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## Tour Guiding Performance Attributes and Tourist Satisfaction: Evidence from North Rift Tourist Region, Kenya

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### **Abstract**

*Kenya's tour guides play an important role in presenting the country's rich tourist products and services. Tour guides roles and performance are important and significant in the Kenyan tour industry as they are the face of the industry. The study explored the broad issues of tour guides performance attributes and tourist satisfaction in North Rift tourist region of Kenya. The study hypothesized that tour guide performance attributes have significant effects on tourist satisfaction and the study used cross sectional research design and applied Performance Evaluation Measurement Analysis (PEMA) to evaluate tour guide performance in the North Rift tour circuit region from both domestic and foreign tourists. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation was used in data analysis. From the data collected and analyzed in the circuit's three regions of Lake Nakuru, lakes Baringo & Bogoria and Kitale. The Pearson correlation (r) analysis results indicate that the tour guides were ill equipped in equipment & tools of trade (-0.1492), poor personality traits (-0.0049), inability to customize tourist service (0.0084), stimulation of tourist interests (0.0419) and weak in problem solving (0.0184). But overall, the findings indicate that the tour guide performance attributes contribute 78.14% in tourist satisfaction. Therefore, the study recommends that the tour guides should acquire equipment & guiding tools of trade, improve on their personality traits, inculcate the skill of humour to stimulate tourist interests and enhance their problem solving techniques in order to realize tourist satisfaction.*

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**Key words:** *Attributes, Performance, Satisfaction, Tourists, Tour Guide.*

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### **Introduction**

Kenya's tour guides play an important role in presenting the country's rich tourist attractions which comprise of unique wildlife & historical cultures, warm beaches and other destination features. Tour guides represent a significant workforce in Kenya's tourism industry. According to Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2016), Kenya's working tour guides were estimated to be over 18,326 offering guiding services in different tourist destinations in Kenya. Since Kenya's independence, tourism has been treated by the government as the main foreign exchange earner (Akama & Kieti, 2003) in which the country has a fully-fledged ministry in charge of tourism matters (TRA, 2016). Tour guides have been viewed as Kenya's 'Folks Ambassadors' and the face of the country's tour industry. It has also been acknowledged that tour guides have significantly contributed to the country's foreign relations and the positive image the country enjoys in many foreign nations (Akama, 2002). With the adoption of a wide

ranging reforms in the sub sector, it has led in part to the repositioning of the industry as an important economic sector which has led to the rapid development of the industry and has immensely contributed to Kenya's overall economic growth (Kenya's Vision 2030).

As a key part of tourism and travel industry development strategies, Kenya government has placed tour guiding management and service provision at the center of its tourism policy practices. In 1990s, the Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO) issued provisional measures on tour guides training, management and administration as its initiative point of its official regulation and management of tour guiding which hitherto include a formal qualification, examination grading system and licensing of tour guides in order to improve guiding services. In 2005 the ministry of tourism and wildlife through Catering and Tourism Development Levy Trustee (CTDLT) promulgated the administration regulation of tour guides and corroborated the tour guide licensing requirements. In 2007, the Catering and Tourism Development Levy Trustee (CTDLT) issued the implementation measures on tour guides administration licensing policies and regulations and also to other tourism professional sub sectors. With the reform measures highlighted earlier taking shape in the tourism sector, Catering and Tourism Development Trustee (CTDLT) was disbanded and was succeeded by Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA) which thereafter presented evaluation and monitoring systems on tour guiding operational practices in Kenya. Currently, the administrative regulations on tour guides practices is one of the main administrative agenda of the Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA), Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO), Kenya Professional Safari Guides Association (KPSGA) among other private sector regulatory organizations.

The formulation and promulgation of Kenya's tour guide policies and regulations through the Tourism and Regulatory Authority (TRA) was well intentioned and were aimed at delivering high standards of guiding performance and service quality by tour guides (TRA, 2016). However, these policies and regulations were formulated largely on the basis of the policy maker's limited knowledge of the industry, notwithstanding the very dynamic occurrences in the industry. In fact, there is limited research that can inform a systematic evaluation, examination and monitoring of tour guide performance in Kenya and thus provide a basis for sound tour guiding policy measures towards evaluating tour guides performance. Therefore, this dearth of empirical work is the basis for this present study.

Performance is a key indicator which has been widely adopted in a variety of researches (Oh, 2001 and Mount, 2005). According to Huang (2008), performance as an evaluation and measurement tool has found its applications in diversity of topical fields including service quality, studies of destinations, satisfaction, tour operations and tour guide performance. Researchers have found that performance evaluation technique as a tool can be applied to evaluate both tour guide performance and tourism policy & regulations (Zhang and Chow, 2004). However, performance as a tool for measuring service standards as initially proposed by Martilla and James (1977) has been severally criticized for a number of flaws and methodological weakness (Huang *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, this study utilized performance evaluation measurement analysis (PEMA) approach as proposed by Stevenson (2011) to evaluate the overall performance of tour guides of North Rift tourist circuit in Kenya. The study specifically set out to determine how tour guides specific performance attributes influence tourist satisfaction and generate management and policy interventions based on the analysis. To underpin such outcomes of analysis, tour guide literature is reviewed to ascertain key components which constitute tour guiding performance and proficiency.

## **Literature Review**

### **Roles of Tour Guides**

The World Federation of Tourist Guides Associations (WFTGA) defined a tour guide as a person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area. The association further highlights attributes of a guide as individual devoid of possession of other positive attributes must possess area specific qualification usually issued and or recognized by the appropriate authority (WFTGA, 2003). Thus, the tour guides are some of the key front line players in the tour industry. Tour guiding profession has been the face of tourism worldwide, but the importance of tour guiding in offering satisfying and fulfilling tour experience has never attracted the attention of research scholars (Akama and Kieti, 2003). Tour guiding field has been useful, attractive but often neglected. Tour guiding as a profession has been a field attractive to many people (Black, 2007), but recent reforms and the development of service standardization and the requirements for certification including licensing for the industry sub sector in Kenya has put stringent requirements for the new entrants (TRA, 2016). Regularization and the quest for service and product improvements in the industry has been gaining momentum in Kenya and in many other countries relying on tourism sector as their mainstay economic contributor to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Tour guiding services or better call guides are being regulated in many countries for improved services delivery through the requirements of practicing license or permits which are most often acquired through some form of training, examinations or by testing of possessed acquired knowledge and skills (Mark and Wong, 2011). Despite the importance of tour guiding service for quality service to the visitors, the profession has been depreciated and undervalued by many people (Mark and Wong, 2011). The policy makers for the profession of tour guides and other experts from other fields have experienced challenges in trying to standardize services nor to come up with standard mechanisms to regulate the guiding profession. The debates and policy frameworks for the tour guide profession has been ranging from accreditation, certification and other forms of regulatory mechanisms of tour guides all from the perspective of sustainability and tourist satisfaction.

As the tourism sector involves many tourists from different spheres of the world, professional and ethical guides can play a significant role in representing and communicating the image and values of a particular destination and that of the nation in general. It has been observed that tour guides play vivacious roles in bringing satisfaction to visitors touring a particular destination of a country (Black and Ham, 2005). According to Black and Ham (2005) tour guides perform different roles and functions in bringing satisfaction to tourists which may include roles as tour leaders, interpreters, representatives, navigators, social catalyst and as mediators within the tour service product. Also within the globalized tour environment tour guides act as a bridge actors of different cultures because of their cultural interpretation roles. Therefore, it has been widely recognized that guides quality service are critical factors in achieving tourist satisfaction (Salazar, 2005 and Zhang & Chow, 2004).

### **Performance**

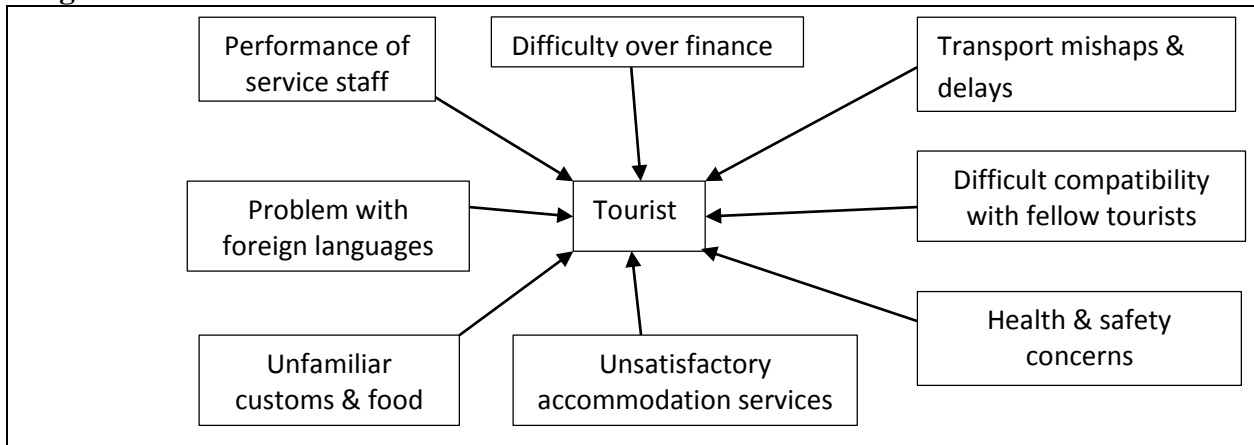
Performance is a subjective concept and a complicated phenomenon. It is also a simple and useful technique applied in decision making processes when it comes to prioritization of resource allocation in organization based on its service or product attributes (Mossberg, 1995). The relationship between the tour guide performance and the tourist satisfaction remains an important component of observation in this study. When tour guides are offering guiding services, it usually also means offering an intangible service (Miller, 1977). The performance of a tour guide service is difficult to control before it is offered and consumed. It's invisible and intangible nature make tourist rely on the image of the guide for further enjoyment and

consumption of the service. Gronroos (1991) observed in his study of field guides in Bali, Thailand, that if an image of a guide is soiled and negative, any further mistake is considered greater than otherwise would be and will result to non-utilization of services of such guides.

### Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has become the key of modern enterprise in the current severe competition of tourist market (Cho *et al.*, 2011). Heung (2008) defined tourist satisfaction as the level of one's feelings after comparing perceived performance or results with expectations. Comparison between expectations and performance produce a feeling of pleasure or disappointment in the minds of tourists. If performance matches or exceeds expectations, tourist will feel happy and satisfied. Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) on their research on tourist satisfaction among outbound Chinese's tourists to Europe, highlighted two negative factors which affect tourists' satisfaction on vocational safari as stress and insufficient arousal which result in boredom and dissatisfaction, figure 1 below

**Figure 1: Tourist sources of stress**



**Source: Adopted and modified from Bowie & Chang, 2005**

There are many factors that affect service delivery and customer satisfactions (Stevens, 1990), but there is no guarantee that a holiday safari will not experience shortcomings and negative sentiments which may be out of tour guide control. The highly labour intensive nature of guiding make the service encounter difficulty to manage and standardize hence variation in guiding service experience among guides and between destinations. Many critical studies have demonstrated that tour guiding service is a critical factor in achieving tourist satisfaction. Gronroos (1978) stated that it's the tour guide who sells the next holiday packages. Quiroga (1990) in his study of chartered tour guides suggested that tour guide performance is a key factor in differentiating satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the eyes of tourists. Thus, the tour guide performance within the guiding service encounter not only affect the destination image but also tourist loyalty and word of mouth communication from the tourist perspective is the most powerful tool for measuring service and satisfaction levels. Tourist satisfaction with tour guide performance does not necessarily mean that tourists are well satisfied with the tourist destination. Therefore, service quality delivery and tourist satisfaction are based on a service oriented approach in which the quality of tour guide service is essential for overall satisfaction.

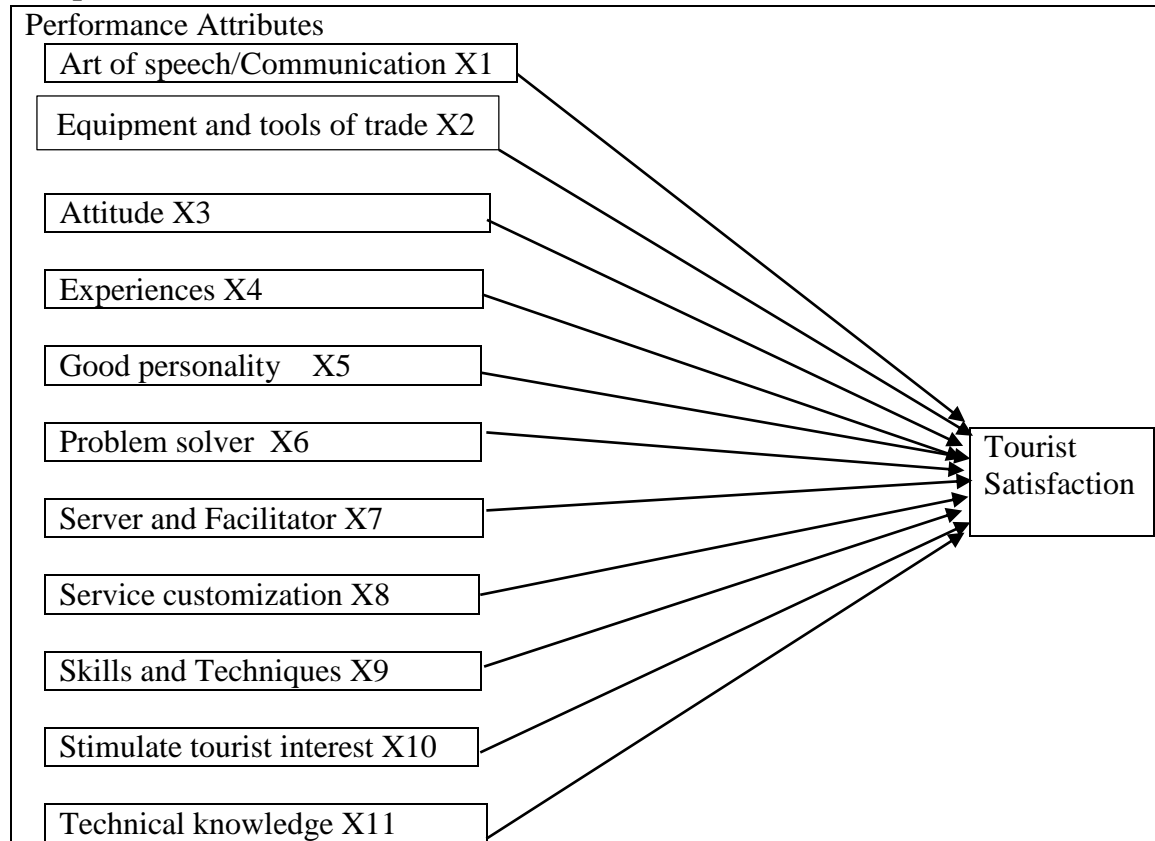
Zeithaml *et al.*, (2003) stated that tour guiding service in enhancing satisfaction are built on complex considerations, including their own pre-purchase, beliefs, expectations and other people's opinions. Zeithaml *et al.*, (2003) suggested two levels of tourist levels of guiding service expectations and these were adequate satisfaction and desired satisfaction in tour

guiding quality evaluations. The adequate levels satisfactions are the minimum level considered acceptable and are what tourists believe it would be. The desired level of satisfaction are the service the tourists customers wish to receive. This are the mixture of what most tourist believe the levels of performance can be and should be at all times. In line with this suggestion, three characteristics of guiding services were highlighted as having direct influence on tourists' satisfaction experiences which are; tour guide expertise, tour guide attitude and the guide's demographic background. Bitner *et al.*, (1990), considered that the conduct of a tour guide who dissatisfy the tourist are often undertrained, suffer from job dissatisfaction or are underpaid with low levels of motivation. Gabbott and Hogg (1998) considered tour guiding service encounter and performance with tourist as involving five dimension; participation, time, physical proximity, engagement and level of service customization, and that other unfavourable factors hinder tour guides during the guiding service encounter. These were multiple service encounters and difficulty for the tour guide to maintain the same level of satisfaction. Solomon *et al.*, (2008) observed that tour guides are constantly changing their perspectives of the service experience as tourist in the destination demand for quality services. Tour guides are social actors in the tour industry as they learn and adapt themselves through a series of social settings. Therefore, the level of satisfaction tends to be influenced easily by other tour guides during the multiple encounters services in a single transaction.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Based on the literature reviewed on the performance of tour guides, a framework of the relationship between independent variable of performance attributes and the dependent variable which is tourist satisfaction was formulated.

## Independent Variables



**Figure 2:** Theoretical framework model

**Source:** *Primary Data, 2017*

## Hypothesis Formulation

Based on the theoretical framework, research hypothesis was formulated as follows;

H<sub>1</sub>: Tour guide performance attributes (X1, X2, X3.....X11) have positive and significant effect on variable (Y) tourist satisfaction

## Description of the Study Area

Kenya's North Rift tourist circuit region (NRTR) stretches from lake Nakuru in the east to Saiwa National park in the west, and consist of the following attraction areas: lake Nakuru national park, lake Bogoria, Lake 94, Lake Baringo conservation area, Rimoi national reserve, Kamnarok national reserve, Saiwa swamp national park, Central & south Island national parks, Nasalot national park and lake Turkana national park. Other attractions within the circuit region include cultural museums found in Karbarnet, Kipsaraman and kitale town. Pekerra River Kerio River, Elgeyo escarpment, Nandi forest, Kitale nature conservancy and Turkwel gorge are among other attractions of circuit (Okello *et al.* 2008). The unique features of the destination makes the North Rift circuit a key destination in Kenya. The North Rift tourist region, being rich in biodiversity, has also some of Kenya's most famous physical features and rich and unique cultural traditions. The flamingos of Lake Nakuru which are endemic to the Rift Valley lakes (Okello and Yerian, 2009), makes it the most preferred tourism destination in Kenya. The hot springs and geysers of Lake Bogoria national reserve and the Nile crocodiles of Lake Kamnarok and Kerio River, the second largest holding and breeding grounds of Nile crocodiles in Africa after Lake Chad are some of the famous attractions within the regions circuits (Kahyarara and Mchallo, 2008). The traditional cultures like those of Njemps, Tugen and Nandi are some the famous cultures that many tourist come to enjoy.

Lake Nakuru national park was established as a national park in 1987 for the protection and conservation of both greater and lesser species of flamingos and as a wildlife sanctuary (Chongwa, 2012). It was designated a Ramsar site under Ramsar convention in 1984 and the park covers an area of 188 Km<sup>2</sup> of which 100 Km<sup>2</sup> is terrestrial while 88 Km<sup>2</sup> is lake portion of lake Nakuru and wetland areas. The park is a magnet for birdwatchers from around the world with Kaleidoscope of birds found along the shoreline of the lake (Okello *et al.*, 2005). Lake Bogoria national reserve host quite sizeable number of bird species including species of flamingos but the principle attractions of the site are the hot springs and geysers which were formed during the volcanic formation of the Great Rift Valley. The reserve has an area of about 107 Km<sup>2</sup> and was established in 1970. It is rich in bird life making the protected area a prime birding destination in East Africa

Elgeyo escarpment is part of the major tourist attraction within the circuit. The escarpment is trekked more often as it allows climbers and trekkers to enjoy journeys through a variety of landscapes that include lush forests and volcanic rock formations. The escarpment also offers opportunities for parachuting and paragliding sporting events The Saiwa swamp national park is the smallest established national park in Kenya covering an area of 2.9 Km<sup>2</sup> created in 1974 for the protection of the endemic and the threatened aquatic Sitatunga antelope. Lake Turkana is the largest, most northerly and most saline of Africa's Rift Valley lakes and it is an outstanding laboratory for the study of plant and animal communities. Turkana national park is an excellent touristic attraction suitable for off the beaten adventure travelers who have plenty of time to spend in adventuring. The park has an area of 6405 Km<sup>2</sup> and was established in 1973 for the conservation of its uniqueness alongside the preservation of the tribal cultures of the Turakana and the Elmololo communities where the latter is the smallest Kenyan tribe. The lake was designated UNESCO heritage site in 1997. Central and South Island national parks are Island protected areas located within Lake Turkana and where gazetted in 1985 where Central Island has an area of 5 Km<sup>2</sup> and south Island occupy 25 Km<sup>2</sup> respectively. Both where established purposely to protect the breeding sites of the endangered Nile Crocodiles and the common hippopotamus species

### **Research methodology**

The study applied Akbar *et al.*, (2009) Performance Evaluation Analysis Measurement (PEMA) approach to evaluate Kenya's tour guides performance and cross sectional research design was used in the data collection. Questionnaires were used in the collection of data from tour guides and both domestic and foreign tour package tourists who were visiting North Rift tourist circuit. Firstly, a pool of tour guide performance attributes were generated by reviewing relevant literature (Yu *et al.* 2002 and Zhang and Chow, 2004). Secondly, three focus group discussions (FGD) were held in Nakuru town, Lake Baringo and Kitale town to validate tour guide performance attributes and to identify other performance attributes which were not captured in the performance attribute guide schedule. FGD was categorically organized with three different co-horts of tour guides, tour managers and tourist to represent the different perspectives of tour guide performance. An average of 4-7 participants formed member participant for each of the selected FGD co-hort. Performance attribute were adjusted based on the information of FGD interviews. The questionnaires consisted of 10 attribute items measuring tour guide performance as perceived by the respondents and one item measuring tourist respondent satisfaction with tour guiding services. A 5 point likert type scale was adopted to assess the respondents ratings on the performance of tour guide were 1= extremely poor and 5= extremely good. A similar likert scale was applied in measuring tourist satisfaction were 1= very dissatisfied and 5= very satisfied

### Population and Sample size

Population is a generalization term consisting of objects that have certain qualities and characteristics applied by researchers to study and then draw conclusion on them (Al-Ababneh, 2013). In this study the target population was taken as individuals (tour guides and tourists) undertaking some form of tourism activities within the North Rift Tourist circuit region, and were stratified regionally as shown in table 1 below

**Table 1: Sample Size**

<b>Regions</b>	<b>Tour Guides</b>	<b>Tourists</b>	<b>Total Respondents</b>
<b>Lake Nakuru region</b>	68	82	150
<b>Lake Bogoria and Baringo region</b>	28	38	66
<b>Saiwa swamp and Kitale region</b>	24	35	59
<b>Total</b>	120	155	275

**Source: Field data, 2017**

### Data collection

Data collection was done in the North Rift tourist attraction points of Lake Nakuru, Lake Bogoria, lake Baringo, Kitale nature conservancy and Saiwa Swamp national park. Also data was collected in the circuit's main urban areas of Eldoret, Nakuru and Kitale from the month of December 2015 up to May 2016. Non probability sampling technique which does not provide equal opportunities for sample inclusion was used in the selection of respondents for the study. Accidental sampling i.e. the sample was determined selecting any tour guide found guiding at the time of data collection (Suanmali, 2014)The questionnaires developed were distributed to the local tour operators who administered the questionnaire survey among the different groups of guides who operate guided tours within the North Rift tour circuit during the period of the survey. Tourist questionnaires were administered by tour guides and other tour staff and were collected at an appropriate time during or at the end of tour arrangement. 120 questionnaires were administered to the tour guides and 155 were administered to the tourist making a total of 275 targeted respondents. Among the returned questionnaires, 104 were from the tour guides while 136 were from tourist representing 86.7% and 87.7% respectively and were deemed complete and useable for analysis

### Data Analysis

Collected data information were analyzed using scientific package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21.0. All types of likert type of responses on tour guide performance attributes were transformed by use of natural logarithms and partial correlations were performed for each performance attribute and overall satisfaction while holding other performance attributes constant

### Results and Hypothesis Testing

#### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The information shown in table 2 is the gender, age and educational level of all the respondents interviewed in the study area of North Rift tourist circuit region as elaborated below;

#### Tour Guides Demographics

##### Gender

From all the respondents, 92.1% were male while 7.7% represented female guides within the region which is logical given the nature and the orientation of the Kenya's tourism industry



### Academic profiles

3.8% of the interviewed guides holds high school certificate, 20.2% had college certificate in tour guiding while a bulky of practicing guides 68.3% have college diploma in Tour guiding and administration. Another paltry (5.8%) of practicing guides have university education while none of the guides had higher qualification at postgraduate level table 2. 1.9% of the interviewed guides had no formal qualification.

### Age

Majority (48.1%) of the North Rift tourist circuit region practicing guides are aged between 41 to 50 years while 18.3% are aged over 51 years and still offer guiding services while 27.1% represent youthful guides below the age of 40 years table 2

### Tourists Demographics

#### Gender

64.7% of the north Rift tourist were male while 35.2% were female. This findings confirms that most tourists/travelers are predominantly male (Al-Ababneh, 2013)

#### Age

Majority(48.5%) of the North Rift tourist were aged between 51-60 years, while 19.9% were in the age bracket of 31-40 years and those aged over 60 years was 16.9% table 2

#### Educational level

A majority (37.5%) of the tourists interviewed had university level of education signifying the fact that most tourists/travelers are averagely aged and are well educated and informed of what kind of tourism products and services they are looking for, and another 30.9% indicated to be holding college diplomas. Other demographic profile information is as shown in table 2

**Table 2: Respondent Demographic profiles**

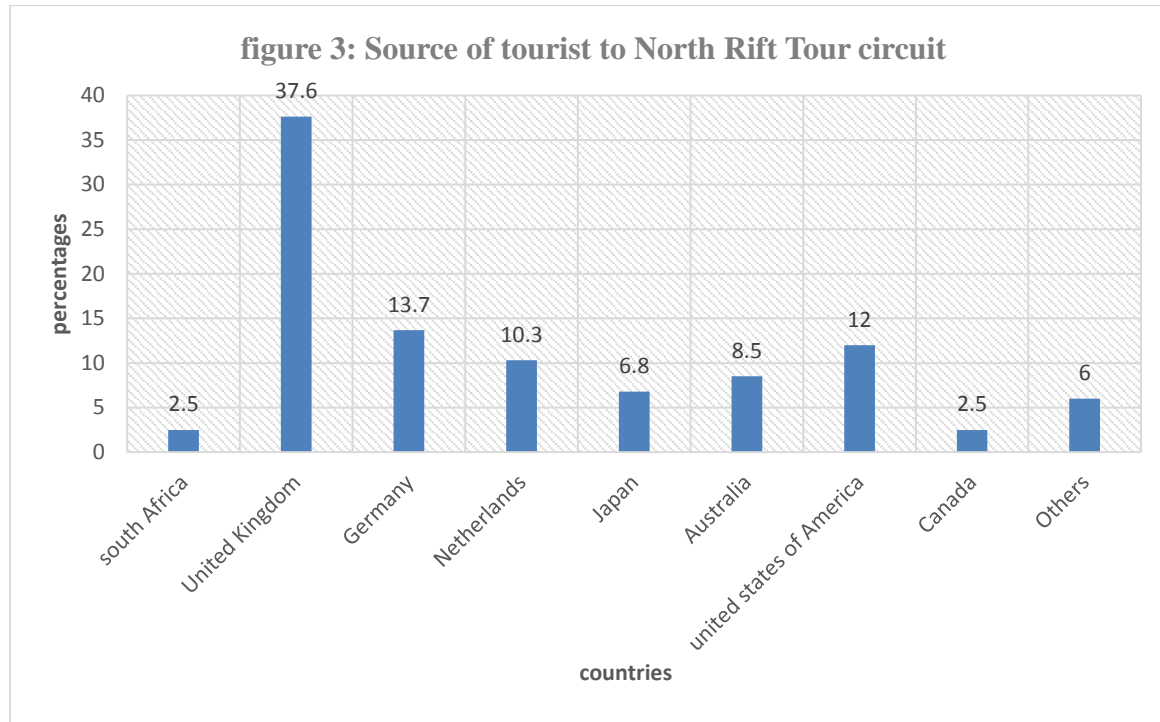
Type of Respondent	Male		Female				Total					
	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%				
Tour Guide	96	92.3	8	7.7	104	43.3						
Tourists	88	64.7	48	35.2	136	56.7						
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>76.7</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0</b>						
Educational levels	High school		College certificate		College diploma		Degree		Post graduate		Others	
	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%
Tour Guide	4	3.8	21	20.2	71	68.3	6	5.8	-	-	2	1.9
Tourists	17	12.5	22	16.2	42	30.9	51	37.5	4	2.9	-	-
Age of Respondents	Below 20 yrs		21 – 30 yrs		31 - 40 yrs		41-50 yrs		51 – 60 Yrs		Over 61yrs	
	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%	Frg.	%
Tour Guides	2	1.9	12	8.8	17	16.3	50	48.1	19	18.3	4	3.8
Tourists	-	-	14	10.3	27	19.9	6	4.4	66	48.5	23	16.9

**Key: Frg. frequency**

**Source: Primary Data, 2017**

### Tourist to North Rift tourist Region

21.3% of the tourist to the North Rift circuit region were domestic while international tourist were 78.7%, this findings confirms that Kenya's tour industry is foreign dominated in terms of visitor numbers to different tourists destinations. The main generating source of foreign tourist to the region were ; United Kingdom 37.6%, Germany 13.7% , America 12.0%, Netherlands 10.3%, Australia 8.5% and Japan at 6.8%. Both Canada and South Africa each generates 2.5% of the regions tourists while other countries generates 6.0% of tourist numbers figure 3.



Source: Field data, 2017

### Tour Guide Performance

Correlation between the eleven (11) tour guide performance attributes and tourist satisfaction

**Table3: Performance attributes and satisfaction correlations**

Performance attributes	Mean	Tourist satisfaction Pearson correlation (r)
Art of speech and communication	3.6122	0.3827*
Equipment & tools of trade	2.519	-0.1492*
Attitude	2.5973	0.5649*
Experiences	4.5717	0.7446**
Good personality	1.8197	-0.0047
Problem solver	3.3746	0.0184
Server and facilitator	2.7321	0.6890*
Skills and techniques	1.6527	0.8412**
Stimulate tourist interests	3.5291	0.0419
Technical knowledge	2.9466	0.5511*
Service customization	1.7735	0.0084

\*Statistically significant at level 0.10

\*\*Statistically significant at level 0.05

Source: Field data, 2017

The correlation coefficient (r) explains the strength of the relationships between dependent and independent variables. The values of (r) varied and ranged between -1.00 to +1.00 ( $-1.0 \leq r \leq 1.0$ ). The greater the value (r) the greater the relationship between the two variables. When the values of (r) are closer to zero it indicates insignificant or no relationship between the variables (Saris, 1984). The results indicated more positive correlations among the tour guide performance attributes and tourist satisfaction with a few of the attributes having lower impacts on tourist satisfaction table 3.

The hypothesis regarding tour guide performance attributes towards tourist satisfaction as indicated in the theoretical model figure 2 were analyzed using a series of multiple regression analysis with tourist satisfaction as dependent variable and tour guide performance attributes as independent variables. Table 3 displays the results of the regression analysis. Standardized regression coefficient (beta) are displayed to the right of the parameter estimates (table 3), so that the relative effect of each of the independent performance attribute variable could be assessed. For each of the performance attribute cases, the study was interested in whether there was statistically significant effect on tourist satisfaction on the services of the tour guides after controlling effects of other underlying factors.

**Art of Speech and Communication:** The performance attribute was significant ( $P < 0.001$ ) with beta coefficient value of .3827 implying positive effect on tourist satisfaction. Analyzing art of speech and communication by tour guides on tourist satisfaction, the result has it that a unit (1) of beta increase in the performance attribute can effect tourist satisfaction by more than .3827 units. Therefore, art of speech and communication service by tour guides was a moderate performance attribute contributing to tourist satisfaction as was highlighted by both foreign and domestic tourists

**Equipment and Tools of trade:** Equipment and guarding tools of trade was found to be negatively significant ( $P < 0.001$ ) with beta coefficient values of -0.1492, suggesting that unavailability and inadequacy of the equipment and guiding tools of trade impact negatively on the tour guide performance and contribute negatively to tourist satisfaction. This was the position perceived by 136 tourist interviewed, while 64.8% of the tour guides acknowledged the inadequacy table 3

**Tour Guide Attitude:** The attribute was significant ( $P < 0.001$ ) with beta coefficient value of .5640 implying a positive and stronger performance attribute substantially contributing to tourist satisfaction. The results indicates attitude of tour guides in guiding service is of paramount important in enhancing tourist satisfaction on guided tours as was noted by 56.4% of the respondents. 90.2% of the guides in the region appreciated the work with positive attitude

**Tour Guide Experiences:** The tour guide experiences was significant ( $P < 0.001$ ) with beta coefficient value of .7446 implying the performance attribute strongly correlates with tourist satisfaction. The results of the study reflects that tour guides of North Rift tourist region are more experienced and thus this performance attribute among the interviewed tourist respondents positively enhanced their satisfaction

**Good Personality:** The attribute had a weak negative significance ( $P < 0.001$ ) with beta coefficient value of -0.0047 implying that this attribute among tour guide of the region lowers tourist satisfaction as was indicated by the respondents. Tour guides of North Rift region do not strongly believe that good and positive personality play a role in contributing towards enhancement of tourist satisfaction. The relationship between good personality and tourist

satisfaction was negatively weak (-0.0047), whereas personality is performance driven attribute. Therefore, it is important that the guides of the region consider inculcating the attribute for better enhancement of tourist satisfaction

**Problem Solver:** Problem solver attribute was significant ( $P < 0.001$ ) with beta coefficient value of .0184 meaning weak contributor to tourist satisfaction. Analyzing the beta values for the attribute 'problem solver' and tourist satisfaction, the findings indicates that tour guides of the region are less problem solvers when faced with challenges during tour guiding service periods. Problem solving improves trustworthiness in the eyes of the tourist and enhances their confidence in the tour guide roles and performance, thus improves satisfaction on the service being offered.

**Server and Facilitator:** The attribute was significantly strong ( $P < 0.001$ ) with beta coefficient value of .6890 implying stronger relationship of the tour guide performance attribute (server and facilitator) and tourist satisfaction. The finding indicate that most tour guides of North Rift tourist region are service servers and facilitators in their guiding fields as was noted by tourist and therefore enhance their satisfaction through this performance attribute

**Guiding Skills and Techniques:** This attribute had a strong significance ( $P < 0.001$ ) with beta coefficient value of .8412 implying that North Rift tour guides have adequate guiding skills and techniques which help them in achieving and enhancing tourist satisfaction. Tour guide possession of skills and guiding techniques indicated a strong relationship with tourist satisfaction.

**Stimulation of Tourist interests:** Ability to stimulate tourist interests among tour guides was significant ( $P < 0.001$ ) but weak correlation with beta coefficient value of .0419. This finding suggested that North Rift region tour guides are unable to stimulate tourist interests as a performance attribute in enhancing tourist satisfaction

**Technical Knowledge:** Tour guides technical knowledge on the services and tour products was significant ( $P < 0.001$ ) with beta coefficient value of .5511, implying tour guide technical knowledge had a moderate relationship with tourist satisfaction. The findings revealed that tour guides technical knowledge moderately contributed to tourist satisfaction

**Service Customization:** This attribute among tour guides was significant but weak ( $P < 0.001$ ) performance attribute to tourist satisfaction with beta coefficient value of .0084. By analyzing beta coefficient, the findings revealed that there was weak relationship between the North Rift tour guides service customization and tourist satisfaction. Implying skills of service customization by tour guides is minimal in enhancing tourist satisfaction

### Testing Hypothesis

Hypothesis testing was done to test whether there was a positive relationship between independent variables (Tour guide performance attributes) to the dependent variable (tourist satisfaction). To test the formulated hypothesis, the statistical test used was the F-test and the coefficient of determination are indicated in table 4 below

**Table 4: F- test output analysis**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	$(\ddot{X})$ of Square	F	Sig.
Regression	146.749	12	74.139	7.462	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	686.327	61	6.482		
Total	833.076	73			

a) *Dependent variable: Tourist satisfaction*

b) *Predictors (Constant): Performance attributes*

### Hypothesis

H<sub>01</sub>: Tour guide performance attributes have positive and significant effects on tourist satisfaction.

Based on the results on table 4, obtained F-test results indicates that the F arithmetic amounted to 7.462 with end probability of 0.000 and based on the requirement significance at 5% level (0.005), the probability value of the regression coefficient is less than 0.05, therefore, the hypothesis ‘Tour guides performance attributes has positive and significant effect on tourist satisfaction’ is upheld. Thus the performance attributes as independent variables collectively and simultaneously have significant influence on tourist satisfaction.

### Tourist Satisfaction

#### Coefficient of Determination

The magnitude of the influence of tour guide performance attributes (the art of speech & communication, attitude, experiences, good personality, problem solver, server & facilitator, skills & techniques, stimulation of tourists’ interests, technical knowledge and service customization) to tourists’ satisfaction can be shown by the coefficient of determination as shown in table 5 below

**Table 5: Coefficient of Determination**

R	R square
.884 <sup>a</sup>	.7814

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Coefficient of Determination (Kd)} &= R^2 \times 100\% \\ &= .7814 \times 100\% \\ &= 78.14\% \end{aligned}$$

Based on results in table 5, the findings indicates that the correlation (R) of .884 shows the level of correlation and the coefficient of determination (R square) of .7814 (78.14%), implying that 78.14% of tourist satisfaction variable can be explained or influenced by tour guide performance attributes variables shown in figure 1, while the remaining .2186 (21.86%) are influenced by other variable factors which was out of scope of this study.

### Discussion and Conclusion

The study applied performance evaluation measurement analysis (PEMA) approach to evaluate tour guides performance in the Kenya’s North Rift tourist circuit region for both domestic visitors and foreign tourists. Pearson correlation (r) analysis was conducted on the tour guide performance attributes to generate implicitly derived importance scores. According to the analyzed correlation results, North Rift tourist circuit region’s tour guides should concentrate on improving their personality appearances as a priority issue in order to improve tourist satisfaction. This findings highlighted a well noted concern among the regions tour guide practices. Tour guide good personality including good grooming, appearing neat and tidy

would naturally enhance tourist perception of the guiding service and contribute to tourist satisfaction.

The performance evaluation correlation analysis also suggested that the North Rift tourist circuit tour guides should improve their skills on solving problems while offering guided tours. It was noted in the analysis that guides ability to solve problems was significantly low. Another identified performance attribute that needed to be improved by tour guides was the tour guide's ability to stimulate tourist interests towards the guiding services. This was noted to apply to both the tour guides serving domestic visitors and foreign tourists. The skill and ability to make the tourist happy and enjoy the guiding service was found to be significantly low. Therefore, the guides should consider using sense of humour in stimulating tourists' interests to enhance their satisfaction. Because few studies were found to be applying performance evaluation measurement analysis approach in tour guide performance research, it was difficult to compare the findings of this study with other similar studies. Some differences were observed between this findings and those of Black and Ham, (2006) and those of Cho and Wang (2011). While stimulation of tourists' interests was identified as a key component in this study, Cho and Wang found it non-essential performance attribute in tourist satisfaction. Black and Ham identified sense of humour as a possible tourist satisfaction enhancing attribute among the Vietnamese tour guides

Ways to strengthen North Rift tourist destination image as well as assimilative effects and emotional connections can be deduced from what the tour guides and tourist viewed as their guiding and trip highlights in various touristic points within the North Rift region. The North Rift region offers some of the unique touristic features which the tourist can sample including the mega fauna and great physical features. An effective interpretation strategy coupled with effective guiding could be valuable development and management tool that can enable tour guides of the region enhance overall tourist satisfaction

Despite the numerous limitations encountered, the obtained results could primarily serve as a recommendation for improving the North Rift region professional customer satisfaction services.

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