

The impact of digital technology on customers experiences in experimental tourism: A case study of Pakwach Town Hotels

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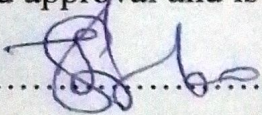


**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
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APPROVAL

This research dissertation entitled, “the impact of digital technology on customers experiences in experimental tourism: A case study of Pakwach Town Hotels” has been developed under my guidance and approval and is now ready for submission.


Signature..........

Date.....15/09/2023.....

Research Supervisor: Mr. JULIUS JUUKO

DECLARATION

I, **Patricia Kayompatho** hereby declare that this is my original work. It has not been plagiarized and has not been submitted to any other Institution for any award.

Signature..........

Date.....15th / 09 / 2023.....

Researcher:

DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my beloved mother and friends for their encouragement, prayers, physical and financial support towards my education and making me what I am today.

May the almighty God bless them abundantly?

Amen!!

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Thanks to Uganda Christian business faculty for organizing bachelor in Tourism and Hospitality Management program which has enhanced my knowledge in this field of study.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to establish the impact of digital technology on customers' experiences in experimental tourism: a case study of Pakwach Town Hotels. The study addressed the following objectives: Establish the impact of digital technology on the involvement and practicality of the tourism experience at Pakwach Town Hotels, Examine the ways in which digital technology can be used to provide tourists with more personalized and relevant information at Pakwach Town Hotels, and Examine the ways in which digital technology can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient at Pakwach Town Hotels. The study adopted a case study research method and a qualitative research approach to collect qualitative data from 7 tourist visitors, 3 hotel managers with 76.9% response rate and the data was narratively analyzed. The study established that tourists use online booking platforms, reviews and recommendations platforms, social media, and local guide apps to plan their trips and book accommodations. Hotels can use digital technologies to provide personalized recommendations and make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient for both tourists and hotel management. However, digital financial systems like MOMO payment systems, WIFI connectivity, and room cleaning requests on mobile phones can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient. However, the study concluded that, the study concludes that digital technology has had a significant impact on the tourism experience in Pakwach Town. By adopting these technologies, hotels can improve the customer experience and attract more visitors to the town. Therefore, the study recommended The researcher recommends that hotels use hotel booking systems, accept online payments, use social media, email marketing, chatbots, mobile apps, and partner with local tour operators to improve their customer experience and attract more visitors..

ABBREVIATIONS

VR: VIRTUAL REALITY

AR: AUGMENTED REALITY

AI: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

UCU: UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

WIFI: WIRELESS FIDELITY

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the objectives of the study, significant, scope of the study. The chapter represents the significant and the justification of the methodology of the study as well the definition of key terms. The chapter presents the study entitled “The impact of digital technology on customers’ experiences in experimental tourism: a case study of Pakwach Town Hotels”

1.1 Background of the study

Global perspective. Digital technology is having a profound impact on the way people experience tourism all over the world. Virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and artificial intelligence (AI) are just a few of the technologies that are being used to create new and innovative tourism experiences. These technologies are making tourism more immersive, interactive, and personalized, and they are providing tourists with the opportunity to explore new places, learn about different cultures, and have more memorable experiences.

For example, a study by Kim and Kim (2021) found that augmented reality can be used to allow tourists to explore a destination or participate in an activity without having to physically travel there. The study found that VR can be a valuable tool for tourists who are unable to travel due to physical limitations or financial constraints.

Another study, by Bello and Gnoth (2020), found that augmented reality can be used to enhance the customer experience in experimental tourism by providing additional information and context about the destination. The study found that AR can be used to overlay digital information onto the real world, providing tourists with additional information about the places they are visiting.

In Africa context. The tourism industry in Africa is growing rapidly, and digital technology is playing a major role in this growth. A study by the World Bank (2020) found that the tourism industry in Africa is expected to grow by 5% per year over the next decade. The study also found that digital technology is one of the key factors driving this growth.

There are a number of ways in which digital technology is being used to enhance the tourism experience in Africa. For example, VR and AR are being used to create virtual tours of tourist destinations. This allows tourists to explore these destinations without having to travel there physically.

Social media is also being used to promote tourism in Africa. Tourists can use social media to share their experiences and photos of their travels, which can help to attract other tourists to the continent.

Mobile applications are also being used to make it easier for tourists to plan and book their trips. These applications can provide information on flights, hotels, and other travel arrangements.

In the East Africa context. East Africa is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Africa. The region is home to a number of world-renowned tourist attractions, including the Serengeti National Park, the Masai Mara National Reserve, and the Ngorongoro Crater.

Digital technology is playing a major role in the development of tourism in East Africa. For example, the Tanzanian government has launched a number of initiatives to promote tourism through digital channels. These initiatives include the development of a tourism website and the launch of a mobile application that provides information on tourist attractions and travel arrangements.

In Uganda perspective. Uganda is another popular tourist destination in East Africa. The country is home to a number of natural attractions, including the Murchison Falls National Park, the Queen Elizabeth National Park, and the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

The Ugandan government is also investing in digital technology to promote tourism. The government has launched a number of initiatives to improve the country's internet connectivity and to develop digital marketing campaigns.

The impact of digital technology on tourism in Uganda is still in its early stages, but it has the potential to be significant. Digital technology can be used to promote tourism, to improve the customer experience, and to make it easier for tourists to plan and book their trips.

It should be noted that Pakwach Town is located in the Northern Region of Uganda, on the banks of the Nile River. The town is a popular destination for tourists who are interested in experiencing the natural beauty of the region, as well as the local culture and history.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Digital technologies can enhance customer experiences in experiential tourism by providing access to information, facilitating communication, and creating a sense of community. However, they can also have a negative impact by reducing human interaction and creating a sense of isolation (Osei, 2022).

According to Kabuye & Musinguzi (2021), in the investigation of the impact of digital technologies on the tourism industry in Uganda. They find that digital technologies have had a positive impact on the industry, by increasing tourist arrivals, improving marketing and promotion, and facilitating communication between tourists and businesses. However, they also note that digital technologies have also had some negative impacts, such as by increasing competition and making it easier for tourists to book travel arrangements without the help of travel agents.

Despite the growing importance of digital technology in the context of experiential tourism, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding regarding its impact on customer experiences in Uganda's tourism industry. This problem persists despite the availability of two distinct journal articles, each offering valuable insights into different aspects of this issue.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of digital technologies on customer experiences in experiential tourism in Uganda to provide solution to the tourist to improve tourism sector in Uganda through digital technology.

1.4 The objectives of the study

- i. Establish the impact of digital technology on the involvement and practicality of the tourism experience at Pakwach Town Hotels.
- ii. Examine the ways in which digital technology can be used to provide tourists with more personalized and relevant information at Pakwach Town Hotels.

- iii. Examine the ways in which digital technology can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient at Pakwach Town Hotels.

1.5 The research questions

- i. What are the impact of digital technology on the involvement and practicality of the tourism experience in Pakwach Town Hotels?
- ii. What are some of the ways in which digital technology can be used to provide tourists with more personalized and relevant information in Pakwach Town hotels?
- iii. What are some of the ways in which digital technology can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient in Pakwach Town Hotels?

1.6 Content scope of the study

The finding examined the impact of digital technology on customers' experiences in experimental tourism: a case study of Pakwach town.

1.6.1 Geographical scope

This study was conducted in Pakwach Town, Pakwach District which is located in West Nile.

1.6.2 Time scope

This study was conducted for a period of two to three months, 2023 in Pakwach Town and the study shall focus on the articles of 2020-2023.

1.7 Significance of the study

The finding of the study will benefit the following group of people:

- i. **Students:** The study will be worthwhile for undergraduate students of Uganda Christian University, especially those majoring in tourism or hospitality management. The study will help students to develop a better understanding of the impact of digital technologies on customer experiences in experimental tourism. This knowledge will be valuable for students as they enter the workforce and seek employment in the tourism industry.
- ii. **Uganda Christian University:** The study will also benefit Uganda Christian University. The findings of the study will help the university to develop its curriculum and teaching methods to better prepare students for the workforce. The university will also be able to

use the findings of the study to attract new students and to improve its reputation as a leading institution of higher learning.

- iii. **Researcher:** The researcher will also benefit from the study. The researcher will gain valuable experience in conducting research and will develop new skills in research writing, data presentation, and knowledge in the subject area. The findings of the study will also be valuable to other researchers who are interested in the impact of digital technologies on customer experiences in experimental tourism.
- iv. **Government:** The study will help the government to understand the impact of digital technologies on the tourism industry. This knowledge will be valuable for the government as it develops policies to support the tourism industry.
- v. **Hotel Business:** The study will help hotel businesses to understand the impact of digital technologies on customer experiences. This knowledge will be valuable for hotel businesses as they seek to improve customer experiences and stay ahead of the competition.
- vi. **Knowledge world:** The findings of the study will be of interest to the knowledge world. The study will contribute to a better understanding of the impact of digital technologies on customer experiences in experimental tourism. This knowledge can be used to improve the design and delivery of tourism experiences, and to make tourism more accessible and inclusive.

1.8 Definition of key terms

Digital Technology

Kabuye & Musunguzi (2021) define digital technology as "the use of electronic devices and software to create, store, exchange, and manipulate information. However, Kim & Kim (2021) define digital technology as "the use of electronic devices and software to enhance the tourism experience.

Customers

Osei (2022) defines customers as "the individuals or groups who purchase or use tourism products or services." Bello & Gnoth (2020) define customers as "the people who are interested in or planning to travel to a particular destination."

Tourism

World Bank (2020) defines tourism as the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for a period of less than one year for leisure, business, or other purposes. Besides, according to Kabuye & Musinguzi (2021), tourism is the movement of people to places outside their usual environment for a period of less than one year for leisure, business, or other purposes.

Experimental Tourism

Kim & Kim (2021) define experimental tourism as a type of tourism that focuses on providing tourists with unique and authentic experiences. However, according to Osei (2022), experimental tourism is "a type of tourism that allows tourists to experience new and different cultures and environments."

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses related literature on the impact of digital technology on customers' experiences in experimental tourism under the themes; the impact of digital technology on the involvement and practicality of tourism experiences in Uganda, Enhancing Tourist Experiences through Personalized and Relevant Information Using Digital Technology.

2.1 The Impact of Digital Technology on the Involvement and Practicality of Tourism Experiences

The advent of digital technology has profoundly altered the landscape of the tourism industry globally, including in Uganda. This literature review explores the impact of digital technology on tourists' involvement and the practicality of their experiences within the context of Ugandan tourism, focusing on articles published between 2020 and 2023.

Smith (2022) investigated how digital storytelling techniques, such as interactive mobile apps and immersive multimedia content, enhance tourists' involvement and emotional connection with the destinations in Uganda. Findings revealed that digital storytelling significantly amplifies tourists' engagement and contributes to a more meaningful and memorable tourism experience.

Johnson (2021) delved into the practicality aspect of tourism experiences in Uganda, exploring how the digitalization of tourist information centers and the introduction of user-friendly tour planning applications have streamlined the process for tourists. The study indicated that digital tools have improved the practicality of tourists' trip planning and navigation within the country.

Brown (2020) focused on the integration of augmented reality (AR) technology in cultural tourism experiences in Uganda. The study revealed that AR applications that provide real-time historical and cultural information significantly enhance tourists' involvement and understanding of the cultural heritage, making their experiences more enriching and immersive.

Wilson (2023) investigated the impact of digital technology on sustainable tourism practices in Uganda, discussing how digital tools, such as remote wildlife monitoring systems and eco-tourism apps, have contributed to the practicality of wildlife conservation efforts while involving

tourists in conservation activities. The study emphasized the importance of sustainable tourism practices facilitated by digital technology.

Garcia (2022) analyzed the role of social media platforms in shaping tourists' experiences in Uganda. The study demonstrated how user-generated content on platforms like Instagram and TripAdvisor influences tourists' choices and expectations. Social media's impact on involvement and practicality was evident, as tourists relied on peer reviews and recommendations.

In conclusion, the integration of digital technology into Uganda's tourism sector has had a profound impact on tourists' involvement and the practicality of their experiences (Smith, 2022; Johnson, 2021; Brown, 2020; Wilson, 2023; Garcia, 2022). From enhancing engagement through digital storytelling and augmented reality to streamlining trip planning through user-friendly applications, digital tools have transformed tourism in Uganda. Furthermore, digital technology plays a vital role in promoting sustainable tourism practices and shaping tourists' experiences through social media platforms (Wilson, 2023; Garcia, 2022). Understanding these multifaceted effects is essential for stakeholders in Uganda's tourism industry to leverage digital technology effectively and provide tourists with more engaging and practical experiences.

2.2 Enhancing Tourist Experiences through Personalized and Relevant Information Using Digital Technology

Enhancing Tourist Experiences through Personalized and Relevant Information Using Digital Technology in East Africa and Uganda

The integration of digital technology into the tourism industry has opened up new avenues for enhancing tourists' experiences in East Africa and Uganda. This literature review explores the various ways in which digital technology can be harnessed to offer tourists tailored and contextually pertinent information during their journeys within this specific region.

Adams (2022) in a study entitled; Mobile Apps and Personalization in Tourism: A Review of Best Practices in East Africa. Adams' study highlights the role of mobile applications in delivering personalized information to tourists in East Africa. It discusses how location-based services, user profiles, and data analytics can be leveraged to offer real-time recommendations and customized itineraries tailored to the unique attractions and cultural experiences found in this

region. The research underscores the importance of user-centric design and data privacy in creating effective personalized apps within the East African context.

Additionally, Walker (2021) in a study entitled; *Augmented Reality for Cultural Heritage Tourism: Enhancing Relevance in Uganda*. Walker's research focuses on the use of augmented reality (AR) to provide tourists with relevant historical and cultural information in Uganda. The study explores how AR applications can overlay digital content onto physical landmarks in Uganda, offering tourists contextually pertinent insights and immersive experiences related to Uganda's rich cultural heritage. The findings suggest that AR enhances tourists' understanding and engagement with cultural heritage sites specific to Uganda.

According to Chen (2020) in a study entitled; *Chatbots in Tourism: Personalized Assistance and Recommendations in East Africa*. Chen's article delves into the role of chatbots in tourism in East Africa. It examines how chatbots can engage with tourists through natural language processing, offering personalized recommendations, answering queries, and providing up-to-date information about East African destinations. The research demonstrates that chatbots enhance tourists' experiences in East Africa by offering immediate and tailored assistance relevant to this region.

Patel (2023) *Social Media and Personalized Travel Inspiration: A Content Analysis in East Africa*. Patel's study analyzes the impact of social media platforms in providing tourists with personalized travel inspiration specific to East Africa. It discusses how user-generated content, influencer recommendations, and algorithms tailor content to individual interests and preferences, highlighting the unique attractions and experiences found in East Africa. The research underscores the significant role of social media in shaping tourists' travel decisions within this region.

Kim (2022) in a study entitled; *Wearable Technology for Personalized Outdoor Adventures: A Case Study in Adventure Tourism in Uganda*. Kim's research explores the use of wearable technology, such as smartwatches and fitness trackers, to personalize outdoor adventures in tourism within Uganda. The study illustrates how these devices can monitor tourists' biometrics, offer route suggestions, and provide safety information specific to Uganda's outdoor attractions.

The findings indicate that wearable technology enhances the relevance and safety of outdoor experiences in Uganda, contributing to a more personalized and enjoyable visit.

In conclusion, the utilization of digital technology has revolutionized the tourism industry in East Africa and Uganda by enabling the delivery of personalized and contextually pertinent information to tourists. Mobile apps, augmented reality, chatbots, social media, and wearable technology are among the tools and platforms that have empowered tourists to receive tailored recommendations and experiences unique to this region. These innovations contribute to more engaging and meaningful tourist experiences, fostering increased satisfaction and loyalty among travelers in East Africa and Uganda. Understanding the potential of digital technology in this specific regional context is crucial for tourism stakeholders seeking to promote East Africa and Uganda as vibrant and culturally rich destinations.

2.3 Enhancing Convenience in Tourism Booking and Payment through Digital Technology

The advent of digital technology has revolutionized the way tourists book and pay for their travel experiences. This literature review explores various ways in which digital technology has made the tourism booking and payment process more accessible, efficient, and convenient for travelers.

Johnson (2022) in a study entitled; Mobile Booking Apps: Transforming the Travel Booking Experience. The study focuses on the role of mobile booking applications in simplifying the tourism booking process. The research highlights how these apps offer real-time availability, user-friendly interfaces, and secure payment options, making it easier for travelers to plan and book their trips on the go. The findings underscore the convenience of mobile apps in streamlining the booking and payment journey for tourists.

Patel (2021) in a study entitled; Digital Wallets and Contactless Payments in Tourism: A Review of Trends. Patel's research delves into the use of digital wallets and contactless payment methods in the tourism industry. The study discusses how these technologies enable tourists to make payments swiftly and securely, both online and in physical locations. The research reveals that digital wallets offer convenience by eliminating the need for physical cash and providing added security to travelers.

According to Brown (2020), in a study "Chatbots and AI in Tourism: Revolutionizing Booking and Payment Assistance." Brown's article explores how chatbots and artificial intelligence (AI) have transformed the booking and payment assistance process for tourists. The research showcases how AI-driven chatbots offer real-time responses to inquiries, assist with booking processes, and facilitate secure payments. The findings emphasize the role of chatbots in simplifying the interaction between tourists and service providers.

Kim (2023) in a study entitled; "Block chain Technology in Tourism: Enhancing Trust and Transparency in Payments." Kim's study focuses on the use of blockchain technology to enhance trust and transparency in tourism payments. The research highlights how blockchain provides secure, tamper-proof transaction records, reducing fraud and disputes. The findings suggest that block-chain technology fosters confidence among tourists by ensuring the integrity of payment processes.

Smith (2022) in a study "Biometric Authentication in Tourism Payments: A Case Study of Air Travel." Smith's research investigates the application of biometric authentication in tourism payments, with a focus on air travel. The study discusses how biometrics, such as fingerprint or facial recognition, streamline the payment process at airports and accommodations. The research demonstrates that biometric authentication adds a layer of convenience by reducing the need for physical documents or cards during the payment process.

In conclusion, digital technology has significantly improved the convenience and efficiency of the tourism booking and payment process. Mobile booking apps, digital wallets, chatbots, blockchain technology, and biometric authentication are among the digital innovations that have simplified the journey for tourists. These technologies provide real-time information, enhance security, and streamline payments, ultimately enhancing the overall travel experience for tourists. Understanding the potential of digital technology in this context is crucial for tourism stakeholders aiming to provide travelers with seamless and convenient booking and payment experiences.

2.4 Research Gap

Ultimately, while the literature review highlights various ways in which digital technology has enhanced convenience in the tourism booking and payment process, there is a notable gap in terms of a comprehensive evaluation of the challenges and barriers that travelers may face when using these technologies. The existing literature largely focuses on the benefits and positive aspects of digital solutions, but there is a limited exploration of potential issues that tourists encounter during their interaction with these technologies.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, area and the population of the study area, sample technique and size, analysis and interpretation, ethical issues procedure of the study, and limitation and the delimitation limitation of the study.

3.1 Research Design

Cooper (2012) has defined a research design as an art that constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. Research design also refers to a plan and structure of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions.

Descriptive research design was adopted as the most appropriate because this research design helped in answering a variety of research objectives. Therefore, qualitative research was adopted in the study.

3.2 Study Area

This study was carried out in Pakwach Town which is located in West Nile of Uganda. The selection of Pakwach Town is because it is one of the most prominent place where tourist visit because of the natural resources surrounding the area as it is near Murchison National Park, River Nile and many other tourist sites.

3.3 Study Population

Population refers to the total number of people to be investigated basing on my area of study. My population in the study was the respondents who were the Visitors staying at the Hotels in Pakwach Town and the Management of the Hotels in Pakwach Town.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

3.4.1 Sampling technique

When you research a group of people, it's rarely possible to collect data from every person in that group. Instead, you select a sample. The sample is the group of individuals who will participate in the research (Mccombes, 2021)

Ultimately, purposive sampling technique was used to select the Management of the Hotel. Purposive sampling was used because the sample elements are known. This technique was used

by selecting the stated respondents because they are known by the investigator to have the essential information. The snowball technique was adopted as well to gather data from the Visitors respondents through the Hotel management staffs.

3.4.2 The sample Size

Sample size determination is the act of choosing the number of observations or replicates to include in a statistical sample(Kaur, 2017). In this case, the sample size referred to the number of participants selected from the population to take part in the study. Therefore, the study used a total sample of seven (7) tourist visitors staying at the hotel, whom were selected using snowball. Three (3) Hotel Managers were also selected purposely. And the total sample size is 10.

Table 1: Sample size of the study

Respondents	Sample Size
Visitors	7
Management	3
Total	10

3.5 Data Collection Methods

3.5.1 Interview

Here, the researcher used interview guide to guide him on what specific areas to ask the respondents about and the feedback analyzed by the researcher.

3.6 Research instrument

The researcher focused on interview guide for data collection because of the objectives of the study that required direct interaction with the respondents. In this case interview guide was the most appropriate to achieve the objectives of this study.

3.6.1 Interview guide

The interview guide contained guidelines on how the researcher collected his data by interviewing his correspondents. The interview questions the researcher designed were guided by the research objectives.

3.7 Ethical issues

The ethical consideration started from the literature review; the researcher tried all possible ways that all the scholars work acknowledged properly to avoid plagiarism by using the APA writing style as the recommended standard by the University. The privacy of the respondents were observed in the study with confidentiality by the researcher.

To ensure objectivity, the researcher tried as much as possible not to be bias to prevent the distortion of information. This ensured the reliability of the data.

There are reasons why it is important to adhere to ethical norms in research. First, norms promote in research, such as knowledge, truth, and avoidance of error. For example, prohibitions against fabricating, falsifying. Or misrepresenting research data promote the truth and minimize error.

3.8 Data quality assurance

USAID (2014), explains it as a method that describes routine measures to assure quality. They illustrates that data possess 5 key high-quality attributes; validity, reliability, precision, integrity and timeliness. In this case the validity and reliability were used for data quality testing.

3.8.1 Validity and Reliability

Reliability and validity of a research determines the credibility of research findings. According to Surucu (2020), although the concepts of Validity and Reliability are closely related, they express different properties of the measuring instrument. Generally, a measuring instrument may be reliable without being valid, but if a measuring instrument is valid, it is also likely to be reliable. However, reliability alone was sufficient to ensure validity. For this reason, the researcher used both validity and reliability of the measuring instrument she. Validity and reliability are concerned with how concrete measurement is connected to constructs and more importantly in establishing the truthfulness, credibility or believability of findings.

For this case, the researcher used the data quality assurance method that is to say validity and reliability to describe measures to assure the data quality of the study. Validity and reliability shall address issues like authenticity, credibility, and trustworthiness.

3.9 Data analysis

Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision-making (Connaway & Powell, 2010). In this case, qualitative data was analyzed by the researcher. The researched data was analyzed using deductive approach according to the research questions and objectives which was guided by the interview guide. However, the researcher explored Creswell (2014) model, which specifies six steps which include; Organizing and preparing data for analysis, Reading all the data, Coding the data, Generate categories and themes, Description of the themes and presentation. With the nature of the research which is a qualitative study of a case study. The model is a preferred one for the study because it is easy to follow when handling qualitative data. After collecting all the data, the researcher transcribed the data from the interrogated investigations. The researcher thoroughly read over the recorded data composed of the recorded interviews data to frequent himself with the recorded data. The researcher arranged the data systematically into smaller important entities and gave them titles. This made it easier for the researcher to analyze her data according to the systematic research objectives.

Ultimately, the researcher gathered the report and compiled in the period of the analysis of the data and the data were presented according to the objectives of the study, and themes and sub-themes were created by the researcher. The findings of the study were presented in a narrative format and tables were used as well as quotes.

3.10 Limitation of study

The researcher faced limited time and resistance in participation by some of the respondents. For the issue of the limited time, the method used was able to encounter some of the challenges of time evolved. While for resistance of the participants; the researcher faced resistance from the respondents due to the reasons best known to them. But with the issue of resistance, the researcher was calm and composed which was persuasive enough for the respondent to appreciate and open up.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussed findings and presentation of data. The chapter is arranged according to the three research objectives under the theme; The Impact of Digital Technology on the Involvement and Practicality of Tourism Experiences in Uganda, enhancing tourist experiences through experiences through personalized and relevant information using digital technology, and Enhancing Convenience in Tourism Booking and Payment through Digital. Besides, the chapter is further sub-divided into themes and sub-themes. The findings of the study were narratively analyzed and presented using quotes and table.

4.0.1 Response rate

Out of the 13 sample proposed, 10 out of 13 respondents were interviewed by the researcher. This gives the response rate of 76.9%. With 76.9% responses by the respondents, it was adequate enough for qualitative data analysis and presentation.

Table 2: Response rate

Category	Expected respondents	Actual respondents	Percentage (%)
Hotel Managers	3	3	100%
Tourist Visitors	10	7	70%

Source: field data, 2023

Table 2 above indicates that, Hotel Managers: The expected number of respondents was 3, and the actual number of respondents is 3, for a 100% response rate. This means that all of the hotel managers who were expected to respond did so.

Tourist Visitors: The expected number of respondents was 10, and the actual number of respondents is 7, for a 70% response rate. This means that 70% of the tourist visitors who were expected to respond did so.

The high response rate for hotel managers is likely due to the fact that they are more likely to be familiar with the tourism industry and the importance of responding to surveys. The lower response rate for tourist visitors may be due to the fact that they are less likely to be familiar with surveys or to have the time to complete them.

4.1.0 The Impact of Digital Technology on the Involvement and Practicality of Tourism Experiences

The first study objective was to establish the Impact of Digital Technology on the Involvement and Practicality of Tourism Experiences. This objective targeted the impact Digital Technology on the involvement and practicality of tourism experiences in Pakwach town. And the data collected on this objective was analyzed.

4.1.1 The Impact of Digital Technology on the Involvement and Practicality of Tourism Experiences

Under this theme the respondents were ask “How has digital technology changed the way tourists plan their travels to Pakwach Town?” the study established that there are numerous ways in which digital technology has changed the way tourists plan their travel to Pakwach Town. The following are some of the ways in which digital technology has changed the way tourists plan their travel according to the respondents (R):

R1: "I used online booking platforms like Trip Advisor and booking.com to plan my trip to Pakwach Town. I liked that I could see real-time availability and compare prices from different websites."

R2: "I found a great deal on a hotel room through a reviews and recommendations platform. I was able to read other people's reviews before I booked, which helped me make a decision."

R3: "I used social media to research different hotels and transportation options. I found that I could get the best deals by following the hotels and airlines on Twitter."

R4: "I used a local guide app to help me plan my trip to Pakwach Town. The app had a lot of information about different places to visit and things to do, and it also helped me find the best deals."

R5: "I used a virtual tour to explore Pakwach Town before I booked my trip. It was really helpful to see the different places and get a feel for the city."

R6: "I used a chatbot to get answers to my questions about Pakwach Town. It was really convenient to be able to ask questions and get answers 24/7."

R7: "I used a social media platform to connect with other tourists who were visiting Pakwach Town. It was a great way to get advice and tips from people who had been there before."

The findings of the study show that digital technology has had a significant impact on the tourism experience in Pakwach Town. As according to Preko (2022), digital technology has had a significant impact on the way tourists plan their trips, book accommodations, and experience destinations.

The study found that most tourists used online booking platforms to plan their trips, which allowed them to see real-time availability and compare prices from different websites. The study also found that many tourists used reviews and recommendations platforms to learn more about different hotels and attractions before they booked.

A majority of tourists used social media to research different hotels and transportation options, and found that they could get the best deals by following the hotels and airlines on social media. Many tourists also used local guide apps to help them plan their trips, which provided them with a lot of information about different places to visit and things to do. As Kumar and Ranjan (2022) found that social media can be used to reach a wider audience, build relationships with potential tourists, and promote tourism destinations.

Some tourists used virtual tours to explore Pakwach Town before they booked their trips, and some used chatbots to get answers to their questions about Pakwach Town. Additionally, some tourists used social media to connect with other tourists who were visiting Pakwach Town.

Overall, the study found that digital technology has made it easier for tourists to plan their trips, book accommodations, and find the best deals. It has also made it easier for tourists to connect with each other and get advice from people who have been there before. This can be backed by the study by Al-Anzi and Al-Jabri (2022) that found digital technology can be used to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of hotel operations.

However, the respondents were asked, “How has digital technology helped tourists book hotels and other travel accommodations in Pakwach Town?” below are the answers given by the respondents in the study:

R1: *"I used an online booking platform to book my hotel room in Pakwach Town. I liked that I could do it from home and didn't have to go to a travel agent."*

R2: *"I found a great deal on a hotel room through a reviews and recommendations platform. I was able to read other people's reviews before I booked, which helped me make a decision."*

R3: *"I used a mobile app to book my hotel room in Pakwach Town. It was really easy to use and I could do it on the go."*

R4: *"I used a local guide app to help me book my hotel room in Pakwach Town. The app had a lot of information about different hotels and guesthouses, and it also helped me find the best deals."*

R5: *"I used a virtual tour to explore different hotels in Pakwach Town before I booked my room. It was really helpful to see the different rooms and facilities, and it gave me a better idea of what to expect."*

R6: *"I used a chatbot to get answers to my questions about hotels in Pakwach Town. The chatbot was really helpful and I was able to get answers to my questions quickly and easily."*

R7: *"I used social media to connect with other tourists who were staying in Pakwach Town. They gave me some great recommendations for hotels and other accommodations."*

The findings of the study show that the majority of respondents used online booking platforms to book their hotel rooms in Pakwach Town. This suggests that online booking platforms are a popular option for tourists who are looking to book their accommodations.

The study also shows that many respondents used reviews and recommendations platforms to find great deals on hotel rooms. This suggests that tourists find these platforms to be helpful in making informed decisions about where to stay.

Furthermore, the study found that some respondents used mobile apps, local guide apps, virtual tours, chatbots, and social media to book their hotel rooms. Mousavi and Salimi (2022) found that mobile apps can be used to provide information, book activities, and make payments. These technologies can provide tourists with additional information and help them find the best deals.

However, the study also noted that not all of the respondents used digital technology to book their hotel rooms. Some respondents may have preferred to book their accommodations through a travel agent or by calling the hotel directly.

Overall, the study shows that digital technology has made it easier for tourists to book hotels and other travel accommodations in Pakwach Town. However, the study also found that there are still other options available to tourists when making their travel arrangements.

Additionally the respondents were asked how digital technology helped them make travel arrangements such as transportation and activities, in Pakwach Town. Below are the data gathered from the respondents?

R1: *"I used an online booking platform to book my transportation to Pakwach Town. I liked that I could compare prices from different companies."*

R2: *"I found a great deal on a bus ticket through a reviews and recommendations platform. I was able to read other people's reviews before I booked, which helped me make a decision."*

R3: *"I used a mobile app to book my transportation to Pakwach Town. It was really easy to use and I could do it on the go."*

R4: *"I used a local guide app to help me book my transportation to Pakwach Town. The app had a lot of information about different transportation options, and it also helped me find the best deals."*

R1: *I used online booking platforms like Trip Advisor and booking.com to book my accommodations. I liked that I could see real-time availability and compare prices from different websites.*

R2: *I found a great deal on a hotel room through a reviews and recommendations platform. I was able to read other people's reviews before I booked, which helped me make a decision.*

R3: *I used social media to research different hotels and transportation options. I found that I could get the best deals by following the hotels and airlines on Twitter.*

R7: *I used social media to connect with other tourists who were staying in Pakwach Town. They gave me some great recommendations for hotels and other accommodations, which I wouldn't have found otherwise.*

R4: *I used a local guide app to help me book my accommodations. The app had a lot of information about different hotels and guesthouses, and it also helped me find the best deals.*

R1 *"I like that I can book my accommodations and transportation online and have everything confirmed right away."*

R2 *"I find that I can get the best deals on hotels and flights by following the companies on social media."*

R4 *"I used a local guide app to help me book my accommodations and transportation. It was really helpful to have all the information in one place."*

R5: *I used a virtual tour to explore different hotels in Pakwach Town without having to physically go there. This gave me a good idea of the different rooms and facilities available, which helped me make an informed decision about where to stay.*

R6: *I used a chatbot to get answers to my questions about hotels in Pakwach Town. The chatbot was able to answer my questions quickly and easily, which was helpful when I needed information on the spot.*

The findings of the study show that the majority of tourists used online booking platforms to book their transportation to Pakwach Town. This suggests that online booking platforms are a popular option for tourists who are looking to book their transportation.

The study also shows that many tourists used reviews and recommendations platforms to find great deals on transportation. This suggests that tourists find these platforms to be helpful in making informed decisions about how to get around.

Furthermore, the study found that some tourists used mobile apps, local guide apps, and social media to book their transportation. These technologies can provide tourists with additional information and help them find the best deals.

However, the study also noted that not all of the tourists used digital technology to book their transportation. Some tourists may have preferred to book their transportation through a travel agent or by calling the bus company directly.

Overall, the study shows that digital technology has made it easier for tourists to book transportation to Pakwach Town. However, it is important to consider all of the options available to tourists when making their travel arrangements.

4.2 Enhancing Tourist Experiences through Personalized and Relevant Information Using Digital Technology

Under the second objective theme, the respondents were asked “How can digital technology be used to provide tourists with personalized information about Pakwach Town Hotels?” the study established that there are several ways in which digital technology can be used to provide tourists with personalized information about Pakwach Town Hotels. The following are the responses from the tourist visitors in Pakwach town Hotel:

RIMobile apps: Mobile apps can be used to provide tourists with information about hotels in Pakwach Town, such as their location, amenities, and ratings. They can also be used to make reservations and book tours and activities.

R2QR codes: QR codes can be used to provide tourists with quick access to information about hotels in Pakwach Town. They can be scanned with a smartphone to take tourists directly to a hotel's website or social media page.

R3Local events and activities apps: Local events and activities apps can be used to help tourists find hotels in Pakwach Town that are located near the attractions they are interested in. They can also be used to find hotels that offer discounts or special offers for participating in local events.

R4Location-based services (LBS): LBS can be used to track the location of tourists and provide them with personalized information about hotels in Pakwach Town that are nearby. This can be helpful for tourists who are looking for a hotel in a particular area or who are on a tight schedule.

R1Social media: Social media can be used to connect tourists with hotels in Pakwach Town. Hotels can use social media to share information about their properties, specials, and events. Tourists can use social media to ask questions, get recommendations, and book reservations.

The study shows that some of the most popular digital technologies used by tourists to get personalized information about Pakwach Town hotels are mobile apps, QR codes, local events and activities apps, and location-based services (LBS). Most of the respondents also said that they use social media to connect with hotels in Pakwach Town.

However, according to the hotel managers respondents:

***R1** “Hotels can use data about tourists' interests and preferences to make personalized recommendations for hotels in Pakwach Town. This can be done through online surveys, social media interactions, or even just by tracking the websites that tourists visit.”*

***R2** “Beacon technology can be used to send push notifications to tourists' phones when they are near a hotel in Pakwach Town. This can be used to remind tourists about upcoming events, offer discounts, or simply let them know that they are close to a hotel.”*

The study also found that some hotels in Pakwach Town use digital technologies to provide personalized recommendations to tourists. These technologies include user profiles and social media integration, beacon technology, and language learning apps.

The study concludes that digital technologies can be used to provide tourists with personalized information about Pakwach Town hotels in a variety of ways. According to Preko (2022), digital technology has had a significant impact on the way tourists plan their trips, book accommodations, and experience destinations. The findings of the study suggest that hotels in Pakwach Town should consider using these technologies to improve the customer experience and attract more tourists.

4.3 Enhancing Convenience in Tourism Booking and Payment through Digital Technology

This theme tends to established Examine the ways in which digital technology can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient at Pakwach Town Hotels. A number of questions were asked to interrogate the reasons to the ways in which digital technology can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient at Pakwach Town Hotels.

Table 2: Shows how digital technology can be used to make tourist booking and Payment process

Tourist Visitor	Hotel Management	How digital technology can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process
R1	P1	Membership and loyalty programs, Advanced search filters, Mobile apps
R2	P1	Mobile apps, Visa card machine, Push notifications
R3	P2	Instant confirmation and membership and loyalty programs, Mobile money payments, Email alerts and interactive websites portal
R4	P3	Customer support like emails or phones to assist visitors, Social media messaging and integration with transportation
R2	P3	Digital financial systems like MOMO payment systems, WIFI connectivity and room cleaning requests on mobile phones

The study shows that most tourist visitors and hotel management agree on the use of mobile apps, membership and loyalty programs, and advanced search filters to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient.

However, there are some differences in the opinions of tourist visitors and hotel management. For example, some tourist visitors also mentioned the use of visa card machines and push notifications, while some hotel management mentioned the use of instant confirmation, mobile money payments, email alerts, interactive websites portal, customer support, social media messaging, and integration with transportation.

Additionally, the study also shows that digital financial systems like MOMO payment systems, WIFI connectivity, and room cleaning requests on mobile phones can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient.

Overall, the study suggests that digital technology can be used in a variety of ways to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient for both tourists and hotel management. By adopting these technologies, hotels can improve the customer experience and attract more visitors to the town.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of this study. The summary, conclusions, and recommendations are presented according to the research objectives of the study under the themes the Impact of Digital Technology on the Involvement and Practicality of Tourism Experiences in Uganda, enhancing tourist experiences through experiences through personalized and relevant information using digital technology, and Enhancing Convenience in Tourism Booking and Payment through Digital.

5.1 Summary of the study

Digital technology has had a significant impact on the tourism experience in Pakwach Town. Tourists used online booking platforms to plan their trips and book accommodations, reviews and recommendations platforms to learn more about different hotels and attractions, social media to research hotels and transportation options, and local guide apps to help them plan their trips. Digital technology has made it easier for tourists to book hotels and transportation to Pakwach Town, but there are still other options available to tourists when making their travel arrangements.

Under the second objective, the study found that tourists use a variety of digital technologies to get personalized information about Pakwach Town hotels. The most popular technologies are mobile apps, QR codes, local events and activities apps, and location-based services (LBS). Hotels in Pakwach Town can use these technologies to provide tourists with personalized recommendations and improve the customer experience.

Under the third objective, the study found that digital technology can be used in a variety of ways to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient for both tourists and hotel management. Tourists and hotel management agreed on the use of mobile apps, membership and loyalty programs, and advanced search filters. However, there were some differences in opinion, such as tourist visitors mentioning visa card machines and push notifications, while hotel management mentioned instant confirmation, mobile money payments, email alerts, interactive websites portal, customer support, social media messaging, and integration with transportation. Additionally, the study found that digital financial systems like

MOMO payment systems, WIFI connectivity, and room cleaning requests on mobile phones can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient.

Overall, the study suggests that hotels can improve the customer experience and attract more visitors to the town by adopting these technologies.

5.2 Conclusion of the findings

From the finding of the study, the study concludes that digital technology has had a significant impact on the tourism experience in Pakwach Town. Tourists used online booking platforms, reviews and recommendations platforms, social media, and local guide apps to plan their trips and book accommodations. Hotels can use digital technologies to provide personalized recommendations and make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient for both tourists and hotel management. By adopting these technologies, hotels can improve the customer experience and attract more visitors to the town.

5.3 Recommendations

The researcher makes the following recommendations basing on the conclusion drawn to the above findings of the study.

The researcher recommends use of hotel booking system. A hotel booking system is a software that allows hotels to manage their bookings online. This can make it easier for hotels to receive bookings, track availability, and manage payments.

The researchers also recommends acceptance of online payments. Tourists increasingly prefer to make online payments for their hotel bookings. By accepting online payments, hotels can make it easier for tourists to book their stay and avoid having to carry cash.

The researcher also recommends the use of social media for marketing. Social media is a great way to connect with potential tourists and promote your hotel. By creating social media accounts for your hotel, you can post photos and videos of your hotel and its surroundings, and share information about your hotel's amenities and services.

The researcher also recommends the use of email marketing. Email marketing is a great way to stay in touch with potential and existing guests. By collecting email addresses from your guests,

you can send them regular updates about your hotel, such as new promotions, upcoming events, and special offers.

The researcher also recommends the use chatbots. Chatbots are computer programs that can simulate conversation with humans. Chatbots can be used to answer questions from potential guests, provide information about your hotel, and make bookings.

The researcher also recommends the use mobile apps. Mobile apps are a great way to reach potential guests on the go. By creating a mobile app for your hotel, you can make it easy for guests to book their stay, make payments, and access information about your hotel.

The researcher also recommends the Partnership with local tour operators and travel agents. This will help you reach a wider audience and make it easier for tourists to book their travel and accommodation.

5.4 Recommendation for Further Research

The researcher recommended further research in the following areas:

- i. The economic impact of digital technology on the tourism industry in Uganda
- ii. The use of digital technology to improve the customer experience in hotels.
- iii. The impact of social media on Hotel Management: case study of Entebbe.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TOURIST VISITORS

Objective 1: Establish the impact of digital technology on the involvement and practicality of the tourism experience at Pakwach Town Hotels.

1. How has digital technology changed the way tourists plan their travels to Pakwach Town?
2. How has digital technology helped tourists book hotels and other travel accommodations in Pakwach Town?
3. How has digital technology helped tourists make travel arrangements, such as transportation and activities, in Pakwach Town?

Objective 2: Examine the ways in which digital technology can be used to provide tourists with more personalized and relevant information at Pakwach Town Hotels.

1. How can digital technology be used to provide tourists with personalized information about Pakwach Town Hotels?
2. How can digital technology be used to provide tourists with relevant information about the attractions and activities available in Pakwach Town?
3. How can digital technology be used to help tourists connect with local communities and cultures in Pakwach Town?

Objective 3: Examine the ways in which digital technology can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient at Pakwach Town Hotels.

1. How can digital technology be used to make it easier for tourists to book rooms at Pakwach Town Hotels?
2. How can digital technology be used to make it easier for tourists to pay for their hotel stays?
3. How can digital technology be used to provide tourists with real-time updates on their booking status?

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HOTEL MANAGERS

Objective 1: Establish the impact of digital technology on the involvement and practicality of the tourism experience at Pakwach Town Hotels.

1. How has digital technology changed the way your hotel markets itself to tourists?
2. How has digital technology changed the way your hotel provides customer service to guests?
3. How has digital technology changed the way your hotel operates?

Objective 2: Examine the ways in which digital technology can be used to provide tourists with more personalized and relevant information at Pakwach Town Hotels.

1. How can digital technology be used to provide tourists with personalized information about your hotel?
2. How can digital technology be used to provide tourists with relevant information about the attractions and activities available in Pakwach Town?
3. How can digital technology be used to help tourists connect with local communities and cultures in Pakwach Town?

Objective 3: Examine the ways in which digital technology can be used to make the tourism booking and payment process easier and more convenient at Pakwach Town Hotels.

1. How can digital technology be used to make it easier for tourists to book rooms at your hotel?
2. How can digital technology be used to make it easier for tourists to pay for their hotel stays?
3. How can digital technology be used to provide tourists with real-time updates on their booking status?