**THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF A COUNTRY**

Student Name

Institution

Course

Instructor

Due Date

**Introduction**

Tourism is a huge economic driver to many countries, it does not only serve as a leisure activity but it also helps with the growth of an economy. Tourism is a whole sector of its own that employs many people directly and indirectly. The significance it brings in injecting the financial health of a country is noticeable. “Tourism is now one of the world's largest industries and one of its fastest growing economic sectors” (Creaco & Querini 2003). One good example of how the value of tourism can be seen is during the 2020 period when the covid-19 pandemic was declared as a global pandemic leading to lockdowns. Many economies stagnated but the tourism sector was hugely affected with many businesses closing. This essay looks at the role that tourism plays in the economic development of a country.

**Employment Generation**

Tourism plays a major role in employment creation within an economy, the most direct impact of tourism is in job creation. There are some sectors that benefit from the tourism, this includes, hospitality, drivers, tour guides, hotels, restaurants, waiters, cleaners, etc. tourism also creates employment indirectly, some people supply foods to restaurants, some people are able to sell ornaments and other items to tourists.

**Increase economic growth**

Various governments have been on a rigorous exercise of attracting as many visitors as possible from all over the World in order to generate alternatives for increases in the gross domestic product (GDP). When a country receives international tourist, it earns foreign currencies. This money is used to balance trade deficit, development purposes and stabilize national economy. Tourist spend money on accommodation, transport, entertainment, food, health care and many other services. This directly contribute to the economy.

**Cultural exchange**

Because of tourism one is able to experience various cultural dynamic of various people, it allows one to interact and learn about other cultural believes and practices. In this way it promotes cultural exchange and understanding between deferent people. Various natural heritage as well as cultural heritage in the society are preserved because of tourism, without tourism some of this heritage would have been neglected and forgotten. “Many developing countries and regions see tourism development as an opportunity for economic and social development” (Mihalic (2002).

**Development of good transport system**

Tourism leads to the growth of Air transport, road transport, and railway transport to allow smooth movement of tourist from one place to another. The country needs to invest heavily on ensuring improvement of its infrastructure to be able to accommodate influx of visitors. This is achieved by building of airports, airstrip, and improvement of road network and improve railways transport system, this will improve the whole infrastructure system in the country, and this will not only benefit the tourism sector but all other sectors as well.

**Establishment of small business**

Tourism promotes establishment of small business such as curio shops which sell souvenirs, locally made handcrafts, traditional attires and goods to visitors.This allows small and medium enterprises to do well in the area making it a good revenue generation. Other small businesses includes opening of hotels: this provides hospitality services required by visitors when traveling.

**Tourism promotes international relation**

Tourism plays a softer role of public relations and enabling countries to form smooth relations with each other due to the ease of their respective citizens to interact with each other. A country is able to develop and sign memorandum of understanding to other nation to allow marketing of its natural heritage and collaborating together in areas that benefit each other. This help the country to be liked by other nations thus increasing in the number of tourists visiting. With this a country is able demonstrate its economic growth and strength in the international market allowing its prestige to be elevated internationally.

Human wild life interaction: community living around the Game Park and national game reserves are able to stay peacefully with wildlife, this help in reducing the incidence of pouching and ensure continuous influx of benefit arising from tourism. Domestic and wild animal share the same environment for grazing and shelter, when the government preserve its heritage domestic animals also benefits in the end.

**Creation of conservancies in the community**

These are tourist attraction areas where both wild animals and domestic animals stay together, grazing pattern of domestic animals is controlled by the management of the conservancy. With this the community benefit is dual trajectory.Revenue generated helps in improvement of infrastructure, healthcare and compensation in case of lose arising from wildlife.

**Cultural exploitation and environmental degradation**:

Although tourism helps in promoting cultural exchange in a country, there are instances where it may lead to negative exploitation of indigenous culture, this is through commercial use of culture and practices to do marketing. This leads to misuse of one’s culture, by doing so it will lead to the preserved culture losing its importance. Some tourist often leave used waste cans and polythene bag in the environment openly, this leads to pollution of environment affecting nature and wild animals. To mitigate these challenges, a country needs to ensure tourism is sustainable by ensuring there are clear guidelines for garbage disposal. Tourism promotes realization of economic potential available at rural areas, this is due to available natural attraction sites found there. This help in development of remote areas in rural villages and towns. This activity provides alternative source of income to the county.

**Conclusion**

Tourism plays a key role in the development of a nation economically, the tourism industry has been a major financial contributor to most economies. The tourism sector helps in generation of employment, earning of foreign exchange, helping in infrastructural development and promotion of cultural exchange. The industry also attracts investments from major investors in the tourism sector. Tourism however needs to be managed well to ensure sustainability of the industry and minimize the negative effects that the sector may have to the environment and the many stakeholders involved.

**References**

Creaco, S., & Querini, G. (2003). The role of tourism in sustainable economic development.

Mihalic, T. (2002). Tourism and economic development issues. Tourism and development: Concepts and issues, 81-111.