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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

**Meeting, Incentive, Convention and Exhibition (MICE) Tourism in
Addis Ababa: Current Practices, Challenges and Prospects**

**Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts in Tourism Development and Management.**

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**April 2022
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

DECLARATION

I declare that the project "MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa: Current Practice, Challenges, and Prospects" is my individual research, that this has not been presented at Addis Ababa University or any other institution, and all information sources used in the research have been correctly acknowledged.

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Table of Contents

Contents	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
Table of Contents	ii
List of Table	vi
List of Figure.....	vi
List of Abbreviation	vii
ABSTRACT.....	viii
CHAPTER ONE	1
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Background of the Study.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem	3
1.3. General Objective.....	4
1.3.1. Specific Objectives.....	4
1.3.2. Research Question	5
1.4 Significance of the Study	5
1.4.1. Policy Significance.....	5
1.4.2. Academics Significance	5
1.5 Scope of the Study.....	6
1.5.1 Content Scope.....	6
1.5.2. Methodological Scope	6
1.6 Operational Definition.....	6
CHAPTER TWO	7
2. Literature review	7
2.1. Historical Background of MICE Tourism.....	7
2.2. The Development of Convention Bureau.....	8
2.2.1. Meeting, Convention and Event Tourism	9
2.2.2. Exhibition and Incentive Tourism	10
2.2.2.1 Incentive travel.....	12
2.2.3 Concept of MICE Tourism.....	13
2.2.4. MICE Tourism in Ethiopia.....	15

2.2.4.1. Ethiopia Convention Bureau.....	16
2.2.4.2. Current Trend of MICE Tourism industry in Addis Ababa.....	16
2.2.4.3. Country Exhibition Spaces as part of one segment of MICE tourism.....	17
2.2.5 .Challenge of MICE tourism Development in Ethiopia.....	18
2.2.6. Prospects of Tourism in Addis Ababa.....	21
2.2.6.1. Chamber Hub.....	22
2.2.6.2. Addis Africa International Convention and Exhibition Center (AAICEC).....	22
2.3. Empirical Evidence.....	23
2.4 Conceptualizing MICE Tourism Practices and Challenges.....	25
2.4.1 Practices of MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa.....	25
2.4.2. Conceptual framework.....	26
CHAPTER THREE.....	27
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	27
3.1. Introduction.....	27
3.1.1 Description of the Study Area.....	27
3.2. Research Design.....	28
3.3. Population of the Study.....	28
3.4. Sampling Technique and Sample Size.....	29
3.5. Data source and type.....	29
3.5.1. Data Collection Methods.....	30
3.5.1.1 Interview.....	30
3.5.1.2 Personal observation.....	30
3.5.1.3. Focus Group Discussion FGD.....	31
3.6. Data analysis.....	31
3.7 Limitations of the study.....	32
3.8. Ethical Considerations.....	32
3.9. Summary of the Chapter.....	32
CHAPTER FOUR.....	33
4. Data presentation, Analysis and Interpretation.....	33
4.1 Results of the interview on MICE tourism.....	33
4.1.1 Status of the interview respondent.....	33

4.1.2 Summary of the findings from the interview participants.....	34
4.1.3 The respondents Gender and educational background.....	34
4.1.4. The current MICE tourism practices in Addis Ababa.....	35
4.1.4.1 MICE bidding practices	35
4.1.4.2. Venues service practices	36
4.1.4.3. MICE tourism statistics collection practices and infrastructure	38
4.1.4.4. MICE tourism marketing practices.....	40
4.1.5. Summary of Current practices of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa.....	41
4.2. Current Challenges to MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa.....	42
4.2.1. Organizational challenges	42
4.2.2. Lack of full understanding of the MICE sector.....	43
4.2.3 Lack of Standardization of MICE services providers	44
4.2.4. Inter-Organizational Challenge	45
4.2.5. Collaboration towards MICE tourism development strategy.....	46
4.2.6. Absence of Legal Framework for MICE Tourism	48
4.2.7 New Culture of Virtual Meeting and COVID-19.....	49
4.2.8 Poor practice of MICE Business Networking.....	50
4.2.8.1 Poor practice of MICE Sales and Bidding.....	51
4.2.8.2 Budget related challenges.....	53
4.2.8.3 Competition Challenge	54
4.2.8.4 Lack of MICE Brand Image	55
4.2.8.5 Lack of MICE market focused research in Addis Ababa	56
4.2.8.6. Current Political instability.....	57
4.3. Prospects of MICE tourism development in Addis Ababa.....	58
4.3.1. Venue development prospects.....	59
4.3.2. International MICE Bidding Prospects.	59
4.3.3. Technology prospects.....	60
4.3.4. Infrastructure prospects	61
CHAPTER FIVE	63
5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	63
5.1. Conclusion.....	63

5.2. Recommendation.....	64
5.2.1. Recommendations for Government.....	64
5.2.2. Recommendations for the Ministry of Tourism / Ethiopia Convention Bureau	64
5.2.3. Recommendations for the Ethiopia chamber of commerce and sectorial association	65
References.....	66
ANNEX 1.....	69
ANNEX 2.....	74

List of Table

	Page
Table 1. Total indoor exhibition space (sq m) & country ranking in Africa	18
Table 2. Sample Frame	29

List of Figure

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework.....	26
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List of Abbreviation

ACTB-	Addis Ababa Culture and Tourism Bureau
AAICEC –	Addis Ababa International Convention and Exhibition Center
AU-	African Union
ET –	Ethiopian Airline
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
ICCA -	International Congress and Conventions Association
MICE -	Meeting, Incentive, Convention and Exhibition
MOT -	Ministry of Tourism
OAU-	Organization of African Union
TE-	Tourism Ethiopian
CB –	Tourism minister Convention Bureau
UNECA -	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNWTO -	United Nations World Tourism Organization
UIA -	Union of international association

ABSTRACT

MICE tourism, which denotes meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibition, has emerged as a significant sector in tourism. However, the practices and challenges of MICE tourism in Ethiopia have not been fully investigated. This study, therefore, aims to fill in this research gap by exploring the practices challenge and prospects of meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) tourism in Addis Ababa. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of study consisted of the employees of Ethiopian convention Bureau, chamber of commerce and sectorial association, Ethiopian event organizers some selected hotels and Addis Ababa Culture, Art and Tourism Bureau. The sample size of this study was 16 individuals determined using purposive sampling. From the research results, the practices of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa show that in five standard hotels however only UNECA and AU conference facilities that fit with the international standard. Still existing meeting facilities in AU and UNECA has relatively small capacities and are not business oriented. Regarding the challenges in the development of the MICE tourism industry in Addis Ababa, including absence of full understanding of the MICE sector, lack of standardization of MICE services providers, lack of MICE tourism policy ,lack of legal framework for MICE tourism, poor practice of MICE sales and bidding ,poor practice of MICE business networking, lack of MICE brand image and lack of MICE market focused research ,inadequate data for planning of MICE sector, strong international competition,COVID-19,political instability and several marketing challenges are identified. Moreover, the prospect of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa the expansion of international airports at Addis Ababa, the ongoing construction of AACEC, AAEC and the development of attraction sites in Addis Ababa and effort of Ethiopian Convention bureau on bidding international exhibition and conference is a huge step forward in increasing traffic to Addis Ababa's MICE tourism.

Key Words: MICE Tourism, practices, challenges and prospects

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Tourism industry is one of the engines for economic development in most developing countries (Saurabh and Vinary, 2010). In such countries, there are different forms of tourism activities, such as adventure tourism, business tourism, MICE tourism (rarely used interchangeably with conference tourism) and ecotourism are among often practiced. The acronym MICE stands for meetings, incentives, conferences and events. Accordingly, MICE tourism implies for tourism activities primarily involving a group of travellers that plans, books and organises conferences, seminars and other events. Moreover, MICE tourists undertake side activities such as visits to attraction within a city, such as museums and art galleries, religious temples, skyscrapers and buildings of historical significance, monuments and memorials, cemeteries, and so on, are popular activities among business travelers. The Meeting, Incentive, Convention, and Exhibitions (MICE) industry, which is an important and rising segment of the tourist industry with a lot of potential, has been the driving force.

According to World Travel and Tourism Council(WTTC), tourism supported an estimated 330 million jobs, 1 in 10 jobs around the world and contributed 10.3% of global GDP in 2019 (WTTC 2020). The leisure tourism accounts for 70% of the global tourism activities. Nonetheless, the MICE tourism has also been growing globally. MICE, or business tourism spending, exceeded \$ 1.4 trillion in 2019, accounting for more than half of all tourism spending globally. Despite the fact that business travelers account for only 25% of total international tourist flows, business tourism contributes for about 60% of the tourism industry, according to the World Tourism Council (WTC). The MICE industry consists of multi-sectors of hospitality services, including lodging, food and beverage, catering, convention service, convention facility supply, transportation, tourism, retail, and entertainment and thus bears great importance for the local economy of a destination (Yang & Gu, 2012).

In addition the MICE industry is growing and maturing at a rapid rate, it is recognized as a sector that draws direct and indirect revenue to host destinations, creates employment opportunities and

generates foreign exchange. Travellers attending MICE activities have a purpose beyond leisure tourism and are in fact business travellers. Moreover, the official definition of tourism given by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) includes those who travel for business or professional reasons are considered as a tourist.

These business travellers are connected to different sectors of the tourism and hospitality industry through their MICE activities. For instance, we can think of business travellers who travel to a city to attend an exhibition. The MICE industry's overall impact is predicted to be far greater than the spending connected with attending a convention. The amount of conference spending triggers a chain of economic transaction that result in increased spending in other areas of a region's economy, such as food, drinks, retail, entertainment, transportation, and lodging (Braun & Rungeling, 1992). This business traveler's excursion period also likely expected to take more than a day. Tourism industry is the power with vast potential to be hub of MICE industry.

The report of Events Industry Council shows that Africa accounted for only 5.3 percent of worldwide business event attendees and 2.2 percent of global direct spend in 2017. Moreover, According to international congress and convention association (ICCA) and Union of international association (UIA) Africa is underperforming in terms of world business events arrivals, accounting for only 3% of international association meetings in 2018 and 6% of international organization and association meetings.

Ethiopia is ranked 4th and 73rd in Africa and globally respectively in terms of international meetings-related performance on a global scale by International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA, 2017). As the MICE tourism blossoms around the world, Ethiopia is also uniquely positioned to reap the benefits, owing to its unique place in Africa's diplomatic landscape. Addis Ababa, known for hosting various international and regional organizations including the African Union (AU) headquarters and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), is also another growing tourist attraction places in the country. With its remarkable safety record and forward-looking infrastructure boom, today Addis Ababa, the capital city, stands among the top capitals in the world, hosting major regional and global events.

It is, therefore, imperative to examine the practice of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa as well as the challenges that may exist in this regard and thereby show its future prospects.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In many destinations, the MICE industry plays a critical role in the development of tourism. Reservation of venues and hotels for MICE travelers, the professionalism of the employees and infrastructure of the venue are the most significant criteria. MICE tourists are primarily professionals from a number of critical areas, such as medical, finance, agriculture and tourism etc. Furthermore, MICE tourism is a relatively young and under-researched field of study worldwide. In Africa, as well as Ethiopia, there is a scarcity of literature on MICE tourism. On the other hand, the development of MICE tourism brings the existence of convention marketing organizations at both national and international level. Many convention and visitor bureaus were established worldwide and in Africa, such as Rwanda, Kenya, South Africa and recently Ethiopia it is known as Ethiopia Convention Bureau. This calls for a thorough investigation of the current practices of MICE tourism and impeding factors in diplomatic cities such as Addis Ababa.

Notwithstanding its high potential to become one of the most prominent conference venues on the continent, limited conference facilities and accompanying services are available in Addis Ababa city. This may be one of the causes for the sector's poor performance in the city through an investigation is needed. Furthermore, infrastructure is a fundamental requirement in the MICE event planning process. Accessibility to public transportation, the quality of hotel services, and the capacity of congress facilities are all factors that contribute to a competitive edge in becoming destination for major events and the arrival of attendees.

In sum, the current practices of MICE tourism and limiting factors for fully realizing the potential of Addis Ababa for MICE tourism need to be investigated. Such studies are crucial for the sector's future development. Nonetheless, two studies conducted focusing on MICE tourism in Addis Ababa are available (Kalleab 2012, Wondemagegn 2019). The Study of Kalleab (2012), focused on the challenges, opportunities and prospects of conference tourism development in Addis Ababa in general and MICE tourism discussed as one aspect. The finding indicates that absence of appropriate structure and organization for tourism sector; insufficient conference facilities and service providers, lack of professionalism and weak human resource development

in the sector and absence of pre and post conference activities are the major challenge identified. In other study, Wondmagegn (2019) identified challenge of event organizers in Addis Ababa indicated that limited awareness about MICE and the organizers, substandard facilities and services, budget constraint, time constraint, limited education and training, problem in VISA facilitation, lack of international representation, limited safety and security, lack of national convention bureau, and weak event organizers association are among identified challenges. Furthermore, the Role of event tourism by Jal (2019), his work finding reveals that event tourism can be used by event organizer and government as a tool for economic gain, destination development and branding, it can also bring negative impacts to the community if not properly planned and organized.

However, no published works are available in relation to current practices of MICE tourism and its barriers for development in Addis Ababa. Thus, the existence of such limited researches throughout the country and absence of studies in the study areas initiated the researcher to raise the issue under consideration. In this study, the current situation of MICE tourism and its barriers for development was explored. Consequently, there is a need to conduct research on current status of MICE tourism in the context of Addis Ababa in consideration of the fact that the implementation of government tourism policies and strategies. In due consideration, the purpose of this thesis was to examine the current practices and barriers of MICE tourism industry in Addis Ababa. By doing so, the study was not only add a new insight about MICE tourism in Addis Ababa but also shows the sector's prospect so that MICE businesses and affiliated stakeholders can benefit from the findings of this study.

1.3. General Objective

The main aim of this study is to assess current practice, challenges and prospects of (MICE) tourism in Addis Ababa.

1.3.1. Specific Objectives

1. To explore the Current practices of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa.
2. To identify challenges of MICE tourism Development in Addis Ababa
3. To show the prospects of MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa

1.3.2. Research Question

1. What are the practices of MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa?
2. What are the main challenges in Addis Ababa MICE Tourism Development?
3. What are the prospects of MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa ?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is enable researchers, academicians, Event planners, destination management organizations, and other stakeholders such as policy makers, in gaining a better understanding of MICE tourism. It is serve as a source material or reference for future academics, as well as and it can propose alluring advantage to move new business owner who are keen on MICE industry by demonstrates fundamental difficulties and Prospects.

1.4.1. Policy Significance

The study is aimed to support with MICE tourism and it show how the industry can embrace MICE tourism policy formulation by defining the sector's Future Prospects and changing the country's economic and social relevance. In addition, the study provides useful information and a relationship between knowledge and comprehension in the context of MICE tourism in Ethiopia.

It can be used by event organizers to assess the potential for developing MICE tourism strategies, as well as to offer techniques for developing MICE destinations in Addis Ababa. In addition, The MICE industry is progressively perceived as an area pertinent to the travel industry advancement especially for nations like Ethiopia, where the travel industry shapes a critical for development.

1.4.2. Academics Significance

The research also aims to fill a vacuum in the literature by adding knowledge about MICE tourism in Addis Ababa practice and providing insight for other researchers to examine and probe more in MICE tourism and venue in Ethiopia.

1.5 Scope of the Study

1.5.1 Content Scope

The scope of this Study is assessing the MICE industry practices, challenges and Prospects in Addis Ababa. The Study concerns MICE tourism industry in Addis Ababa. This is on the grounds that as the Ethiopian government expects to draw in more Event Tourism in Addis Ababa by Developing Convention Bureau in capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa fills in as a regional and global center point for some gatherings, with potential for development of MICE tourism industry.

1.5.2. Methodological Scope

The use of qualitative thematic analysis on the practices, challenges and Prospects of MICE tourism industry in Addis Ababa **and descriptive research design was used to collect relevant data related with the practices, Challenges and Prospect of MICE Tourism industry.**

1.6 Operational Definition

M = Meetings:- An event where the primary activity of the attendees is to attend educational sessions, participate in meetings/discussions, socialize, or attend other organized events. Basically, there are three categories of meeting.

I = Incentive:-a travel reward given by companies to employees who stimulate productivity. Also known as an incentive trip or incentive travel. Incentive is a meeting event in which the participants are rewarded for a previous performance (ICCA, 2013).

C = Convention: - convention is an assembly of persons who have met for a common purpose. Conventions are often held annually, this call for more intensive planning it organizes not only the business of the convention, but also an extensive social program. Basically, there are three categories of conventions.

E = Exhibition:- An event at where products and services are displayed. The primary activity of attendees is visiting exhibits on the show floor. These events focus primarily on business-to-business (B2B) relationships. (Source : The Convention Industry Council's, 2005);

CHAPTER TWO

2. Literature review

2.1. Historical Background of MICE Tourism

Meeting has existed for quite a while and steadily advanced. The components in MICE like social occasions (Event), gatherings, Meetings and Exhibitions have been portions of individuals' lives from the earlier written history. Since gatherings are so normal possibly a long period of time back, antiquated individuals might gather around an open airfare to examine whether they should hunt or other endurance issues. Or then again maybe an antiquated family sat in a crude shed discussing which debating which forest flora to avoid. Social meetings like these presumably existed for a long period of time, across all of mankind's set of experiences yet formal, coordinated gatherings came a lot later. Moreover, Archaeologists have discovered crude remnants of ancient cultures that were utilized as meeting regions where residents would assemble to talk about normal interests like government, war, chasing, or ancestral festivals (Fenich, 2005).

In Europe the historical backdrop of Convention started with congress of Vienna in 1814 to June 1815. There were little convection action in 20th century until 1850s because of impact of the universal conflicts Industrialization of the late 19th to mid-20th century expanded the need for conferences. There were additionally gatherings for political strict and sporting issues. However, as Meetings were not limited to managers and experts yet additionally stretched out to those people who might gather to talk about and trade thoughts on political, business ideas, sporting, Cultural events, recreational and other different subjects (Spiller, 2002).

However, following the Second World War in the 20th century in Europe hindered the expected quick development of the industry in the region (Spiller, 2002). Associations started to incorporate yearly Meetings. Besides the extension of government associations, development in worldwide collaboration and offices Development in affiliations interests, experts and product promotion gatherings increased through time.

2.2. The Development of Convention Bureau

The first convention bureau in the United States was happened when the national trade and expert affiliations had created and shown incredible interest in uniting their members together at conventions in Detroit in 1896. However, until the late 1890s, the majority of those who met were religious, military, political, social, and educational groups, as well as participants to different agricultural issues (Denton, 1950).

The development of Convention business since the 1950s was because of various reasons. Similarly, the increment of individual income, the more noteworthy desire to travel, from the more prominent interest for exhibitions and gatherings and taking into account the business' expected financial advantages, numerous objections all throughout the planet put intensely resulted in infrastructure development. In addition, the development of urban communities, the formation of bigger assembling associations, and the speed of progress all made it alluring and vital for individuals to get together to discuss new assembling strategies, see new items, and talk about the difficulties of dealing with countless individuals spread out over a wide geographic region. In general, factors such as the development of the Convention business and the Convention visitor Bureau industrial revolution, Technological Advancement with its associated development of large assembling associations, and the overall speed of progress brought about by the numerous railroad developments.

Convention bureaus nowadays successfully promote The MICE Sector and various aspects that influence the site selection interaction. Conventions are now regarded as one of the largest segments of the MICE industry. It is the least responsive to value changes and aids in the reduction of "top box" examples on rare occasions. These might potentially attract high-spending who frequently stay longer at and make rehash visits to the destination resulting MICE tourism development. The rise of capitalism, new items and new social interactions, just as the better approach for life prepared for more adaptable improvement of the developing number of Events. Notwithstanding, it was during the twentieth century when the advancement of the multitude of various kinds of occasions topped and they approached what we these days think about occasions. Regardless, Crouch and Weber (2002) brought up that the MICE industry market portions require distinctive marketing approaches. In this manner, promoting procedure for

driving the clients' need includes isolating a market into more modest gatherings of purchasers with unmistakable necessities, qualities, or practices who may require separate items or showcasing blends (Kotler, 2015). Convention and visitor Bureau (CVBs) may address a particular city, a more noteworthy metropolitan region, various urban areas, or a territorial objective (Gartrell, 1994).

2.2.1. Meeting, Convention and Event Tourism

Event in the travel industry is both a field of study and a universally huge area of the economy. It very well may be characterized and concentrated by reference to its inventory side. Event tourism in the MICE industry at a Destination level is the turn of events and showcasing of arranged occasions as vacation spots, impetuses, illustrators, image creators, and destination advertisers (Getz, 2013).

Bowdin (2006) Describes the term "Event" to show customs, introductions, exhibitions or festivities that are deliberately organized and made to check exceptional events and additionally to accomplish specific social or corporate objectives and targets." This process includes bidding on, facilitating and creating events, and the management of portfolios of events as destination assets. For individual events, event tourism means taking a marketing orientation to attract tourists, sometimes as an additional segment and sometimes as the core business. Business Event (or the MICE area) requires Conference and Exhibition focuses, including various, more modest private gatherings and capacities held in cafés, lodgings, or resorts.

Meeting in the travel industry incorporates business action like a gathering or meeting, and that is the fundamental justification traveling. It additionally incorporates components of the travel industry, as it expects making a trip to the meeting objective and for some situation utilizing different the travel industry administrations like convenience, café, and transport and program administrations (Davidson, 1994).Conference is a meeting for problem solving, discussions and for consulting purposes. There are no regulations for how often it should be arranged. There is no time limit, but usually a meeting lasts for a defined time and it has set goals. It is a meeting with small amount of attendants and it has a specified theme (Rautiainen & Siiskonen 2002). Congress is a regularly organized gathering of hundreds or thousands of people from the same profession, culture, religion or other group members.

Its purpose is to present a specific topic and it can last for several days and many lectures are offered (Rautiainen & Siiskonen 2002) Convention has two different types of gatherings. The first type is for members of legislation, political or economic groups. It is an official and general meeting for a negotiation about a specific event, discussion and agreements. This type of conference has set goals and a time limit, but there are no regulations about arranging meetings regularly. The second type of convention is for large, international or national business meetings, which are organized for discussions, commercial exhibitions or both (Rautiainen & Siiskonen, 2002).

Lately the worldwide meetings industry has started to recognize Africa as a favored objective for meetings. Significant global assembly halls have been developed in a few nations, including Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, and South Africa and most as of late in Malawi as anchors for building intensity for meeting the travel industry (Magombo et al., 2017). Moreover, for the development of both global and homegrown meetings it is basic likewise to deal with the challenges around the adequacy and reasonableness of meeting focuses and objections, including according to the points of view of meeting coordinators and representatives (Tiflin and Balkaran, 2014).

2.2.2. Exhibition and Incentive Tourism

Worldwide exhibitions have been distinguished as convincing ways for firms to the global attractiveness of items and administrations search out channels of dissemination and evaluate the global competition (Motwaniet et al., 2002). The Conference, Meeting and Exhibitions industry is quickly arising as quite possibly the main areas inside business travel as well as in the entire the travel industry. In acknowledgment of its significance, Ethiopia has been advertising The MICE Sector as one of the objectives to the world and the presence of 4-5 star lodgings that can oblige huge opportunity for MICE. On the other hand, trade fairs (trade show, trade exhibition or expo) is an exhibition organized so that companies in a specific industry can showcase and demonstrate their latest products, service, study activities of rivals and examine recent market trends and opportunities. Exhibitions are not just places for purchasing and selling but also attendees go about as settings of learning for all exhibitors. Trade shows present a decent opportunity for wholesalers to set up new office prospects by working with contact with

makers in a similar setting. Similarly, merchants and retailers can hope to get new deals tasks and make deals advancements.

Moreover, the industrial Revolution which is known for its mass production has played an important role for the growth and development of trade fair in different parts of the world and Europe in particular (Morrow, Sandra L, 2002).

There is an innate presumption among exhibitors that the motivation behind an exchange reasonable is to make deals, or if nothing else produce prospective customers Skerlos and Blythe (2010). For the guests, the three primary goals expressed for going to presentation incorporate; to see new items and advancements, to get specialized or item data and to get exceptional information. Then again, exhibitors referred to meeting new clients, dispatching new items, take deals orders as a portion of the explanations behind displaying their items and administrations. As per the World Travel and Tourism Council, the travel industry is critical in supporting a country's economy; contributing 10.3% of the worldwide GDP in 2019. Moreover, the United Nations World Tourism Organization reasoned that worldwide the travel industry has demonstrated nonstop development, projecting an expected 1.8 billion traveler appearances by 2030. The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) industry has demonstrated to be a vital supporter of global appearances for business related exercises.

Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan under its GTP II Section "Culture and Tourism" plan sets out for the nation to sort out 237 public social displays and 272 public the travel industry career expos and Exhibitions. GTP II supports the need to draw in extra unfamiliar direct ventures and to help the nation's fares to improve its balance of payments position. The MICE Sector is firmly identified with this more extensive target of the GTP II as numerous agreements and leads (sends out, FDI, sourcing, innovation move) are produced during mechanical fairs and expos (UN Report, 2019)¹.

¹ The scope of this report is to provide a brief analysis of the trade show and exhibition sector in Ethiopia placing it in the context of the global and regional scenarios. Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) II, under its GTP II Section "Culture and Tourism", makes reference, albeit only indirectly, to the relevance of the Meetings Incentives, Conference, Exhibition (MICE) sector

Singh and Kumar (2013), characterizes incentive travel as a worldwide administration device that utilizes an outstanding travel insight to propel as well as perceive members for expanded degrees of execution on the side of hierarchical objectives Swarbrooke and Horner (2001), Incentive travel, for instance, may comprise totally of recreation, game and diversion. In any case, in any event, for meeting delegates, guests to exchange fairs and individual business explorers, outings to nearby cafés and spots of diversion, or touring visits, can be a method of unwinding toward the finish of the functioning day

2.2.2.1 Incentive travel

Incentive travel has existed for over 100 years however it is as yet one of the most un-perceived and most inadequately estimated sections of the business travel market. For the most part arrangement, of incentive travel out has prompted various conversations. Researchers and field experts are contending whether it has a place with relaxation or business travel (Davidson & Cope, 2003). The Journey includes a ton of incentive components however may in any case be portrayed as a meeting. It is paid by the business and therefor can be positioned as business travel yet truth be told it incorporates just little business. Hence, the subject is really mind confusing and requires further thought. The idea of incentive travel regularly incorporates watchwords like motivation, prize, and novel travel insight. Incentive travel is viewed as inside advertising that expects to get representatives for their work (The Society of Incentive & Travel Executives):

As described by Lassila (2002) the term Incentive travel is a worldwide administration instrument that utilizes an outstanding travel insight to rouse or potentially perceive members for expanded degrees of execution in sup-port of authoritative objectives". Moreover, (Davidson and Cope, 2003) affirm that incentive travel is broadly perceived helpful oversee management mechanism that is viewed as fulfilling and propelling for the representatives. How-ever, he expresses that the adequacy of the projects is generally clarified by the prominence of the excursions among the member.

Incentive travels are an important tool used by companies to motivate, reward and meet employees for their employees' superior performance, service and commitment. Incentive travel can be defined as a motivating factor for promoting the productivity and performance of

employees, which all travel costs are paid according to performance levels in line with organizational goals (Campiranon & Arcodia, 2008). Conventions are mainly participatory meetings designed for discussion, information sharing and sharing, problem solving and consultation. It can also be called a convention with the combination of meetings and exhibitions (Montgomery & Strick, 1995). An assembly, often periodic, of delegates or representatives of a political or religious group, commercial organization, fraternal society or other organization. According to the UNWTO, "MICE tourism is a relatively young industry in Asia; the region is quickly becoming a key player in this sector, accounting for 16% of total meetings activities worldwide.

Incentive travel is a universal management tool that rewards participants for higher levels of performance in support of the organization's goals by providing an exceptional travel experience (SITE, 2013). It is defined as an all-expenses-paid trip (Rogers, 2003) that is utilized by corporations as a motivating factor to increase staff productivity and performance in fulfilling the organization's sales and support goals (Campiranon & Arcodia, 2008). It is aimed at business groups, with the host destination promoting prospective commercial prospects such as discounted rates and buying power for corporate purchasers. However, due to the complexity of this aspect of MICE, it is becoming increasingly difficult for corporate clients to pick which places to use for their 'incentive.'

2.2.3 Concept of MICE Tourism

The tourism segment known as MICE stands for meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions. Therefore, this section is business-related and involves required (or nondiscretionary) travel. The other component of MICE is incentives; while it is tied to business because it is frequently given to employees or dealers/distributors as a reward, it is mostly leisure-based. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a meeting is a gathering of people; a seminar is a professional conference; a workshop is a location or gathering for concerted action; and a conference is a gathering for discussion. In a very general sense, they all stand for a team of people cooperating to achieve a common objective. MICE tourism is therefore a significant component of the tourism business, yet many individuals have no idea what MICE stand for! The business tourism sector includes MICE tourism. It includes the Meetings, Incentive Travel,

Conferences, and Exhibitions niche markets. As you can see, MICE isn't exactly an acronym for rodents; rather, it's a way to group the four types of tourism stated above together.

MICE tourism is often defined as travel that is prearranged and created for sizable groups of people with specific objectives. MICE is "a sort of tourism where groups of people are gathered to achieve certain aims," according to Leong (2007). Any form of travel for a meeting is considered "mice tourism" (s). This includes both little and big meetings. Meetings might be brief (a few hours, for example) or lengthy (e.g. a week or more). Board meetings, focus groups, training seminars, strategy planning, and shareholder meetings are just a few examples of the several kinds of meetings.

MICE travel has expanded significantly in recent years. This expansion has been especially noticeable in Asia, where travel to nations like China and India has dramatically expanded. In recent years, more exhibitions and conferences have been held than ever before. The world's population is expanding, in part, to blame for this. Additionally, there are more meetings, conferences, and other events that call for international travel as a result of how interconnected and globalized our world has become. MICE travelers frequently spend more money and stay longer than ordinary visitors, making them significant tourism stakeholders.

MICE tourism can also support urban renewal, community revitalization, and the formation of a feeling of national identity (Getz, 2008). Additionally, MICE tourism can promote growth in a location, notably in the areas of convention and exposition centers, upgrades to airports and other transportation facilities, and various urban regeneration initiatives.

MICE tourism is a cutting-edge business model and one of the fastest-growing segments of the global business travel market. It satisfies a variety of business needs through conferences, international conferences and conventions, meetings, and exhibitions, and it is gradually but steadily catching the attention of every major hotelier. The significance of the MICE industry rests in the fact that it turns the annual business conventions and conferences into an affluent occasion that rewards the delegates and attendees. MICE business tourism is found to be necessary for the majority of events, whether it be a meeting to bring together all delegates within one's company or from a wider spectrum, a world conference with 1,000 delegates.

To sum up, using the phrase "business tourism" to represent the industry that includes conferences, exhibits, and incentive travel is accurate or suitable. The association with "tourist" is viewed as unclear and clouded by a lot of unfavorable opinions. The expression "business tourism" is now frequently used as a general word. The four MICE tourism or business tourism sectors that receive the most attention from venues and destinations are conferences, exhibitions and trade shows, incentive travel, and corporate events since the locations of the events are subject to influence.

2.2.4. MICE Tourism in Ethiopia

MICE in Ethiopia are still in infant stage. However, has a huge potential with a meeting capital Addis Ababa to the tourism revenues occur when MICE tourists are visiting the country either as part of a large conference group or a group travelling on incentive trips. According to Tourism Ethiopia Report, Ethiopia shares only (15 meeting) 3% of association meeting in Africa in 2018 with compared to neighboring Kenya 31 meeting per year in 2018. In any case, the development of MICE the travel industry brings the presence of Convention advertising bodies. It covers both the regional and international levels (Rogers, 2003; Spiller 2002). Numerous convention bureaus were set up worldwide and in Ethiopia, it is known as Ethiopia Convention Bureau. ECB was established under

Ministry of Tourism must strengthen Ethiopia as a MICE business and promote MICE brand to position Addis Ababa for the worldwide gatherings, motivating forces, exhibitions and presentations of (MICE) mar. It fills in as a focal center point to help meeting and event organizers to offer for and stage global business occasions in Ethiopia's just as go about as a channel for public product development. Ethiopia gives visa on arrival to every African nation and E-visa administrations for the remainder of the world. Ethiopia, Africa's second most populated nation, is one of the quickest developing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa in the year (IMF, 2018). A few authors call attention to as a benefit for an objective to foster MICE industry as a method of lessening the seasonality of other travel industry modalities, since it isn't unforeseen for these occasions to be coordinated during times of low season (Wan, 2011).

2.2.4.1. Ethiopia Convention Bureau

Ethiopia Convention Bureau (ECB) is the government's strategic entity in the development of MICE. Ethiopia Convention Bureau (ECB) is established as a directorate within Tourism Ethiopia; it is a destination marketing organization with the primary role to drive economic growth from the MICE tourism sector to Ethiopia's Gross Domestic Product, supporting the goals of the second Growth and Transformation Plan and the Ethiopia Sustainable Tourism Master Plan 2015 – 2025. (<https://www.miceethiopia.com/>).

As pointed out by Kim et al. (2011: 87), "the Economic effect of the MICE Tourism on a national economy is a lot more noteworthy than that of the traditional tourism industry. In an increasingly globalized and competitive tourist market, destination marketing is now recognized as a cornerstone of future growth and sustainability for tourism destinations (UNWTO, 2011).

2.2.4.2. Current Trend of MICE Tourism industry in Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa city is having the biggest number of foreign embassies which serves as Africa's political center. There are in excess of 120 international embassies and political missions. Addis has been filling in as the base camp of the African Union since its origin in 1963 and UNECA since 1958. A number of factors are presently working in Addis Ababa favor as a MICE destination. One factor relates to the establishment of Ethiopia Convention Bureau and its links within International Congress and Convention association (ICCA) which provides countries in the region with the opportunity of hosting a growing number of regionally based Convention and meetings. . Concurrently, as increasing number of star rated hotels, like Hyatt regency and Ramada- skylight hotel, capital hotel etc have an ever-improving infrastructure, a hub airport, and world-class conference venues at the AU, the UNECA, AAICEC (Addis Africa International Convention & Exhibition Centre) and the Millennium Hall, and professional associations are forming throughout the region to share knowledge and advance their various disciplines to the development of MICE sector in the city.

Moreover, Ethiopia has the best Airline and connecting flight availability in Africa. From its center point at Addis Ababa, an Ethiopian aircraft serves 116 global and 23 homegrown objections. ET flies to 62 urban areas in Africa, Europe, North and South America – 22 Cities, Gulf and Middle East and Asia – 26 Cities. Addis Ababa has cutting edge offices for gatherings

and meeting occasions. Though the information, professionals, and patterns, all things considered, the MICE industry has been promising for future advancement consistently as of late. Leisure tourism is an occasional business. Recreation sightseers just begin to go during top seasons in the mid-year and in winter. They normally travel separately or in enormous visit gatherings, however and still, after all that the majority of their commitments to the objective's economy depend on close to home consumptions, for example, shopping, recreation exercises, and so forth.

Purchasers and travelers in the MICE business are normally proficient affiliations or partnerships; this makes a different classification of vacationers with various requirements and assumptions. MICE voyagers consistently travel in huge gatherings; enormous corporate occasions, for example, this increment an inn's inhabitation dramatically. Furthermore, the more prominent spending force of business voyager's add up to 2 or multiple times that of a recreation guest; extraordinarily adding to that local economy. Convention Bureau is a non-benefit making organization accused of the obligation of advancing show, presentation and motivation travel. A convention bureau gives an incorporated road in organizing business and meeting the travel industry advertising, worldwide gathering offering. In recent years, Convention and visitor Bureaus CVBs have changed their mission statements to incorporate more than just marketing the destination. The shift from „sales and marketing“ to „partnering in economic development“ allows them to be more involved in their communities and better serve planners and visitors to their destination (Anonymous, 2008).

2.2.4.3. Country Exhibition Spaces as part of one segment of MICE tourism

One crucial component for the MICE sector and the subsequent economic growth it brings about is exhibition space. The global association of the world's leading tradeshow organizers and fairground owners regularly compiles a global census of all exhibition venues having a minimum of 5,000 sqm of gross indoor exhibition space in order to create the "World Map of Exhibition Venues." The location may be an exhibition area in a purpose-built center or another location, such as an exhibition space (e.g. hotels, arenas, sport venues, and amusement fair grounds). In 2017, there were 1,217 venues with a total interior display space of 34.7 million square meters. This census, which was conducted in 2011, shows a net rise of 1.6 percent in the number of venues and a net increase of 7.6 percent in the amount of exhibition space (+1.3 percent on

average per year. (**UFI World Map of Exhibition Venues 2017**). Therefore, as the total amount of exhibition space available around the world continues to grow, exhibition organizers have a more and more diverse choice of venues available in their target markets which results the increase MICE tourism opportunities. On other hand Ethiopia tanked number 19 compered with other African countries with the availability of indoor exhibition space (See Table 1.below). (The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry (2018).

Table 1. Total indoor exhibition space (sq m) & country ranking in Africa

1.	South Africa	213.700
2.	Tunisia	83.000
3.	Algeria	56.300
4.	Nigeria	51.000
5.	Tanzania	36.300
6.	Morocco	31.000
7.	Senegal	27.000
8.	Zimbabwe	26.700
9.	Togo	24.000
10.	Mozambique	20.668
11.	Angola	20.600
12.	Libya	19.600
13.	Ghana	18.000
14.	Malawi	18.000
15.	Zambia	16.700
16.	Sudan	13.200
17.	Madagascar	11.000
18.	Namibia	10.000
19.	Ethiopia	4.200
20.	Kenya	1,400

Source: The Exhibition Industry in the Middle East & Africa 2011-2012, 2nd Edition, UFI 2013

2.2.5 .Challenge of MICE tourism Development in Ethiopia

For the development of MICE industry functional National Convention Bureau is the necessary first step in developing a successful MICE tourism sector Strong relationship with clients, industry stakeholders and suppliers throughout the value chain with consistent and diligent marketing and sales strategies are key. Moreover, For MICE reliable ICT must be developed as an immediate priority to support growth in the sector a critical enabler of success. Associations that consider the absence of statistics as a significant fare hindrance become less

internationalized. These consequences show that if the organizations have an undeniable degree of information obstructions, they are probably going to have a questionable outlook on the best way to take part in global exchange.

According to Lee and Back (2009) shows that worldwide market improvement is a gradual interaction described by the company's securing, coordination and utilization of information about unfamiliar business sectors and activity and by a progressively expanding obligation to unfamiliar business sectors. This can be supported by the way that the impression of non-exporters about monetary incentives for global exchange exercises are not sufficiently appealing, they might have almost no interest in worldwide exchange, or may come up short on the time and aptitude to apply for government reserves. MICE industry in Addis Ababa, the barrier for the growth is mainly due to fewer infrastructures such a venue, ICT, supply of human capital that has industry knowledge and work experience in MICE is required to fully understand the complexity of the industry and the sophisticated offers many additional services when compared to the services offered by other countries (City).

There are many problems confronting MICE industry, they can be definite as follows: Safety and security, improving administrations, offices, scenes plan and IT advancements (Hotel Mule, 2010). Moreover, Training and instruction, the absence of information on MICE, Customer fulfillment (for example giving recreation exercises, Negative ecological effects (for example contamination, ozone harming) controlling and limiting these effects needs from coordinators and participants to observe rules and guidelines just as to play out their undertakings in a natural/moral way (Tsyvinskaya, 2011).

The infrastructure required for MICE must be well-planned and performed in order for the destination's good features to be realized (Ranchold, 2004). Infrastructures such as transportation, information technology (IT), and purpose-built conference and exposition venues should be adequately planned and implemented to serve MICE demand. For example, in 2010, a total of 1197 exhibition halls around the world hosted 30,700 shows, attracting 2.8 million exhibitors and over 260 million visitors (UFI, 2011).

Since 2006, the amount of space available for holding exhibitions has increased, with a prediction of 198 new venue construction projects around the world. The MICE business is

witnessing increased demand (Getz, 2008), and infrastructure expansion is required to adequately service the market.

Tourism is a labor-intensive industry that requires a higher percentage of individuals to work in operations and on the front lines. These same jobs are essential for high-quality service and higher service standards (Seebaluck, V., & Ramseook. (2015). The MICE industry's dynamic provides a variety of work opportunities that may help to lower unemployment rates (Hobson, 1996). However, the industry must establish a code of ethics to ensure compliance with labor laws (Dwyer & Mistilis, 1999).

Currently, Ethiopia does not have a coordinated world class convention center which can meet the necessities of worldwide Convention. Event administrators as far as space, project offices, and strategically, and so forth A couple of focuses as far as coordinated space are accessible in the country. The absence of world class convention center combined with other infrastructural challenges has been a significant obstacle for the development of this sector. This incited the public authority to assist the method involved with creating convention centers in the country in the future Seebaluck, V. , & Ramseook Munhurrun, P. (2015)

Currently Meeting industry is calling innovation kept on creating genuine advancement showed up with the computerized upset during the 1990s and mid-2000s. With the web, correspondence was at this point not attached to simple telephone lines. Out of nowhere, we could send bundles of data zooming across advanced organizations. The meeting business moved through 2020 by rapidly turning to virtual meetings. Associations accepted the advantages of virtual innovation inside a range of weeks, which would some way or another, have required years. E-conferencing has been used for roughly thirty years, according to Lin, K. (2010). Various studies noticed the opportunity to use technology for automated transmission of TV signals for videoconferencing purposes as early as the 1970s (Camana, 1979). The rise of mixture event: participants partake in a vis-à-vis/online experience where members who can't go to face to face can do as such on the web. This choice decreases the quantity of individuals in a spot without influencing the quantity of participants. The COVID-19 pandemic has to a great extent formed how occasions ought to be gotten ready for the rest of the year and sooner rather than later. Thusly, drifts in this

space are pointed toward keeping up with the wellbeing security proposals that have been set up to slow the development of the pandemic and forestall new cases.

2.2.6. Prospects of Tourism in Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa has a number of higher hilly peaks, including Mount Entoto in the north, which is the city's highest point. Unity Park, meskel square, merkato, and friendship square are some of the most popular tourist attractions. The Addis Ababa Exhibition Centre (AAEC) and the Millennium Hall are two of the few trade show and exhibition venues currently conducting trade exhibitions in Addis Ababa. The capacity situation is weaker outside of Addis Ababa. Products and services are typically shown in large tents and other temporary materials, or by temporarily renting space/halls from government or private groups. Facilities secured in this manner are frequently of poor quality, exposing displayed objects to weather-related damage as well as theft.

The AAEC hosts the majority of Addis Ababa's trade shows. One such event is the Addis Chamber International Trade Fair. A examination of events held at AAEC between July 2017 and July 2018 finds that 8 to 10% of the 36 events (including "tentative" and "permanent") contain trade show features. Meetings, cultural exhibitions, anniversary celebrations, and other events are examples of other events. Additionally, the Millennium Hall is considered Addis Ababa's premier exposition site. Its management does not publish any information, and the company does not have a website. The overall area of the facilities is 86,858 square meters, with one major hall and three smaller conference rooms. The enormous hall, which measures approximately 6.000 square meters (gross), allows organizers to offer approximately 3.000 square meters of exhibit space. Additional temporary halls (tents) are available for larger shows. Addis Park Development and Management PLC, a private corporation founded in 2004, owns the Millennium Hall. Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali Al-Amoudi, an Ethiopian businessman, built the facilities for the Ethiopian Millennium Celebration in 2006.² (Ethiopian trade show and exhibition report, 2019 p.36).

² The Millennium Hall is considered the main exhibition venue in Addis Ababa (see image 4.2). Its management does not provide any published information and the company maintains no website. Facilities total 86,858 sq m comprising one large hall and three (3) small conference rooms. The large hall, with about 6.000 sq m (gross), enables organizers to sell around 3.000 sq m booth space. For bigger shows there are additional temporary halls (tents) available. The Millennium Hall is owned by the Addis Park Development and Management PLC, a private

Hall is equipped with modern and state-of-the-art sound and light effect technologies as well as exhibition materials to meet the needs of modern conventions. Over the years, the Hall has hosted events of national, regional and international standing with thousands of delegates and visitors such as the Saudi-East African Investment Forum, the Indian Forum, the Annual All African Leather Fair, the 16th International Conference on Public Health, the State Dinner of the Africa World Economic Forum, the annual Diplomatic Charity Bazaar and hotel show Africa. According to information provided by the Addis Park management, in total some 76 events are scheduled to be organized in 2019. In 2018, 49 events have been held. Over the period 2011–2017, the Millennium hall hosted some 253 events of which around 60% referred to conferences (103 events) and exhibitions (50 events).

2.2.6.1. Chamber Hub

The so-called Chamber Hub is currently in the planning stages at ECCSA. An exhibition and conference center, a Chamber Academy, a structure that will house the Pan-African Chamber of Commerce, and, eventually, a hotel, are all part of this hub development. The government has already been asked for about 15 hectares of land.

2.2.6.2. Addis Africa International Convention and Exhibition Center (AAICEC)

The AAICEC Share Company established as of convention and exhibition center that offers world-class venues for corporate gatherings and entertainment, resulting in significant economic advantages for the business community and the country as a whole. Is a public-private partnership enterprise that has secured 11 hectares (about 110,000m²) of land in a prominent position with Addis Ababa administration and Chamber of Commerce working together as two of the initial significant shareholders. The Addis Africa International Convention and Exhibition Center is the name of the project (AAICEC).

The AAICEC is being designed as a multi-purpose business center that will accommodate a variety of events such as international conferences, conventions, trade shows, and exhibitions. The project includes the construction of a multipurpose hall with seating for 5,000 people, a conference hall with over 3,000 seats, two auditoriums with 500 seats each, and six small

company established in 2004. Facilities were built in 2006 by the Ethiopian business person Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali Al-Amoudi for the celebration of the Ethiopian Millennium

meeting rooms with seating for 50 to 100 people. A four-star hotel and other support facilities, such as restaurants, a canteen, lounge area, and playgrounds, would be included in the venue.

2.3. Empirical Evidence

The Study Conducted study by Kalleab,(2012) on the challenges and opportunities of conference tourism development in Addis Ababa. The finding reveals that the major challenges identified was absence of appropriate structure and organization for tourism sector; insufficient conference facilities and service providers, lack of professionalism and weak human resource development in the sector and absence of pre and post conference activities.

The study conducted by Helen,(2017) on the quality of Conference Service and customer satisfaction by international conference Center in Addis Ababa. The finding shows that convention center the departments has a challenge to translate working documents and to assign interpreters on time and department focus on the technology application which therefore cannot perform as participants expectation to all conference services. Furthermore, the finding shows that quality conference service could satisfy more than two third of the participants and more than three fourth of staff service providers. However the research found that one third of the participant and one fourth of service providers did not agree that the service could meet their expectation.

According to Wondmagegne, (2019) study on the challenges and opportunities of event organizers in Addis Ababa in their role for tourism development. Identified the challenges include mainly the limited awareness about MICE and the organizers, substandard facilities and services, budget constraint, time constraint, limited education and training, problem in VISA facilitation, lack of international representation, limited safety and security, lack of national convention bureau, and weak event organizers association. Moreover, He outlined the opportunities include the city as a center of political and economic diplomacy, the increasing government attention, the rich cultural and tourism resources as well as the location and air access.

Furthermore, other counties study on MICE tourism by McCartney (2015) revealed that human resource challenges were a notable obstacle to the further development of the MICE industry and ultimately to the diversification of economy. Moreover, Several investigations have been

directed to uncover the significance of MICE objective ascribes (Stylos, et.al , 2016). examined the role of MICE on overall destination image. The (MICE) industry has been perceived as a huge market segment over the previous many years (Astroff and Abbey, 2006).A number of past researches were identified the common attractiveness attributes that are important to meeting planners in the selecting of MICE destinations. The destination attributes considered important to meeting planners in selecting locations by Kang et al. (2005). Results from Kang et al.'s (2005) study showed that meeting planners view facilities as the most important attribute in selecting destinations, followed by accessibility and service while cost, image, information and attractions are perceived as the least important. According to Kim and Kim (2003), convention and exhibition facilities are considered the most important by meeting planners in the selection of convention destinations, followed by hotel room availability, room rates and on-site assistance with organization and planning conferences. Additionally, according to “Meeting Market Report” published by *Meetings & Conventions Magazine* reported that throughout 2007, approximately \$103 billion was spent on conventions (\$34.6 billion), associations (\$38.1 billion) and corporate (\$30.2 billion) events (Braley, 2008). Overall the MICE industry does not only contribute to the host destination in direct spending (hotel rooms, meeting space), but also accelerates the growth of the travel and tourism industry in that destination (Lee & Back, 2005). Attendees may visit the destination for the first time (due to events location), but choose to come back for leisure purposes.

According to Oppermann and Chon (1997), four main factors influence attendees when thinking about whether or not to participate in an event; 1) personal/business - the purpose of the trip, their health, finances, 2) association/conference - level of involvement, personal goals and agendas, 3) location - ease and length of travel, cost, destination image, 4) intervening opportunities- competing and alternative events. Moreover, McCleary (1995), Crouch and Ritchie suggest that identifying decision makers in associations will increase a destinations chances of hosting events and enjoy the prosperity that follows. However they agree that more research is needed in the area of site selection process

Other studies by Fenich (2001) investigated community (destination) attractiveness for conventions. In his review of previous studies he identified a number of common destination attributes that appeared to be of importance. “Destination services” was the most frequent

attribute mentioned, followed by “promotional appeal”. Other frequent attributes were “air transportation”, “hotel rooms “restaurants” and “local transportation”. He used facts, such as number of rooms in a destination, crime rate, average temperature, size of meeting space and more. Generally as previous literatures clearly show that MICE tourism development in terms of volume and expenditure is very low compared with other segments even though there is a progress from time to time typically in some countries including South Africa, Morocco and Egypt. For instance, South Africa has been considered as one of the success stories of MICE tourism in Africa and global ranked of 39 with more than hundred international meetings per year according to ICCA, 2018 Africa ranking index. However, Ethiopia 80 on global rank by ICCA, 2018 with only Fifteen meeting per year and share of 3% Africa market.

2.4 Conceptualizing MICE Tourism Practices and Challenges

2.4.1 Practices of MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa

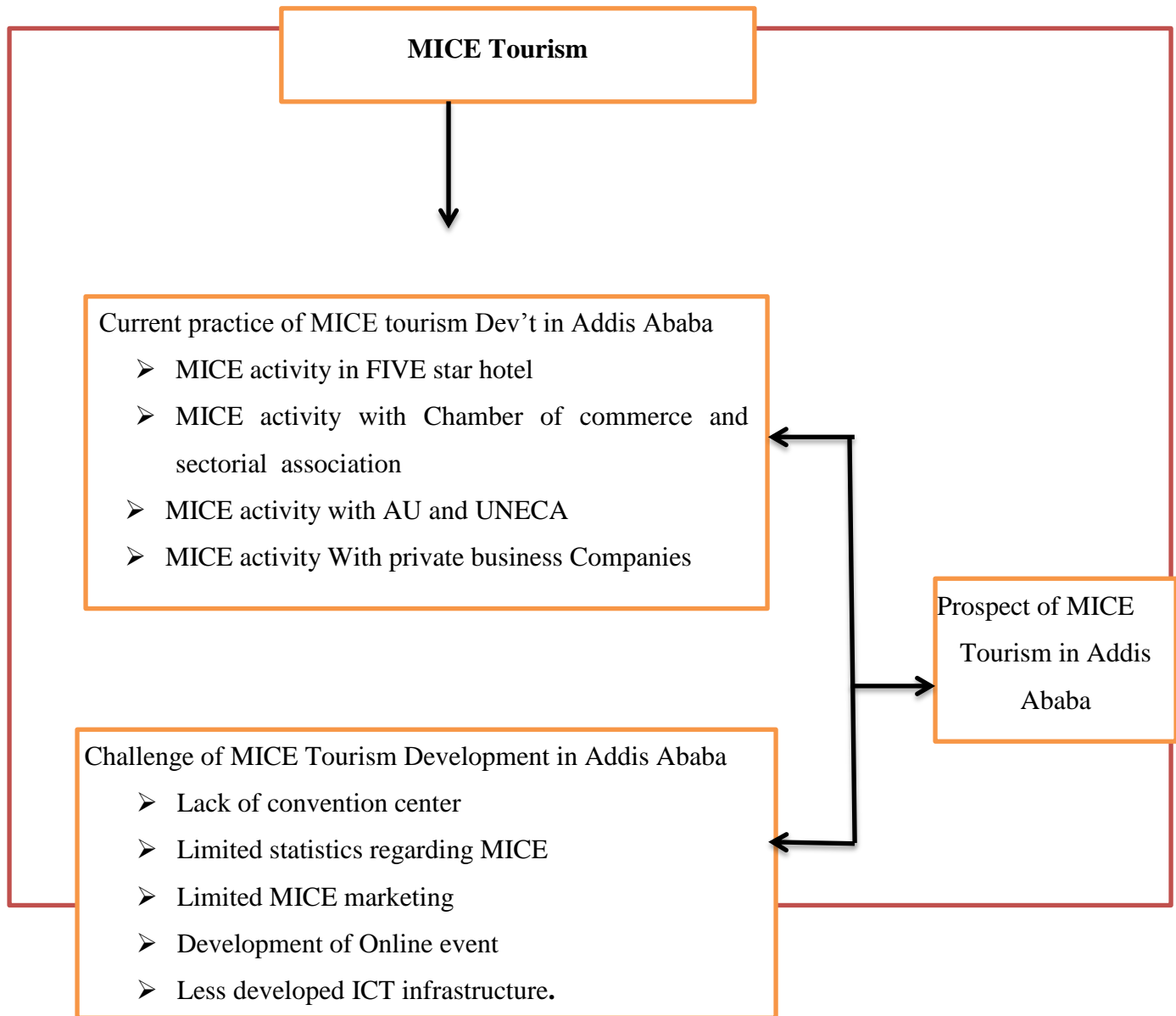
The study's conceptual framework reveals that the current MICE activity and Challenges are intimately linked to MICE amenities, which trigger the the development and prospect of MICE tourism. This is because challenges such as Lack of convention center ,Limited statistics regarding MICE, Limited MICE marketing, Development of Online event and Less developed ICT infrastructure have a significant impact on the prospect of MICE Tourism development.

On the other hand, there must be a relevant connection between the MICE activity and the availability of services in the city for Organization in the MICE business (chamber of commerce, private organization hotel, AU and UNECA).Therefore, the possibilities of MICE tourism development in Addis Ababa are determined by the activity of MICE tourism at five-star hotels as well as other locations like the AU, UNECA, AAEC, and Millennium Hall. Additionally, exhibition space, convention centers, and venues are all intimately related to the city's MICE tourism activities. The association between practices and challenges will lead to an indication of MICE tourism's future development in the city.

Furthermore, Rogers (2013) states that the MICE Tourism is a sector within "business tourism" and a sub-sector of the larger tourism industry, with leisure and business tourism serving as a further sub-sector to further examine the MICE tourism field. To be clear, business travelers prioritize location and closeness to meetings, technology conveniences at the venue, such as Wi-Fi availability, and hotel room amenities that provide a "home away from home" feel; this

distinguishes them from leisure travelers. Furthermore, according to Rogers (2013:28), while both leisure and business tourism requires a similar level of infrastructure, the latter offers a variety of additional advantages that attract delegates. And conferences, the promotion of sponsors' products, and an increase in promotional efforts.

2.4.2. Conceptual framework



Source (own construction)

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter of the research explains the research methodology and provides details on how it was carried out. It depicts the research design, the study population, the population sample selection, the data collection instruments, and data presentation, analysis, and interpretation.

3.1.1 Description of the Study Area

Addis Ababa Lies between 70 and 110 north latitude and 370 and 410 east longitude. It is located right at the geographic center of Ethiopia lying between 2120 meters (Akaki-Kaliti sub-city) and 3200 meters (Entoto Mountain in the Gullele-Sub-City) above sea level and over-looked from the north by the Entoto chain of mountains (3200). The other mountains, which escort Addis Ababa from far and near distances, are the mountains of Zuquala, Erer, Furi, Wechecha and Menagasha, with an average altitude of over 3000 meters above sea level. These mountains together usually modify the climatic conditions of Addis Ababa thereby making sightseeing easier for tourists. The Entoto mountain chain serves as a water shade between the Blue Nile basin to the north and the Awash Basin to the south. This area is rugged with many typical volcanic features and steep topography with patches of hills and flat plains. Since its founding approximately one hundred and thirty years ago, Addis Ababa has grown at an incredible rate. The metropolis, which spans 540 square kilometers, meanders over various wooded hillsides and valleys with streams. Addis Ababa is the fifth highest capital city in the world, behind La Paz (and Sucre), Quito, Thimphu, and Bogota in Bolivia and Ecuador. Addis Ababa, known for hosting various international and regional organizations including the African Union (AU) headquarters and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), is also another growing tourist attraction places in the country With its remarkable safety record and forward-looking infrastructure boom, today Addis Ababa, the capital city, stands among the top capitals in the world, hosting major regional and global events.

3.2. Research Design

Meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions are often referred to as MICE in the tourist industry. As a result, this section deals with business-related travel that is necessary or non-discretionary. The other part of MICE is incentives, which are primarily leisure-based but are nonetheless linked to business because they are typically offered to staff members or dealers and distributors as rewards. Exhibitions and trade shows, corporate events, incentive travel, individual business and corporate travel, and non-corporate events are all part of the conference sector. The primary focus of venues' and destinations' marketing initiatives is on these business tourism sectors. The conference market and events sector, according to authors like Getz (2014:) and Haven-Tang, Jones, and Webb (2007) (MICE - incentive meetings, congresses, trade shows, consumer shows, board meetings, training and workshops.

Therefore, descriptive research design was used to collect relevant data related with the practices, Challenges and Prospect of MICE Tourism industry. The reason for utilizing descriptive research design was to contemplate the particular forecasts with description of current practices and future prospects concerning the MICE tourism circumstance. The Qualitative research approach will be used to explore the MICE tourism barriers because it is suitable for research findings that cannot be discovered by quantitative approach.

3.3. Population of the Study

The total population of the study was conference organizers, Ethiopian tourism organization (ETO) and Ethiopian Convention Bureau, Addis Ababa City Administration Art, Culture and Tourism Bureau, (AACACTB), and Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MocT), Addis Ababa chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Association (Members of a Chamber of Commerce are generally worldwide and nearby working organizations, property designers, the travel industry organizations, aircrafts, fabricating organizations, import and product organizations, so on Offices of Commerce fundamental activities are, sharing business encounters and financial matters, contact with governments, common society, nearby media and the press and arranging expos(trade shows, exhibitions and events) and some selected Hotels. Moreover, the population of this study is specialists in MICE industry with regard to Future Prospects of MICE sector in Addis Ababa.

3.4. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Based on the objectives of the Study, nonprobability purposive sampling technique for sampling will be used which is also normal in qualitative to pick research members to comprehend the challengers and prospect of MICE Tourism industry. The study was targeted the organizations which are directly involved in MICE tourism in Addis Ababa. This will include hotels, Ethiopia conventional Bureau staff and AACACTB, event organizers, and chamber Commerce and sectorial association.

Based on the objectives of the Study, both nonprobability purposive sampling technique is used which is also normal in qualitative to pick research members to comprehend the challengers and prospect of MICE Tourism industry. The study was target key organizations which are directly involved in MICE tourism in Addis Ababa. This was including hotels, Ethiopia conventional Bureau staff and AACACTB, event organizers, and chamber of Commerce and sectorial association.

Table 2. Sample Frame

Qualitative Sampling Techniques	Interview of respondent		
Purposive sampling	Event Organizers association director and senior MICE expert	3	
	AAICEC	1	
	Ethiopia Convention Bureau director and senior MICE expert	4	
	AACACTB MICE senior staff	3	
	Addis Ababa chamber of commerce and sectorial association senior Exhibition expert	3	
	Hotel marketing expert	2	
	Total	16	

(Source: Author data collection)

3.5. Data source and type

Both Primary and Secondary Source of data were be used in the study. The primary information was gathered through interview and FGD and the Secondary data was collected via publications, past studies, Articles and reports.

3.5.1. Data Collection Methods

Data was gathered through top to bottom interviews with MICE and the travel industry Professionals as well as focus group discussion with selected MICE tourism staff was used for primary data collection instrument for the study.

3.5.1.1 Interview

In order to collect information for the study interviewees were chosen from related ventures to assist with understanding the hindrances to the advancement of MICE tourism industry in Addis Ababa the interviewees was from various administration levels and included supervisors, CEO, Event organizers and Mice specialists. The interviews assisted to gather the MICE and travel industry assets and Venus, affiliations, government backing and future possibilities of the Sector. Sixteen (16) participant interviews was conducted based on saturation of the result and assisted to gather the MICE and travel industry assets and Venus, affiliations, government backing and future possibilities of the Sector. Additionally, to this, the researcher was conducted likewise lead individual observation to event coordinator office their jobs and obligations including Ethiopian Convention Bureau and Hotel Conference Venues.

3.5.1.2 Personal observation

Since the current practice of MICE tourism activity is profoundly connected with the everyday existence of the people groups, participatory perception empowers the researcher to notice and talk about with the respondents on the issues. During individual observation, the researcher was notice event coordinator found in Addis Ababa. As needs be, the researcher was observe absence of material asset like organizational structure, office setup, and staff. Likewise, the researcher was observing the Ethiopian Convention bureau and Addis Ababa Art Culture and Tourism Bureau (AACACTB). Moreover, the coordination with event coordinators and activities undertaken by Government bodies and MICE Actors was observed.

3.5.1.3. Focus Group Discussion FGD

A focus group discussion (FGD) is a qualitative research method and data collection approach in which a small group of people explore a certain topic or issue in depth, guided by an outside moderator (Researcher). This method was used to elicit participants' perspectives, as well as their knowledge, experiences, and practices, which are shared during interactions with the group members. The technique is founded on the notion that group processes generated during a FGD aid in the identification and clarification of shared knowledge among groups and communities, which would otherwise be impossible to collect through a series of individual interviews. During such 'open' discussion rounds, an FDG allows the investigator to solicit both the participants' common story as well as their variances in terms of experiences, viewpoints, and worldviews. Six to twelve participant were recommended for FGD however Smaller groups are also fine and instructive, providing all members enough time and chance to share. A "mini group" is a group with only three or four members. A common rule of thumb is that the group size may be smaller the more expertise and experience the participants have regarding the topic at hand. Therefore the study Conducted with four member of focus groups discussion were conducted r with participant from Ethiopian convention bureau, two senior MICE tourism expert, one MICE tourism Research officer, and one with Ethiopian Convention bureau director (representative). A moderator (the author) and a co-moderator were present for each focus group at Ethiopian Convention bureau main office in October 2021.

3.6. Data analysis

Data collected from semi structured interview was recorded to identify themes and was categorized according to similar patterns then analyzed via thematic analysis. Kothari, (2004) characterizes information examination as the method involved with Categorizing and summing up data so it becomes information that can without much of a stretch be translated and ends settled on to help interpretation. Prior to preparing the response for analysis, the collected data was checked for fulfillment and consistency. Focus group discussion was analyzed by transcribing recorded statements about who said what about a particular question and Coded the transcription using 'codes' and finally Codes are 'labels' that summarize short fragments of text, and therefore help to sort and structure the data.

3.7 Limitations of the study

The study is limited to only on few selected government and private organization with Ethiopian convention bureau. Because the concerned leaders in many parts of the organizations were engaged with other duties, the researcher may encounter some respondents who are too busy for an interview during data collection for this study, so it resulted delays in the research's accomplishment. Moreover, as the study is basically founded on essential information gathered through interview and FGD influence of the respondents could have impacted its outcome.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

The Study was directed regarding all moral issues of on consideration. The participants will be advised with regards to the reason for the study and requested their willingness to engage with the study. To obtain informed consent the researcher was provide to potential participants description about research purpose, potential benefits and confidentiality policy to be used; giving a names of researcher can contact if they have any questions; and inform participation is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw at any time from the study. The researcher was produce compatibility with the members to energize ideal reactions during information collection. Likewise, participants were not committing to specify their name and other personal characters.

3.9. Summary of the Chapter

The approach that the researcher utilized to gather, present, analyze, and interpret data was the subject of the third chapter of this study project. This chapter explains how the researcher accomplished his goals. This chapter described the study's research methods, including the demographic, sample, data-collection tool, and ethical considerations. In order to complete the literature review, the researcher used a variety of sources, including books, reports, and electronic references. Furthermore, the researcher used interviews to obtain relevant data with different chosen MICE staffs.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Data presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter is split into two sections. The results and descriptive analysis of participant replies obtained through interviews are presented in the first portion, while the findings and analysis of focus group discussion are presented in the second section. To discover and categorize the themes in the transcribed text, this study used thematic analysis. Thematic analysis, according to Blumberg (2011), is a technique that is frequently used to organize the data in interview transcripts into relevant themes. Each study topic was turned into a theme in order to do this. For example, the research's major topic was: What are the practices, challenges, and prospects for MICE tourism development in Addis Ababa? As a result, the major study issue was split into two parts: practices, barriers, and prospects.

The information gathered from the interviews was divided into three categories: practices, challenges, and prospects. The participant's comments was first audio recorded on a smartphone before being typed out and thematically summarized on a word document. In these instance MICE tourism professionals and stakeholders were interviewed.

4.1 Results of the interview on MICE tourism

In this section the findings of the interviews are explored in relation to the themes that were derived from the research questions.

4.1.1 Status of the interview respondent

In this section the findings of the interviews are explored in relation to the themes that were derived from the research questions. In an attempt to ensure that the respondents were MICE tourism professional and the stakeholders of the MICE businesses that they operated, a question was formulated to capture such information MICE tourism practices, challenges and prospects in regard to Addis Ababa.

4.1.2 Summary of the findings from the interview participants

According to the information gathered from the respondents, nearly all of them worked in the MICE tourism sector, either directly or indirectly, at the Ethiopian convention bureau; some are hotel marketing managers, tour operators, and business owners in the MICE tourism industry; and others work in higher positions in the event organizer association. As a result, the study drew in a large number of players from the MICE tourism industry.

Focus group discussions with four senior specialists with at least a bachelor's degree and five years of relevant office experience. This is critical for gathering information on topics that require greater explanation.

MA degree in hospitality management I have experience in the industry even organizing events and know working at Ethiopian Convention Bureau

As we can see to the above quota provided by the respondents, the respondents have a direct connection to the MICE tourism sector. Some are hotel marketing managers, tour guides, and business owners in this area, while others hold higher positions within the association of event organizers. As a result, numerous MICE tourism sector participants participated in the study.

4.1.3 The respondents Gender and educational background

According to the study's findings male accounted for 56 percent (table below) of respondents, while Female accounted for 44 percent. This demonstrates that the study was gender sensitive, and the researcher recorded unbiased data. As previously stated, the purpose of this question was to comprehend and meet the study's objective, and the participants were from groups that were directly related to the research question's issue, especially since the research's primary emphasis was MICE professionals and stakeholders. An intensive interview was conducted by selecting 16 different stakeholders for acquiring appropriate information and to minimize the sampling error. These stakeholders included from tour operators, MICE professionals, Hotel Marketing officers, Ministry of Tourism and MICE Experts at Ethiopian convention bureau, chamber of commerce and sectorial association and Addis Ababa culture, art and tourism bureau.

4.1.4. The current MICE tourism practices in Addis Ababa

4.1.4.1 MICE bidding practices

MICE bidding practices are the most commonly mentioned of the key themes that causes MICE tourism development found by interview. When discussing about MICE tourism, convention bureaus must consider the practices of international meeting bidding. They were concerned about lower MICE tourist performance, which necessitated cautious supervision by the local government and local businesses. Respondents recognized that in comparison to international MICE tourism development approach MICE bidding tended to be more positive toward MICE tourism development in the city. Donaldson (2013) further expanded that the creation of the national convention bureau had been to support and coordinate the countries bidding activities, market as an attractive MICE destination, and provide policy and consultancy support for the development of MICE tourism in the country.

Although infrastructure remained the key factors, Bidding was considered to have a higher priority according to recent international MICE tourism development approaches. For example, a common expression from interview was that Based on the response from the participants, the MICE sector of Addis Ababa had been represented by three entities, including Ethiopian convention bureau, Addis Ababa event organizers association and Addis Ababa chamber of commerce and sectorial association. This suggests that practitioners in Addis Ababa MICE tourism are hotel industry, event organizers association and Addis Ababa chamber of commerce and sectorial association which address a number of aspects in order to improve the chances of successfully MICE Practices. Many respondents believe that a platform and experienced staff should be hired by the local authority to collect clear statistical information of MICE business and that tourists should be encouraged by presented information. As one of the respondents stated that

Regarding MICE tourism practices as a professional; I can say that stakeholders lack full understanding on the concepts regarding all component of MICE Tourism. Most of the private organizations and government offices did not give attention to MICE tourism so far but now the government now gave focus. Because they did not consider them as one of Tourism product compared with arrival of leisure tourist. However, MICE tourism is also about incentive travel and local companies don't have any practices of incentive travel to their employee and therefore the development should focus in all aspects or components of MICE

Another respondent added

In general I can say Weak/ no practices of coordinate the bidding process of MICE events by public and private entities and pre- and post-bid support, destination expertise, meeting, event and convention planning support and on-site event services are not well practiced by the responsible bodies

According to the above quote, government or public sector incentives are needed to encourage MICE tourism business enterprises to embrace worldwide MICE bidding practices. Local governments may be able to provide specific funds to local firms to assist them in adopting worldwide MICE bidding processes. Those who execute the procedures may be given priority in approaching new sources of MICE tourists through international MICE business market profiles, or they may be chosen to attend MICE tourism trade shows in or beyond the region for promoting and networking possibilities of their business and the city in general. The other participant, **FGD 003**, pointed out that while Addis Ababa has a lot of leisure tourist prospects; it also has a lot of MICE tourism opportunities, so we need to strategically broaden our plan to develop MICE tourism in Addis Ababa. Government offices, particularly the Ethiopian tourism minister and the Ethiopian Convention Bureau, should take this proposal seriously

4.1.4.2. Venues service practices

The MICE Tourism is included in the national economic development strategic plan. Addis Ababa is well positioned to benefit from the growth of the MICE business because of the availability of some infrastructure and amenities such as tourism attractions, venues (AU, ECA standard hotels) and exhibition centers. In Addis Ababa Venues, on the other hand, are not appropriately built to assist guests and allow them to conduct for business oriented conference except AU and ECA. The venues of meetings, conferences, and exhibits are one of the most significant aspects of MICE. Because they lack the types of venues required for MICE business, a substantial number of destinations do not receive nearly as much business as they would want. To undertake international meetings, conferences, and exhibits, the type of venues available at the destination must be carefully considered. Ethiopia's Largest Meeting Room -2,912 Sqm is among the large MICE venues in Addis Ababa is the United Nations Conference Centre Addis Ababa, which has two large exhibition halls for 800 and 475 persons, respectively.

In addition, a number of services associated with MICE venues, including as catering, shopping, entertainment, and others, are a barrier to the industry's development and must be prepared to get the most out of the rising MICE tourism development. According to the interview findings show that except few venues in Addis Ababa is not fully equipped to provide the best possible service to business travelers. Simple things like microphones, video, and sound systems all contribute to a successful meeting, convention, or exhibition/trade show. To build a MICE destination, the sector must learn and grasp quickly. International MICE visitors can also be helped by providing them with useful information such as weather, dress rules, language, and tipping. On top of this as respondent explained:

The current MICE Tourism Practices is only concentrated in Five and Four star hotels all most all meeting and conference are held in hotels, due to lack of business oriented convention centers, meeting Hall existed in the hotels are not well equipped, such as translation services due to this reason it is an hindrance factor for competing with other MICE destination in Addis Ababa.

According to Business meeting planners have long required out unusual, fascinating, and memorable meeting locations and venues. However, event planners will seek out more "experiential" events that will make a lasting impression on their participants. As a result, venues will need to urge participants to think and act differently long after they return home or to the office, in addition to inspiring creativity and collaborative working. During an interview with local tourism industry owners and local government employees they claimed that local Venue should be comparable to worldwide Venue products, as this would not only differentiate the MICE tourism offer, but also provide delegates with an experiential value. Maintaining external relationships for MICE tourism activities is an important aspect of the development of MICE tourism.

Furthermore, **FGD 001** began the discussion by pointing out what are the current practices of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa. The first thing he mentioned was MICE tourism have not well practiced yet in Addis Ababa, even though we have tourist standard hotels and most tourist service facilities like attractions areas, souvenir shops, accessibilities, tour operators have enough facilities to operate international MICE service , the main problem is lack of enough international standard venue.

The manager of MICE Tourism Company stated that:-

To boost MICE tourism in Addis Ababa, I believe we should focus more on available venues. It would be much better if we shared information on existing venues and infrastructure that cater to MICE events. This will result in more photos, greater advantages for the local community, and a narrowing of the information gap. As a result, multinational business organizers may be more interested in focusing on MICE events in the city. This, in particular, can make the CITY's MICE tourist more unique, since local specialties are served to conference guests.

The result shows that Business travelers, on the other hand, can have their own private characteristics, such as the Venue, which has a versatile event area and a garden area. Event venues that can accommodate up to 50-200 guests in the best possible location can also be deemed acceptable for MICE Tourism activities and the style and size of venue is determined by the event planner and the number of delegates, which Addis Ababa also has. Furthermore, depending on the nature of the event, the closeness of the location to amenities such as lodging, food options, and recreational facilities may influence how delegates evaluate the event's appeal. The findings of the study also reveal that Addis Ababa's venue services practice need facility development.

4.1.4.3. MICE tourism statistics collection practices and infrastructure

The industry is concerned about the adequacy of MICE infrastructure now and in the future, given the Development of meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions. However, there is a significant barrier to understanding the infrastructure because the industry lacks both record keeping and organized MICE facilities. Many Organizations and businesses are not able to provide summary statistics supporting their claimed level of business. It is therefore difficult to support or refute industry claims and opinions on the levels of MICE activity and the adequacy of the current resources to cater MICE attendees. Furthermore, many organizations and enterprises are unable to distinguish MICE from other types of business, and nearly no organization can provide specific information on the number of MICE events held, the number of attendees, or the origins of the guests. The following is a quote from the respondent:

When it comes to MICE tourism, it's critical to present information on the area's infrastructure and venues, as well as marketing these facilities to the business actors, because this information can influence international organizers' and individual participants' during the decision-making. As a result, I believe there is a poor practice of international mice bidding and attracting meetings to be held in Addis Ababa.

Respondent A

In my opinion, Poor practices of collections and dissemination of relevant MICE tourism information and research, therefore less Business traveler in Addis Ababa

Business visitors, according to the quotation above, decide to spend one or more days for a certain event and due to the limited time available, it is critical that such clients be provided with information about comfortable lodging, restaurant access, and closeness to the meeting location, train station, or airport. This level of comfort and high-quality service is greatly influence business traveller to experience the city additional amenities. **Additionally FGD 002** expert at MICE tourism business development department added, "Before we design the next MICE tourism strategic plan, we must clear out information or statistical data on MICE tourism," he is not confident about the exact figure of MICE tourism impact in terms of arrivals and economic contribution because the first source comes from immigration and is analyzed by the Ministry of Tourism statistic department, and thus for better MICE business development in Addis Ababa, we must clear out information or statistical data on MICE tourism. Therefore to increase the convention and meetings to be held in the city there is a need to research and participate on international MICE market and bid for the city to host such type of meetings.

Moreover regarding to the MICE infrastructure in Addis Ababa there are centers which is specialized to conduct international meeting ranging from a business meeting to an international trade fair such as five star and four star hotels. They all have facilities like well-appointed meeting rooms, boardrooms and private dining rooms, ceiling cameras, exquisite lighting system, drop screens, and luxurious staying options. However, the venues available in Addis Ababa are fully equipped to conduct international meeting they lack interpretation facilities: As stated by respondent:

Mice tourism is really underdeveloped in Ethiopia, particularly in Addis Ababa. The main issue is a lack of convention service, less Developed infrastructure such as ICT and available venues (hotels) lack interpretation services to conduct international meeting except AU and ECA. Finally, there is a lack of understanding on how to build and implement MICE as a tourism attraction. The approach is novel, as is the idea of ignoring domestic tourists.

According to the above sentence, the meeting room's amenities must be complete. The most crucial factor in ensuring the exhibition's success is relying on meeting facilities or the exhibition's quality. Facilities such as interpretation facilities are among the factors that meeting planners must consider. They must also include facilities for disabled individuals in order to attract the attention of all visitors to the Exhibitions. Similarly, meeting planners must select meeting spaces based on available space and room arrangement. They must select a hall with decorations and artifacts that fall under the sign and symbol of contentment for the attendees.

4.1.4.4. MICE tourism marketing practices

MICE Tourism practices must adapt their marketing techniques to the specific services because the industry has its own unique characteristics. The components of MICE tourism, which combine the qualities of a tourist product and a business event, necessitate a comprehensive marketing plan. When marketing services to a diverse market, it is critical to meet all information demands and answer all probable queries before your clients ask them directly. Because MICE services entail the management and planning of complicated corporate events, they demand a high level of professional and specialized competence from service providers. The characteristics of the MICE industry are extremely specialized and distinct, according to the finding, which implies that MICE marketing strategies should be correspondingly tailored to the needs of potential clients and the sector's objectives. The importance of marketing for MICE tourism cannot be overstated, and a successful marketing strategy will help you realize your business projections.

As a result, without the correct marketing and promotion, locations will struggle to attract MICE business and will miss out on this upward growth opportunity. Respondents during the in-depth interviews revealed that various marketing tactics in Addis Ababa might be regarded means of marketing MICE tourism in the city. MICE Tourism includes events held in the city as well as

business meeting practices, according to **FGD** respondents. Consider annual MICE events like the Hotel Show Africa. One of the respondents expressed his thoughts.

Tourism marketing can be done in a number of ways. Ethiopia, for example, has a tourism marketing strategy with MICE as a sub-section. Our marketing materials promote tourism destinations as a whole. MICE tourism, on the other hand, should be marketed as a single category and integrated with overall strategy, with the website reflecting genuine city MICE tourism practices.

This is arguably poor MICE marketing, but a destination promotes both online and printed promotional materials to guests, such as brochures, pamphlets, and flyers, in the hopes that they will distribute them and promote their destinations. However, the majority of visitors do not even read the materials. This marketing endeavor ended up being highly pricey, and it was a failed venture. As a result, in the mainstream business world, excellent marketing is such as digital marketing is also the new dimension of MICE marketing. As a result, tourist marketing alone cannot improve the city's MICE tourism economy. Other aspects must be taken into account.

4.1.5. Summary of Current practices of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa

Venues services MICE practices

Interviews stated that there are only UNECA and AU conference facilities that fit with the international standard. However existing meeting facilities in AU and UNECA has relatively small capacities and are not business oriented. Even though Business conferences are held in five and four star hotels are not well equipped or lack services such as interpretation

Exhibition centers

There are no professional business standard setting and exhibition centers in Addis Ababa. Millennium and Addis Ababa exhibition centers are the main two. However, millennium hall current changed to Covid-19 Diagnostic center. In addition the two exhibition centers exhibitions center is aging and requires rehabilitation for international use.

MICE Infrastructure (ICT)

Facilities for MICE tourism are represented in tourist attraction services, conference centers, transportation, ICT and halls, variety of accommodation, accessibility, hospitality and the availability of holding exhibitions and fairs not adequate

MICE marketing

In terms of MICE business, most interviewees consider the most essential external relations are inadequate or poor practice of MICE marketing. In the context of MICE activities, such aspects are especially significant for pre- and post-meeting planning. It's critical to share information about the infrastructure and locations because it can affect both the organizers and individual participants. Ethiopia is not still well known as a MICE destination

MICE bidding practices

Based on the response from the participants, suggests that practitioners in Addis Ababa MICE tourism are hotel industry, event organizers association and Addis Ababa chamber of commerce and sectorial association which address a number of aspects in order to improve the chances of successfully MICE Practices.

MICE statistics

The interview finding shows that there are no well-documented statistics on MICE tourism. There is a significant barrier since the industry lacks both record keeping and established standard for event organizing companies. Furthermore, few organizations and corporations can produce summary statistics to back up their claims of business success

4.2. Current Challenges to MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa

4.2.1. Organizational challenges

As a challenge, in the MICE Tourism industry organizations owners and Tourism authorities expressed that they experienced lack of individuals with experienced abilities and organized statistical information to work in the MICE industry. These challenges not just make the MICE tourism industry not capable but rather additionally hinder the capacity to approach on the

possibility of MICE Tourism development. As per a large number of respondents from the MICE tourism industry organizations, the MICE tourism industries are not surely known by all stakeholders. There were just a few short workshops by a few major lodgings and resorts for their staff to present the idea. Subsequently, relatively few individuals have skills and knowledge to approach MICE tourism. However, it is possible that the designation MICE tourism, which is still used by the government, is not well understood. As the respondent stated that:

MICE tourism is still a new concept to many stakeholders and organizations. In our training program for stakeholders, they only relate with conference. Although the MICE tourism applies incentive travel of the organization staffs which satisfy the high performer workers and other knowledge or skills for this concept are still unavailable. I think the local authority and local tourism businesses should work together toward a professional training program for MICE tourism development in the city.

Additionally, Tourism had been viewed as a multi-product by the Ministry of Tourism, with MICE as a niche tourism activity. Now is the right time, because the Ministry has recognized the value of MICE and its growth have a prominent role in the government's new draft strategy.

4.2.2. Lack of full understanding of the MICE sector

As per a large number of respondents from the MICE tourism industry organizations, the MICE tourism industries are not surely known by all stakeholders. There were just a few short workshops by a few major lodgings and resorts for their staff to present the idea. Subsequently, relatively few individuals have skills and knowledge to approach MICE tourism. However, it is possible that the designation MICE tourism, which is still used by the government, is not well understood. Tourism had been viewed as a multi-product by the Ministry of Tourism, with MICE as a niche tourism activity. Now is the right time, because the Ministry has recognized the value of MICE and its growth have a prominent role in the government's new draft strategy. As the respondent stated that:

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As we can see from the preceding quotation, both public and private players appear to have limited current awareness of the MICE sector. Therefore, it is necessary to have a Convention Bureau with the necessary competencies, as well as functional private sector MICE associations and service providers with the necessary skills.

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4.2.3 Lack of Standardization of MICE services providers

Worldwide MICE occasions require an extremely serious level of impressive skill and administration quality and there is absence of standardization of business owners in the MICE sector and administrations for each MICE activity. This requires more prominent expert advancement of the organizations involved and the manpower in MICE industry. Therefore, there is a need for the sector for development of protocols to regulate the hosting of MICE activity in Addis Ababa under pre-required regulations.

As stated by expert from Ethiopian Convention bureau

There is no legal requirement prepared by concerned body for those who entered in event organizing business especially for those who organize international events. Therefore, for future development and regulation of MICE tourism development their should be structures and procedures for those who wish engage in MICE Business

Other participants added

Our main challenge is posed by rapid growth of this sector is to maintain service standards in a context of intense competition for MICE tourism. In particular, the development of skills in information technology is regarded as essential to the provision of quality service to business travellers.

As the statement from respondent above the development of MICE tourism will be significantly impacted by the standardization of MICE operations. At the early stages of standardization, the necessary regulation and some operational problems may exceed the advantages of increased process reliability and minimal changes in customer satisfaction. However, efficient application

of the standardized procedures will ultimately result in increased efficiency and a significant boost in the level of MICE tourism service quality.

According to the above quotation, there are no legislative requirements prepared by the relevant organization for people who enter the event planning sector, particularly those who organize international events. The lack of standardization across MICE service providers indicates that standard service suppliers are scarce. This means that uniformity is critical to overcoming the obstacles and making the city the greatest Destination for MICE Tourism. As a result, in order to maintain the facilities' authority, the Ethiopian Convention Center should make more efforts to achieve better results by developing standards papers in the operational administration of events hosted in Ethiopia and Addis Ababa.

4.2.4. Inter-Organizational Challenge

A collaborative network that attempts to solve sector problems and executes the collective actions needed for MICE tourism growth is critical to Addis Ababa's success in attaining MICE tourism development. Organizational challenges include the lack of cooperative strategic intent and lack of human resources to government sector in MICE tourism operation. There are many challenges that faced in MICE tourism development, among them, were strategic cooperation. Furthermore the respondent stated as the following

In my opinion, the MICE industry is still handled or practiced in a narrow sense, with MICE tourism centered solely in the hands of commercial organizers and no government engagement. As a result of these factors, further development of the MICE sector may be hampered. Furthermore, there are no Cooperation among the actors for international MICE bidding in Ethiopia, so it can be concluded that the mice activity in Addis Ababa was held either for individual interest or private businessman initiative. Therefore, it clearly it show that MICE practice are not well supported by structures and professionals

Inter-organizational collaboration toward an open, common aim was difficult at both the management and staff levels, as the results of the interviews and verbatim quotation confirm. Due to ongoing Collaboration challenges, as well as the pursuit of competitive advantage and the urgent need to address Inter-organizational collaboration issues facing the MICE sector, inter-organizational collaboration must therefore be strengthened significantly for the successful development of MICE Tourism.

According to the interviews finding and document analysis despite the fact that each organization has its distinct functions, they aim to work together as much as possible, even rotating staff when needed for a certain time or event. However the issues are beyond that which needs strategic cooperation among responsible organizations. Since the Ethiopian convention bureau understood its responsibility for the country as a whole and the cooperation challenges, they have been attempting to collaborate with other organizations outside of Addis Ababa.

4.2.5. Collaboration towards MICE tourism development strategy

Inter-organizational collaboration may not be the only or best process for every problem or issue, but it is an option when the problems being faced affect more than one sector, are complex, driven by multiple factors and cannot be resolved by one organization (Crosby and Bryson 2005). That would be the case with the Addis Ababa 2030 MICE tourism strategy, which necessarily involves collaboration because it cannot be achieved in a single process with a single leader or organization, requiring the participation of various actors from the state to the local level and across sectors, as well as ongoing conversation into new knowledge to introduce diverse approaches. As a result, residents, municipalities, governments, colleges and universities, commerce and industry, and the idea-based sector in Addis Ababa requires collaboration and networking to achieve MICE tourism development and a better MICE destination in Africa by 2030. According to Bramwell, et.al (2000). collaboration is a process through which different parties and stakeholders see a problem differently, can explore their differences and find ways to resolve the problems that can go beyond what they can think of as possible.

On account of MICE Tourism industry in Addis Ababa, little is done to familiarize MICE Tourism with further develop MICE business. Maybe one of the challenges on MICE industry was industry collaboration and there were no any structures that manage event coordinators. It is crucial for the accomplishment of the meeting, incentive or exhibitions that these partners coordinate shipping of their item. It additionally demonstrates the extent of difficulties in planning the MICE practices of various partners to offer a quality support to coordinators and representatives of the MICE industry players.

These problems are happened in in every stage of authorities to the local level because of extra human and monetary asset requirements. The MICE industry is a Complex industry the

complicated connection between firms in MICE industry gives more noteworthy chance to boost collaboration, for instance through casual or authoritative courses of action and strategic cooperation or involvements. Since Participation is significant at the organization level, as well as in areas of preparing, showcasing and arranging.

Therefore, to turn into Addis Ababa on a-list of best MICE destination in Africa collaboration are needed to come from both the public authority and the private organizations. Government approaches must be with the end goal that assistance as well as work with the development of MICE. The public authority should uphold MICE by giving tax incentives to private investors for placing their assets in convention centers. It ought to sponsor and put resources into building, keeping up with and refreshing conference halls, exchange fair and show corridors and meeting settings. The private area ought to likewise understand the huge capability of this area and do most extreme to deliver it. They should feature the capacities of Addis Ababa abroad; explicitly focus on the business travellers targeting the objective for MICE. According statement from the deputy manager event organizers association and owner of Prana event

Due to lack of support, coordination and incentive on the sector, we have issues related with PA system, Live streaming Equipment's, High Quality LED Screens, Participant management Systems, etc. Therefore, this all are challenge for successful completion of event service provision

According to the quotation above, collaboration is critical for the successful growth of MICE destinations, not only in terms of assistance but also in terms of relevant policies and the relevance of all players in the sector communicating the same consistent messages to the global MICE market. Similarly, the study discovered that companies marketing Addis Ababa at international exhibition shows had to adapt their strategy due to the changing nature of the MICE business and the country's limits on MICE tourism. The responders who represented them realized that such techniques needed to evolve and that they needed to be influenced by research. In addition to the aforementioned challenges, the researcher stated that additional respondents raised issues such as the private sector's lack of interest in the MICE industry. This may be due less incentive provided by government to those private sectors who plan to engage in mice industry.

Absence of MICE Tourism Policy

MICE tourism can't remain solitary and depends on numerous different ventures to exist and develop; immediate MICE specialists proposed that approaches should to make more connection between MICE actors and others industry in the city. This would make the arrangements simpler to execute with the help of different businesses and the activity of MICE tourism in the area would be all the more broadly perceived. Different areas in the local should consider MICE tourism as a significant sector in the city and all should uphold the business to foster well. As it has been stressed by the heads of the MICE business professionals, the policies should focus on making this become valid. To accomplish this, the strategies and policies should attempt to make more relations between related businesses, for example, one manager of a mice business organization referenced this as below:

We really do confront legal challenges there is no approach or lawful structures for the MICE business overall and particularly there are issues connected with Exhibition and Meeting License there are customs issues in regards to MICE attendees accompanying hardware's or equipment's

Additionally, the development of the MICE Tourism relies upon the policy of MICE Tourism as an objective and providing bidding support to attract international events to the country and particularly to the city. The current practices of MICE in the world are moving move to the virtual occasion with large numbers of the conference held online, including the offering bidding processes. The respondents delivered the requirement to develop MICE tourism policy and support of the Ethiopian MICE sector.

4.2.6. Absence of Legal Framework for MICE Tourism

How and in what form MICE tourism is regulated is determined by its internal administrative structure and legal framework. Collaboration, for example, has been formed between the national agency responsible for MICE tourism and other ministries and institutions from other countries. The technique for regulating MICE package organization and sale. Some states demand a license as proof of financial capability to operate or an individual's ability to function, as well as proof of professional competence, knowledge of foreign languages, and so on.

MICE tourism at the state level is not regulated by a special law, field of tourism with the national law, but it limited itself to basic principles and to tourism policy. The latter provides a legal basis for regulating the marketing of MICE tourism and areas governing business traveler's protection

According to the findings of the interviews, the private MICE sector lacks regulations about the current legal framework for operating MICE tourism businesses. For private MICE sector organizations, these conditions must be completed by the organizers of MICE-related activities and their sellers, as well as the way of ensuring the obligation to complete the transaction. Both the organizer and the provider must get a license from the national convention bureau in order to conduct this activity. Accompanying personnel (who, under this type of regulation, both have the status of a regulated profession) must also obtain permission for their operation.

4.2.7 New Culture of Virtual Meeting and COVID-19

Nowadays, Virtual meeting resemble the inexpensive type of meeting adapted by many organizations. Even though it is the last option since it provides commitment open doors with relevant subjects with practically no interruptions, virtual gatherings are engaging on the grounds that they permit you to go to without booking lodging, get on a plane or depart your office seat.

However, in some cases you can't pass up the vast systems administration potential during an event and you decide to go there face to face, different times you're simply keen on a subject and go to a virtual gathering. Nonetheless, getting ready for attempting to interest virtual meeting of participants is something the MICE business should work on it and it won't be a simple undertaking. During interview with MICE professional's respondents argue that the event facilities in Addis Ababa lacks technology equipped meeting rooms. One participant said:

Despite the fact that technological requirements varies from one operation to the next, MICE tourism has a similar challenges: they lack the technology required to operate meeting rooms.

In addition, the recent convention centers now offer a wide scope of innovative general media administrations, including HD video projection innovation to make a colorful event insight and on location specialized help. It additionally offers free fast Wi-Fi administrations across the complex. Event organizers might permit outsider endorsed providers to offer extra administrations, for example, simultaneous interpretation, 3D projections, extraordinary lighting and a wide scope of general media administrations for events held. As a result, the contemporary

MICE Tourism's greatest difficulty is resolving technology issues. Technology will never be able to replace people's natural desires to socialize and form bonds. Nonetheless, some people prefer to avoid social contact, and this must be considered. Services such as live streaming, video creation, and high-speed internet connectivity will need to be upgraded. One participants state

MICE Service providers do not use the technology of the sector and the equipment in MICE we are using is old fashioned opposed to other equipment that support MICE planning and management

FGD 004:- For the effective development of MICE tourism a certain level of infrastructure as well as all the necessary conditions for a comfortable stay on a business trip must be created, which include: standard Convention centers for the organization of exhibitions, congresses and conferences; business hotels for business people; business aviation; mobile and satellite communication and technology oriented service.

4.2.8 Poor practice of MICE Business Networking

MICE agencies can operate within a certain region or globally. In both cases, this requires a huge number of partners and service providers. The bigger scope and scale of an event is, the bigger amount of time and service providers is required. Recent trends of organizing meetings and use of social media and meeting apps are also expected to boost market growth in the near future. (Allied Market Research 2020). These collaborations could be between multinational MICE tourism organizations. In-depth interviews even expressed the perspective that MICE tourism organizations might be viewed as a regional networking opportunity in MICE tourism. Furthermore, the need of networking and forming partnerships in order to host an event was underlined. Those arguments were strengthened even more by mentioning.

We've set up a separate company to handle MICE business development. In Ethiopia, notably in Addis Ababa, the separate entity focuses in marketing and promoting MICE. We have a website and distribute flyers as well. We're currently working on preparing MICE bidding document where we'll be able to show off our MICE potential to international customers.

Therefore, for attracting international business travellers networking with international mice organization is important. From the finding show that all MICE organizations focus on marketing and promotion. This shows expanding inclination for public relationship to advance convention, Meetings and Exhibitions as one means of attracting MICE Tourism. This is a

reaction both to the expanded challenge for MICE business from a quickly developing number of events and to the internationalization of expert relationship across all disciplines and regions. Therefore, to boost the likely advantage to Addis Ababa via MICE business with abroad nations, access to new innovation, trade of thoughts, foundation of important business and expert networking is very important. Schwark (2015) has described a cooperative and networking organization with the purpose of developing a vast network that connects all existing tourism cooperation. Those networking events, which included both government and private sector participants, were project-based and continuous, and they crossed borders to connect the event. Wöhler (1997) further remarked that regional destinations partnering to deliver a complete tourism product are an excellent example of such networks.

Finding from FGD002:- regarding MICE services in Addis Ababa are provided by quite a few companies, most of which are event organizers. Thus, according to the directors of Ethiopian convention bureau, Addis Ababa outnumbers more than 400 tourist companies, though only less than 20 of them could be related to the category of MICE tourism. Therefore, it needs an improvement in MICE business as well as increase the network of the companies who are working in MICE tourism.

4.2.8.1 Poor practice of MICE Sales and Bidding

A MICE bid package is an important component of the bidding process. MICE bid package includes all of the essential information for MICE, including a letter detailing the eligibility requirements such as government support, infrastructure, security issues, and other important papers. As we pointed out above, today business bidders have connection to the international market. At any time, they can be looking for our infrastructure, venues, accommodation, logistics or other products. As a result, Addis Ababa has no any practical MICE bidding experience so far at international level for hosting business meeting at national level in Ethiopia.

As a result, learning from a failed attempt international convention practice is critical for future bids. Furthermore, some selling for venue and with the government here and Addis Ababa as a culture and knowledge of MICE destination in the bid, there were some practical challenges that arose from the interaction with the event organizers, such as logistics issues, getting appropriate

venues, and service standards for their spend in Addis Ababa hotels near the venue, and grants for stay.

In discussing these marketing challenges, cope effective marketing requires being able to collect and analyze MICE tourism statistics and facilities and then use it to make decisions on the strategies they should use.

Another respondent stated that

Well! the challenge related to marketing is to have a clear understanding of a market's demands. However, because MICE tourism lacks organized information, it is not impossible to collect and analyze MICE marketing data, nor is it possible to use this data to make effective business decisions. As a result, MICE tourism activity continues to make marketing judgments based on incomplete information.

However, researcher also discovered that the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Association, for example, had engaged into a number of agreements and contracts with other business associations in other countries. It has been discovered that organizing a conference or expo in Addis Ababa, for example, allows foreign items to be transported into the country. The exhibitions, it was pointed out, is a solid source of cash and also acts as benchmarks for the quality of service provided to clients. During the exhibitions, the degree of customer service and, as a result, satisfaction has continued to rise, which can be ascribed to the level of exposure gained by local manufacturers and exporters. Such practice of hosting exhibition and conference will be a good practice for hosting international convention in the future. Hosting conferences or exhibitions in Addis Ababa can act as a critical platform for transferring global best-practices across organizations and technology, strategic choices. As results foreign exhibitions do indeed serve as a promotional platform for foreign products and services, in international media to reach a large audience, resulting in increased interest in local goods and services. Moreover, **FGD 001:-** also had some things to say about the preceding description. Ethiopian convention bureau MICE tourism growth strategy executed a new action, and this project developed a new practice of bidding on worldwide MICE opportunities. For MICE tourist development, this technology made it simple to collect data from accommodation centers, venues, infrastructure, and other services.

FGD 004:- pointed out that the main challenge raised are lack of venues and bidding on international market and understanding of MICE tourism as well as most of the tour operators do not know the demand of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa. In addition, he said that “I have begun

working here and it consumes a lot of time to get into the list of MICE bidding and there is this worry in with regards to we must be fruitful, we don't have a long term practices of how to lock such images. What we need to think about is how would we really help the MICE associations and limit those obstacles toward dissatisfaction and there are enormous issues on MICE sector.”

4.2.8.2 Budget related challenges

Another challenge for poor MICE business development practices is that businesses struggle with their marketing budget. Without appropriate marketing budget, deciding on the right marketing plan and allocating the necessary resources becomes difficult. Begin by looking at tools for detailing and examination that provide simple marketing and commercial reports and measurements. This will help you divide what is working for your business and how to allocate your marketing budget accordingly.

We face marketing issues, and the MICE business will be hampered by marketing obstacles, if appropriate finance is not available to fund the next phase of MICE development. Access to MICE development capital remains a critical concern for the tourism industry, particularly the MICE sector.

The preceding statement demonstrates that financial allocation for MICE area development must take into account both homegrown businesses and large public meetings, and that the organizers of these events are not getting together in their own circle and connecting with connected partners and holding hands with the global meetings to reach into a huge stage for the global meetings to come in and witness what we as of now have and skilled to host global meetings.

Additionally, after hearing the conversation from focus group discussion, senior expert at MICE business development Ethiopian convention bureau (**FGD 002**) stated that his department does not have enough budgets and that he will highly recommend that those concerned stakeholders participate in MICE tourist awareness and workshop programs. These will aid tour operators in developing unique packages and identifying new MICE tourism markets

According to the respondent, public-private partnerships may have an important role in financing Major MICE practices in the majority of situations. Moreover, Infrastructure obstacles will Continues the MICE business if sufficient funding is not available to fund the next phase of MICE tourism growth. Access to development capital remains a critical concern for the tourism industry, particularly the MICE sector.

4.2.8.3 Competition Challenge

Nowadays, the market changes quickly it might turn out to be more difficult than any other time for organizations to acquire new clients and boost international MICE tourists. Similarly, a new promotion regulations and guidelines are springing up each day, making it challenging for marketing and MICE business experts to keep up. Furthermore breaking these consistency guidelines result failure in the International MICE market. Addis Ababa needs to focus in its MICE tourism sector improvement on delivering quality visitor experiences. According, Addis Ababa MICE tourism strategy, Ethiopia is not currently market ready for the incentive travel sector. According to the respondent stated that:

Regarding to MICE tourism the industry player's show quite clearly that external relationships are a weak point in the current structure and organization of the MICE sector, and secondly regarding the venues the current international standard meeting hall in Ethiopian is only AU and ECA and implementation are not assisting in overcoming these weaknesses as much as they could. We have used five star hotel meeting hall the case of to show that there is potential to begin to think of the MICE Tourism as a tool to both improve MICE tourism performance and local economic/community linkages.

At the point when we look at the respondents as far as Addis Ababa competitiveness with different MICE objective, we observed that less infrastructure and settings that can assist them with working or compete the world MICE destinations. Also we figure our nearby association should update their insight, ability offices to adapt up to the most recent necessity of MICE tourism. In any case, in certain associations, for example, lodgings, the updating system is as yet in the works. They are not in a situation to give equipped MICE service as international standard.

Regarding the competition the finding from FGD001:- On MICE Tourism Competition, MICE a tourism professional in Addis Ababa has to be strengthened through MICE related certification and accreditation. The MICE Industry Development Team, based on MICE Tourist Development of Addis Ababa and other cities in the country, shall engage MICE tourism enterprises, institutes of higher education, and worldwide associations to establish the MICE Industry Development. Specialized academic programs need to be developed in order to develop the skills of existing local MICE suppliers and broaden available specializations in the sphere of MICE tourism. Therefore, become more successful in MICE tourism.

4.2.8.4 Lack of MICE Brand Image

In addition, the MICE market should have a favorable or neutral reputation. You won't be able to exist as an alternative MICE destination if you don't have this reputation. Over time, the reputation will fluctuate and maybe improve. Your competitors' brand image should be distinct and distinguishable. Addis Ababa City MICE Brand Image, advancement as well as exhibition and convention service practices is far way from the international standard. The interview results have confirmed that both the federal and Addis Ababa city culture Art and tourism Bureau is not effectively promoting the MICE tourism resources to the different world tourists. The real image as well as the historical, cultural and natural heritages is not introduced broadly enough. In addition, a good internet based promotion that should be dynamic and be useful with a functioning care staff to help customers.

This was because of low special action on destinations potential, Most of the time, marketing practices just around facilitating meetings. However, focus on promotion of numerous attractions and authentic local history which the participants can visit plays critical role in building the city image. A MICE brand image plays, for example, huge impact in purchasers buying choices, it is important to understand the development collaboration as well as where the information that adds to the awareness is gotten from (DiMarino, 2008). Consequently, the image of MICE brand improvement ought to begin before a MICE business travelers come to the country or city.

However, the findings of the interview show that to build the a city's MICE brand image is not as easy task due to a lack of adequate offices structures, cost factors, and openness to MICE marketing availability of convention centers comparable to tourist vacation areas, importance of conference setting according to traveler expectations, and preparing marketing campaigns. The above arguments are sported by the respondent below.

EMM!! I can say the MICE business is solely run by private organization initiatives except recently opened Ethiopian Convention bureau that's responsible for international MICE bidding and marketing Ethiopia and brand as a MICE Destination. And the MICE tourism did not promoted well yet. The MICE tourism facilities and event organizers services are very limited and services are often provided in an informal way

A MICE brand image is the total perception that arises from all of its influences in the minds of business travellers or customers. Consumers connect the brand with a variety of associations.

They create brand image based on these associations. Based on the consumers' subjective opinions about the brand's association's package, an image of the brand is created. The recently created Ethiopian MICE Tourism Brand is "MICE Ethiopia, meet in the land of Origins." The concept behind brand image is that when a consumer buys a product or service, they are also buying the image that goes along with it. Therefore, Addis Ababa should be branding as a single MICE destination rather than connected with Tourism brand. Brand communications such as packaging, word-of-mouth marketing, advertising, and other promotional tools, etc. can help to strengthen Addis Ababa's MICE brand *perceptions*.

FGD 003:- suggested that to cover the cost MICE tourism promotion, different strategies can be formed. Whatever the case is we have to build positive country image and MICE Brand Even in collaboration with Ethiopian airline, we can use the, digital marketing to promote our country especially focusing on MICE business travelers.

4.2.8.5 Lack of MICE market focused research in Addis Ababa

MICE oriented research is relatively smaller compared to other tourist segments, according to information received from MICE tourism experts of Addis Ababa Bureau of Culture, Art and Tourism, Ethiopian Convention bureau and Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce sectorial association. Private business sector professionals, also known as MICE industry professionals, prefer to use hotel reports. The existing supply of MICE services is based on the opinions gathered from the working experience of managers of tourist class hotels.

Furthermore, The Bureau's concerned tourism professionals also offered their thoughts. Conferences are conducted frequently in Addis Ababa, especially as it is Africa's capital. In light of these factors, as well as the growing tourist influx, existing lodgings do not distinguish MICE business customers from other leisure travelers. There appear to be several critical issues, particularly in terms of quantity, such as insufficient data gathering in tourist class hotels. These could be the result of a lack of standard regulations and a major lack of frequent inspections of tourist accommodations by the relevant Federal, and City Administration tourism government agencies all contribute to the problem.

As a result, MICE business managers and buyers are faced with a never-ending list of complex issues when it comes to making decisions about financing, marketing, and demand, where to invest, how much of a product to have on hand, how to establish standards of performance and ways to measure productivity, and so on. The components that make up business difficulties are frequently complex and difficult to understand. AS a result, MICE marketing research can be used to address these issues and take the appropriate action. Moreover, FGD001 suggested their department must conduct market research on MICE tourism market and distribute the information to all stakeholders for the future because information is a base line for every MICE activity in Addis Ababa

4.2.8.6. Current Political instability

Political issues are one of the challenges that faced by the government that affect the direction and volume of tourism flow due to political unrest. Participants were asked to discuss the challenge of political unrest in Addis Ababa on MICE tourism. Experts interviewed noted a sense of insecurity among potential MICE tourists in Addis Ababa as a basic factor resulting from political instability and its impacts on MICE tourism; according to Experts interviewed noted that many foreigners simply do not want to take the danger of going there and do not want to incur the risk of going somewhere.

A couple of participants in Addis Ababa's tourism-related services emphasized the issue of safety, or perhaps more appropriately "security." According to them, security is a major role in the media's creation of a negative image of attractive destinations in Addis Ababa, as the media tends to misrepresent the situation and overestimate the potential threat level. Tourism and MICE tourism require political stability and safety; even the potential of events such as civil turmoil might induce tourists to reconsider their plans to travel a region. Political unrest has an immediate and potentially long-term influence on a destination's tourism industry. Participants also discussed as following

Despite the fact that Addis Ababa is safe to perform MICE activities, the country's political upheaval will certainly result in a decrease in the number of international travelers and tourism earnings.

Furthermore, tour operators and MICE business agents reduced their activities due to a lack of bookings or a fear of accountability. As a result, political turmoil reduces demand on MICE

activity and the country's suitability as a MICE tourism destination suffers, and its visitor attractiveness suffers even more.

4.3. Prospects of MICE tourism development in Addis Ababa

An examination of the MICE world market shows that there is saturation in the developed business sectors of US and Europe and Asia Pacific and Africa is arising as the following objective in worldwide MICE market. Ethiopia and especially Addis Ababa needs to take advantage of this open door. Global convention practices are contributing as far as innovation moves and expansion in innovative work while exchange exhibitions are prompting development and advancement regions, for example, hotels, manufacturing, materials, spas and food cooking.

Along these lines, all elements of MICE are expected to develop in future. The MICE business is fit for creating tremendous incomes for the country particularly for example, exchanging creation and product and the travel industry related administrations. The travel industry related income created by MICE guests is huge commitment to the general the travel industry.

It's expected that many people involved in the MICE industry, such as coordinators, venue managers, and hospitality service providers, will try to boost their human resources in line with rising demand for international standards of service. As was shown above MICE area elements need to overcome a complicated arrangement of difficulties. Nonetheless, the crucial fixings in working MICE tourism industry tasks are venue advancement, convenience, coordinated factors and improvement of framework. MICE area would have no possibility of achievement without fulfillment of these Components. It proposes that the possibilities accessible to MICE areas are interrelated.

It likewise shows that the possibility of effective MICE industry relies upon a readiness to work in a helpful climate. MICE industry tasks are overseen effectively; event coordinators have a solid opportunity assuming they can support strategic relationships. Addis Ababa MICE industry areas have the possibility of creating Venues and accessing support from Government. Besides, the presence of support in MICE area by government affirms that regardless of the effort by private sector. It seems governments have yet to make sufficient effort to regulate and encourage the sector.

4.3.1. Venue development prospects

MICE Tourism attributes like Venues, convenience, and vacation spot design are promising in Future. It has sufficient inspiration and drive for event head out and might want to see around and cultural heritage of the country. What's more, there are additionally a few explicit elements having the capacity to impact future MICE development. In particular, reasonably estimated the travel industry products and better pay open doors are something that the MICE specialist co-ops would search for. However, with regards to government, accessibility of security emotionally supportive networks and legitimate data of those would overshadow different elements.

Additionally, the ongoing development of Venus like Addis Africa International Convention and Exhibition Center (AAICEC) lay out as of conference and exhibition focus that would offers world class service for corporate social events and entertainment, bringing about critical financial benefits for the business local area and the country in general. The project incorporates the development of a multipurpose hall with seating for 5,000 individuals, a gathering corridor with north of 3,000 seats, two assembly halls with 500 seats each, and six little gathering rooms with seating for 50 to 100 individuals. A four-star inn and other help offices, such as restaurants, lounge area, and playgrounds, would be included in the venue.

Furthermore, Addis Ababa Exhibition Center (AAEC) presently possesses four hectares of land, which will be extended to ten hectares in a future arranged expansion. The whole region involved is accepted to be 24,000 square meters. AAEC will incorporate meeting halls, a "seven-star" lodging, an adaptable show community, a parking garage that can oblige north of 2,500 vehicles, and a gallery, amphitheater and meeting corridors will cover 17,000 square meters, with a sum of 57,000 square meters devoted to meeting and display space will have positive a MICE sector prospects in the future.

4.3.2. International MICE Bidding Prospects.

The office for MICE is significant as a makeshift measure and foundation of Conventional Bureau for Ethiopia. Ethiopian Convention Bureau had been to help and facilitate the countries contribution exercises, market Addis Ababa as an appealing MICE objective, and give strategy and consultancy support to the improvement of MICE industry in the country. Addis Ababa was positioned seventh on the ICCA Africa city ranking for association in Africa (ICCA, 2018). The

gap in proactive MICE marketing and offering and general information about the market availability and accessible offices to have meetings has been an inhibitor to development of the MICE sector. Furthermore, the convention bureau is basic element for offering global meetings to come to Addis Ababa, for achieving both the MICE industry and non- travel industry benefits connected with this market segment.

Further, the conversations with the respondents uncovered that it became fundamental to be aware of the current requirements in competing MICE industry in Addis Ababa and the condition of destination marketing activities. In addition, some respondents had referenced a few different instances of famous MICE destination practices shows that the essential reasons is for that success to be connected to predictable public exchanges and informing among the different MICE stakeholders.

According experts MICE market competition has likewise been putting resources into world-class conference halls. This can be corrected through suitable product advancement, packaging, evaluating, informing and promoting to key objective business sectors. To quick track the development of Addis Ababa's MICE industry in a significant, manageable and intentional way, Ethiopian Convention bureau has set up a technique that will characterize how the MICE business will function and measure its success, keeping fixed on the higher reason and ground breaking effect of MICE on the business world and Ethiopia's development as whole.

Moreover, in delivery of its mandate to provide leadership in expanding the economic benefits and impact of MICE tourism, ECB will be recognized as the center of excellence and catalyst of Ethiopia's MICE industry. Success will depend largely on fostering strong partnerships, collaboration and teamwork between all stakeholders, both public and private sector.

4.3.3. Technology prospects

The cost of starting a MICE business is significantly reduced thanks to information and communication technologies. In this aspect, digital technologies are making it much easier to develop an idea into a new business model and promote it. As a result of information and communication technology, chances for collaboration are opening up, allowing for the creation of high-quality low-cost products. According to the IACC's 2016 Meeting Room of the Future Report, survey respondents expect to be working on the following tasks while connected at

meetings over the next five years: It's difficult to ignore the innovations coming from and being employed in the meetings, incentives, conferences, and expos (MICE) arena in the realm of business travel. Meetings sector technology, which adds a new aspect that can attract participants and improve their experience, is also making it easier for meeting planners to work more efficiently. And the prospects for continued expansion appear to be promising. This means that conference attendees will be doing a lot more than checking their e-mail and remaining connected to their home office they'll be taking advantage of everything their event has to offer online.

In addition, Safaricom Telecommunications Ethiopia, which received an operating license in Ethiopia in May 2021, has begun work on telecom expansions in the national information and communication technology. Without a question, the telecommunications market's future looks brighter than ever – and the way to a successful prospects for companies in the MICE industry is marked by targeted and extensive analysis of all available data. Furthermore, the expansion of the telecom network, combined with MICE tourism market and geographic data, will result in analyses that provide the most valuable insights for stakeholder network strategic planning, profitable market development, successful business area and location planning, and, most importantly, the needs and wants of target MICE audiences.

4.3.4. Infrastructure prospects

The above arguments are statement of the current status of open MICE industry in Addis Ababa. The reveling climate unnecessarily calls for reconsidering as how to give consistent chain of openness, and stays associated all through the MICE industry, for instance, the stakeholders and MICE sector organizations are urgent in this phase. Uniquely, available and extension of air terminals, trains and rail route stations, traveler mentor and more modest vehicles, pleasant street, actual access at and around tourist destination, open public accommodations and so forth would be of vital significance to encourage the reasons for open MICE industry. For the first time, tourism was mentioned in Ethiopian's among the top five Economic plans in early 2014. Ethiopia's government has launched a project to improve infrastructure in Addis Ababa at tourism hotspots.

National governments have been instructed to cater to the demands of middle and low-income domestic tourists at popular tourism destinations.

According to finding suggests that these days of fast travel, the need for airports to be built to the greatest international standards and to expand their network is undeniable. The upcoming expansion of international airports at Addis Ababa bole international airport is a huge step forward in increasing traffic to Addis Ababa's tourism hotspots. Putting Addis Ababa on the world air map is a boon for the region's center corridor, which is mostly untapped in terms of MICE tourism. It will be able to operate as a direct traffic feeder for the MICE industry. Even the addition of more foreign consulates in certain places can boost the number of international tourists by ensuring that visas are issued quickly.

Another prospect of infrastructure development is government's effort on the development Exhibition and entertainment space and MICE sector enterprises will be beneficial to tourism marketing. Such amenities benefit not only the tourists but also the local people. It generates a lot of jobs for the locals and will almost certainly make them gainfully employed in the future. There are a variety of perspectives from the industry, including worry over the significant development in facilities in recent years, such as enormous venues, as well as a public demand for facility expansion. In general, Addis Ababa is expected to have a "overabundance" of conference and exposition facilities in the not-too-distant future. In practice, this could result in both foreign and internal competition among African cities.

Taking the above into account, the future MICE industry is intense and one needs to straggle with numerous chargeable difficulties and bottlenecks. Maybe, a portion of those are quite easy to manage or make due. What might be required is specific level of responsibility, sincere endeavors and coordination with respect to coordinate associates. With regards to more mind Complex issues including impressive financial responsibility and coordination, it would be important to initiate appropriate arrangement components and more significant level of interdepartmental coordination systems.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Conclusion

Along with other tourism industries, the MICE Tourism industry is growing at a rapid pace. There are numerous opportunities available. Even so, properly managing all elements of the MICE sector is a difficult endeavour that necessitates a unique set of capacities. Regarding the practices of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa the findings show that there are only UNECA and AU conference facilities that fit with the international standard. However existing meeting facilities in AU and UNECA has relatively small capacities and are not business oriented. Even though Business conferences are held in five and four star hotels are not well equipped or lack services such as interpretation services.

The current major challenges in the development of the MICE tourism industry in Addis Ababa, including lack of full understanding of the MICE sector, lack of standardization of MICE services providers, lack of MICE tourism policy, lack of legal framework for MICE tourism, poor practice of MICE sales and bidding, poor practice of MICE business networking, lack of MICE brand image and lack of MICE market focused research, inadequate data for planning of MICE sector, strong international competition and several marketing challenges need to be addressed.

However, the MICE industry's future prospects in Addis Ababa, as well as its potential benefits nationally and regionally, will be determined in large part by its ability to manage these obstacles better than its competitors. Venue development, convenience, coordinated factors, and legislative framework improvement are critical components in the future expansion of the MICE tourist business. Without the completion of these Components, the MICE area would be unable to realize its goals. Moreover, the upcoming expansion of international airports at Addis Ababa, the ongoing construction of AAEC, AAEC and the development of attraction sites in Addis Ababa and effort of Ethiopian Convention bureau on bidding international exhibition and conference is a huge step forward in increasing traffic to Addis Ababa's MICE tourism. Putting Addis Ababa on the world air map is a boon for the region's center corridor, which is mostly untapped in terms of MICE tourism.

5.2. Recommendation

5.2.1. Recommendations for Government

- Ethiopian government should support the trend towards marketing Addis Ababa as a MICE tourism destination via formulating Regulation and MICE tourism Policy.
- Establishing an international conference center with exhibition halls through the participation, functional network, and coordination of various stakeholders who are involved in conference organization should be part of incentive for investment projects on convention centers.
- Incentive for Investment projects on Convention center should include establishing an international conference center with exhibition halls.
- Government should develop MICE Tourism policy at the state level to prepare Addis Ababa for MICE tourism and analyzing the obstacles to applying this type of tourism.

5.2.2. Recommendations for the Ministry of Tourism / Ethiopia Convention Bureau

- MICE Marketing strategy should focus on the development of the Addis Ababa Tourism industry including , unique events, meetings, exhibitions, and different sorts of the MICE industry to draw in different market sections and overcome the current inactivity of MICE industry.
- Launching marketing campaign to build the MICE brand image of Addis Ababa destination in different international trade fairs
- Promoting Addis Ababa as a MICE destination through participating in international and regional conferences concerning incentive, conference and exhibition
- Build Ethiopia brand of Addis Ababa as a MICE tourism destination, and through Familiarization trips and awareness programs.

5.2.3. Recommendations for the Ethiopia chamber of commerce and sectorial association

- Organizing training courses for tourism managers and employees in Addis Ababa tourist companies to qualify them as a skilled workforce.
- Organizing workshops for tourism companies about how to organize successful MICE events in which Addis Ababa or foreigner specialists of MICE tourism will lecture.
- Holding workshops regarding competitors' encounters in MICE industry as well as the advantages of MICE industry over other segment of the sector
- Additionally, the study also recommends event coordinators to incorporate the tourism packages to draw in numerous exhibition members.

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ANNEX 1
ABABA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
CENTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
Tourism Development and Management Unit
GRADUATE PROGRAM

Dear respondents,

The interview is prepared to collect information that is fundamental for a study on MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa: Practices, Challenge and prospects for partial fulfillment of Master of Arts degree in Tourism Development and Management. Therefore, the interview aimed to collect data for assessing the practice of MICE tourism in order to promote Addis Ababa as a MICE destination. This study is solely for academic purposes and so has no impact on you in any way.

As a result, I would gladly ask you to spend a few minutes with you for all information you submit will be treated as confidential, and data will be used strictly for the purposes of this study. You're honest, forthright, and prompt response is critical to the study's success.

Thanks in advance for your cooperation!!

Tsega Wondu , (researcher)

Contact address

Phone: +25192451969

E-mail: tsegawondu4@gmail.com

Interview Question

Question on the Practices of MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa

1. Would you please tell me briefly about your self? E.g. Educational background, work experience, your current position, how your work related with MICE tourism etc
2. How do you describe the potential of Addis Ababa for MICE tourism and the unique opportunities it renders for this sector?
3. How do you explain the current MICE tourism practices in Addis Ababa? Venues, exhibition and ICT etc?
4. How do you describe the Government's role towards MICE tourism development in Addis Ababa?
5. How do you explain about the currently existing facilities for MICE tourism practice in Addis Ababa?
6. Could you please explain about Government's Effort and support to Private organizations engaged in MICE tourism sector?
7. What mechanisms are put in place by your organization to improve MICE Tourism in Addis Ababa?
8. How do you describe the collaborations and cooperation's among the stakeholders in MICE tourism?

Question on Current Challenge of MICE Tourism development in Addis Ababa

1. What are the challenges faced by MICE tourism sector in Addis Ababa? Would you please explain the challenges related to:-
 - 1.1.Regulation and legal framework
 - 1.2.Would you please explain the challenges related to technological limitations?
2. Would you please explain the organizational and structural challenges in the MICE sector is facing?

Question on the Prospect of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa

- Q1. What has been done so far to improve MICE tourism activity in Addis Ababa?
- Q2. In your opinion what should be done to improve MICE tourism in Addis Ababa in the future?
- Q3. In your opinion, what are the prospects of MICE tourism in Addis Ababa?
- Q4. In your opinion, what should be the role of private sector to improve MICE tourism in Ethiopia in general and AA in particular in Addis Ababa?
- Q5. In your opinion, what should be the role of international organizations such as ICCA (international Congress and Convention association), WTO and WTTC to improve MICE tourism in Ethiopia in general and AA in particular?
- Q6. In your opinion, what should be done to boost the number of delegates attending conferences, meetings, events in Addis Ababa by attracting more business travelers from the local, national and international level?

ABABA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
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በአዲስ አበባ MICE ቱሪዝም ክንውኖች የሚመለከት ጥያቄ

1. እባክዎን ስለራስዎ በአጭሩ ይንገሩኝ? ለምሳሌ የትምህርት ደረጃ ፣ የሥራ ልምድ ፣ እንዲሁም ሥራዎ ከ MICE ቱሪዝም ጋር እንዴት እንደሚዛመድ ቢያብራሩልኝ
2. አዲስ አበባ ለMICE ቱሪዝም ያለውን አቅም እና ለዚህ ዘርፍ የምታቀርባቸውን ልዩ እድሎች እንዴት ይገልፁታል
3. አሁን በአዲስ አበባ የMICE ቱሪዝም እንቅስቃሴ/ክንውኖች እንዴት ያብራራሉ?
4. በአዲስ አበባ ውስጥ ለMICE ቱሪዝም ልማት የመንግስትን ሚና እንዴት ይገልፁታል?
5. በአዲስ አበባ ስለMICE ቱሪዝም መሰረተ ልማት እና ፋሲሊቲዎች እንዴት ያብራራሉ?
6. እባክዎን ስለ መንግሥት ጥረት እና ድጋፍ በ MICE ቱሪዝም ዘርፍ ለተሰማሩ የግል ድርጅቶች ማብራሪያ ቢሰጡኝ?
7. በአዲስ አበባ ውስጥ MICE ቱሪዝምን ለማሻሻል በድርጅታዎ ምን ስልቶች ተዘርግተዋል?
8. MICE ቱሪዝም ውስጥ ባለድርሻ አካላት መካከል ያለውን ትብብር እና ትብብር እንዴት ይገልፁታል?

በአዲስ አበባ የ MICE ቱሪዝም ልማት ወቅታዊ ተግዳሮቶችን የሚመለከት ጥያቄ

1. በአዲስ አበባ MICE ቱሪዝም ዘርፍ ያጋጠሙት ተግዳሮቶች ምንድን ናቸው?
 - 1.1. ደንብ እና የሕግ ማዕቀፍ ግር ተያይዞ ያሉ ተግዳሮቶችን ቢያብራሩ
 - 1.2. ከቴክኖሎጂ ጋር የተዛመዱ ተግዳሮቶችን ቢገፁልን
2. እባክዎን በ MICE ዘርፍ ውስጥ ያሉ ድርጅታዊ እና መዋቅራዊ ተግዳሮቶችን ያብራሩልን?

በአዲስ አበባ የ MICE ቱሪዝም የወደፊት ምስክታን የሚመለከት ጥያቄ

1. በአዲስ አበባ የሚይስ ቱሪዝም እንቅስቃሴን ለማሻሻል እስካሁን ምን ተሠራ?
2. በእርስዎ አስተያየት ወደፊት በአዲስ አበባ የሚይስ ቱሪዝምን ለማሻሻል ምን መደረግ አለበት?
3. በእርስዎ አስተያየት ፣ በአዲስ አበባ ውስጥ የ MICE ቱሪዝም ተስፋዎች ቢያብራሩልኝ?
4. በእርስዎ አስተያየት በአጠቃላይ በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ MICE ቱሪዝምን ለማሻሻል የግሉ ዘርፍ ሚና ምን መሆን አለበት?
5. በእርስዎ አስተያየት በአጠቃላይ በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ በተለይም (MICE) ቱሪዝምን ለማሻሻል እንደ ICCA,WTO እና WTTC ያሉ ዓለም አቀፍ ድርጅቶች ሚና ምን መሆን አለበት?
6. በእርስዎ አስተያየት ሀገር አቀፍ እና ከአለም አቀፍ ደረጃ ብዙ የንግድ ተጓዥኞችን በመሳብ በአዲስ አበባ ኮንፈረንሶች ፣ ስብሰባዎች እና ዝግጅቶች ላይ የሚሳተፉትን ልዑካን ቁጥር ለማሳደግ ምን መደረግ አለበት?

ANNEX 2

N o	Position	S e x	Interview date	Mode of interview	Intervie w place	code
1.	Senior MICE expert Ethiopia convention bureau	M	09 Nov,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A1
2.	Marketing Manager of Harmony Hotel	M	24 Nov,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A2
3.	Managing Director, Prana Event and vice president of event organizer Association	M	24 Nov,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A3
4.	MICE expert at Addis Ababa chamber of commerce and sectorial association	F	24 Nov,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A4
5.	Am a director. I own a business	M	24 Nov,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A5
6.	Managing Director,	M		Face to face	Addis Ababa	A6
7.	MICE tourism research expert at Ethiopian Convention Bureau	F	09 Nov,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A7
8.	MA degree in hospitality management I have experience in the industry even organizing events and know working at Ethiopian Convention Bureau	M	09 Nov,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A8
9.	BA degree in Heritage management and working as Tour operator	M	Oct 29,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A9
10.	Addis Africa convention and exhibition center , marketing officer	F	15 Dec,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A10
11.	Addis Ababa chamber of commerce and sectorial association marketing officer	F	17 Dec, 2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A11
12.	Addis Ababa culture, art and Tourism Bureau. MICE expert	F	28 oct,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A12
13.	Addis Ababa culture, art and Tourism Bureau –Tourism promotion Director	M	28 oct,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A13
14.	Skylight hotel marketing manager	M	22 Nov,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A14
15.	Tour operator	F		Face to face	Addis Ababa	A15
16.	Skylight hotel receptionist	F	22 Nov,2021	Face to face	Addis Ababa	A16