# Collaborative planning as a prospect to nurturing domestic tourism: perspectives from service providers in mid-western Uganda

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## Abstract

This article investigates how collaborative planning can be applied to nurture domestic tourism in mid-western Uganda. Available literature suggests that the country's domestic tourism potential has not been given adequate consideration; instead more attention is directed to international tourism. The civil wars which afflicted the country between early 1970s to mid-1980s slowed the growth of tourism since the country relied on international tourism more than on domestic tourism. The medium-term growth strategies and outcomes of Uganda indicate that the tourism industry has been growing and contributing a substantial fraction of the country's National Domestic Product (NDP) since the 1990s. The article focuses on the perspectives regarding the adoption the collaborative planning as a remedy to nurturing domestic tourism portfolio in Uganda. Data were collected in mid-western Uganda among a purposive sample of 32 participants using interviews. The results suggest that collaborative planning through both the internal and external inputs is essential for domestic tourism. Mid-western region is capable of making positive gains if stakeholders choose to collaborate in planning for the domestic tourism sub-sector. This is revealed by a view that Uganda has a wide range of destinations, services, activities and cultural opportunities which the citizenry can visit once collaborative planning is adopted.

**Key words:** Collaborative planning, domestic tourism, internal-inputs, external-inputs

## Introduction

Recent studies have suggested that collaborative planning involves the distribution of tasks for planning to partners who have the ability and are prepared to negotiate on the issues (Cullen et al 2010:333). When planning of tasks is distributed to all partners as the distribution of similar other responsibilities, the degree of participation as well as innovation within the structures of decision-making increases (Shih & Susanto, 2016:5). As a result, collaborative planning is favoured because it is linked to four advantages: the first is that collaborative planning can be used for easy resolution of disagreements since it allows parties to bargain thereby incorporating diversity of views, which prevents both resistance and domination. The second advantage is that there is consensus-building from the planning stage which is positive for successful policy implementation. The third advantage is that quality decisions are realised since diverse views of

all parties will have been accommodated. The fourth advantage is that the relationship between stakeholders improves and so is the ambience in overall organisation (Jamal & McDonald, 2011:4). However, the benefits of collaborative planning depend on the level of motivation, readiness of all parties to work as a team, ability of members to avoid compromises, a clear set of rules and regulations, clear lines of responsibility and an appropriate organisational vision. This suggests that collaborative planning increases the joint capacity of all stakeholders in order for them to embark on a specific action regarding a development strategy.

Collaborative planning can be described as the distribution of tasks in respect of planning to partners who can negotiate on those plans (Cullen et al 2010:333). This presupposes that tasks for planning are and can be shared with individuals who have the ability and willingness to negotiate the process in order to achieve an envisaged product called "a plan". From the perspective of a process, collaborative planning is about joint ventures intended to achieve common goals (Wil'en & Chapaux, 2011:533). The key attributes of collaborative capacity include increased participation in decision-making processes, empowerment and bridging social networks that link stakeholders and the resources across administrative levels and spatial scales (Nienhuis et al., 2011:98). Consequently, when members collaborate, the above attributes advance knowledge diversity which is then necessary to deal with complex organisational challenges. Enhancing collaborative capacity therefore requires the engagement of stakeholders at all levels in decision-making structures (Shih & Susanto, 2016:6). However, to be effective, the planning process should be designed carefully and should account for the power dynamics among stakeholders since each of them has different roles to perform (Jamal & McDonald, 2011:18). This suggests that when there are marked differences in power between the governing elites and the local communities, then equitable exchange of information and decision-making within the structure are held back.

As noted by Wil'en and Chapaux (2011:535), few groups can decide to undermine those they perceive to have the least status in relation to other stakeholders. This implies that unless anticipated and mitigated, the politics involved in participatory processes can maintain or intensify the vulnerability of certain members inside the organisational structure (Mwesigwa, 2015:213). In several Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, such as Uganda, Burundi and Liberia, the benefits and risks of multi-stakeholder participatory processes have not been fully accounted for in the design of a number of collaborative programs (Wil'en & Chapaux, 2011:536). A great deal of studies has focused on participation in decentralised service delivery, civil society-government engagement and policy management processes. Collaborative planning remains a least studied area, yet it is essential in service delivery including the popular public-private partnership (PPP) which has become a universal approach (Christian, 2016:40).

Research into collaborative planning provides insights into how best developing countries can take advantage of domestic tourism as a potential enterprise. The aim of this article is to explain how collaborative planning can be used as a remedy for nurturing domestic tourism in Uganda. Collaborative planning is selected as a strategy to rise above the internal pitfalls facing domestic tourism in the country. While domestic tourism is dominant in several countries, collaborative planning has not been applied as one of the strategies by which countries can engage key stakeholders. For example, Stone's (2015:170) study suggests four advantages of collaborative partnerships in tourism planning: participation of stakeholders, decision making, community approval and positive attitude.

**The theoretical framework**

This article reviews selected theoretical frameworks pertaining to the key variables: collaborative planning and domestic tourism.

## Collaborative planning

There are several theoretical perspectives on collaborative planning: The communications and collaboration theory advocates a collaborative undertaking which should involve two overlying parts – communications and collaborative visioning (Lawrence, 2000: 617). This theory suggests that the planning process involves a set of attributes which include deliberation, dispute resolution, open debate and negotiation between parties, these attributes require intermediaries to harmonise different proposals tendered from members. By contrast, the collaborative planning model proposes that in order to promote discussions between individuals, they should be guided by their conduct and purpose (Lawrence, 2000: 611). This model presupposes that both individual behaviour as well as the collective drivers are central to meaningful deliberations among individuals. While the normative planning theory suggests that planning should be guided by knowledge-based experience, which entails both arbitration and negotiation among opposite interests and values (Morton, et al 2012: 510), this brings into play the role of arbiters and concessions during the planning process.

The communications and collaboration theory proposes the centrality of communication and interactions, collaborative exposure and resolution of public interest, role of information in considerations, institutional preparation, combining both individual and analysed information, and planners with ability in administration, communication, problem solving, interpersonal relations, compromise, and dispute resolution. Recent studies suggest that the elements put forth under the communications and collaboration theory are central to increasing output (Sooryamoorthy, 2016:142). The normative planning model presupposes that every condition should be based on five elements: affirmative interdependence, responsibility for both the individual and the group, contact within the group, interpersonal and solidarity abilities as well as group processing (Hanson & Deluliis, 2015:225).

The theoretical imperatives suggest that it could be useful to find out whether or not Uganda's domestic tourism potential can be promoted through the culture of collaborative planning. In terms of the domestic tourism industry, recent studies suggest that collaborative planning has not been applied as an avenue because the contacts between stakeholders as well as the power relations have not been dealt with (Adiyia et al., 2015:114). Studies propose the 'inside-out' rather than the 'outside-in' approach although adopting the inside-out approach calls for collaboration among stakeholders with balanced power relations which cannot operate in a class-based society (Reid, 2002:29). The issue is whether the culture of collaborative planning can be used to stimulate domestic tourism: the response to this issue is meaningful for Uganda's domestic tourism planners. The tourist destination choice model suggests that the tourists' choice of destination is influenced by both internal inputs - social, psychological and geographical factors of travellers as well as external inputs - destination attributes, symbolic stimuli and social stimuli (Li, et al 2015:456). The model proposes that the movement of tourists can be influenced by psychological connections through awareness and attachment as well as individual attitude and durable behaviour.

## Domestic tourism

Domestic tourism describes the form of tourism involving residents of a given country travelling only within that country (Alipour, et al., 2013:472). It is "the pursuit of travel, leisure, entertainment, social and educational experiences...within spatial confines" (Canavan, 2016:514). Recent investigations on domestic tourism suggest that when citizens travel within their country, they are able to achieve as much as individuals and for the country compared to visitors who cross-national

borders. The tourist destination choice model suggests that the tourists' choice of destination is influenced by either or both internal inputs and external inputs (Li, et al 2015:456). The internal inputs include social, psychological and geographical factors of travellers while external inputs include destination attributes, symbolic stimuli and social stimuli. This model underpins the view that the movement of tourists can centre on how much awareness a prospective visitor acquires, the attachment portfolio in terms of psychological connection and an individual's allegiance towards influential attitudes and durable behaviour.

The theoretical framework demonstrates that domestic tourism is a potential market which should not be sacrificed in favour of international tourism (Canavan, 2015:513). The tourist destination choice model is pertinent to sub-Saharan African countries such as Uganda which face challenges of attracting and sustaining a significant number of international tourists. Yet, majority of the challenges facing international tourism can be mitigated when domestic tourism is planned by not only focussing on the social, psychological and geographical factors as well as creating awareness but increasing time management, skill development, raising financial strategies and interpersonal coordination. Studies indicate that domestic tourism alone accounts for up to 80%ofglobal tourism (Lepp, et al., 2014:712). According to Voltes-Dorta, et al (2016:854), countries whose global based tourism is massive, such as France and Spain, domestic tourism remains superior both in volume and monetary contribution.

The challenge is that domestic tourism has not been granted adequate space in the overall literature on tourism. One reason for existence for this unevenness could be vagueness of the terms tourism and leisure which tend to used interchangeably and the distinction between those aspects – which has been subjective many a time (Lepp, et al 2014:713). The other reason is that resources and services for both tourism and leisure are similar; they both exert comparable importance as well as societal and emotional effects to participants (Adiyia et al 2015:118). As a result, there is a presupposition that tourism and leisure should not be treated one by one but as sides of the same coin (Coles, 2004:135). A few scholars such as Veal (2011:131) suggest that tourism is an approximate affluent practice than the leisure activities, such as sports, that are related with amusement and pleasure. Even though these are elements of tourism connected to the more affluent and less characteristic practices linked to the inner enthusiasm of leisure activity and travelling around, the shorter spaces covered or larger artistic closeness between visitors and host communities make domestic tourism less visible and an often-disregarded opportunity.

### A global survey on domestic tourism

Recent statistics indicate that domestic tourism at the global scale is estimated at 10 to 1 persons (Alipour et al., 2013:472). By 2020, the number of domestic tourists worldwide is estimated to grow twofold from about 800 million to over 1.5 billion (Sangpikul, 2010:109). While the growth in the number of visitors is expected to be superior in Asia, sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries have become latest tourist targets for both international and domestic visitors. Overall, a number of visitors are changing their attitudes from international to domestic travels. This paradigm shift suggests not only steady growth but prospects for sustainable increase in domestic tourism (Eshun & Tagoe-Darko, 2015: 392).

In Asia, China's domestic tourism is leading compared to international tourism in terms of volume, expansion, rate, financial contribution and it is more sustainable than international tourism (Li, et al 2015:455). But while a number of domestic tourists in India are not documented, anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of domestic tourists in form of pilgrims to religious places, was over 120million visitors by the end of 2016. Studies suggest that the Turkey's domestic tourism industry grew to about 16.4million visitors by 2004 and continues to grow more than international tourism (Alipour, et al 2013:472). Statistics in Southeast Asia show that the United Arab Emirates

had combined revenue of over US$7 billion in 2013 and its growth potential is expected to shift towards domestic tourism (Hatemi-J, 2016:424). In Southeast Asia, trends in domestic tourism have been impressive since 2000: the recorded number of domestic tourists to Indonesia was about 109million in 2001, Malaysia recorded about 16 million in 2001, and Thailand recorded about 58million in 2001 (Mena, et al 2004:21). According to Alipour, et al (2013:472), trends in socio-economic development resulting from the burgeoning domestic tourism are noticeable in several Asian countries such as Turkey, China, India and Thailand.

In Europe, domestic tourism has been growing The UK recorded about 7% growth in the number of domestic tourists between 2007 and 2009, and it is estimated that the industry's worth was about £63billion by 2014 (Alipour et al.,2013:472). In Greece, domestic tourism travels is estimated to be 3 to 6 visits per person (per annum) for up to 15 years with about 30%-60% owning a holiday house (Tsartas et al., 2001:38). In Spain, 92% of all residents' tourist trips chose domestic destinations, accounting for 52% of total trips and 36% of hotel stays by 2012 (Voltes-Dorta, et al., 2016:854). A study by Oviedo-García, et al (2016:845) suggest that majority of Spanish tourists prefer domestic destinations compared to international travels. Since a number of European countries' economies have not registered considerable growth in the last two years, domestic tourism has improved more in comparison with international tourism.

In East Africa, the tourism industry has been growing albeit slowly due to political turmoil since 1970s (Christian, 2016:41). Uganda faced serious socio-economic and political upheavals between 1071 and 1979 when dictator Amin ceased power in a *coup de tat* which affected tourism (Adiyia et al 2015:118). Kenya relied on few destinations since international tourists were scared away by the region's political strife including the Somali insecurity status which destabilized the northern border and thronged it with the world's biggest refugee camps, internal insecurity as well as street children. Following the Rwandese genocide of 1994as well as the civil wars in Burundi, the two nations were suffered a huge deficit in tourism (Major, 2015:168). A study by Sefa-Nyarko (2016:188) suggests that the Sudanese civil wars of 1955-1972 and 1983-2005 saturated the east African region with refugees in the key urban centres and affected the number of visitors.

Studies further suggest that the tourism sector in East Africa has not grown at par with other African countries. For example, about one million visitors went to Uganda in 2011, from rest of Africa compared to about 8million visitors to South Africa (Lepp, et al 2014:712).Uganda has registered enormous growth in the number of domestic visitors to about 57% of all tourists including the number of businesses such as tours and travel companies, hotels, restaurants and beaches as well as the hotel and tourism training institutes – employing a number of citizens and contributing over 2.5% of the Gross Domestic Product (Tumwine, 2012:69). According to Mena et al (2004:13), the growth of domestic tourism is linked to direct employment and poverty reduction in the third world. This suggests the need for collaborative planning that will: (i) hold the global shift from traditional international tourism to domestic tourism, (ii) sustain domestic tourism as an opportunity for economic growth, (iii) reduce conflicts between different stakeholders in the domestic tourism domain, and (iv) promote collaborative partnerships between government agencies, private sector, and local communities.

**The motivation of domestic tourism**

Investigators have had the tendency to focus on global tourism as well as intra-regional tourism due to the foreign exchange element involved yet a series of advantages highlight the benefits of domestic tourism as well. While several commentators indicated that global tourism has the propensity to contribute to the country's economic growth through increased foreign exchange, domestic tourism takes an extra importance outside of the small number of extremely globalized locations both in cities and other destinations, services and activities. Tumwine (2012:59)

suggests that inferior locations and sceneries can gain a great deal from domestic tourism since even low income earners, who cannot afford international travels, can afford a domestic trip within their region. For example, the local music is popular in Uganda and it is associated with all economic classes whenever there is music festival (Pier, 2016:9). Domestic tourism is thus recognized for bringing about reorganisation of countrywide revenue from more affluent urban areas such as Soroti, Mbarara or Jinja to inferior countryside and remote areas such as Murchison Falls in Kiryandongo or Kidepo valley in Karamoja. Consequently, domestic tourism is capable of presenting prospects for capital transfer as well as durable growth of disadvantaged areas within the country (Li, et al 2015:455).

Uganda faces an economic growth dilemma to respond to infrastructural constraints, yet the country has a number of sceneries susceptible to ecological damage such Rwenzori ranges and Bwindi impenetrable forest (Duim, et al 2014:591). While several domestic tourists prefer touring areas that lie within close proximity and often travel by road, they require a lesser amount of restricted natural resources. For example, domestic tourists wishing to travel to Namugongo shrines, in Wakiso, can be responsive to the local cultures of Buganda due to cultural closeness, common values and shared resources (Tumwine, 2012:59). Studies suggest that such tourists can engage in less extravagant and uncertain activities such as canoeing at Lake Bunyonyi in south-western Uganda than when in a foreign country. Travel by citizens inside their individual nation allows them to come together and mix, thus improving awareness towards, appreciation of and delight in their country (Duim, et al., 2014:589). Therefore, domestic tourism expands the shared characteristics and appreciation of a country's socio-cultural and ecological diversity.

Domestic tourists can provide extra economic contribution to the local populace since they use local facilities and services thus cutting leakages (Christian, 2016:41). For example, domestic tourists prefer to use small-scale business operations in the areas they visit such as restaurants, instead of the big resorts to evade pre-paid taxes and to buy local art and crafts (Li et al., 2015:455). Domestic tourism can become shock-absolvers for easing recurrent and reliance on existing bazaars which cannot satisfy all the visitors' select needs. Besides, studies suggest that while the per capita spending of international tourists is higher, their return rate is lower compared to domestic tourists and, as a consequence, their gross expenditure is lower and less consistent (Christian, 2016:40). Studies further suggest that the probability of having second international visitation is lower compared to first time visitation (Wang, 2004:101) implying that domestic tourists present a constant, reliable, practical and less recurrent growth alternative for a number of tourism-related enterprises such as resorts, beaches, hotels and restaurants as well as travel agencies.

This study targeted the service providers though, specifically, their perspective to using internal inputs and external inputs to nurture domestic tourism in mid-western Uganda. Three internal inputs were selected – social factors, psychological factors, and geographical factors of travellers and three external inputs were selected – destination attributes, symbolic stimuli, and social stimuli.

**Materials and methods**

A descriptive qualitative approach was used so as to collect systematic data on practices and methods of domestic tourism providers to collaborative planning. Multiple domestic tourism providers were selected and each was represented by four participants including the manager. This approach was suitable because it allowed the researcher to amass in-depth views, in the domestic tourism sector, shared in their true state. Purposive sampling technique was used to reach 8 service providers in mid-western Uganda and participants were individuals who could give insight to the research questions. They were selected on the basis of operating domestic

tourism activities in the region. Importance was to opt for key participants and attain quality of information appropriate to the trend under enquiry rather than to focus on the frequency of participants. It was decided that each of the participants be accessed using the support of the company manager who was conversant with domestic tourism activities. Results suggested that that the mean age of all participants was 36.5 years, ranging between 28 and 45 years, and the participants had served between 0.5 and 12 years in the current company.

Data were collected using a semi-structured individual interview guide which was formulated based on the themes to be covered. The focus areas included seven Hotels/Resorts and one Tours and travel company in three districts: (i) Buliisa; Adonea Hotel, Biiso guest house and Albert Nile (ii) Kagadi; Zika Hotel and peoples' Hotel and (iii) Hoima; Miika Resort Hotel, Hotel Kontik as well as Savana Tours and Travel. For each theme, sub-topics were prepared so as to facilitate the interviewer to verify that all issues are addressed in the interview. The interview guide consisted of proposals to questions relating to every theme and interviews were conducted by two interviewers. All 32 interviews were administered at the participant's place of work and following each interview, a short summary was written. Broad themes were considered in order to ensure that they addressed the substance of the study. All summaries were proof read and balanced between emerging issues and existing ones until all data under the themes were covered.

**Findings – towards collaborative planning for domestic tourism**

The key themes that emerged from data analysis suggest that collaborative planning depends on a number of attributes. The findings suggest the ability to recognize willing service providers with skill to work together as well as ascertaining the collective ambitions so as to reduce the likelihood of diverting from the mission as well as assisting every team member to stay resolute. In addition, espousing mutual understanding, interpersonal talent and developing the competence of team members are vital but enhancing interpersonal links through effective communication, integrity and responsibility are essential. Collaborative planning was approached from two angels: internal inputs and external inputs as illustrated below.

Nurturing domestic tourism requires promoting discussions between individuals who are directed by their conduct and purpose but guided by arbitration and negotiation among opposite interests and values they hold. The study suggests that collaborative planning, at the internal inputs portfolio, is inescapable since the growth and expansion of domestic tourism bases on prospective visitors' choice over 'where to visit' and 'whether to visit'. The findings point towards the need for putting in place social infrastructure so as to encourage the populace not only to choose to visit a destination but to continue visiting diverse destinations. This demonstrates the significance of working together among stakeholders in order to facilitate reading of literature and addition information relating to tourism destinations, services and activities as frequent as possible. This perspective was particularly highlighted one participant in Buliisa who noted that:

> When the citizens know the available tourism services and activities as well as the cost of visiting, they become excited to consider visiting. However, literature should be available and accessible in the languages that are easy to identify with. *(Participant-Buliisa)*

The findings suggest that design of tourist information, in terms of graphic and other creative pictorial, should be simple and easier to read in a short time. In addition, the availability of community radios which reach a larger mass is a great opportunity for disseminating information on domestic tourism. It was noted that stakeholders can cooperate in planning for regular discussions on the accessible medium concerning domestic tourism-related issues as well as engaging with listeners and motivating them to continue such discussions with family members.

This would call for educators, the media, religious leaders and local leaders working in concert and using the existing forums in order to keep in close touch with the population. One member had this perspective:

> The population becomes motivated to visit affordable tourism destinations within their neighbourhood such as museums, religious temples, cultural sites, lakes, hills, or waterfalls, before going to destinations that are located far from their habitual residences. For example, discussions on domestic tourism can encourage the citizens to visit Kibiro site, the royal burial site at Mparo, Karuziika palace, plus Wambabya and Karuma waterfalls. In addition, frequent discussions about tourism destinations allow the population to become familiar with domestic tourism activities, services, cultures and destinations in the region. *(Participant-Hoima)*

The study revealed that awareness is not only empowering but one of the means through which knowledge of and patriotism can be attained. For example, when stakeholders in the mid-western region work, as a team, in order to set platforms for enabling citizens discuss about and get to know about Bugoma forest or Karuma falls, they directly appreciate the existing potential. It was suggested that stakeholders can join hands in preparing appropriate avenues by which interest and affection in domestic tourism can be stepped up in each of the region's established destinations. Participants noted that interest in domestic tourism is significant in planning and through teamwork the population can be facilitated to develop and sustain interest and passion of visiting tourism destinations, services and activities in their region. They suggested that a number of people are fond of travelling around the region for different activities and programs which imply that travelling as tourists can become one of the crosscutting activities for regular travellers such as government officials and local business operators. An interviewee's perspective revealed that:

> When officials choose to host a public holiday in an area, they can be facilitated, to visit the local destinations. It can be appropriate for government officials to visit key sites in Hoima even if they went for international Labour Day celebrations. In addition, a sports club from Kampala which goes to Masindi to play against *Kinyara* football club can be encouraged to visit key sites in Budongo and Lake Albert as a way of getting acclimatized as well as boosting the domestic tourism potential. *(Participant-Buliisa)*

The findings attest to the link between tourism and sporting activities in a number of regions around the country. It was noted that this can be realized when stakeholders plan it together. Stakeholders such as the line ministry, service providers, the civil society and local leaders work in partnership considering the involvement of the population in domestic tourism as a great thing. In addition, this calls for guarantee that visitors to any destination are assured of their security in addition to providing the necessary infrastructures such as access roads. By so doing, teamwork will enable stakeholders to ensure that residents start planning to get involved in domestic tourism activities and facilitate the planning process in terms of appropriate seasons for specific activities and climatic changes. The findings suggest that when teamwork is used, citizens develop the willingness and ability to take additional moments participating in domestic tourism activities as well as developing the enthusiasm to encourage family members to partake in domestic tourism activities. Demographic factors such as income and financial status of the family affect the prospect of becoming a domestic tourist or participating. This perspective was underscored by one member who proposed that:

> Low income earners and those from resource constrained families are less likely to participate even if they are made aware of the destinations, activities and services available. *(Participant-Kagadi)*

This suggests that collaborative planning is necessary in enabling citizens of different economic spheres to be accommodated in the domestic tourism sector. For example, stakeholders can focus attention on how to create consciousness and form domestic tourism curiosity along with projecting into the choices of potential visitors. This shows that consciousness can be created when stakeholders aim at making sure that citizens gain knowledge of domestic tourism in its true sense. A manager to a beach hotel noted that:

> Knowledge can be translated to the potential domestic tourists through a number of channels such as education materials, mass media or advertising right from infant stage. Curiosity can be formed when stakeholders emphasize the important ideas about tourism in this region seeing that different individuals have different curiosities regarding domestic tourism in Bunyoro. *(Participant-Buliisa)*

While knowledge about domestic tourism does not guarantee that the person will take time and feelings towards a service, once citizens acquire adequate curiosity about tourism, they become interested in finding out what is on ground by visiting the destination or going for the service being advertised. The findings suggest that when individuals acquire adequate awareness, they develop a behavioural choice about whether they should visit any domestic tourism destination/activity/service. This implies that behavioural choice, as a long-term aspect, is not generated from excitement but emotional relationship with the service or destination or activity creating a slow progress towards affection and afterwards allegiance towards domestic tourism. It was acknowledged that an individual's personal factors, such as family life, education, financial condition, gender as well as intra- and inter-personal limitations, can influence the behavioural choice in the long-run. However, in rare cases, social factors of potential domestic travellers such as religion, ethnicity, family, physical status, education, location, life partners, and children play an important role. In other cases, the study established, psychological factors play a big role of relating to the mind and emotions of domestic travellers because beliefs, habits, values and past experiences with domestic tourism have an influence on the type of tourism selected, thoughts, and feelings, thereby affecting the attitude, behaviour and functions of the potential tourist.

The findings suggest that psychological factors such as humanistic values involve deep personal feelings about what is important to domestic travellers since values are strong enough to influence behaviour and motivate visitors' action – a potential tourist can find the idea of visiting a specific destination because of particular landscapes or cultural activity. In addition, some people have a strong attachment to a particular feature such as Wambabya falls so highly that they do not like anything else except that water fall and they are willing to spend the entire moment watching water vapour. According to one of the member's perspective:

> Beliefs form personal tourists' conviction: although it is common in cultural tourism, certain cultural beliefs influence people to visit certain places in mid-western Uganda which lead to strong taboos. The presence of subconscious cultural beliefs among some communities can restrict potential visitors from partaking in certain festivals including visiting selected areas such as Bunyoro heritage or historical sites, as a result, attitudes tend to influence a potential tourist's views over a particular destination or service since they are based on peoples' culture, personal history, travel experiences, religion or perceived status. *(Participant-Kagadi)*

Another informant noted that:

> Habits such as choices made by an individual can become routine to the extent that domestic travel habits among the youths or students tend to be different from the habits of

> adults. They include drinking too much liquor, engaging in sexual activity with strangers, bull/goat roasting and beach sport. *(Participant-Hoima)*

The above suggestions show that by working as a team to develop strategies that seek to address the socio-psychological and geographical concerns, preferences and constraints of potential domestic travellers in mid-western Uganda, stakeholders can achieve great milestones.

**Discussion**

This study explains that success of collaborative planning depends on several attributes. Although these attributes are important, Christian (2016:47) notes that issues such as tour operators and hotels that are used to create, manage and implement domestic tourism packages involve a series of production networks which call for collaborative planning if the country is to benefit from the paradigm shift from international tourism to domestic tourism. In this study, the tourist destination choice model was used to look at how the tourists' choice of destination is affected by both internal inputs and external inputs (Li, et al., 2015:456). The findings suggest the relevancy of collaborative planning at both inputs so as to nurture domestic tourism.

Nurturing domestic tourism, in mid-western Uganda, will involve collaborations through discussions between individuals who are not only directed by their conduct and purpose but guided by arbitration and negotiation among opposite interests and values they hold. The findings have indicated that collaborative planning at both the internal inputs: social, psychological and geographical factors of travellers) and external inputs (destination attributes, symbolic stimuli and social stimuli, is inescapable since the growth and expansion of domestic tourism bases on prospective visitors' choice over 'where to visit' and 'whether to visit'. The need for social infrastructure aimed to motivate the population to choose to visit a destination and to continue visiting diverse destinations. This suggests when stakeholders plan together with the aim of aiding the populace to read literature and other information relating to tourism destinations, services and activities, they acquire knowledge (Butler & Mazur, 2007:610). When a citizen knows which type of tourism is available where and the cost involved in order to visit, they will be motivated to consider visiting. However, this process will call for both availability and accessibility of literature in key indigenous languages.

Awareness is both empowering and a means through which knowledge and patriotism can be attained. For example, when stakeholders in mid-western Uganda work as a team in order to set platforms that can enable citizens discuss about and get to know about the tourism sites, they appreciate the existing potential (Shaw, 2010:15). The findings further agree previous studies which attest to the link between tourism and sporting activities in several countries around the world (Humphreys, 2014:30).The willingness and ability to take additional moments for participating in domestic tourism activities as well as developing the enthusiasm to encourage family members to partake in domestic tourism activities support the findings of Li et al (2015:469) about demographic factors affecting the prospect of becoming a domestic tourist. The findings further echoes Weng and Peng's (2014:780) view on consciousness as a community empowerment tool for decision making. Consequently, when stakeholders emphasize the ideas about domestic tourism, they develop curiosities regarding sector (Jani & Hwang, 2016:3). In addition, when citizens acquire adequate curiosity about tourism, they become interested in visiting the destination or going for the service (Jurdana & Frleta, 2016:3).

Stakeholders can collaborate when three external inputs – characteristics of the destination, symbolic incentives and social incentives– are guaranteed and the potential domestic tourists are either motivated to partake or maintain their involvement in domestic tourism. This study maintains that collaborative planning requires all key stakeholders to develop a catalogue

containing all the features, cultures, services and activities that have a tourism aspect. As noted by Lepp, et al (2014:720) that when a tourism catalogue is well-run, travellers gain interest in learning the customs, visiting places and gaining new experiences. Recent studies suggest that the tourism catalogue can specify the different clusters of features, cultures, services and activities in different regions along with a simple summary in form of brochures, leaflets or fliers to potential tourists (Jurdana & Frleta, 2016:3). The catalogue can highlight the characteristics of specific destinations and the expected social incentives – these act as medium-term and long-term drivers to the local citizenry.

The domestic tourism sub-sector is multifaceted since a number of socio-eco-political outcomes are directed towards the nationals involved therein. For example, this study discovered that while it failed to engage the private especially tour operators, tour guides and the hoteliers, the Uganda tourism board (UTB) in collaboration with the UWEC organised *Tulambule* (tour) Uganda promotion during the tourism month (Batte, 2016). Consequently, the initiative's target of promoting domestic tourism enthusiasm was not only affected but revealed the necessity for collaborative planning which would facilitate and create an environment for a stronger domestic tourism. Therefore, collaborative planning can enhance the visibility of domestic tourism destinations, activities and services as the citizens identify with tourism. While collaboration involves documenting of touristic opportunities and enabling tourism agents to make available package preferences from destinations, services and activities, the potential and real challenges facing tourism are dealt with via consensus (Adu-Ampong, 2014:3). This process involves key stakeholders engaging in community mobilisation activities at various levels with the view of identifying characteristics of different destinations, promotional messages and social incentives.

Collaborative planning can be important in ensuring the security of visitors, infrastructural maintenance, information flow, quality transport, hotels/restaurants and attractiveness of sites. This issue was maintained by Abuamoud et al (2014:151) suggesting that because control over the planning and development of destinations, services and activities is split, affected by both external and local actors, a broad array of establishments and individuals –public and private that can embrace contrasting perspectives on domestic tourism (Adu-Ampong, 2014:12). For example, a number of authorities and regulatory bodies on public and private lands are involved in this complexity and without collaborative planning the authorities and bodies, land ownership conflicts emerge. Therefore, developing a strategy for domestic tourism growth entails collaborative planning attitudes which revolve around information sharing, registration of all potential opportunities, monitoring and review of the strategy. Destination planning that encompasses local stakeholders can create a centre of attention for a great deal of collaborative awareness of different destinations, promotional messages and social incentives available to domestic tourists (Pansiri, 2013:66). While the dynamic participatory planning process based on a range of views and proficiency allows for transformation, improvement and learning, Morton, et al (2012:510) note that the participatory processes embedded favour dominant groups rather than the local communities. Consequently, successful adoption of the collaborative planning approach requires an empowered and informed citizenry that can collaborate in a win-win exchange of ideas.

The findings support Adu-Ampong's (2014:11) study which suggests that collaboration planning can be based on both collective vision and compromise in terms of coordination, configuration and consideration to resource distribution for performance of domestic tourism results in different destinations, promotional messages and social incentives. In several parts in mid-western Uganda, citizens are aware of the possible benefits of working in teams since they have gone through decades of farmers' cooperative societies (Fergusson & Kepe, 2011:423). Collaborative planning, as a tool, can thus be used to resolve differences and promote collective ideas

necessary to face common threats. Scholars such as Olsen (2016:181) note that for those destinations that are not stable, self-rule through collaborative planning with host communities can ease the development of a consultative framework in the unstable sphere of different destinations. Consequently, this can make it easier for promotional messages and social incentives available to be delivered to visitors.

Mid-western Uganda has a number of opportunities which can be exploited using collaborative planning if domestic tourism is to be promoted. The region is blessed with magical attractions which range from gently sloping and snow-capped mountains, rivers, and wildlife species such as mountain gorillas, lions, elephants, zebra, unique cultures and cuisines as well as the cool climatic conditions (Tumwine, 2012:59. Collaborative planning will not only create a healthier environment for public-private partnerships but become the means through which the country's attractions can be locally exposed (Adu-Ampong, 2014:4). This can be supplemented by human resource planning in order to take care of the domestic tourists as well as the physical infrastructure in terms of appropriate routes leading to most visited and potential attraction locations for ease of access. Recent studies suggest that the hindrances to effective development of the domestic tourism sub-sector can be suppressed through collaborative planning as stakeholders will be able to identify such as funding gaps, packaging and product development which affect the region's ability to position itself among its own citizens (Adiyia et al., 2015:116). Through collaborative planning, proper decisions will be made, resources pooled for marketing as well as harmonisation of key players such as the line ministry of tourism, Uganda tourism board, Uganda wildlife authority.

**Conclusion**

This article investigated collaborative planning as a prospect to nurturing the potential of domestic tourism in mid-western Uganda. While the growth of domestic tourism can be a challenge, if collaborative planning is espoused, the hurdles can reduce and success made more probable. Including the skill of key stakeholders at the planning phase is important in terms of identifying willing members with expertise to collaborate, explaining the shared goals, facilitating every team member to remain focused, adopting shared understanding and interpersonal ability, developing the capacity of team members, using effective communication, honesty and accountability to improve interpersonal relationships, facilitating the consciousness of collaborative culture and recognising of one another's achievements and individual differences through flexibility and complex opportunities. It is important to recognize that the involvement of influential stakeholders in collaborative planning can encourage the products of domestic tourism across mid-western Uganda and overall national development. At the national level, collaborative planning can steer domestic tourism to be treated as a single unit of analysis taking into consideration its broad objectives and targets to the socio-economic conditions of Uganda.

The results of this study demonstrate that collaborative planning, in terms of sharing tasks on planning to partners who can negotiate on the plans, presupposes that tasks planning can be shared among stakeholders having the skill and willingness to negotiate the process so as to nurture domestic tourism. It is concluded that the attributes of: increased participation in decision making, empowerment and social networks, that link service providers in domestic tourism and the resources, can be achieved through collaborative planning.

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