the market by evaluating factors that affect profitability within a specific industry. The CPA is predicated on five factors: a destination's competitive intensity and appeal, forces, and supplier strength, which is the power of suppliers to drive up prices. Buyer Bargaining Position: The influence customers have on pricing and quality. Rivalry Between Similar Items: The intensity of competition among existing firms. Threat of Substitution: The likelihood of customers finding alternative products or services. The potential of new entrants: the ease with which new competitors can enter the market. These forces significantly affect a company's brand and promotional efforts. The theory is applicable for understanding the factors in a specific industry, making informed decisions regarding market entry, capacity increase, and developing competitive strategies.

Relevance of the theory to the study

In the context of Udzungwa Mountains National Park, the application of Porter's Five Forces helps in understanding the effect of the marketing mix on tourists' choices of destination. The integration of Porter's Five Forces with the marketing mix (4Ps: product, price, place, and promotion) provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating Udzungwa Mountains National Park competitive position and developing strategies to enhance its appeal to tourists. This approach addresses external competitive forces and internal marketing strategies, ensuring a holistic understanding of the factors influencing tourists' destination choices. The five forces outlined in the theory is linked to the marketing mix elements that were investigated in this study. These five forces are:

Competitive Rivalry: Helps to analyze the intensity of competition Udzungwa Mountains National Park faces from other tourist destinations within Tanzania and the region. By assessing the promotional strategies and market positioning of competitors like Serengeti and Ngorongoro, we can identify how Udzungwa Mountains National Park can differentiate itself and attract more tourists. Threat of New Entrants: Evaluate the potential for new tourist destinations to emerge within the region. Understanding UMNP's product attributes, such as its unique wildlife and cultural heritage, helps create barriers to entry for new destinations by emphasizing what makes Udzungwa Mountains National Park stand out.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers: Assess the influence of suppliers (e.g., tour operators, accommodation providers, and local businesses) on UMNP's marketing strategies and tourist offerings. This involves analyzing how place (accessibility and infrastructure) and supplier partnerships can enhance UMNP's attractiveness. Bargaining Power of Customers: Understand tourists' power in choosing their destinations. By examining price sensitivity and perceived value, we can tailor UMNP's pricing strategy to meet tourists' expectations and enhance their satisfaction.

Threat of Substitutes: identify alternative activities or destinations that could attract potential visitors away from Udzungwa Mountains National Park. By analyzing the product and highlighting UMNP's distinctive attractions and experiences, we can develop unique selling points and targeted marketing campaigns.

Limitations of Porter's Five Forces Theory

The theory has some limitations. These are: limited scope, static nature, and short-term focus. The model provides a snapshot of the industry at a specific time, neglecting the dynamic nature of markets. This static approach can be problematic in fast-changing industries where trends and competitor behaviors can evolve quickly. Furthermore, the framework considers external factors impacting an industry's attractiveness, neglecting internal company analysis and specific competitive advantages or disadvantages. The model's findings are also primarily relevant in the short term, given its limited consideration of long-term trends and disruptive forces. By addressing these limitations and integrating Porter's Five Forces with the marketing mix, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of UMNP's market dynamics and develop effective strategies to enhance its attractiveness and competitive edge in the tourism industry.

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

2.3.1 The Attributes of the Marketing Mix that Affect the Choice of a

Destination

Kwok *et al.* (2020) conducted an extensive analysis of evaluations left by American tourists on Airbnb using supervised machine learning to understand how the 7 Ps of marketing apply to the home-sharing industry. The study involved a substantial sample size, focusing on textual data analysis to classify reviews into predefined categories. The key findings highlighted that tourist frequently discussed the service's product, tangible evidence, pricing, and advertising, which were crucial in their decision-making process. This research is particularly relevant to our current

study on Udzungwa Mountains National Park as it emphasizes the importance of specific marketing mix elements in influencing tourists' choices. By drawing parallels between the home-sharing industry and tourism destinations, we can infer that the product quality, pricing strategies, and promotional efforts at Udzungwa Mountains National Park are likely to have a significant impact on attracting tourists. Additionally, employing similar analytical methods, such as supervised machine learning, can enhance our understanding of tourists' perceptions and preferences based on their reviews and feedback about Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

Hasan and Islam (2020) conducted research in the Cumilla District of Bangladesh to determine the impact of diverse marketing strategies on tourist satisfaction. The study involved 300 tourists and utilized a quantitative survey-based design with structured questionnaires as the primary data collection tool. Regression analysis revealed that tourists were more satisfied when exposed to a diverse range of marketing strategies. Five of the seven marketing mix variables positively influenced tourists' destination choice and satisfaction, although there was dissatisfaction with Cumilla's promotional efforts and tourism process. These findings inform the current research by demonstrating the link between diverse marketing strategies and tourist satisfaction, and by assessing the impact of each marketing mix element on tourists visiting Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

Antoni *et al.* (2020) investigated the effects of the marketing mix on tourists' decisions in Mandeh Island, West Sumatra. Although the sample size was not specified, the study utilized a survey-based design with structured questionnaires to

collect primary data. Regression analysis revealed that promotion, product, price, site, people, and process variables had positive and significant effects on tourists' decisions to visit Mandeh Island. This study highlights the comprehensive role of the marketing mix in shaping tourists' choices, which is applicable to evaluating the marketing mix elements' impact on tourists' decisions to visit UMNP.

2.3.2 The Effect of Competitiveness and Attractiveness in Determining a Destination

Sadq *et al*. (2019) conducted a descriptive analytical study on the impact of tourism marketing in enhancing competitive capabilities in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. The study involved 200 tourists, utilizing surveys and structured interviews to collect primary data. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis indicated that tourism marketing significantly enhances a destination's competitive capabilities by raising awareness of tourism products. This study underscores the role of tourism marketing in improving competitiveness and provides insights into enhancing UMNP's competitive edge.

Krei and Prebac (2011) conducted a correlation study with 4,915 travelers across six locations in Croatia to examine the Index of Destination Attractiveness. Using surveys to collect primary data, the study employed correlation analysis to identify relationships between destination attractiveness and competitiveness. The findings demonstrated a strong relationship between these concepts, with natural elements, destination aesthetics, and marketing being crucial draw factors. These insights are valuable for assessing UMNP's competitiveness and attractiveness.

2.3.3 The Effect of Perceived Value on Quality of Products in Measuring

Perception

Jeong and Kim (2020) studied sport tourists' perspectives on event quality, destination image, perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty. The study involved 500 respondents and used a quantitative survey design with structured questionnaires to collect primary data. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) revealed significant impacts between event quality, destination image, perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty, with satisfaction mediating the relationship between perceived value and loyalty. These findings underscore the importance of perceived value in enhancing tourist satisfaction at UMNP.

Fang *et al.* (2016) explored the concept of perceived value, distinguishing between process value and outcome value, and its influence on repeat purchases. The study involved 300 online shoppers and utilized a quantitative survey design with online questionnaires to collect primary data. Regression analysis showed that age and gender moderate the relationships between product and service quality and perceived value. This study highlights how perceived value affects tourists' destination choices and satisfaction, providing insights for UMNP.

2.3.4 Effect of Marketing Strategies on Customer Choice of Destinations

Kamau *et al.* (2015) examined the influence of the distribution of tourism products and services on tourists' choices in Nairobi and Nakuru cities in Kenya. The study involved 400 respondents and used a quantitative analysis approach with structured questionnaires as the data collection tool. Descriptive statistics and regression

analysis revealed that the term 'place' significantly influences tourists' desire to visit a destination. This study highlights the importance of place in attracting tourists to UMNP.

Almeida-Santana and Moreno-Gil (2019) conducted a comprehensive analysis of tourists from 18 European countries using computer-assisted web interviews, sampling 28,947 tourists. The study used a cross-sectional design and binomial logit analysis to determine that destination images, motivations, cultural background, and socio-demographic characteristics are crucial in shaping the perception of a sustainable destination image (SDI). These findings are valuable in understanding how marketing strategies influence tourists' choices and preferences for UMNP.

2.4 Research Gap

The studies by Kwok *et al.* (2020), Hasan and Islam (2020), and Antoni *et al.* (2020) provide valuable insights into how the marketing mix influences tourist satisfaction and destination choice. However, these studies collectively highlight a key research gap: there is limited exploration of how specific elements of the marketing mix impact tourists' choice in unique, conservation-focused destinations like UMNP. While Kwok *et al.* applied machine learning to analyze marketing mix elements in home-sharing, the focus on service attributes such as "product" and "tangible evidence" lacks direct applicability to conservation areas with distinct ecological and cultural characteristics.

The studies by Sadq *et al*. (2019) and Krei and Prebac (2011) underscore the

importance of tourism marketing and destination attractiveness in enhancing competitiveness. However, a notable research gap exists in applying these findings to conservation-centered destinations, where natural preservation and community engagement play a critical role.

The studies by Jeong and Kim (2020) and Fang *et al.* (2016) highlight the critical role of perceived value in influencing tourist satisfaction and loyalty. However, a research gap remains regarding the application of these insights to ecotourism destinations like UMNP. Visitor satisfaction is influenced not only by traditional factors (e.g., event quality, destination image) but also by environmental and conservation considerations.

Kamau *et al*. (2015) and Almeida-Santana and Moreno Gil (2019) underscore the importance of distribution (place) and destination image in shaping tourist choices. However, neither study directly examines the nuanced interactions between distribution, sustainability perceptions, and destination marketing within a natural conservation area such as UMNP. Kamau *et al.* focus on urban centers, where distribution dynamics differ significantly from those in remote or ecotourism-focused destinations, while Almeida-Santana and Moreno Gil's findings emphasize European tourists' perceptions, potentially overlooking factors influencing tourists visiting African nature reserves.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework demonstrates the linkages between the independent

variables (marketing mix elements) and the dependent (tourist destination choice) variables. This study does not employ mediation effects, focusing on the direct relationship between the marketing mix and tourists' destination choices. In this framework, each marketing mix element (product, price, place, promotion) directly influences the choice of Udzungwa Mountains National Park as a tourist destination. This structure aligns with the specific objectives outlined in the study and reflects the elements discussed in the literature review

Marketing Mix Strategies
1. Product
2. Price
3. Place
4. Promotion

Choice of Tourist Destination
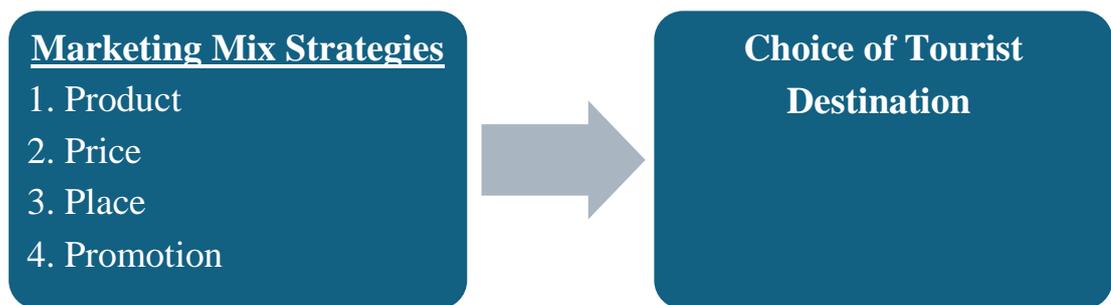
Figure 4.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Own conceptualization

2.6 Conceptual Framework Description

In understanding the effect of the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) on tourists' choices at Udzungwa Mountains National Park (UMNP), it was crucial to take into consideration the competitive environment as explained by Michael Porter's Five Forces while in literature review the integration of Porter's Five Forces and the marketing mix provided a comprehensive view of both internal and external factors influencing tourists' decisions. This review identified the competitive

forces and how they interacted with the marketing elements, thereby offering insights into how these elements were optimized to enhance tourist's choice at Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

Key Concepts and Variables:

Product Attributes: Unique features of Udzungwa Mountains National Park such as flora, fauna, and diverse activities are key in attracting tourists.

Price: The cost, including entrance fees and perceived value, played a crucial role in tourists' decision-making processes.

Place (Location and Accessibility): The Park's proximity to major cities, infrastructure quality, and connectivity are important for its attractiveness.

Promotion Strategies: Effective use of digital marketing, social media, and partnerships with travel agencies enhanced Udzungwa Mountains National Park visibility and appeal.

Tourist's Choice of Udzungwa Mountains National Park: This represents the decision influenced by the aforementioned factors.

Tourist Satisfaction: The ultimate goal, influenced by product, price, place, and promotion, reflecting tourists' overall experience and feedback.

Linking theoretical foundation to marketing mix:

Competitive Rivalry: The intensity of competition with other parks for instance parks located in the northern circuit are highly competitive (receives more tourists) as compared to the parks in southern circuit are less visited.

Threat of New Entrants: The potential for new parks or attractions entering the market.

Bargaining Power of Buyers: The influence of tourists on Udzungwa Mountains National Park pricing and offerings.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers: The power of those providing services to the park, like tour operators.

Threat of Substitutes: The availability of alternative destinations or activities.

The conceptual framework was grounded in the marketing mix (4Ps) and Michael Porter's Five Forces, which provided a robust foundation for analyzing both internal marketing efforts and external competitive pressures. This dual approach ensured a thorough understanding of the factors affecting tourists' choices.

Assumptions guiding conceptual framework:
- Tourists made rational decisions based on perceived value.
- Udzungwa Mountains National Park attractiveness is influenced by both the marketing mix and competitive forces.
- Data collection accurately reflected tourists' preferences and experiences.

The study focused on Udzungwa Mountains National Park in Tanzania, targeting domestic and international tourists, tour operators, travel agent, lectures in the Universities teaching tourism and park management. This context helped in understanding the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Udzungwa Mountains National Park in attracting tourists. Also incorporating Porter's Five

Forces with the marketing mix helped to understand how competitive pressures impact Udzungwa Mountains National Park marketing strategies and tourists' choices. This integrated approach provided insights into enhancing the park's attractiveness and competitiveness.

The framework aligned all elements to address the overall research problem, ensuring a comprehensive approach to understanding factors influencing tourists' choices and satisfaction at Udzungwa Mountains National Park. This alignment guaranteed that all components work together logically and effectively to support the study's objectives.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology part of the study. It discusses the procedures to be used while conducting the survey. It covers the research strategy, study population, study description, research design, sampling procedures and techniques, data methods, data analysis procedures, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design and philosophical orientation

3.2.1 Research design

This study adopted a cross-sectional research design for convenience and trend analysis. Cross-section design allows for the identification of patterns and correlations across variables. This design is particularly efficient for examining prevalence and demographic trends and is relatively time-efficient and cost-effective compared to longitudinal studies. In this design, the treatment or measurement of variables on the individuals selected is done only at one point in time without repetition. The researcher administered the questionnaire and interviews to selected participants at only one point in time and place.

3.2.2 Research Approach

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative methods. Mixed methods provide a comprehensive view of research problem by leveraging the strengths of both data types. Quantitative data delivers

measurable, generalizable results, offering statistical support and trend analysis, while qualitative data provides contextual depth and insights into participants' perspectives, enhancing understanding of underlying motivations and experiences Quantitative data was collected through structured questionnaires, while qualitative data was gathered using key informant interviews.

3.2.3 Philosophical Orientation of the Study

This study is rooted in the positivist philosophical orientation. Positivism emphasizes the use of the scientific method to obtain knowledge. It relies on observable, measurable facts and aims to produce objective, quantifiable data. This approach is particularly suitable for this study as it seeks to assess the effects of marketing mix elements on tourists' choice of destination through empirical data collection and statistical analysis. (Mbanaso, *at el* (2023).

3.3 Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in Udzungwa Mountains National Park (UMNP) in Tanzania, part of the Eastern Arc Mountains located in the southern central part of Tanzania (7°48′S, 36°41′E). It lies within Kilolo and Kilombero Districts in Iringa and Morogoro Regions, respectively (Safari *et al.,* 2015). The study area was chosen due to the limited number of studies conducted there and the low flow of tourism compared to other destinations in the country. The study sought to identify the effects of the marketing mix and the destination's attractiveness on tourists' choice of UMNP. Tourism activities in UMNP are mainly nature-based and recreation services

(Egoh *et al.,* 2012; Hernández Morcillo *et al.,* 2013). The unique flora and fauna, including primates, make the destination attractive.
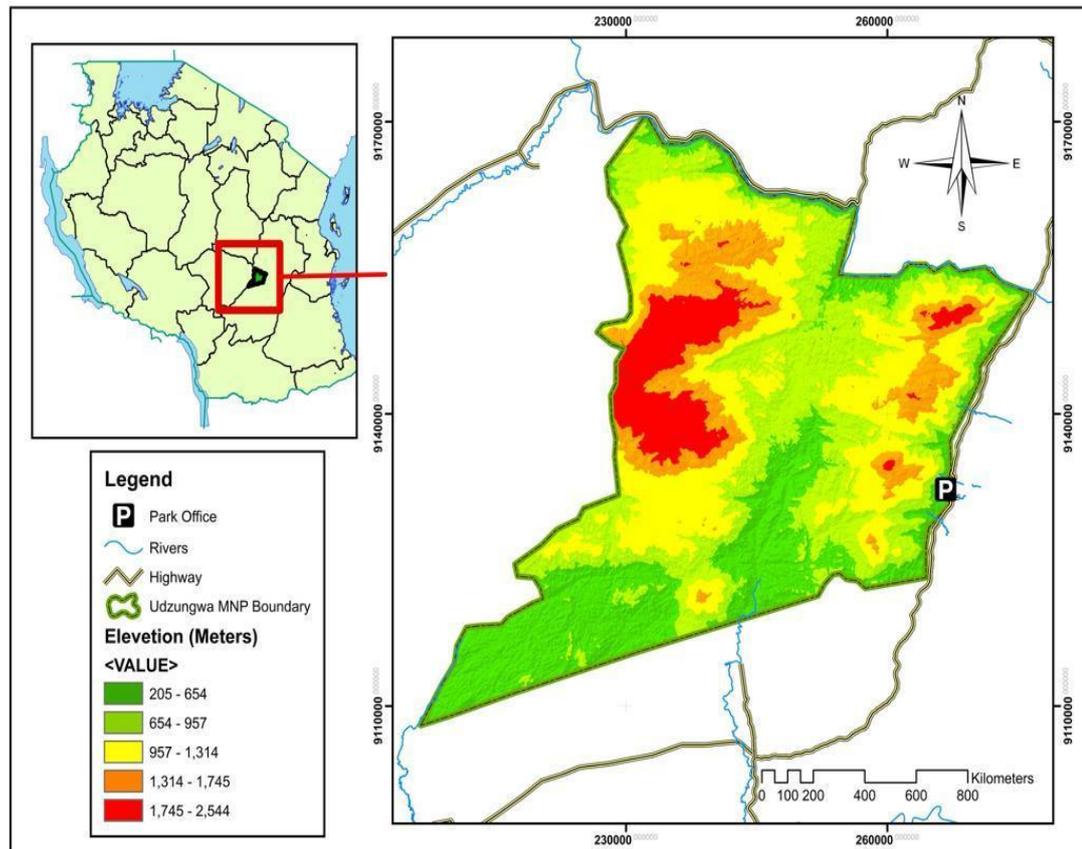
Figure 3.1: Map showing the study area

Source: ESRI data modification

3.4 Population of the Study

Population is a set of cases or elements from which the sample is taken (Kothari, 2004). The target population for this study was the tourists who visited Udzungwa Mountains National Park, both domestic and international, as well as the tour operators, tourism consultants, and officers drawn from academia, Tanzania Tourists Board (TTB), Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), and the tourism industry. These

included tourism lecturers, tour operators, consultants, and tourism officers. Based on annual visitation statistics, the total population is approximately 4,577 tourists per year. **Source:** Tanapa Statistics Department 2023

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

3.5.1 Sampling technique

This study adopted a convenience sampling approach to select tourists to participate because the study didn't have a sampling frame. Since the study population was dynamic, it was impossible to have a list or sampling frame for selecting the sample (tourists on transit and each day vary in numbers). The absence of a sampling frame obliged the researcher to employ convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a nonprobability sampling approach commonly used in research where participants are selected based on their availability and accessibility to the researcher (Creswell, 2018). Although it may introduce biases, it is a relatively easy and convenient sampling method. For the qualitative part, purposive sampling was used to select 14 key informants considered experts in their fields and could provide in-depth insights.

3.5.2 Sample size

Sampling is vital since collecting data from the whole population is impracticable, expensive, and time-consuming. Thus, it is essential to select a sample from the study population (Saunders, 2009). A sample size of 110 tourists was used in the study, determined by the Yamane formula from an average of 150 tourists per day. For in-depth key informant interviews, 14 participants were selected purposefully. These 14 key informants were selected based on their expertise, experience, and

roles in the tourism industry, ensuring they could provide valuable insights relevant to the study. The formula by Yamane (1967) was used to calculate the sample size:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n= sample size to be studied

N=Total Population (150)

e = Margin of error (0.05 or 5 %)

From the above formula, the sample size for this study was:

$$n = \frac{150}{1 + (150)(0.05)^2} = \mathbf{110}$$

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

(a) Questionnaires

This study used self-administered questionnaires administered to 110 tourists at Udzungwa Mountains National Park. Tourists completed the questionnaires and returned them to the researcher after visiting the park. The information collected in the tourist questionnaire included respondents' characteristics such as origin, interests, source of travel information, socio-economic characteristics, and marketing mix elements.

(b) Key Informant Interviews

Interviews helped the researcher gather valid and reliable data relevant to the research questions and objectives of the study as (Creswell, 2018) point out in this study, the researcher used vital informants' interviews, which included a list of questions covered during the interviews. A total of 14 key informants were

interviewed, drawn from academia, industry practitioners, and policy levels. These included tour operators, private tourism and hospitality firm owners, government employees in TANAPA, TTB, and heads of the parks. The interviews aimed to understand the interviewees' explanations and meanings regarding the effects of the marketing mix and the attractiveness of tourists' choice of destination at Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Data Collection Instruments

The questionnaires were administered to 10 tourists during piloting to check the instrument's reliability. The respondents for piloting were not part of the study sample to avoid bias. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was then calculated. The coefficient of 0.7 and above is deemed reliable and acceptable for the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). To ensure validity, experts were consulted to provide feedback on the quality of the tools and ensure that all study objectives were met. The researcher ensured that all questions were posed correctly to the respondents and that clarifications were made where possible to prevent any kind of misinterpretations.

3.8 Data Processing and Analysis

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 was used to analyze the data. The data was edited, coded, analyzed, and processed. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendencies were used to describe the elements of the marketing mix used in UMNP. A Pearson chi-squared test for categorical variables was used to evaluate the significance of associations between

the marketing mix elements and the destination choice. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within a dataset of qualitative data.

Table 3.1: Measurement of Variables

Variable	Description	Measurement
Independent variables		
Product	Attributes and quality of tourism products	Likert scale from 1 to 5
Price	Cost of tourism products and services	Likert scale from 1 to 5
Place	Location and accessibility of the destination	Likert scale from 1 to 5
Promotion	Marketing and promotional strategies	Likert scale from 1 to 5
Dependent Variable		
Destination Choice	Number of tourists choosing UMNP	Binary variables and Multiple response

3.9 Ethical considerations

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from The Open University's graduate school, facilitating the permit application process with the Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH). Additionally, consent was secured from the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) and Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA). Data collected from tourists and key informants were kept strictly confidential and used solely for research purposes. The researcher made sure that the participants fully understood the purpose of the research and the processes involved. Informed consent was obtained. The participants were first asked to agree to provide data

voluntarily. The researcher respected participants' rights to privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity throughout the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This fourth chapter provides an overview of the findings of the study. It includes the

analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected in the field. The chapter is

organized into the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the descriptive

statistics, inferential statistics and the qualitative analysis and the discussions.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

4.2.1 Tourists Source Markets

Although the respondents were sampled on random basis, the source markets of the

visitors to the UMNP varied significantly. Majority of the surveyed respondents were

from Belgium (17%) and Tanzania (16%). Italy and Switzerland were the third with

9% each followed by France (7%), Germany (6.4%) and USA (5.5%)

Country of origin	Percentage
Belgium	17.3
Tanzania	16.4
Switzerland	9.1
Italy	9.1
France	7.3
German	6.4
USA	5.5
South Africa	2.7
British	2.7
Denmark	2.7
Uganda	1.8
Kenya	1.8
Netherland	1.8
China	1.8
India	0.9
Chile	0.9
Egypt	0.9

Zimbabwe	0.9
Tunisia	0.9
Nigeria	0.9
Niger	0.9
Zambia	0.9
Sudan	0.9
Russia	0.9
Canada	0.9
Australia	0.9
Japan	0.9
Finland	0.9
Argentina	0.9

Source: Field data, 2023

4.1.2 Age categories of the respondents

Majority of the tourists surveyed were of age categories between 25 and 29 years (24%) and 30 to 34 years (23%). Others were below 20 years. This formed category (1%). Other significant age classes were 35-39 years (17%) and 20 to 24 years (15%). The majority of surveyed respondents, representing 24%, felt within the 25-29 age groups. These demographic shows a preference for UMNP attractions and activities. Common travel motivations include attractions and activities at UMNP. Tourist destinations are tailored by marketing and offerings to attract this age group by focusing on their specific interests and spending behaviors.

Table 1: The Age categories of the respondents

Age category	Frequency	Percentages
Under 20 Years	1	1
20-24 Years	14	15
25-29 Years	23	24
30-34 Years	22	23
35-39 Years	16	17
40 - 44 Years	9	10
Over 44 Years	10	11
Total	**95**	**100**

Source: Field data, 202

4.1.3 Level of education

In terms of education level, most travellers attained tertiary levels of education (77.3%) while a significant proportion had attained secondary level (17.3%) by the time of the survey. Only three respondents had no formal education at all and other three had attained primary education at the time of the survey. This distribution highlights the predominance of respondents with tertiary education in the study, which may influence their perception and choices regarding the marketing mix and its impact on their selection of tourist destinations. The relatively small proportion of respondents with no formal or primary education suggests that the marketing strategies analysed may resonate differently across varying educational backgrounds.

Table 4.2: Shows the levels of education

Levels of education	Frequency	Percentages
No formal education	3	2.7
Primary	3	2.7
Secondary	19	17.3
Tertiary	85	77.3
Total	**110**	**100**

Source: Field data, 2023

4.1.4 Sex of the respondents

Table 4.3 below shows the sex of the travellers surveyed in the study. Higher proportion of the visitors surveyed was males (55.7%) while females represented 43.4%. Only a single respondent preferred not to say his/her sex. This was important parameters to compare the sex perspective on the marketing variables. The higher representation of male respondents compared to females influenced how various elements of the marketing mix such as promotional strategies, product offerings and pricing impact destination choices. Marketing strategies and preferences can differ between sex which may affect their responsiveness to different marketing tactics. Consequently, the predominance of male respondents in this study could shape the findings related to how effective different marketing mix components are in influencing tourists' destination choices. Understanding these sex-based difference is crucial for tailoring marketing strategies to address diverse consumer preferences effectively.

Table 4.3: Shows the Sex of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentages
pMale	59	55.7
Female	46 +	43.4
Prefer Not to Say	1	0.9
Total	**106**	**100**

Source: Field data, 2023

4.1.5 Tourists typologies based on accommodations

Table 4: below shows that type of accommodation used by the travellers while at the destination. Majority of the travellers were staying on the hotels and lodges (55%).

Significant proportions were using self-catering bandas or campsites (18%) and guesthouses (13%). Others used cottages, vacation homes or homestays (9%), and youth hostels (5%).

Table 4.4: The type of accommodations used by tourists

Type of Accommodation Used	Frequency	Percentages
Cottage, Cabin, Vacation Home	9	9
Youth Hostels	5	5
Hotel/Lodges	58	55
Guest House	14	13
Self-Catering Banda's/Camping	19	18
Resorts	1	1
Total	**106**	**100**

Source: Field data 2023

4.2 Analysis of Marketing Mix Attributes in UMNP

In this study, four elements of marketing mix namely promotions, products, place, and price were analysed in UMNP as shown in Table 4.5. Tourists were asked to rate the influence of these attributes of marketing mix on the attractiveness of the destination.

Table 4.5: Rankings of Marketing Mix Attributes in UMNP

Element	Statistics	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Promotions	Freq.	49	20	16	7	1	93
	(%)	53	22	17	8	1	100
Products	Freq.	40	33	26	3	0	102
	(%)	39	32	26	3	0	100
Place/Location	Freq.	20	37	29	7	1	94
	(%)	21	39	31	7	1	100
Price	Freq.	21	28	35	8	0	92
	(%)	23	30	38	9	0	100

(Excellent=1, Very Good =2, Good=3, Fair =4 and Poor=5)

Source: Field data 2023

4.2.1 Products

Among the four elements of marketing mix that were covered in the current study, most tourists rated products as excellent (39%) and very good (32%) with overall mean of 1.9216 (Table). No respondent rated this product poor although some rated as fair (3%). Products in this destination included aattractions, accommodations, and services provided.

The quantitative results were like qualitative results, most of the key informants rated products as unique and impressive. Although some participants argued that the Park had limited products, as the only iconic products are waterfalls, *Sanjay Crested Mangabey* monkey, hiking in the mountains and other endemic species, most key informants rated these products as unique and attractive. Udzungwa boasted several endemic primates, including the *Iringa Red Colobus Monkey* with its fiery fur and the *Sanje Crested Mangabey* with its distinctive white beard. The destination is also a habitat for over 400 bird species thrive in the diverse habitats, including the

Udzungwa Forests Partridge, the *Udzungwa Forest Weaver*, and the majestic, Crowned Eagle.

One of the key informants reported:

> *''If you ask me to rank UMNP in scale of one to ten, because of its uniqueness, hiking, and waterfalls, and as compared to other Parks in Southern Circuit such as Ruaha, Selous, and Mikumi, which relies on game drives, I will say it is number 1 because UMNP is more adventurous and have more activities. Also, like other emerging destinations, UMNP is more nature based and most of my clients rank it first''.*

> **(Participant 4: Tourist Consultant, Travel Track Company, Dar es Salaam)**

4.2.2 Promotions

In terms of promotions, most travelers rated as excellent and very good (53% and 22% respectively). However, there were significant proportions of the tourists who rated fair and poor (8% and 1% respectively). Promotions were mainly attributed to source of travel information and these proportions who rated the promotional messages as poor and fair highlight the gap in effectiveness of the promotional campaigns being used. As compared to qualitative data, the participants in the interview perceived the element as still lagging. In terms of specific promotional strategies adopted by the park, the key informants mainly reported that the UMNP mainly relied on the traditional methods such as advertisements, exhibitions, trade fairs such as *Saba Saba* and *Nane Nane* local exhibitions, Kili trade fairs, printing and distribution of brochures, flyers, and leaflets.

They also identified posting adverts in the main website of TANAPA with the sub-theme component of UMNP and use social media marketing platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to interact with its audience. The qualitative results corroborate with quantitative findings in that some promotional strategies being used by UMNP, Tanzania Tourism Board (TTB) and Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) are traditional in nature and are not effective.

One of the participants in the interview emphasized:

> *"Promotions are not effective because I have not seen them online except the trade fairs and other exhibitions. UMNP and TANAPA should do more promotions online; so that myself as tour consultant, I should get updates online. Thus, I think these promotions are not effective, and have not affected tourism flow. Digital marketing is much better as clients can access from the mobile phones, mobile apps, and other devices"*

(Participant 12: Senior tourism officer (TTB), Iringa Municipality)

4.2.3 Place

Place in the current study refers to location and accessibility of the destination. Higher proportion of the respondents rated very good (39%) but a significant proportion rated fair (7%). The proxies for determining the attractiveness of the place are its accessibility, connectivity, and infrastructure that influence the ease of travel and overall experience. Destinations with well-developed transportation networks, convenient access points, and efficient infrastructure are more appealing to tourists. This was in contrary to key informants such as tour operators and other industry professionals who mainly agreed that the location of the place is very accessible and strategic. They noted that the destination was accessible by air, road, and rail.

One participant said:

> *"The location is perfect because it is just along the major road network. However, western side of the park is not well accessible, and efforts should be made to open the western part where plenty of wildlife have not been explored"*

(Participant 8: Senior Assistant Conservation Commissioner and Head of Mikumi National Park – TANAPA)

Another participant cited the connectivity of the destination with road, rail, and air transport as well as proximity to Dar es Salaam and to other regional destinations. Participant posits that the Park is in the center between in center between Mikumi, Ruaha and Nyerere, and visitors could not get off the tarmac road.

He stated:

> *"The park is strategic and in the center between Mikumi, Ruaha and Nyerere, and the distance is best from Dar es Salaam. I consider this as strategic as the visitors does not need to get off from the tarmac road, and visitors can combine with other neighboring national parks such as Mikumi, Nyerere and Ruaha and make a long itinerary for UMNP. Tanzania Zambia Railway (TAZARA) - railways is also big potential means of transport from Dar-es-Salaam"*

Another participant also stressed that:

> *"The location of UMNP affects tourism flow because it enables extension and connection of safari for tourists from this National Park to Ruaha and Nyerere National parks, which means operators, can organize combined safaris from UMNP to Ruaha and Nyerere"*

(Participant 14: Senior Tourism Officer -Staff from TTB -Lake Zone office at Mwanza)

Other participants interpreted place as destination location in comparison to other destinations in the circuits. In this perspective, some participants rated this as low in comparison to Northern tour circuits. For example, one participant cited:

> *"As compared with the Parks located in the Northern Circuit, I can say that Udzungwa location is a bit disadvantaged in tourism flow for example if UMNP would have been in between Manyara National Park and or Ngorongoro Crater would have get a lot of tourists or higher flow of tourist. Hence, all Parks located in the Northern circuit receive a high number of tourist's flows due to their best location and accessibility"*

> **(Participant 7: Principal Conservation Officer, TANAPA)**

4.2.4 Price

Although higher proportion of the respondents' rated prices of products and services in UMNP as good (38%) and significant proportion rated fair (9%). In the Likert scale, this element ranked lowest. The higher mean ($\mu=2.3261$) shows that the element was close to five (poor=5) as opposed to products/attractions ($\mu=1.9216$) which is close to one (excellent=1).

Table 4.6: Measures of central tendencies

Variable	N	MEAN (μ)	SE	STDEV.
Promotion	97	1.8280	0.10770	1.03864
Product	92	1.9216	0.08666	0.87525
Place	97	2.2766	0.09495	0.92055
Price	97	2.3261	0.09666	0.92711

Source: Field data 2023

The qualitative results differed with quantitative results in that most of the key informants rated the price as effective and reasonable. All participants in the

interviews perceived the pricing of products including entry fees, accommodations, and other services as relatively cheap compared to other destinations in the northern and southern circuits in Tanzania.

One respondent gave these comments:

> *"In terms of park fees, I think they are effective, for example they charge $30 plus VAT becomes $35.4, and my clients (tourists) have never complained that it is expensive as compared to other parks such as Serengeti and Ngorongoro whose prices even go as high over $70 exclusive of Value Added Tax (VAT)"*
>
> ***(Participant 4: Tourist Consultant, Travel Track Company, Dar-es-Salaam)***

4.3 Effect of destination attractiveness in determining customer's choice of destination

In the current study, six indicators of attractiveness of the destination were used namely, the proximity to other attractions or amenities, the level of satisfaction derived by the tourists, the price factor, uniqueness and diversity of attractions, safety and security and the sustainability practices in the destination.

4.3.1 Descriptive results

Table 4.3.1 shows the indicators of destination attractiveness. Tourists were asked to rate the level of impact of these metrics on their choice of the destination. The most outstanding parameter in measuring the attractiveness of the destination is the uniqueness and diversity of attractions in the UMNP. A big number of the respondents rated uniqueness of attractions as very high (53%). The second most important factor was the safety and security of the destination (41%).

In terms of impact of proximity to other attractions or amenities, majority rated as high (42%) and average (34%). Similarly, the benefits derived and the level of satisfaction, majority of the travellers rated as high (44%) and average (31%). In terms of price, majority rated high (43%), but a significantly larger proportion rated as low (8%). Environmental and sustainability practices ranked lowest as most participant rated as average (40%), and some ranked as low (4%) and very low (1%).

Table 4.7: How does the following Attributes of Attractiveness in UMNP?

Attribute	Stat.	Very High	High	Average	Low	Very low	Total
Proximity to other attractions or amenities	Freq.	20	39	32	2		93
	(%)	22	42	34	2		100
Benefits/customer satisfaction	Freq.	20	41	29	3		93
	(%)	22	44	31	3		100
Product pricing	Freq.	12	38	31	7		88
	(%)	14	43	35	8		100
Uniqueness/diversity of attractions	Freq.	51	25	18	3		97
	(%)	53	26	19	3		100
Safety and security	Freq.	38	32	17	5		92
	(%)	41	35	18	5		100
Environmentally/ sustainability practices	Freq.	29	24	39	4	1	97
	(%)	30	25	40	4	1	100

Source: Field data 2023

Table 4.7 above shows the measures of central tendencies. Results confirms that the unique and diversity of attractions and security of the destination are key attractive variables in the destination (1.7216 and 1.8804 respectively). On the other hand, sustainability practices and product pricing ranked lowest in influencing the attractiveness of the destination (2.2165 and 2.375, respectively).

Table 4.8: Measures of Central Tendencies for Marketing Mix Elements

Variable	N	Mean	SE	Stdev.
Proximity to other attractions or amenities	93	2.1720	0.08180	0.78883
Benefits/customer satisfaction	93	2.1613	0.08274	0.79796
Product pricing	88	2.3750	0.08751	0.82088
Unique attractions/diversity of attractions	97	1.7216	0.08883	0.87491
Safety and security	92	1.8804	0.09382	0.89985
Environmentally/sustainability practices	97	2.2165	0.09746	0.95989

Source: Field data 2023

4.3.2 Relationship between Destination Attractiveness and Destination Selection

Generally, most travelers rated destination as very attractive. Similarly, in the qualitative interviews, most key informants agreed that the UMNP is attractive destination, which influences the travelers to choose this destination. Travelers seek destinations that offer them the most value for their time and money. This included factors like affordability, diverse attractions, unique experiences, species richness, and beautiful scenery. Destinations that effectively communicate their value proposition are more likely to attract visitors. For example, one participant observed:

> *"I cannot compare UMNP to other parks as the rest of the parks in the circuit are quite different to Udzungwa. UMNP has unique flora and fauna in a unique landscape. As it is, it does attract certain type of tourists who are fond of unique species."*

(Participant 13: Assistant Lecturer Department of Tourism – (UoI) University of Iringa).

To test the level of significance of destination attractions on the influencing travellers the choice of destination, Chi-square test as used (Table 4.9) below shows. The results show the attractiveness of products and services in the destination

significantly influenced the tourists' choice of destination (p-value =0.012). Destination attractiveness encompasses the various factors that make a destination appealing and desirable to potential visitors.

Table 4.9: Chi-Square Tests of relationship between attractiveness and

    customers' choice of destination

	Reason for visiting		
Attractiveness products/services of the destination	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	31.405[a]	16	0.012
Likelihood Ratio	36.739	16	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.501	1	<.001
N of Valid Cases	95		

19 cells (76.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .29.

Source: Field data 2023

4.4 Relationship between Customers' Expectations and their Perceived Value on Quality of Products and Services in UMNP.

On perceived values, respondents were asked to rate their perception of the elements of marketing mix vis-à-vis their expectations. Among the elements of marketing mix, promotional campaigns and accommodations ranked higher where these variables exceeded the expectations (50% and 48% respectively). All other variables mainly meet customers' expectations. Significant proportion of travellers rated ancillary services as indifferent (15%) while some rated accommodations and promotional campaigns as extremely below their expectation (2% each).

Table 4.10: Rate on Expectation and Reality of the Elements in UMNP

Variable	Stat.	EE	ME	I	BE	EBE	Total
Ancillary services	Freq.	9	63	13	2		87
	(%)	10	72	15	2		100
Attractions	Freq.	30	62	4	1		97
	(%)	31	64	4	1		100
Accommodations	Freq.	46	31	16		2	95
	(%)	48	33	17		2	100
Products and Services	Freq.	14	65	6			85
	(%)	17	77	7			100
Promotional Campaigns	Freq.	46	31	7	6	2	92
	(%)	50	34	8	7	2	100
Accessibility In UMNP	Freq.	45	37	7	4		93
	(%)	48	40	8	4		100
Overall Satisfaction	Freq.	16	65	5	1	2	89
	(%)	18	73	6	1	2	100

EE=Exceed Expectation, ME= Meet Expectation I=Indifferent, BE =Below

expectation and EBE = Extremely below Expectation

Source: Field data 2023

In relations to meet and exceed expectation, attractions were ranked first by (92%) followed by accessibility of the destination/place by (82%). The promotional campaigns and accommodations ranked fourth by (77%) while ancillary services ranked the lowest in terms of perceived value and the reality ranked by (72%). Ancillary services are support services such as social amenities, enterprises, banking services and accessibility. In terms of overall satisfaction, most elements of marketing mix met the customer's expectation (73%) and even exceeded (18%) as shown in Figure 3. Smaller %age of travellers could not tell the difference (6%), rated extremely below expectation (2%) and below expectation (1%). Significantly, tourists could not rate the accommodations in UMNP (17%) and in fact some rated is as extremely below the expectations (2%). Among the key informants, they

suggested they acknowledge the poor state of accommodations in the destination and suggested the involvement of private investors. One participant said that:

> *"It is true that most accommodations in UMNP is well below the standards and therefore there is need to offer incentives to private sector to develop accommodation facilities in Kilombero and Ifakara towns, and the development of new product like Zipline (Adrenaline product), trail run, conference, upgrade accommodation facilities and improvement of campsite within the park".*

> **(Participants 9: Assistant Conservation Commissioner (ACC) and Head of UMNP– TANAPA)**

4.5 Marketing Strategies that Affect the Customers' choice of Destinations

4.5.1 Reasons for Travel to UMNP

Table 4.11: Shows the Reasons for Visiting UMNP

Variable	Stat	SD	D	NDA	A	SA	Total
Spend Holiday	Freq.	7	20	1	52	30	110
	(%)	6	18	1	47	27	100
Business Travel	Freq.	19	38	8	23	21	109
	(%)	17	35	7	21	19	100
On Transit	Freq.	12	35	16	32	11	106
	(%)	11	33	15	30	10	100
Study/Research Purposes	Freq.	13	25	6	12	51	107
	(%)	12	23	6	11	48	100
Visit Friends and Family	Freq.	23	44	5	29	8	109
	(%)	21	40	5	27	7	100
Attractions in the destination	Freq.	6	32	4	40	23	105
	(%)	6	31	4	38	22	100
For Hiking	Freq.		108			1	109
	(%)		99			1	100

Source: Field data 2023

Table 4.11 above represents the reasons for visiting UMNP by the tourists surveyed in the study. Results show that most tourists in the current study (count 82) agreed

and strongly agreed that their motivation to visit UMNP was to spend a holiday and to see the unique attractions in the destination (count 63). Additionally, a significant proportion also visited to conduct the research and studies (63). Other motivations to visit the destination was leisure travel where the respondents reported that they were in business and thy combined with the travel to site (44), while others were on transit (43) enroute other destinations such as Ruaha, Nyerere, Mikumi or Katavi national parks. Moreover, some tourists visited the park while on their company of friends and family in the country (37). Smallest category visited for hiking purposes (1).

4.5.2 Sources of Travel information and Customer's choice of Destination

Choosing a destination and planning a trip involves gathering information from various sources. In the current study, the survey of visitors to UMNP revealed that majority of the travelers (72 %) got information on the destination from referrals (friends, relatives etc.), information centers (65 %) and online platforms (60 %). Other got it from promotional campaigns (54) and small proportion visited the site just as they were travelling as a group, and some were in research activity in Udzungwa Ecological Monitoring Centre (UECM). This result demonstrates that today's tourists have a diverse and ever-evolving landscape of resources at their fingertips, making understanding their information-seeking behavior crucial for tourism stakeholders.

Table 12: The Sources of Travel Information

Source of information	Stat.	SD	D	A/D	A	SA	Total
Information Centre	Freq.	18	22	4	41	24	109
	(%)	16.5	20.2	3.7	37.6	22.0	100
Promotional Programs	Freq.	16	33	5	21	33	108
	(%)	14.8	30.6	4.6	19.4	30.6	100
Referrals (Friends, Relatives, Colleagues)	Freq.	4	25	6	43	29	107
	(%)	3.7	23.4	5.6	40.2	27.1	100
Online Platforms	Freq.	13	28	7	22	38	108
	(%)	12.0	25.9	6.5	20.4	35.2	100
Group Travel	Freq.	0	107	0	1	0	108
	(%)	0	99.1	0	0.9	0	100
Udzungwa Ecological Monitoring Centre (UECM).	Freq.	0	107	0	0	1	108
	(%)	0	99.1	0	0	0.9	100

Source: Field data2023

As compared to qualitative results, key informants believed that the promotional campaigns are playing a role in attracting clients to UMNP. They reiterated the importance promotional campaigns on influencing travelers' choice of visiting the destination. They attributed the sources of information among the travelers' plays as key in influencing their choices of the destination. One of the key informants argued that the Park has not adequately sent out information to potential visitors, especially on social media. The participant commented as follows:

"In social media, I have not seen their adverts because they are not promoting a lot. UMNP tourism is more of academic and not family trips; they will just cross for visual visit and move to another park for more adventure. More promotion of the park is required based on the specific activities to be performed by the target tourists".

(Participant 10: Director general and founder of Moshi Expedition and

Mountaineering-(MEM)

4.6 Destination marketing strategies

It is important to market the destination as a circuit rather than as a stand-alone destination. One participant gave these views:

"The whole circuit should be promoted as a single destination because they are in closer proximity".

(Participants 8: Senior Assistant Conservation Commissioner– TANAPA)

Mostly the industry experts who participated in the study suggested the adoption of more digital strategies, online platforms, and social media such as Facebook, TripAdvisor, and Instagram in addition to traditional methods. In these platforms, the destination ought to post video graphs, posters, direct reviews from the customers who have previously visited the facility etc.

One participant suggested that:

"The best marketing strategies are the adoption of digital platforms such as Instagram and Facebook where we share video graphs, posters etc. This is because pictures remain longer in the memory, and it can be a selling opportunity. I recommend 80 % of the promotions to use digital platforms because popularity is enhanced by social media".

(Participant 5: Director General, Safari Partner, Tour Operating Co. Morogoro).

The key informants also suggested regular engagement of travel agents and tour operators as well as other stakeholders in marketing the unique value of the destinations often known as unique selling points (USP).

One of the operators gave these opinions:

> *"Another method is to engage us as travel agents, especially we can have a stakeholder meeting two or three times a year where we share ideas and the park can share new products or promotional materials with us, and we can recommend new changes or options as per our clients' demands".*

(Participant 4: Tourist Consultant, Travel Track Company (CTC) Dar es Salaam)

Several key informants came with the ideas that the use of the country's foreign embassies and consular missions to market the country's tourism. This includes the establishment of tourism information desk in foreign embassies and even the embassies of other countries in Tanzania can be requested for marketing desk. Also, foreign trips by key dignitaries such as the president or ambassadors ought to use their platforms to promote the country's tourism endowment. Another key informant had these to say:

> *"We need to take advantage of our foreign embassies to establish tourism information desk and other platforms such as the prominent figures for example the trip by Her Excellency President of the United Republic of Tanzania (URT) Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan when she attended the 23rd World Travel & Tourism Council Global (WTTC) in Kigali, on 1st to 3rd November 2023".*

(Participant 11: Wild Gaze Safaris Ltd, Iringa Region)

It is also important to do aggressive marketing. An aggressive marketing campaign helps increase brand awareness and ensure your destination is at the forefront of their

minds when they're making decisions. One of the key informants emphasized:

> *"UMNP should repackage their uniqueness well, for example, Coca-Cola have done their marketing, selling same product over time, but they have repackaged their product over time. Why Coca-Cola is always in advertisement, they continue to build their brand, yet they are known worldwide, even us we need to do it time and time again. With us, we have been having the same product, waterfall, mountain; we need to rethink but not overnight. More important is to conduct educational tours to learn from other destinations".*

(Participant 3: Senior Lecturer Tourism Dept. Sokoine University, Morogoro Region)

Key informants also identified the need to enhance destination image in the global markets. This is critical because destination image plays a crucial role in the promotion of tourism destinations, influencing travelers' perceptions, decisions, and ultimately, their travel behavior.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

As compared to earlier years, the source markets of tourists to UMNP have changed a lot. For example, in 2018, the USA, Kenya, and Belgium topped as the source markets to UMNP (MNRT, 2018) as compared to status, where most of the visitors were from Belgium (17%) and Tanzania (16%). Most of these international tourists are well known for being seasoned travelers; their desire for 'outstanding' and 'newest' unique experiences that are not available in their home countries characterized them as novice travelers who want to experience new and unique attractions. As compared to Asia destinations, particularly Singapore, Chinese travelers mainly spent more money on shopping than any other item, making it the leading motivation (Ngwira & Kankhuni, 2018). Their middle layer motive was 'self-actualization' (Pearce, 2011) and the desire to visit the 'biggest' and 'newest' unique experiences, which cannot be found in their home country (STB, 2016; McKercher & Koh, 2017). Contrary to the Chinese market, the Americans were not necessarily attracted to Singapore by any attraction, as they generally visit it as part of their Asian travel to justify their expenditure and kill time.

On age profile, the fact that most of the tourists surveyed were of a lower age profile between 25 and 35 illustrates the trends in the travel industry where the current industry is being dominated by young millennials as compared to the early years of 2000, when the industry was dominated by empty nesters (Pappas & Bregoli, 2016). This compares favorably with a study by Žarevac *et al.* (2022), which illustrated that

the average age of major tourists in the year 2000 was 29.5 years old, while in 2022 the average age of major tourists was 26.0 years old. This highlights the significance of young markets and target marketing.

Big number of the travelers stayed in hotels and lodges; a lot has clearly changed in the tourism industry since the 1970s. However, Cohen's tourist typology remains a useful tool in understanding types of tourists (Solène, 2023). In the current study, this typology helped in describing their preferences. For example, most of the tourists who participated in the study chose hotels as their accommodation, and these were associated with organized mass tourists.

According to Cohen's typology, travelers are classified as institutionalized or non-institutionalized tourists, where the former is linked to tour operators, travel agents, and tourism resorts, while the latter travels independently in pursuit of adventure, authenticity, and the new and the unfamiliar (Kusumawardhana *et al.,* 2023). Accordingly, individual mass tourists belong to the institutionalized category but travel on their own itinerary and prefer familiar food and accommodations, such as hotels. On the other hand, organized mass tourists travel in organized groups; they also rest their heads in the hotel pillow at the end of the day. Therefore, most of the participants in this study belonged to the institutionalized category. On the other hand, drifter tourists typically have deep immersive and authentic experience and preferred to stay with members of local communities rather than hotels. In the current study, the travelers who preferred the vacation homes, cottages, or youth hostels can be attributed to drifter tourists. Moreover, the explorers also have little

interaction with established facilities of the tourism industry and may represent those using homestays.

5.2 Analysis of marketing mix attributes in UMNP

5.2.1 Products

Among the four elements of marketing mix that are covered in this study, most tourists rated products higher. Products in this destination included attractions, accommodations, and services provided. This highlights the attractiveness of the destination and its high potential. These product offerings, features, and benefits shape tourists' perceptions and expectations. These product offerings, features, and experiences shape tourists' perceptions and expectations. For example, the unique hiking experiences and the endemic primate species were cited by travelers as the key reasons for visiting UMNP.

Destinations with unique and appealing attractions, diverse activities, and high-quality amenities are more likely to attract more visitors. All these are the products and experiences of tourism. UMNP, which boasted several endemic primates, including the Iringa Red Colobus with attractive fur and the Sanje Crested Mangabey with distinctive white beard, is one of the attractive destinations in the Southern Tourism Circuit. The destination is also a habitat for over 400 bird species thriving in the diverse habitats, including the Udzungwa Partridge, the Udzungwa Forest Weaver, and the majestic Crowned Eagle. However, tourism flow and volume are still low. Tourists who visited the park were asked how the four elements of the marketing mix influenced their decision to visit the park. Most of the respondents in

the current study reported that they chose the UMNP because of the unique attractions. These results support the findings in Hasan and Islam's (2020) report that tourist attractions are an essential ingredient for successful tourism destination development. Similarly, Benur and Bramwell (2015) argued that tourism destinations rely on their primary tourism products as mechanisms to pull and motivate tourists to visit them.

In this work findings also support the results of Sugiama *et al.* (2022), who asserted that destination attractiveness, including cultural, natural, local people and superstructure, infrastructure, and price, influences tourist satisfaction, which in turn increases loyalty to Silk Road tourism in Uzbekistan. The presence of branded tourist products and their number impact the tourist attractiveness of the region, with nature, heritage, and tourism being considered the most attractive aspects. Additionally, attractiveness factors positively affect satisfaction, destination image, and revisit intentions, with satisfaction playing a mediating role. Attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise affect travel decisions, with attractiveness being the most significant factor (Sugiama *et al.,* 2022).

5.2.2 Promotions
In the current study, the metric of measuring the value of promotion was the source of travel information to travelers. Although the majority of travelers generally rated promotions very good, key informants identified the weakness of promotions used by UMNP. The traditional promotion strategies identified by the key informants highlight the gap in international markets vis-à-vis the competitions from developed

destinations. The content of promotional messages and how they are presented also play a role in attracting travelers to a destination. Some of the participants pointed to the lack of emphasis on the iconic attractions and diversity of products in promotional messages. This supports the findings in Ngwira and Kankhuni (2018), who opined that South African destinations promote their attractions on the advertisements sent out to the public and the fact that the country is marketed as a 'diverse and enchanting country' in the world and attractions such as Kruger National Park, heritage sites such as Robben Island, Cape Town beach life, and Table Mountains stand out in the marketing messages. This underscores the importance of developing the right promotional mix and choosing the most appropriate marketing channels, such as popular online platforms.

While the destination promotional campaigns directly influence visitor expenditures in destinations, accommodations, and restaurants, with self-planners having the highest variance explained (Souza *et al.,* 2020), promotional activities also have a positive and significant effect on product pricing strategies during a pandemic, affecting tourist interest in visiting tourist attractions (Rosita *et al.,* 2022).

Among the key informants, online marketing should be adopted by the destination because most travelers in the current market access information of the destinations mainly from online platforms. Promotional strategies and information on destinations in various platforms form a pre-visit image, which influences tourists' choice of destination. This supports the findings in social media marketing can attract tourists by focusing on pull motivation factors, which are related to the motivations that

influence their desire to travel (Katsikari *et al.,* 2020). Social media destination promo videos and country images positively influence young tourists' overall emotions, attitudes, social norms, interests, desires, and behaviors towards visiting risky destinations (Firoz, 2021).

In further support of the call to shift to online by key informants, Fernández-Cavia *et al.* (2020) also opined that tourists primarily use internet search engines, recommendations from friends and family, maps and plans during the trip, and Facebook in the post-trip stage for destination choice and preparation. Promoting tourist destinations through digital marketing tools like websites, content marketing, search marketing, internet advertising, email marketing, social media marketing, mobile marketing, viral marketing, and video marketing therefore help in increasing their visibility and attract more tourists (Prokopenko *et al.,* 2019).

5.2.3 Place

The word place here refers to location and accessibility of the destination. The proxies for determining the attractiveness of the place are its accessibility, connectivity, and infrastructure that influence the ease of travel and overall experience. Destinations with well-developed transportation networks, convenient access points, and efficient infrastructure are more appealing to tourists. In the current study, a higher proportion of the respondents rated very good due to accessibility and amenities. This result supports the findings by McKercher and Koh (2017), who opined that tourists prioritize destinations with good accessibility. This includes convenient flight connections, well-developed transportation networks

within the destination, and efficient visa processes. Destinations known for their ease of travel, like Singapore with its extensive flight network, tend to attract more visitors.

Moreover, Mckercher *et al.* (2008) reported that distance significantly impacts international tourist flows, with 80% of travel occurring within 1,000 kilometers of the source market, and factors like market access and tourism development influence travel patterns. Marrocu & Paci (2013) showed that spatial correlation between origin and destination provinces significantly influences tourism flows, with distance and population density negatively impacting tourists' decisions, while amenities, accessibility, and income are effective determinants. Urban tourism accessibility in Nanjing, China, varies spatially, with road transport service improvement. Destination attractiveness construction plays key roles in increasing accessibility too (Li *et al.,* 2022). According to Li *et al.,* road transport service improvement plays a dominant role in increasing tourism accessibility in areas with insufficient tourism resources, such as the outskirts of the destination city.

5.2.4 Price

Price is a main determinant factor in tourists' decisions. Their willingness to pay for sustainable destinations is significantly affected by their ecotour attitudes and sustainable consumption behavior (Araújo *et al.,* 2022). This contradicts with the findings by Hsu *et al.* (2009), who reported that price is the least important factor for tourists choosing destination in Taiwan. To them visiting friends/relatives and personal safety were the most important factors.

In this study, most travelers were not interested in price, for instance, bigger proportion rated it good as compared to other elements of the marketing mix, which were ranked higher. This was contrary to other studies conducted elsewhere that found that tourist motivations influence the choice of tourist destinations, with distance and prices having a dissuasive or attractive effect depending on the tourists' personal motivations. While this study did not draw the relationship between price sensitivity and income levels, the study by Nicolau (2010) on the other hand revealed that tourist sensitivity to price decreases with income levels but reaches a saturation point beyond which it increases again, contrary to expectations for high-income earners. Eymann & Ronning (1997) also found that German tourists' vacation decisions were influenced by individual-specific search costs, overcrowding costs, and budget constraints, while time constraints remain a key factor in their destination choices.

In UMNP, the price factor is not considered as a choice by travelers. This is because key informants reported that entry fee for foreigners was 30$ - USD (United State Dollars), also the price for East Africa citizens was 5,000 Tanzania shillings; the price for other products in the park were among the lowest in the country and the tourist flow were also low. According to Batabyal & Yoo (2020), preference matching by tourists affects their choice of destination, with lower-income tourists choosing cheaper destinations and higher-income tourists choosing more expensive destinations. This is because perceived price affects tourist emotions, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions, with prestige sensitivity playing a moderating role in the relationship between perceived price and love (Kucukergin *et al.,* 2020). The price

element also differentiates travelers, especially the short-haul and long-haul travelers. The second leading source of tourists' attraction to UMNP was local citizens of Tanzania (16%). Domestic tourists' destination choice processes were affected by factors such as price, transportation facilities, accommodation facilities, image and recognition, and safety and security levels (Ünal, 2020).

5.3 Effects of Destination Attractiveness in Determining Choice of Destination

Although many factors influence the attractiveness of the destination, this study selected only six factors. In terms of the impact of proximity to other attractions or amenities on the customers' choice of the destination, the majority rated it as high. This implies that proximity to other attractions influences its attractiveness and consequently constitutes the primary motivation for a tourist to choose a particular destination. The results concur with the findings of Vengesayi (2017), who argues that attractiveness enhances the popularity of a tourism destination. Omerzel (2006) agrees also that destination attractors play an important role in determining tourism destination competitiveness. Therefore, for a tourist destination to have a competitive edge, it must ensure that it's overall attractiveness in terms of natural or cultural value, scenic beauty, and tourist experience is superior to other alternative destinations (Dwyer and Forsyth, 2011).

In terms of price, most tourists rated the price of the products low ($\mu = 2.3$). This is even though UMNP represents the lowest priced destination in the southern circuit. This finding contradicts the argument made by Mangion *et al.* (2005) that price is a major factor that influences tourists' decisions on whether to visit a destination.

When prices are high, tourists may be less likely to visit, and when prices are low, tourists may be more likely to visit. According to Mangion *et al.* (2005), tourists' price was sensitive, that changes in price were more likely to influence travelers' choices than by other factors. This is because tourism is a discretionary activity, meaning that people have a choice of whether to spend money on it or not. Normally As a result, tourists are more likely to be careful about how they spend their money on tourism.

The uniqueness and diversity of attractions of places were the main factors influencing the travelers' choice of the destination ($\mu = 1.7216$). Peculiar attractions and biodiversity play a significant role in influencing travelers' choice of destination. According to Kuokkanen (2016), these factors contribute to the overall appeal and desirability of a destination, making it stand out from the crowd and attract visitors seeking distinctive experiences. The fact that attractiveness and uniqueness of attractions in UMNP ranked higher in their travel motivations suggests that most tourists were novice travelers as opposed to seasoned travelers.

In a study conducted in Singapore, the Chinese tourists were categorized into two extremes, namely, novice travelers who were characterized by their preference to visit iconic places and seasoned travelers who deeply engage and consume culture in the destination (STB, 2016). Safety and security were rated higher $\mu = 1.8804$, and this illustrates the attractiveness of the destination. This is the second most important factor after the attractions in influencing the decision of travelers to visit UMNP. Safety and security play a crucial role in influencing tourists' choice of destinations.

This argument is supported by the findings of Mangion *et al.* (2005). They found out that travelers prioritize destinations that are perceived as safe and secure, providing an environment conducive to relaxation, enjoyment, and exploration. Lack of safety and security can deter travelers from visiting a destination. This negatively affects tourism revenue and economic growth.

Environmental and sustainability practices were among the least important factors in influencing travelers' choice of destination together with price ($\mu = 2.2165$). In this work was different in other destinations. For instance, Vengesayi (2003) found that environmental sustainability practices played a significant role in influencing the attractiveness of a destination. The more travelers become increasingly environmentally conscious; they likely choose destinations that demonstrate a commitment to sustainability. Embracing eco-friendly practices not only enhances the destination's image but also contributes to long-term environmental protection and economic prosperity.

Ancillary services were rated lowest because these services were not directly related to tourism activities and did not significantly influence their decision to travel to the destination. This is in line with findings in Owiyo (2018), who posits that support resources do not affect destination competitiveness in the western tourist circuit of Kenya. However, Wang *et al.* (2012) differed with these results, that ancillary services and resources component form the foundation for building a successful tourist destination.

According to Krešić & Prebežac (2011), this attractiveness can be multidimensional, encompassing various aspects such as natural beauty, cultural richness, recreational opportunities, safety, and overall appeal. This implies that destination attractiveness plays a significant role in influencing tourists' choice of destination. Tourists' destinations that offer a combination of natural beauty, cultural experiences, and recreational activities are much more appealing to travelers (Krešić & Prebežac, 2011). This corroborates with the findings of Khairi & Darmawan (2021), who reported that destination attractiveness plays a crucial role in influencing tourists' choices of where to travel and consequently influencing their revisit intentions.

According to Kim and Perdue (2011), the effect of destination attractiveness on the choice of destination is significant and well documented, with research consistently showing a strong positive correlation between the two. Essentially, the more attractive a destination appears to a traveler, the more likely it is to be chosen for their trips. In the context of ski destinations, both affective image (fun and comfortable atmosphere) and cognitive image (quality of skiing) were significantly related to destination attractiveness. The overall perception of a destination, shaped by word-of-mouth, marketing efforts, and media coverage, plays a crucial role in influencing destination choices. Positive images of breathtaking landscapes, vibrant cultures, or exciting activities can pique traveler interest and lead to bookings.

5.4 Destination marketing strategies

Destination marketing strategies are crucial aspect in the tourism industry, attracting visitors to a destination. These strategies encompass a range of activities and

initiatives designed to promote the destination's unique selling points (USPs), enhance its appeal to target audiences, and ultimately drive tourism growth. It is important to market the destination as a circuit rather than as a stand-alone destination. This is so because, as a tour circuit, it will encompass multiple destinations, offering tourists a wider variety of attractions, activities, and landscapes within a single trip. This caters to diverse interests and travel styles, attracting a larger audience. As in the current study, participants suggest the promotion of the destination Udzungwa Mountains National Park as a package with others. This is in line with findings in Owiyo (2018), who noted that visitors are motivated to stay longer by having multiple destinations to explore within the circuit. This increases spending on accommodation, meals, activities, and local goods, benefiting businesses across the region.

Moreover, by diversifying offerings across different destinations, the circuit can attract tourists throughout the year, mitigating the impact of seasonal fluctuations in specific locations. Other destinations in the northern part of Tanzania that are currently facing a challenge of overtourism, such as Ngorongoro crater, marketing other destinations in the same circuit will help spread tourists across multiple destinations and can help manage crowds and prevent overloading individual locations, promoting sustainable tourism practices (Mkumbo, 2010). A lot of the industry experts who participated in the study suggested the adoption of more digital strategies, online platforms, and social media such as Facebook, TripAdvisor, and Instagram in addition to traditional methods. In these platforms, the destination ought

to post video graphs, posters, direct reviews from the customers who have previously visited the facility, etc.

Because a big number of the travelers are young millennials of age between 25 and 29, it is thus important to incorporate social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and others where youngest generation are currently using. According to Lin and Wang (2020) and Mim *et al.* (2022), social networking services are becoming increasingly popular as a means of exchanging, requesting, and acquiring data and expertise among young travelers.

Other key informants also suggested the use of the country's foreign embassies and consular missions to market the in countries tourism. According to other key informants, it is also important to do aggressive marketing. For example, they cited the Kenyan marketing approach, using the mantra "magical Kenya," as one of the successful stories. This is strong marketing strategy that gets your message across, resonates with your target audience, and distinguishes you from the competition. Travelers often start their journeys with research and exploration. An aggressive marketing campaign helps increase brand awareness and ensure your destination is at the forefront of their minds when they're making decisions. This goes in the line with the finding in Dey *et al.* (2020) who opined that aggressive marketing isn't just about raising awareness; rather is about driving actual bookings. This involves targeted campaigns, enticing offers, and strategic use of various marketing channels to convert interest into action. Dey *et al.* (2020) above acknowledged that many destinations face significant seasonal fluctuations in tourism.

Moreover, this finding supports the results in Baker & Cameron (2008), who posit that every destination has unique features and attractions that set it apart from others. For destinations to compete effectively, it is essential to identify the critical success factors and incorporate them into one's strategic promotional plan. Udzungwa Mountains National Park is known for its unique biodiversity, high level of endemism, unique waterfalls, and mountains. Therefore, this destination should clearly articulate these USPs, highlighting the destination's natural beauty, historical significance, recreational opportunities, and any other distinguishing elements that make it an attractive travel destination.

Key informants also identified the need to enhance destination image in the global markets. This is critical because destination image plays a crucial role in the promotion of tourism destinations, influencing travelers' perceptions, decisions, and ultimately, their travel behavior. This finding corroborates with many an extensive review of the literature covering place and destination marketing indicates that image and identity play an important role in differentiating between objectively similar alternatives (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2019; Baker & Cameron, 2008; Krei and Prebac, 2011; Sadq *et al*., 2019).

According to Qu *et al.* (2011), the destination image serves as a mental representation of a destination, shaping how potential visitors perceive its attributes, attractions, and overall appeal. A positive destination image can attract more visitors, enhance their experiences, and contribute to the destination's economic prosperity. According to Le & Le (2020), successful destinations ought to enhance their image

in international markets by improving the quality of the visitor experience, creating differentiated values to attract visitors, providing high quality infrastructure, and creating more space and recreational activities for visitors, among others.

Other scholars identified the creation of brand identity (Pike & Page, 2014; Lin & Wang, 2020). Therefore, the destination ought to create a strong brand identity that represents the destination's essence and personality. This includes developing a consistent visual identity, such as a logo and color palette, and establishing a clear and consistent brand voice across all communication channels. Similarly, it is essential to engage potential visitors with compelling stories and narratives that highlight the destination's experiences, culture, and personality. Storytelling can create emotional connections and inspire travel intentions too (Pike, 2015).

Gretzel *et al.* (2006) are of the views that destination marketing should focus on creating immersive and memorable experiences for visitors, allowing them to connect with the destination's culture, traditions, and attractions. Experienced marketing fosters positive word-of-mouth and encourages repeat visits. Encourage and promote user-generated content (UGC) from visitors, displaying authentic experiences and perspectives. Authentic UGC can be powerful marketing tools, building trust and credibility among potential visitors.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study finalizes that the marketing mix plays a pivotal role in shaping tourists' choice of destination. Destinations that effectively manage their product, price, place, and promotion strategies can attract more visitors and generate more revenues. The study thus concluded that:

Objective 1: To identify the key product attributes within the marketing mix that influence tourists' choice of Udzungwa Mountains National Park: The findings indicate that the unique product offerings at UMNP, including its endemic primates and diverse bird species, significantly influence tourists' choice of the destination. These attractions, characterized by their uniqueness and high quality, are critical in drawing tourists' attention to Udzungwa Mountains National Park. Thus, it can be concluded that product attributes are a fundamental component in shaping tourists' destination choices.

Objective 2: To determine the extent to which price affects tourists' decision-making process when selecting Udzungwa Mountains National Park as a destination: Price was found to play a pivotal role in the decision-making process of tourists. Although some travelers perceived the prices as unfavorable, it underscores the necessity for Udzungwa Mountains National Park to implement competitive pricing strategies that reflect the destination's value. It is concluded that while price is a critical factor, the perceived value must justify the costs to attract tourists effectively.

Objective 3: To evaluate the impact of location and accessibility on the attractiveness of Udzungwa Mountains National Park: The accessibility and strategic location of Udzungwa Mountains National Park were positively rated by tourists, emphasizing that location and infrastructure significantly enhance the destination's attractiveness. Good connectivity with other regional destinations like Ruaha, Nyerere, Kitulo, Katavi, and Mikumi further bolsters Udzungwa Mountains National Park's appeal. Therefore, it can be concluded that place is an essential element in attracting tourists to Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

Objective 4: To measure the effectiveness of various promotion strategies in enhancing the appeal of Udzungwa Mountains National Park to potential tourists: There is a noticeable discrepancy between the travelers' and key informants' perceptions of promotional efforts. While travelers rated promotions highly, key informants pointed out several weaknesses. This indicates a need for more impactful and contemporary promotional strategies. Consequently, it can be concluded that effective promotion of tourists' resources is vital for boosting Udzungwa Mountains National Park's appeal and tourist inflow.

6.2 Recommendations

Objective 1: Enhance Product Offering

- **Recommendation:** Focus on improving and promoting the unique natural and cultural attractions of Udzungwa Mountains National Park. Develop more activities and experiences that cater to tourists' interests, such as guided tours, wildlife safaris, and cultural festivals.

- **Justification:** Highlighting the unique product offerings will attract more tourists looking for distinctive and high-quality experiences.

Objective 2: Implement a Pricing Strategy

- **Recommendation:** Implement a pricing strategy that reflects the value provided by the destination. Consider selling southern circuit destinations as one package and offering seasonal promotions to highlight the overall value of the experience.

- **Justification:** Competitive pricing that matches the perceived value will attract more tourists and justify their expenditures.

Objective 3: Optimize Distribution Channels

- **Recommendation:** Make information about the destination easily accessible through online platforms, travel agencies, and partnerships with tour operators. Utilize a mix of traditional and digital marketing channels.

- **Justification:** Ensuring that potential tourists can easily find information about Udzungwa Mountains National Park will increase its visibility and attractiveness.

Objective 4: Develop a Comprehensive Promotional Strategy

- **Recommendation:** Enhance promotional content to highlight iconic attractions and diverse product offerings. Adopt digital marketing strategies, including social media, influencers, content marketing, and SEO. Continuously monitor the effectiveness of marketing strategies through

analytics and feedback mechanisms and adapt based on market trends and customer feedback.

- **Justification:** A robust promotional strategy will address current weaknesses and effectively reach a broader audience, increasing tourist inflows to Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

Additional Recommendations:

1. **Target Marketing for Young Millennials**

    o **Recommendation:** Use marketing strategies that focus on authenticity, personalization, and experiences. Tailor marketing messages to young millennials based on their interests, travel styles, and motivations.

    o **Justification:** Engaging the growing young millennial market will drive more tourist visits to Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

2. **Ensure Safety and Security**

    o **Recommendation:** Emphasize safety and security in all promotional materials to build trust and attract more visitors.

    o **Justification:** Highlighting safety will reassure potential tourists and make Udzungwa Mountains National Park a preferred destination.

6.3 Recommendations for Further Study

1. **Interaction of Marketing Mix Elements with Consumer Preferences:**

    o **Recommendation:** Investigate how marketing mix elements (product, price, place, and promotion) interact with consumer preferences and choices.

o **Justification:** Understanding these interactions will help tailor marketing strategies to better meet consumer expectations.

2. **Tailoring Marketing Mix to Target Market Segments:**

    o **Recommendation:** Examine how destinations tailor their marketing mix to target specific market segments and adjust to changing market dynamics and traveler demographics.

    o **Justification:** Adapting marketing strategies to specific segments will enhance their effectiveness and attractiveness to varied tourist groups.

3. **Integration of Sustainable Tourism Practices:**

    o **Recommendation:** Explore how sustainable and responsible tourism practices are integrated into the marketing mix.

    o **Justification:** Promoting sustainability will appeal to environmentally conscious travelers and support the long-term viability of Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

6.4.. Recommendations

Objective 1: Enhance Product Offerings

- Improve and promote Udzungwa Mountains National Park unique natural and cultural attractions by developing more activities and experiences that cater to tourists' interests, such as guided tours, wildlife safaris, and cultural festivals. Highlighting the unique product offerings will attract more tourists looking for distinctive, high-quality experiences.

Objective 2: Implement a Pricing Strategy

- Consider selling southern circuit destinations as one package as competitive pricing option to highlight the overall value of the experience. This is because competitive pricing that matches the perceived value will attract more tourists and justify their expenditure.

Objective 3: **Optimize Distribution Channels**

- Make information about the destination easily accessible through online platforms, travel agencies, and partnerships with tour operators by utilizing a mix of traditional and digital marketing channels. This ensures tourists can easily find information about Udzungwa Mountains National Park and consequently increases its visibility.

Objective 4: Develop a Comprehensive Promotional Strategy

- There is a need to enhance promotional content to highlight iconic attractions and diverse product offerings. Adopting digital marketing strategies, including social media, influencers, content marketing, and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) can address current weaknesses and effectively reach a broader audience, increasing tourist inflows to Udzungwa Mountains National Park.

6.5 Recommendations for Further Study

1. There is a need to investigate how marketing mix elements (product, price, place, and promotion) interact with consumer preferences and choices to

understanding these interactions and tailor marketing strategies to meet consumer expectations.

2. There is a need to examine how destinations tailor their marketing mix to target specific market segments and adjust to changing market dynamics and traveler demographics. Adapting marketing strategies to specific segments will enhance their effectiveness and attractiveness to varied tourist groups.

3. There is also a need to explore how sustainable and responsible tourism practices are integrated into the marketing mix to promote sustainability and appeal to environmentally conscious travelers and support the long-term viability of destinations.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Tourists' Questionnaire

Dear Respondent.

My name is Richard Askwar, a student pursuing Masters of Tourism Planning and Management of the Open University of Tanzania. This questionnaire aims to collect data for purely academic purposes. The study seeks to investigate **"The Effects of Marketing Mix on Tourist's Choice of Destination**: A *Case Study of Udzungwa Mountains National Park in Tanzania"*.

Your information was treated with utmost confidentiality and safety and will not be shared with third parties. Feel free to contact the university or supervisor for any clarification needed.

SECTION I: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. Home Country/ Country of Residence: _____

2. **Age of the respondent in years:**

   Under 20 [ ]   20-24 [ ]   25-29 [ ]   30-34 [ ]   35-39 [ ]   40-44 [ ]   over 44 [ ]

3. **The Respondent's Level of education.**
   [01] No formal Education   [ ]

   [02] Primary   [ ]

   [03] Secondary   [ ]

   [04] Tertiary level   [ ]

4. **Gender/Sex [01] Male [02]. Female [03]. Prefer not to say**

5. **Type of accommodation used (Night before)**

Accommodation Type	Tick where appropriate
Cottage, cabin or vacation home	
Youth hostels	

Hotel/lodges	
Guest house	
Self-catering bandas/ Camping	
Resort	

SECTION II: MARKETING MIX ATTRIBUTES

6. Kindly indicate your level of agreement on each of the reasons where; 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree.

No	Reason for visiting	SD	D	N	A	SA
a	Spend a holiday (vacation/recreation)					
b	Business travel					
c	On transit to other destination					
d	Study/Research purposes					
e	Visit friends and family					
f	The destinations in the country are attractive e.g., UMNP					
g	Any other reason (Specify)					

7. **How did you learn about UMNP**

No		SD	D	N	A	SA
a	I got most of the destination information from tourism information center(s)					
b	I got information from marketing destination organization e.g., embassies staffs, travel agents and tourism attachés					
c	I get information through promotional programs.					
d	I get most of the destination information through referral (friends, relative or colleagues).					
e	I get the information through online platforms					
f	Other sources (Specify)					

8. How do you rate the following attributes and your satisfaction in UMNP

		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
a	Promotional messages/campaigns					
b	Products-Attractions, accommodations and Service providers					
c	Location/accessibility of the park					
d	Price of services/products					

SECTION III: DESTINATION ATTRACTIVENESS AND PERCEIVED VALUE

9. How does the following attributes influence the attractiveness of UMNP?

		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
A	Proximity to other attractions or amenities					
B	Benefits/Customer satisfaction and service					
C	Product pricing					
D	Unique attractions/ diversity of products					
E	Safety and security					
F	Environmentally/sustainability practices					

10. How do you rate your expectations and the reality of the following aspects on the UMNP as tourists' destination and the reality in the destination?

Aspect	Exceed expectation	Meet expectation	Indifferent	Below expectation	Extremely below expectation
Attractions					
Ancillary services					
Accommodations/FACILITIES					
Pricing of products and					

services					
Promotional campaigns					
Accessibility					
Overall satisfaction					

11. Below are reasons for choosing Udzungwa Mountain National Park (UMNP). Kindly indicate your level of agreement on each of the reasons

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
My choice of visiting UMNP was determined by price					
Products/services in UMNP influenced my choice					
Location of the destination influenced my decision to visit					
Promotional messages influenced my choice to visit					

Thank you very much for your participation!

APPENDIX 2: Interview Guide

Code (if relevant)	Date (dd/mm/yy)	Interviewer	Location/work place

1. Age in years:

Below 30 [ ]	30-40 [ ]	41-50 [ ]	Above 50 [ ]

2. Position/role:

Top-level manager [ ]	First-line manager [ ]	Other staff [ ]

3. Duration in current employment (In Years).

Below 1 [ ]	1-5 [ ]	6-10 [ ]	Above 10 [ ]

4. Themes of the Interview

Theme	Sub-Theme	Captured Qualitative Data
Attributes of the marketing mix used by UMNP	1. Which Product/service do you think is the main attraction for tourist in UMNP?	
	2. Do you think the products/services are the main reasons for tourisms to visit UMNP?	
	3. Are the pricing strategies adopted by UMNP effective?	
	4. What are some of the promotion strategies adopted by UMNP?	
	5. How do you think the location of UMNP affect tourism flow?	
Impacts	6. How has the performance of UMNP changed as a result of its promotional strategies?	
Attractiveness of the destination	7. What factors do you think are the key drivers of popularity of a tourism destination	
	8. How do you rank UMNP as tourism destination as compared to other parks in the southern circuit?	
	9. How do you perceive the attractiveness of UMNP as tourism destination	
Recommendations	10. Which marketing strategies do you think can help improve marketing of UMNP?	
	11. What do you think should be done differently to improve tourism performance in UMNP (Pricing, product, accessibility, and promotion)	

Thank you for your participation

APPENDIX 3: CASEBOOK

No.	A: Attributes of the marketing mix used by UMNP	B: Attractiveness of the destination	C: Perceived value on quality of products	D: Recommendations
01	**A. PRODUCTS** ☐In terms of the attractions, it has a wide range of attractions, waterfalls (Sanjay waterfall), Sanjay Mangabey in English colobus monkey; we have the Kipunji and the wide range of endemic species. **B. PRICE** In terms of price, yes, the prices are reasonable and effective, and tourist are comfortable because they are charged across all the national parks. **C. PROMOTIONS** ☐I think they use the traditional methods where they print brochures, leaflets, flyers, participate in trade Fairs "Saba Saba trade fares and Nane Nane trade fairs where they share information with the public using these methods. ☐ They also have the main website of TANAPA with sub-theme component of UMNP. ☐ They also use digital platforms such as websites and social media platforms.	☐ I totally agree that Sanje Crested Mangabey is the main product that attract tourists in UMNP. ☐ Attractiveness of a destination can be looked at in terms of accessibility, prices, products, and promotion. For advertising activities, its accessibility, and the nature of accommodation facilities like hotels cottages, bandas among other things. ☐ Again, we need to have the comparison indicators, such as revenue performance and number of touristy received by	☐ This is one of the best well protected and conceived. The national park, which may also be coming close to being one of the potential destinations in the country because of the nature of the park—is less disturbed, few cases of encroachment in terms of logging timber, few cases of bushfires. So, this is one of the parks which is less disturbed and therefore well conserved and thus	☐ Use online travel portals such as online sales portals. ☐Where participation also in the local trade fairs tourism, and international trade fairs for B2B and B2C market access ☐Engage public institutions to create its own domestic market base whereby the tourism department can establish linkage with the industry particularly, the potential public institution, private institutions, and the businesses. ☐In addition, the park can formulate different videos with a range of one minute to three minutes. ☐ You can also try to trace using the online platform such as online travel portals (online sales portals).

	D. PLACE □ Accessibility of the location is not a problem. The standard of the road is not a problem because the UMNP is a landscaping feature in mountains national park. For the adventure/nature lovers is not a hurdle for them to access the mountains because it is accessible during dry season and during rainy season.	the park.	this park is very attractive in terms of the resources.	
02	**A. PRODUCTS** □ Yes, the products are the main attractions in UMNP. □ Waterfall (Sanje), biodiversity (rare/endemic species of primates), Natural vegetation (relatively pristine), Part of Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot **B. PRICE** The prices charged in UMNP are effective. **C. PROMOTIONS** Advertisements, focusing on specific attractions e.g. the Sanje waterfall, Endemic primates online. **D. PLACE** □ Though somehow off path – isolated its proximity to Mikumi NP connects well if accessibility especially by road could be improved	□Attractions presented clearly and bundled to specific tourist interests e.g. naturalists, adventure, researchers, world firm etc. □ I still rate it on the lower side compared to parks like Mikumi and Ruaha NPs.	Quite attractive especially based on its naturalness and world firm	□Make clearer and desegregate the products, pricing based on your attractiveness, strong promotion, good accessibility understands your customers and their interests. □Bundle attractions (process) based on specific tourist interests and promote more strongly, ensure sufficient accessibility especially by road network
03	**A. PRODUCTS** □ The main product is	□I would say it is more	□We have many other	□ The management should come up with

the nature, the forest is intact, the mountain, the waterfalls, birds, animals which are major resources as well as silence, and tranquility. People who love solitude can enjoy. **B. PRICE** The prices are effective; they are affordable and reasonable prices. **C. PROMOTIONS** ☐ I am not sure if UMNP have specific promotion strategies, because I know the parks in the country are marketed by TANAPA headquarters as cooperative. ☐ We have not done aggressive marketing. We do not need to flock on the exhibitions without a proper marketing plan, for example, when we go to symposium and exhibition shows, what are the main products/message are we presenting? ☐ Marketing is about competition, and you need to be competitive so that people can hear you, and thus we need strategies. **D. PLACE** ☐ The location to me location is not a problem; in my opinion the infrastructural development and the system is the key. Because accessibility is	about selling products than services in UMNP. The uniqueness is the key product. ☐ The 4 Ps influence the popularity. Second is the uniqueness of the property. For example, UMNP uniqueness, it should be packaged well for example how Coca-Cola have done their marketing, selling same product over time, but they have repackaged their product over time. With us, we have been having the same product, waterfall, mountain; we need rethinking but not overnight. More important is to be conducted educational tour to learn from other destinations, you must	destinations in the southern circuit, Kitulo, Ruaha, Katavi, Mikumi, UMNP can rank 3rd after Nyerere, Ruaha since others like the Nyerere National Park is more accessible. ☐In terms of the attractiveness, it is perfect, as per the factors, I have mention.	innovative ideas to promote the length of stay by combining the services and products as well as other services such as ancillary services and this requires research. ☐ These parks should be given room to promote their services at national level or international level and not done by TANAPA and TTB as they give more weight to some parks such as Serengeti and Ngorongoro ☐ Focus more efforts on developing own product and not doing promotions. ☐Need new products to promote repeat business. ☐ Routine marketing using different approaches like Coca-Cola including even popular destinations in the country like Serengeti. ☐We need to develop a culture of "shouting" – aggressive marketing like Kenya. ☐Another area is the need for scientific research. ☐ We need to utilize social media more

	within the system and most tourists are empty nesters who want to minimize risks, for example using the bus all the way from Der es salaam to UMNP is not always safe and tiresome. Therefore, there is need for airstrip to facilitate the accessibility. Without such infrastructure as that airstrip and infrastructure, the tourists may ask for the medical services. Therefore, with such facilities they can get emergency services and improve safety and security.	travel to other destinations so that you learn. However, not prioritize the exhibitions, you need to travel to other parts of the world,		often, follow prominent people.
04	**A. Products** To me the main attraction is the hiking and the waterfall. Because most of the tourists that come to us, they mention these products. I also recommend always to clients these products. ☐Hiking is the main products, because of their uniqueness, because you cannot get other places that sell these products as UMNP. **B. Prices** In terms of park fees, I think they are ok, for example $30 when you add VAT, it becomes $35.4, my visitors, they have never said it is	☐First, is the uniqueness of attractions such as waterfalls, and mountains (hiking). ☐Other key attraction is the accessibility of the location. The park is accessible, as compared to other destinations, and UMNP is accessible from Dar es salaam on road easily. ☐If you ask me to rank	☐ My perception of UMNP is very positive because of uniqueness, hiking, waterfall, easy access. Example of visitors from Serbia as a 6 family's tour group and family from Arab (Oman) complained initially me as tour operator placed them in in	☐I could recommend, promotions be done well especially online. The promotions should be online apart from the traditional exhibitions that do not differentiate UMNP from other parks. ☐ They need to go online and use digital methods. ☐ Just like airlines and supplier such as Serena and Grumeti they have put a lot of information online. ☐ Engage travel agents, by visit those two or three times a year and share ideas! ☐ There is need to

	expense as compared to other parks such as Serengeti and Ngorongoro whose prices even go as high as $70 and inclusive of VAT it goes over $80. **C. Promotions** In terms of promotion, I can say it is limited as compared to how others are doing. We only see their promotions in the trade fairs like the Kili trade fairs "Saba Saba" or "Nane Nane". UMNP should shift to digital/online methods such as email marketing. Myself I do not see mainly online marketing from Udzungwa. On the national level, only marketing is done by TANAPA on behalf of the parks. **D. Place** ☐As compared to other destinations such as Ruaha, which takes over 2 days, UMNP is accessible within 5 or 6 hours only because the roads are tarmac.	UMNP from 1 to 10, because of uniqueness, hiking, and waterfalls, and compared to Ruaha and Selous, Mikumi, which relies on game, drives, I will say it is number 1 because UMNP is more adventurous and have more activities. ☐Like other emerging destinations, UMNP is more nature based and my tourists rank it first.	itinerary for UMNP over Mikumi, but after hiking, they change their interest and reported positive comments that hiking was the best! They were concern that they would have spent a night in UMNP and not Mikumi	improve accommodations in UMNP (we are forced to take our clients to Mikumi, instead because of the poor accommodation in UMNP). ☐Attract more investors in the hospitality and accommodation. ☐ Promotions is poor, and there is need to go digital and more online platforms. ☐We need trips to outside countries. ☐Try to improve circuits and where possible sell the three destinations in southern circuit as one package (Mikumi, UMNP and Nyerere just like in Serengeti, Tarangire, Ngorongoro and Manyara. ☐Diversifying products to others such as Kayaking, sport fishing
05	**A. Products** Main attraction is the uniqueness, and the Sanje and some unique trees, **B. Price** Price is friendly because the park charges only Tanzania shillings 5,000 for East Africa Citizens and $30 for foreigners	☐The uniqueness of attractions is in trekking, and getting in contact with nature, in touch trees, waterfalls and mountain. Insects such as	☐Its uniqueness, like the nature tranquility and silence makes it attractive and connecting to nature.	☐ Adoption of digital platforms such as Instagram, like video graphs. ☐ We can use our embassies to market our products in foreign countries. ☐Daily posts in social media. ☐ I can suggest

	exclusive of VAT. This is very cheap as compared to other destinations. **C. Promotions** In terms of promotion, the approaches are also friendly, for example, online platforms attract about 80% of our clients through social media marketing. Other methods are the word of mouth. As tour operators, we also support in marketing. **D. Place** As compared to other destinations such as Ruaha, which takes over 2 days, UMNP can be accessed within 5 or 6 hours because the roads are tarmac.	butterflies. For example, we propose UMNP to our guests on basis of these unique attractions. ☐Popularity is from social media; promotions has also played a big part. Attractions uniqueness is contributing to popularity of UMNP has helped to a large %age.	Like other parks, you will see the major wildlife, so UMNP is unique because of its nature-based attraction that is unique.	UMNP to increase products, such as open the western side to diversify the products. ☐Accessibility is good and only western side to be opened to enhance the accessibility. ☐ Signage should be placed in strategic locations. ☐ Government should increase the budget and increase courses in schools. ☐ Marketing desk for promotion in our embassies in foreign countries ☐Create posts of tourism specialists in the foreign embassies can increase tourism and the revenue from tourism
06	**A. Products** Good weather condition, Sanje waterfalls plus hiking activity is the main attraction for tourists in UMNP. **B. Price** The ranger fees, entry fees, for Non-Residents, Residents are all reasonable. Very reasonable and no complaints from tour companies. **C. Promotions** Slight room for improvements from Twitter, and Instagram	☐Sanje waterfalls is a unique selling point (USP) all the tourists visiting UMNP or nearby National Park must dedicate one day for Sanje waterfalls. ☐ UDMNP stands out for rich biodiversity and hiking. ☐ Presence of	☐ The park is perceived as beautiful majorly because of hiking activity, scenic view, only park within eastern arc mountains ranges, heaven for nature, less crowded park enthusiast, engaged	☐Digital promotions and cameras/ air drones should be used to prepare the content. ☐Traditional promotional (brochures, posters, billboards) should be not also left behind to capture those with no access with modern technology. ☐Celebrity, with millions of followers to visit the park, ☐Serious promotional campaigns targeting

	and main web for TANAPA (UMNP). Currently the website is not active, posts are few and not active. **D. Place** Very strategic, in center between Mikumi, Ruaha and Nyerere, and visitors does not get off the tarmac road	endemic species of primates and birds like Iring red colobus monkey, birds like Udzungwa forests patriates, rufous winged sunbirds, and altitude (being mountainous).	and attracts, researchers and take close to nature	the academic institution. ☐Serious social media promotion (Instagram and twitter) ☐Video marketing (short promotional clips together with live reviews ☐Use online travel agent. ☐Use online marketing platforms such as booking.com, hotel.com, trip advisor. ☐Farm trips for stakeholders should be done and get shown the attractions and accommodations. ☐Regular visitors' surveys
07	**A. Products** Landscape is one of the main tourist attractions, including the waterfalls, hills, scenery, Kilombero valley, key species of primates such as Sanje crested mangabey family, attract many tourists. **B. Price** UMNP is among the park with relatively lower park fees as compared to the fees paid to the fees paid to the park in the North. **C. Promotions** Some of the promotional strategies used by UMNP include	UMNP is attractive destination owing to a lot of beautiful resources--- there are tourists who wants that niche, primates or big five. if you compare how many tourists loves primates and wild beast migration…. The answer is clear. The big five lovers' number is	The perception is positive	- Product Diversification of activities though will not increase tremendous number of tourists. - The popularity of the park can be increased by increasing advertisement, research, filming, budget for promotion and publication. - Farm trips - Effective and frequent use of media to disseminate the message about the park to the large

	personal selling – door to door visit to learning institution for domestic market, local and international exhibition, and electronic media approach for advertisements. They also use social media platform that includes Instagram, Facebook and print media such as brochures, flies, posters, as advertising strategy Relationship management is one of the activities which UMNP does as a promotional strategy such as conduct meeting with tour operators/ stakeholders in the industry. D. **Place** As compared to the parks in the Northern circuit, Udzungwa location is a bit disadvantaged where tourism flow is affected	higher than the primate lovers. Again, the kind of tourist's activities in Udzungwa it is favoring people who are fit physically… it is more of physic fit park…physically stable people there are limited game circuit mainly walking all these make the destination unique and attract a people of its own with physical fitness		audience and marketing penetrations. - The Government should introduce the program of transporting the domestic tourists to different National parks as that will build trusts not leaving the tasks to the private sector for example Coastal aviation's instead Air Tanzania will be used. - Improve Sectoral linkage between government and private sector, the sectoral linkage has very strong impacts in attracting the tourists for example 50% of tourists getting to Tanzania are from Kenya and enter Tanzania via Namanga border using shuttle busses. All these are the results of direct flight to Kenya. - Government support to hotel owners - Government should engage more efforts and capacity to tour operators as they are main industry platers/ catalysts of the business
08	**A. Products** Stunning Scenery which	The destination is	My perception	- Involve tourism stakeholders mainly

is part of the Eastern Arch Mountains and extraordinary biodiversity
B. Price
The price is effective, though it needs to be advanced because the quality and value of the park is high.
C. Promotions
Full engagement in social media promotions, local and international exhibition/ trade fairs, tour operation promotion in the actual field.
-Park should not be promoted in isolations – needs to be promoted as a package with other neighboring national parks to get its unique taste
D. **Place**
Perfect locations, it is just along the highway. However, western side is not well accessible, and efforts should be made to open the western side of the park where plenty of wildlife are available.
	very attractive because of the iconic endemic species of primate's species, (Sanje crested mangabey and Iringa red colobus monkey) of birds, flora, and fauna. UMNP also boast beautiful scenery, with peculiar and popular attractions.	is incredible and I, rank the park number one in the region because of peculiar scenery warm and moderate weather condition and presence of endemic flora and fauna	from South
			- Social media platform should be the priority.
			-Selling the whole circuit as a single as it simplifies the process and attract more tourists
			-More efforts to promote southern circuit by opening liaison office that will deal with promoting South as most customers are from Dar es salaam and Zanzibar
			  ■ Embassies offices should be commercially oriented.
			  - Design commercial adverts as President Kagame from Rwanda is doing.
			  - Avoid bureaucracy!
			- More products should be exploited and innovated for example zipline, cable car which will be used by empty nest tourists and will attract more tourists including the local people
			- The whole circuit should be promoted as a single destination since they are in a closer

				proximity.
09	**Products** - Tracking Sanje Mangabey - Hiking (Short and Long) - Night experience (Pigmy chameleon) - Swimming - Birds and butterfly watching - Waterfalls **Promotions** - Positioning of Udzungwa as undiscovered and wild destination **Price** Price needs to be harmonized with other adjacent Nature reserves like Kilombero Nature Reserves (KNR) especially the camping cost. **Place** The destination is well located for package tourist visiting Mikumi, Nyerere and Udzungwa.	The destination is very attractive (will be more attractive after the finalization of Canopy walkway project of length 1,000m)	The perception is average and high because of customer care (Good services) infrastructures (Trails), uniqueness of attractions (insects - large mammals), tree species etc.	- Private sector to develop accommodation facilities and tour/travel operator to operate in Kilombero/Ifakara town, - Development of new product like Zipline (Adrenaline product) Trail run, conference (Available conference facilities) upgrade accommodation facilities and improvement of campsite within the park - Packaging Udzungwa with Nyerere and effectively utilize the TAZARA train. - Work with industry travel trade partners to drive repeat visitation to Tanzania to discover Udzungwa

				- Work with industry travel trade to position the Udzungwa as a perfect family holiday. - Work with international media partners to reach targeted audiences (Kayah utuber influencer)
10	**Products** Biodiversity hotspot – richness in plants and animals of which some being endemic, they play a key major attraction of the park. **Price** Price has never been the problem; the big problem is value against quality for instance you are charging me $100 what are you giving me back? That is the problem in all nation al parks i.e., is to say there is no value for money and time. **Promotions** In social media, I have not seen their adverts. They are not promoting a lot. UMNP tourism is more of academic and not family trips; they will just cross for visual visit	Presence of endemic species plus rich biodiversity and waterfalls are among the factors that make this park popular. All are made possible by the available good and accessible location of UMNP	Personally, I have good perception considering the unique resources it has in place. The challenge is majority of the tour operators who travels to Europe for various exhibition are not aware of the available resources in UMNP, so more promotions are required to disseminate the message about the	- To educate the public in line with the park vision - Improve infrastructure especially for hiking - The plan will be done in line with GMP. - Introduce wire cable to be ride over the forests/tree canopies - Construct beautiful picnic site that blend the environment at appealing view, tree house where they can eat their lunch accompanied with short trails to walk and see the surroundings - Then will apply digital technology to market the park. - Engage the officials from TTB

	and move to another park for more adventure. **Place** The location of UMNP is great, very accessible throughout the year by tarmac and by rail – TAZARA. The value of this park has been advanced by location of the park		park	to promote the park by inviting and educating them of UMNP key tourism products
11	**Products** Hiking to Sanje waterfalls and available endemic species of primate, mountains, swimming, forests, view when you are already at the higher altitude, the tourist get another test and experience, positive feelings of getting close to nature, body exercise and feels the nature close. The combination of all these makes the Park special/unique. **Price** Price is fair, because it balances the nature of the activity, prices are very reasonable where it balanced with the activity get offered. **Promotions** **Place** -The location of Udzungwa is very good, -Access road is very good and permanent where you can just take a bus and reach very	The destination is attractive due to: -Accessibility (accessible by road network from Dar es salaam and from the southern regions) accessible by air and rain (TAZARA) -Unique attractions where it differentiated itself from other parks in the south by having unique products - Hiking which makes the park unique - The tropical rain forest – ever green face which give it special view against other	Very positive perception because of mountainou s nature, unique, endemism nature, easy transport	☐Use of popular platforms by the prominent figures for example the trip by Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan to the 23rd World Travel & Tourism Council Global (WTTC). ☐ Tourism desks should be placed at the embassy offices. ☐Regular online innovative promotions with up-to-date and appealing content ☐ Products – parks should innovate more products and the park should have qualified personnel to sell the products. ☐Innovate and extend activities to the western and southern part of Udzungwa to add more products. ☐Adopting concepts from mountaineering parks and set tents other than transporting tents

	safe -The main entrance gate is very close from the main tarmac road (just 100 meters) and service is ok where after the tour one can just get back easily. -Flight is very good and near Mikumi -Park can be accessed by rail via Tanzania Zambia Railway (TAZARA) -Accommodations are available and cheap at the nearby villages (Mwaya, Mang'ula B & B) which cutters both levels of income customers (lower, middle, and high class)	savannah parks ☐ Other side of the park (western) should be opened for diversification purpose of products.		daily to reduce hustles. ☐Stakeholders meeting should be done regularly to get latest ideas of improvements from the stakeholders. ☐More investment in Tourism Industry ☐ Farm trips should be organized to whoever comes in Tanzania for conference and tourism exhibition. ☐Capacity building to tour operators, guides, police officers to reduce embarrassments to the tourists when are in rush to the National Park, immigrations officers to have general information about the country and simplify matters related to tourists when in the country e.g. work permit, extension of visas etc. ☐It is important to realize that tour guides, and operators are gatekeepers through which tourists get access to information and knowledge on attractions.
12	**Products** ☐The Waterfalls with a	The key drivers of	I see a positive	Work with brand ambassadors, i.e.,

	swimming pool-Sanje waterfall being the most attractive. ☐Udzungwa Red Colobus Monkey and Sanje Crested Mangabey; unique and endangered species found only at the park. ☐Rich biodiversity, mountain itself **Price** Yes, are effective. **Promotions** Active social media presence, update current brochures. **Place/Location** The location positively affects the tourism flow because the park is accessible in dry and wet seasons.	UMNP attractiveness Price, attraction, accessibility, facilities, image (brand), and human resources	perception among travelers because the park is unique in the Southern Tanzania; in term of mountains and hiking activities, can be categorized the third after Mount Kilimanjaro National Park; Mount Meru - Arusha National Park (ANAPA) then UMNP	Instagram travel influencers who can be local and international. ☐ Develop more innovative products and activities to attract and engage more visitors at the park who will spend more time within the park. (i.e., the developed products like hiking routes have interested more people to visit the park more) ☐ Continue to promote actively through social platforms, develop ambassadorship programs and increase engagement with their visitors after visits. ☐Also, continue to participate in international expos as a NP to market it. ☐Park Guides should be encouraged to learn new languages
13	**Products** Mountain hiking is the main attraction/product. **Price** The price is relative to the beauty of the park. In addition, the price can only be increased if more quality is added to the services and products as tourist move along the park.	I cannot compare, as the rest of the parks in the circuit are quite different to Udzungwa. UMNP has unique flora and fauna in a unique landscape. As	The perception is positive because the park is one among the best in the circuit as it attracts special tourists and host unique	☐ More trails should be created and constructed especially for the hiking in the park and lastly the promotion strategy for the park should be in its own as the park is unique as compared with other parks.

		it is it does attract certain type of tourists who are fond of exotic species.	flora and fauna.	☐ The pricing strategies should not be uniform and inclusively together with other parks as Udzungwa is unique and should have a separate price strategy. ☐More and unique products should be initiated.
14	**Products** Sanje Waterfalls where tourists can swim, as waterfall is nature's shower and can feel the flow, and free him/herself self from the mists and particles. Plant spices (Biodiversity richness with multi-dimensions in medicinal values) **Price** Yes, the pricing strategies adopted by UMNP are effective where the prices for the East Africans and Non-East Africans are generally affordable **Promotions** 1.Use of brochures and fliers 2.Production and distribution of video clips 3. Signboard within UMNP with several information regarding the tourism products found within the park 4. Participation of	The key drivers of the popularity of this destination are 1.Swimming and hiking activities within this park 2. Plant spices found in this park 3. Unique and hidden treasures/species across the animals from insects to reptiles and frogs to birds and primates acts as a major attraction of UMNP	It is number one national park in the Southern Circuit since it has friendly and balanced climate, mountains scenery that also shows that blues sky and cloud cover in its back, swimming activity in the natural swimming pool, but other parks in the Southern Circuit do not have the highlighted activities. Therefore, Personally, I perceive it superb as fa as ever	1.To market this park through the participation in local and international tourism fairs 2. To engage UMNP in digital marketing 3.To produce QR Code of this park 4. To send several promotion materials of this park to various Tanzania Embassies abroad and introduce special desk to Tanzania Embassies in Dar es salaam to attract potential expatriates' market 1. There is a need of establishing and strengthening more new cultural tourism Enterprises such as Udzungwa Community Based Tourism Network (UCOBAT) near UMNP so they can add value to this tourism products and

	UMNP staff to international and local tourism fairs 5. Linkage of UMNP into REGROW Project 6. Linkage of UMNP into EAMCEF Project, the projects deal with improving tourism infrastructures inside the park such as construction of tourist's kitchen and mess plus cupboards, trails, bridges, toilets, tourists' shades, **Place** 1.The location of UMNP affect tourism flow because it enables extension and connection of safari for tourists from this National Park to Ruaha and Nyerere National parks (Combined safaris from UMNP to Ruaha and Nyerere National parks enable affordable prices, super easy access (that's via road, which is tarmac, TAZARA and by air) for tourists, the tourists comment the location excellent) 2. UMNP is easily accessible through road route from Nyerere National Park and through road route from Dar es Salaam via Mikumi.		green nature is concern plus tropical type of climate is concerned	enable tourists to experience tourism product diversification and neighboring community culture, where capacity building can be engaged to the community to get involved to numerous entertaining activities such as acrobatic show, evening talk with tourists, traditional ngomas of the natives to get real taste of the local culture where the tourists can build a Golden Memory of the given destination 2.Introduction of several cultural tourism festivals around UMNP to attract foreigners to come close to the park and exploit the Park resources 3. Opening of curio and gift shops near UMNP so the tourists can collect the souvenirs such as t-shirts, caps for future memory of the destination once they are back in their home country. 4.Strenghterning of digital marketing strategy of UMNP 5. Production of QR Code of UMNP will

				boost and simplify the marketing process, together with park good representatives in international marketing and exhibition with the same rate as local exhibition such as Saba Saba etc.
				6. Effective use of university students and creates embassies/ambassadors' team within themselves to promote the UMNP. This can be done between local and international universities to Tanzanians students studying abroad.
				7. The improvement of the Udzungwa Guide Association should be the priority whereby the donors from away should be consulted to support tourism. NGO such as EAMCEF, Association Mazingira (AM), Reforest Africa (RA), Awesome Africa Initiative (AAI) based in Mang'ula. In addition, the young boys and women should be taken to Vocational Education and Training Authority

				and learn issues about guiding tourists and managing the hotels. Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and Growth (REGROW), United State Agency for International Development (USAID,) African Wildlife Foundation, (AWF), Worldwide Funds for Nature (WWF) who were the core supporters during the park inauguration time back 1992. Highlighted NGOs should be requested for financial support to strengthen tourism in UMNP. Cultural tourism Enterprises should be introduced (CTE) to engage the surrounding communities in tourism to accrue the benefits which are generated from the tourism 8.The neighboring institutions such as Tanzania Electric Supply Company (TANESCO, financial institutions and banks such as National Micro finance Bank, Cooperative Rural Development Bank

				have to be consulted and involved in the development process of the tourism and eco system as they are the key beneficiaries of the conservational and tourism fruits)
				9. The conservational institutions neighboring Udzungwa Mountains National Park such as Kilombero Nature Reserve (KNR) have to be fully involved and collaborate together to improve and boost tourism in Udzungwa Mountains National Park. The Media has to be used to promote and raise awareness such as Televisions like Tanzania Safari Channel Television (TSC) Independent Television (ITV, TBC) etc.

Appendix 4   **RESEARCH WORK PLAN**

SN	ACTIVITY	2023												2024											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Research Proposal writing		■	■	■	■																			
2	Submission of proposal						■																		
3	Proposal defense							■	■																
4	Data collection									■	■	■	■												
5	Data analysis													■	■	■	■								
6	Submission of report																	■	■						
7	External																			■	■	■			

	examiners review																			🟨	🟨	🟨				
8	Dissertation defense																						🟦			
9	Final corrections, matrix and submission to graduate school																							🟩		

Appendix   **RESEARCH BUDGET**

Budget Item	Description	Cost (Tsh)
Travel	Transport facilities for data collection (Udzungwa to Morogoro, Dar es salaam and Iringa)	850,000.
Data Collection	Payments or gifts for interview participants	500,000.
Data Analysis	Data Analysis	1,400,000.
Communication	Communication costs utilities	500,000.
Typology editing	Report Editing	200,000.
Stationery	Stationery for printing questionnaires, proposal, reports, articles, preparation of CD-ROM and two black books.	400,000.
Publications	Two articles (International Journal)	500,000.
Miscellaneous	Unforeseen expenses	250,000.
Grand Total		**4.600,000.**

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

Ref. No OUT/PG201986734

27th September, 2023

District Executive Director (DED),
Kilombero District Council,
P.O. Box 263,
MOROGORO.

Dear Director,

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MR. RICHARD ASKWAR, REG NO: PG201986734

2.   The Open University of Tanzania was established by an Act of Parliament No. 17 of 1992, which became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notice No.55 in the official Gazette. The Act was however replaced by the Open University of Tanzania Charter of 2005, which became operational on 1st January 2007. In line with the Charter, the Open University of Tanzania mission is to generate and apply knowledge through research.

3.   To facilitate and to simplify research process therefore, the act empowers the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania to issue research clearance, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania and Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, to both its staff and students who are doing research in Tanzania. With this brief background, the purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Mr. Richard Askwar, Reg. No: PG201986734), pursuing Masters in Tourism Planning and Management (MTPM).** We here by grant this clearance to conduct a research titled **"The Effects of**

Marketing Mix on Tourists 'choice of Destination: A Case Study of Udzungwa Mountains National Park, Tanzania". He will collect his data at your office from 29th September to 30th October 2023.

4.   In case you need any further information, kindly do not hesitate to contact the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) of the Open University of Tanzania, P.O.Box 23409, Dar es Salaam. Tel: 022-2-2668820.We lastly thank you in advance for your assumed cooperation and facilitation of this research academic activity.

Yours sincerely,

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA
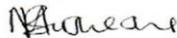
Prof. Magreth S.Bushesha

For: VICE CHANCELLOR