ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TRAVEL AGENCY BUSINESS, CURRENT PRACTICE IN ADDIS ABEBA

BY

YORDANOS BIRRU AYELE

SGS/0230/2009

JUNE, 2018

ADDIS ABEBA, ETHIOPIA

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TRAVEL AGENCY BUSINESS, CURRENT PRACTICE IN ADDIS ABEBA

BY

YORDANOS BIRRU AYELE

SGS/0230/2009

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTEROF BUSINESS OF ADMINISTRATION(MBA)

JUNE, 2018

ADDIS ABEBA, ETHIOPIA

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES FACULTY OF BUSINESS

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TRAVEL AGENCY BUSINESS, CURRENT PRACTICE IN ADDIS ABEBA

BY

YORDANOS BIRRU AYELE

SGS/0230/2009

APPROVED BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS

_____	_____	_____
Dean, Graduate Studies	**Signature**	**Date**
_____	_____	_____
Research Advisor	**Signature**	**Date**
_____	_____	_____
External Examiner	**Signature**	**Date**
_____	_____	_____
Internal Examiner	**Signature**	**Date**

DECLARATION

I, the under signed, declare that this thesis is my original work, prepared under the guidance of WondimenehMamo(Assistant Professor). All sources of material used while working on this thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or in full to any other higher learning institution for the purpose of earning any type of degree.

_____ _____

Name Signature and Date

ENDORSEMENT

This thesis has been submitted to St. Mary's University, School of Graduate Studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

_____ _____

Advisor **Signature**

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First and foremost, I would like to thank God almighty for giving me the strength, knowledge, ability and opportunity to undertake this research study and persevere and complete it satisfactorily. Without his blessing this achievement would not have been possible.

I have a great pleasure in acknowledging my gratitude to my advisor WondimenehMamo (Assistant Professor), for the patient guidance, enthusiastic encouragement and advice he has provided throughout my research work.

I would like to express appreciation and special thanks to all those individuals who participated in the survey and my friends who had assisted me in administering that survey. Finally, I wish to thank all my family and my parents for their support and encouragement throughout my study. I also would like to thank all my friends who stand with me by all those attending years.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CRS Computer Reservation System

CRM Customer Relationship Management

FDRE Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

GDS Global Distribution System:

ICT Information Communication Technology

IATA International Air Transport Association

ITInformation Technology

SMESmall and Micro Enterprise

TAM Technology Adoption Model

TIA Travel Industry Association

T&T Travel and Tourism

UNWTO United Nation World Trade Organization

USD United States Dollars

LIST OF TABLE

LIST OF FIGURE

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to understand the effectiveness of ICT on the performance of travel agency business using a cross-sectional data collected from 218 respondents. Specifically, the research examines the opportunity that ICT offer for the travel industry, assess challenges of the travel agencies because of the ICT evolution and examine to what extent ICT determine the travel agencies business effectiveness. In order to answer the stated objective a causal and descriptive research design were employed. The findings of the study revealed that ICT has strong positive potential for the performance of firms. The analysis confirmed that the new and existing ICT interventions increase the success of those travel agency enterprises. The opportunity created by ICT and possible strategies influence significantly success of travel agency businesses. The analysis further shows that the integration of personal approach with ICT is significant, with new technologies having complementary and not substitutive function. Benefits of new technologies enable development of travel agencies and make communication with customers and other entities easier, which is the foundation for building competitiveness. The study further revealed that the opportunity created by information communication technology increases the business effectiveness of travel agencies. However, the travel agencies are challenges by the current service of unstable internet connection. And it is recommended that for tourism businesses to increase their competitive position they should incorporate ICT in their business practice so as to increase their performance and their effectiveness.

Key words: Information Communication Technology (ICT), Traveled Agents, Effectiveness

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1.Background of the Study

Technology in the form of the internet, software, hardware and communications has made the lives of travel agencies a lot easier for every type of business. Technology has brought efficiencies, automation, customer knowledge, and business opportunities to fill a variety of needs, fast development of new products or services, traveler knowledge and space for new entrants.Past technology needs to be present as a history lesson for the future, now that the world is changing more rapidly than ever, nothing has changed in comparison to what will happen in the next 20 years, and to address business opportunities, travel agencies need to maintain the rhythm of change and anticipate what will come in the future of the new "*Era of Infostrialisation*", where society and economic change is transforming us from an industrial society into an information society(Fernando, 2014).

Information is now available to everybody, but relevant and structured information, mixed with the intelligence and service behind it, is where added value needs to be brought to the traveler based on very specific needs and how those travelers want to see it, buy it and experience it. Technology as a driver of change will bring internet everywhere (in people & in things), mobility, monitoring of personal/social activity and especially: predictive analytics that will impact with new rupture opportunities and business models.The travel industry is moving quickly from traffic patterns to a web/mobile history where data is recorded, stored and analyzed to address individual traveler needs. According to Fernando (2014) the connected travel future will be based on a combination of the following FOUR S's:

- **Structured Data**: not only the capture of the data (video, voice…) across the globe from multiple sources (content, transactions, social media, mobile devices, sensors) but also to put the right structured data in place to be blended for business purposes. Also having the capability of managing non structured data in the same way.

- **Speed**: the value of the relevant data has to come in real time. The speed of accessing what the customer needs is key, from different angles: instant-real time data, instant answer, instant buy, instant social…instant everything
- **Service**: a differentiated strategic service focus to improve the customer experience – from digital self-service to human all-service and the economic value added behind such chain.
- **Sage**: deeper knowledge of customers will be essential through analytics, usage of customer predictive analytics and solutions on merchandise optimization to maximize growth, profitability and customer experience

Technology, which is transforming our professional and personal lives, will be the heart of change in blending this FOUR S's to achieve not only a connected travel future but a fully interconnected travel world beyond the different players, and in which "Next Gen-Tech Travel Agencies" will keep playing an important role(Fernando, 2014)

Time savings and value added service for the traveler will be keys to the future of travel agencies on (1) the whole travel process from planning to sharing experiences, that time saving will be on the planning, on the search, on the booking, during the trip, on expense management, on the post-trip experience sharing, etc. and on (2) Matching traveler needs based on profile and predictive analytics with an intelligent offer to be sent in advance of a traveler's need.In order to provide such value to the traveler, it will require a combination of provider supplied instant data (structured and non-structured), customer data, customer predictive analytics, which will allow unique and differentiated service to maximize customer experience and loyalty. Technology will be key to combine the necessary addressed elements to build a platform and maximize reach to the traveler anywhere, anytime, through any device(Fernando, 2014).

As stated by Osborne. S.,*et al*., (2001) intermediate agents; also known as brokers or agents, are prominent players in today's economy are involved in a large number of business transaction. Some common examples include stockbrokers, insurance brokers/agents, real estate brokers/agents, ship brokers, oil brokers, mortgage brokers, coal brokers, sports agents, employment agencies, auction houses, adoption agencies, food brokers, Internet Services such as e-bay, e-scrap, etc., and many others. The common thread that links all of these is that links these

intermediaries serve as facilitators of exchange between two of more parties by acting as an "agent" on behalf of "principals". Thispaper examines the travel agent as a very visible example of the intermediate agent in terms of its agency function as well as the impact that technology is having upon its basic nature. The evolvement and progress of information technology has therefore had a tremendous impact in tourism (Aldebert B., *et al,* 2011).

Addis Abeba is the state of Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) it is also the head quarter of Africa Union and other major international Organizations. There are 473 individual travel agency companies that are actively engaged in providing traveling service requests in the city of Addis Ababa(Ethiopian travel agency association and Galileo Ethiopia, 2018). The travel agencies are divided in to two categories; International Air Transport Association (IATA) accredited agents and Non IATA accredited agents.IATA accredited agents are booking the air ticket request and issue directly from the airline whereas the Non IATA agents can have an access to book the ticket but not allowed to issue the ticket directly from the airline instead they will purchase via the IATA agents and serve their clients. Therefore this study intended to see the effectivnessof information communication technology on the performance of travel agencies: current practice in Addis Abeba.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

As a sector, tourism has a momentous impact on the environment, economy as well as society at local, national andinternational level. According to the annual research report presented by WTTC projects that the industry of travel andtourism is one of the major contributor towards the world GDP and has grown for six consecutive years until 2015 androse to a total of 9.8% of world GDP (US$7.2 trillion). The report of 2015 also showed that the sector supported 284million people in employment, which is one out of every eleven jobs on the planet. The industry, in general, is acombination of mainly two tires. Tire 1 is dominated by major industry giants such as major tour operators and travelagencies, renowned hotel brands, airlines, entertainment sites and food & beverage caterers, etc. Tire 2 consists ofMedium Scale Tourism Enterprises as well as Small Scale Tourism Enterprise. The major differences between the twotires are based on the infrastructure facilities, their management strategies as well as their system of managinginformation and extent of the use of ICT.

Existing scholarship that has focused on examining how ICT has in recent timeplayed an important role in reshaping the tourism industry, mostly agree that ICThas provided and continue to provide a range of opportunities, for sub-sectors suchas tour operators, accommodation, restaurants, travel agencies in a globalisecontext (Bojnec&Kribel, 2004; Buhalis&Kaldis, 2008; Irvine & Anderson,2008; Spralls et al., 2011; Stiakakis&Georgiadis, 2011; Weigel, 2004; Werthner& Ricci, 2004). Furthermore, a major contribution that has been touted for thetourism industry also includes improving productivity market and market share(Aramendia-Muneta&Ollo-Lopez, 2013; Buhalis, 2003; Buhalis&Molinaroli,2003; Chandler &Munday, 2011), improve competitive advantage (Buhalis, 1998,2003; Namasivayam et al., 2000) and business performance(Shanker, 2008), aswell as reducing operational costs (Bojnec&Kribel, 2004; Buhalis&Kaldis,2008; Buhalis& O'Connor, 2005).

The tourism industry is often defined as the sectored system of innovation and production worldwide. This sectored system in tourism is extremely complex; given the fact that the tourism products and actors changes due to changes in the external forces. This is also the case in Ethiopian tourism industry specifically in the capital, Addis Ababa*(*Aldebert B., *et al*, 2011*)*.Even if technology can improve everything we do, it has got significant problem on the travel industry in Addis Abeba. The major problem faced by the travel agency in the city of AddisAbeba are the internet online and mobile reservation or booking of flight tickets discounted by the airline, which is less than the airlines gives to the travel agent company. This lead to shift the client of the private travel agency to direct purchase from the airline online; not only to get the discount but to avoid some mandatory procedures asked by travel agency, which will be order by the airline to the private travel agency but not found and requested in the online system.

Private travel agents face a problem not to keep in touch with their client using a variety of medium like mobile devices and others and decline their service charge.This study focused on the business of Travel Agency's which are owned by private investors' in Ethiopia. The reason why the researcher want to select these sector is based on the researcher's extensive work experience in the Travel industry and have good knowledge on Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The Effectiveness of ICT on the performance of Travel agency business is the current frustration issue by the private travel agencies' in Addis Abeba.

1.3.Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What are the major opportunities that ICT provide for the travel industry?
- What are the main challenges posed by ICT in the travel industry?
- What are the possible strategies that could be designed to address the impact of ICT in the travel industry?
- To what extent ICT determine the effectiveness of travel agencies business?

1.4.Objective of the study

1.4.1. General objective of the study

To assess the effectivenessof Information Communication Technology (ICT) on the performance of Travel Agencies business

1.4.2. Specific Objectives of the Study

The study had the following specific objectives:

- To determine the opportunity that ICT offer for the travel industry
- To examine the challenges of the travel agencies because of the ICT evolution.
- To suggest the possible strategies for the travel agency that will help to address the challenges faced due to the ICT effect.
- .To examine to what extent ICT determine the travel agencies business effectiveness

1.5.Significance of the Study

The need to conduct this study finds out the main technological factors that affect the travel agency industry. Finding of this study helps the management team and stakeholder of the travel agency organization to execute the overall strategy successfully this ultimately increase business productivity and motivate employees by using technology.

1.6.Scope of the Study

The scope of this research is not outside the geographical location of Addis Abeba due to time and other constraint. Further, in terms of concept this research was limited to analyze the effectiveness of ICT on the performance of Travel agency business. The survey was carried out between March and May 2018.

1.7.Organization of the Study

The research is organized into five chapters. The first chapter provides brief introduction to the study, explains the research problem, and discusses objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study. The second chapter reviewed theories and previous researches done around the topic "The Effectiveness of ICT on the performance of Travel agencies business" for this effort were made to link with the study that was made on the travel agency business current practice in Addis Abeba.Chapter three presents the design of the research-methodology adopted in the study which covers the research design, population and sampling technique, data source and data collection techniques and methods of data analysis techniques. Chapter four summarized the results/findings of the study, and discusses the findings linked with the literature review as well as summary. Finally the last chapter which is Chapter five includes the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.Theoretical Background

2.1.1. The concept of Travel and Tourism Industry

As stated by *Kayani, (2014)*Tourism is a substantial industry (Fien, Calder, & White, 2012). It serves many people in many different industries and is a standard way to exchange wealth between nations; it has a wide array of stakeholders from owners of bed and breakfast establishments to hotels to coach operators to theme parks to airlines and shipping companies to travel agents. Tourism can be defined as the practice of traveling for recreation, the guidance of tourists, the encouragement of touring or the accommodation of tourists ("Tourism," 2014).

Tourism relies on economic structures while creating a way to diversify them (Boiţă, Ardelean, &Haiduc, 2011), and this phenomenon leads to substantial growth potential. The tourism industry is massive on a global scale and continues to grow (TRA, 2014). In 2011, more than 983 million worldwide tourist arrivals were recorded, representing US$ 1.3 trillion dollars – an annual growth of 4.6% compared to 940 million arrivals in 2010 (UNWTO, 2011). Similarly according to*Dhaigude et al., (2016)*the travel and tourism industry (T&T) has huge growth potential. There were 1.133 billion international tourist arrivals across the world in 2014 and this is expected to increase 3–4% in 2015 (UNWTO 2015).The major contributors to this growth are globalization, the development of transportation technology and the increasing use of information and communication technology (Berne, Garcia-Gonzalez, &Mugica, 2012).

According to Dhaigude*et al., (*2016)the T&T industry is characterized by the presence of a large number of actors present at different levels of the value chain, a high level of intangibility, value-conscious customers and variations in terms of regulations. The actors vary in size, functionality, location and level of autonomy.For example, large players such as airline operators or hotels are actual service providers and may be located far away from their customers, whereas booking agents and car rentals are smaller and located close to the customer. For efficient and effective service delivery, the independent actors in the T&T industry must be integrated and this integration is feasible only via ICT.

2.1.2. The Role of IT in the Tourism Sector and Its Growth

As cited by Inversini&Masiero(2014)the advantages resulting from ICT developments have greatly affected the hospitality domain, both in terms of marketing possibilities and sales opportunities (Schegget al., 2013).

As stated by *Buhalls& Law,(2008)* Technological progress and tourism have been going hand in hand for years (Sheldon, 1997; Poon, 1993). Since the 1980s, Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) have been transforming tourism globally. Developments in ICTs have undoubtedly changed business practices and strategies as well as industry structures (Porter, 2001). The establishment of the Computer Reservations Systems (CRSs) in the 1970s and Global Distribution Systems (GDSs) in the late 1980s, followed by the development of the Internet in the late 1990s, has transformed the best operational and strategic practices in the industry dramatically (Buhalis, 2003; O'Connor, 1999; Emmer et al,, 1993; eBusiness Watch, 2006). If the past 20 years have seen an emphasis on technology per se, then since the Year 2000 we have been witnessing the truly transformational effect of the communications technologies. This has given scope for the development of a wide range of new tools and services that facilitate global interaction between players around the world.

In a similar way according to*Wahab, I.(2017)* the development in the field of IT and ICT has deeply influenced the ways in which tourism business perform their activities. Service standards have rose quite high and customers expect to be served 24/7 around the year and service is not confined to only office hours. Leading to the birth of online portals, the travel business was revolutionized forever as these portals have be successful in effectively organizing and distributing distressed tourism inventories to the clients. Various hotel chains, amusement parks, luxury trains and most certainly the leading airlines have all be using IT in order to reach out to customers and allowing them to directly access their reservation system. Such application of IT or ICT has only helped these companies in getting better understanding about the needs of their customers and also helped them in offering them the freedom of choice. ICT is critical for strategic management of organizations as they allow: - expansion into the new market, empowerment of Employees, Lowering of costs and enhancing distribution

In the same way according to *Bethapudi, A. (2013).*Information communication technologies (ICTs) have been transforming tourism globally. The ICT driven re-engineering has gradually generated a new paradigm-shift, altering the industry structure and developing a whole range of opportunities and threats. ICTs empower consumers to identify, customize and purchase tourism products and support the globalization of the industry by providing tools for developing, managing and distributing offerings worldwide. Increasingly ICTs play a critical role for the competitiveness of tourism organizations and destinations. ICTs are becoming a key determinant of organizational competitiveness. The enhancements in ICTs' capabilities, in combination with the decrease of the size of equipment and ICTs' costs, improved the reliability, compatibility and inter-connectivity of numerous terminals and applications. ICTs provide a powerful tool that can bring advantages in promoting and strengthening the tourism industry's strategy and operations.

2.1.3. Uses of IT/ICT in the Field of Traveland Tourism

According to Smith, *E (2018).*Technology plays an important role in the hospitality and tourism industry. Both customers and businesses can benefit from advances in communication, reservations and guest services systems. Technology allows continuous communication and streamlines the guest experience, from reservation to checkout.

2.1.3.1. E-Tourism

According to Wahab, I (2017)E-Tourism or Travel Technology is the digitization of all the process and value chains in the tourism, travel, hospitality and catering industries that enable organizations to maximize their efficiency and effectiveness. The scope of e-tourism includes not just computer reservation system, but also incorporating the broader tourism sector as well as its subset the hospitality industry. Travel technology, includes all business functions such as E-Commerce and E-marketing, E-Finance and E-accounting, E-HRM, E-Procurement, E-Strategy, E-Planning and E-Management.

Wahab, I (2017) state that;the applications of E- Tourisms are:- Flight Tracking system, Dynamic Packaging, Computer Reservation System (CRS), Global Distribution System (GDS), Customer Relationship Management (CRM, Mobile Technology, Social Networks and space Tourism.

Flight Tracking System: Travel technology is used to monitor as well as manage travel, and also includes flight tracking system. Global aviation software such as Plane Finder, ReaderBox24, Flight Stats.com, etc., are useful in tracing the activities of flights from across the world.*Wahab, I (2017)*

Dynamic Packaging: As cited by *Ayazlar, R. (2014);* Cardoso (2005), dynamic packaging can be defined as combination of different travel components which are packaged and priced in real-time in response to consumers' and agencies' demands. Dynamic packaging provides all travel packages under single price by hiding each travel agency's individual price. In the meantime, other services regarding the holiday can be provided ina single web-site (Sharma, 2012; Romano, 2005). According to Romano (2005), dynamic packaging is consumer-driven. It's an online packaging system in travel industry. Dynamic packaging was designed for satisfaction of both service suppliers and consumers for their purposes (Rose, 2004). Dynamic packaging, at the same time, means dynamic pricing because wholesalers can make adjustments in prices whenever they want based on changing market conditions, supply and demand (Romano, 2005).

Similarly according to *Wahab, I (2017)* the freedom offered to customers in order to create their own travel package by choosing the transportation services, flight tickets, accommodation types, activities to get involved in, rental services, etc. instead of choosing a package predefined by the agent is called dynamic packaging. This type of packaging witnesses the real time sourcing of flights, trains, hotels, cars, etc. as per the requirement of the customer.

Computer Reservation System: CRS is famous for the ability to store the information and retrieve it when required. It is also used for conducting transactions related to hotel books, air tickets, car rental, etc. Some of the most widely used CRS around the world are Amadeus, Abacus (Currently owned by Sabre), KIU, Mercator, Navitaire, Sabre, Travel Technology Interactive, Travel Sky, Travelport, etc. Global Distribution System is a CRS which sells tickets for major airlines across the globe.*Wahab, I (2017)*

Global Distribution System: GDS forms a linkage between the service providers in the travel industry, such as airlines, hotels, car rental companies and enabling automated transaction between travel service providers and the travel agencies. It is mainly through GDS, that the travel agency is able to cater to its needs for various tourism related services, to the end users,

which is the customer. It concentrates across three main domains of the industry, viz., accommodation (hotel reservation), ticket reservation in airlines and car rentals. It not only linked the bookings, but also the rates in which each of the services are available. Famous GDS are Amadeus, Galileo, Sabre, Worldspan, etc.Wahab, I (2017)

Customer Relationship Management: CRM is famous for the convenience it brings in when it comes to managing an organization's interaction, not just with current customers, but also future customers. CRM helps in analyzing customer and what to cater to. This plays a role in the retention of the customer by maintaining ideal relationships with customers and ultimately driving sales growth.*Wahab, I (2017)*

Mobile Technology: Cutting edge developments such as Global Positioning System service, Geo Tagging, search based on location, and online mapping facility, which has become possible through mobile service, has so much more to offer to the traveler at their respective travel destinations. Personal assistant in travel is yet another advancement which is revolutionizing the industry of travel and tourism. These applications assist the traveler in having a smooth and safe travel. They also contribute largely on the distribution of resourceful information including great offers and important deals.*Wahab, I (2017)*

Social Networks: According to Zeng, B (2013) the role of social media in tourism has been increasingly noted and researched as an emerging topic. Social media plays an increasingly important role in many aspects of tourism, especially in information search and decision-making behaviors and tourism promotion focusing on best practices for interacting with consumers via social media channels (social sharing of holiday experiences).

In the same manner *Wahab, I (2017)*the development of social networking sites related to travel and tourism allow travelers to build a network of other travelers and share their travel stories and experiences. The reviews and feedback left by other travelers gives a realistic picture of the destination or service provider. Sites such as Trip Advisor, Matador, Tripsay, Couchsurfing, GeckoGo, Travbuddy, etc are all example of such sites.

Space Tourism: One of the latest advancements in the field of travel and tourism is the concept of taking regular people to space. For the purpose of leisure, recreation or business. As an alternative tourism, Space Tourism is promoted by organizations such as Commercial

Spaceflight Federation, Russian Space Agency, etc. Remarkable research is still going on in this domain. A name worth mentioning is Elon Musk from SpaceX who aims at flying two space tourist around the moon in 2018.*Wahab, I (2017)*

The development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and particularly the Internet have had a profound impact on the travel industry (Buhalis& Law, 2008: Kamarulzaman, 2007)

As stated by *Buhalls& Law, (2008)*the energetic growth and development of the industry is perhaps only mirrored by the growth of ICTs. The accelerating and synergistic interaction between technology and tourism in recent times has brought fundamental changes on the industry and on our perceptions of its nature. The significance of crossing the new information threshold of universal, ubiquitous communications access have brought the entire tourism industry to the new levels of interactivity, propelling management by wire. Increasingly, ICTs play a critical role for the competitiveness of tourism organizations and destinations as well as for the entire industry as a whole (UNWTO, 2001). Developments in search engines, carrying capacity and speed of networks have influenced the number of travelers around the world that use technologies for planning and experiencing their travels. ICTs have also changed radically the efficiency and effectiveness of tourism organizations, the way that businesses are conducted in the marketplace, as well as how consumers interact with organizations (Buhalis, 2003). There have been many new entrants among the players on the tourism stage, shifts in market share and balance of power, changes in political perceptions of tourism, and a growing recognition of the importance of tourism to an ever-increasing number of national and regional economies.

As reported by Werthner, H., & Klein, S. (1999)ICT has played an important role in previous phases of the development of modern tourism. Computerized Reservation Systems (CRS), developed and operated by airlines in order to cope with the increasing volume of passengers and the related logistic and operational problems, were among the first worldwide applications of information technology, leading to systems with several ten-thousand participating companies. At that time, comparable applications could only be found in the financial sector.

The diversity of the tourism sector places high demands on IS support and the performance of IS systems. These demands reflect: global markets and the salience of destinations;high volume of transactions and customized products;structured, standardized data as well as multimedia representations;importance of intra- and inter-organizational systems;all different types of customers (consumers, SME, large companies) and fragmented and concentrated markets.

According to *(Statista, 2018)*the statistic shows the worldwide revenue from online travel bookings of 2011 to 2017. In 2016, the revenue generated through online travel bookings was 513 billion U.S. dollars, this figure was forecasted to reach 567 billion U.S. dollars.

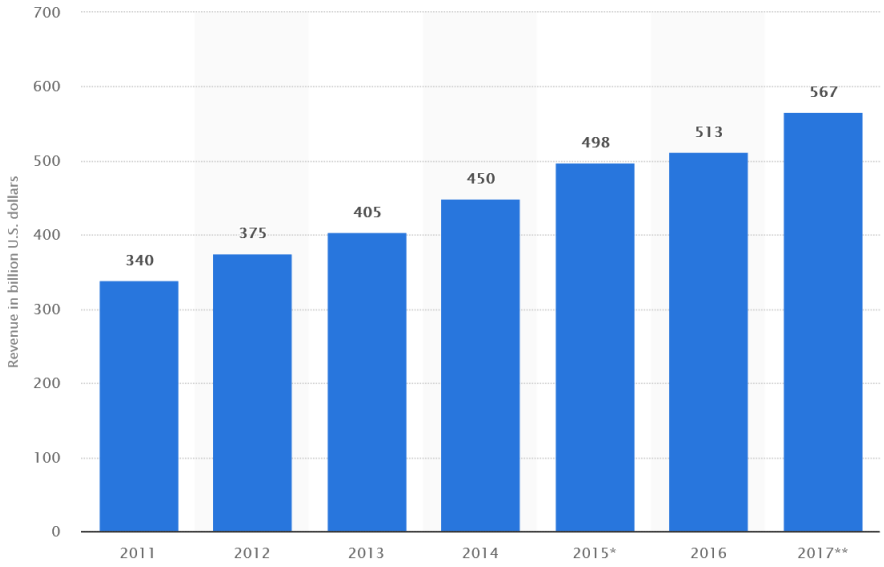


Figure 2.1 Online gross travel booking revenue worldwide from 2011 to 2017 (in billion US dollars)

Source: (Statista, 2018)

2.1.3.2. Disintermediation

According to *Kaewkitipong, L. (2010)* Disintermediation is terminology termed in the e-commerce era to mean the removal of supply chain intermediaries which was expedited by the Internet. This phenomenon has been foreseen by many e-business researchers' since1990s. According to Chaffey (2002), speculation was that disintermediation would occur as direct selling through the Internet was increasingly easy. However, despite much effort of suppliers, the

results have been less than spectacular, particularly in the cases of car manufacturers as end customers still sought for suggestions and services from sales representatives.

As stated by *(Werthner, 1999)*Faced with increasing competition and price pressure, all major airlines have set up Web sites through which they also pursue direct sales strategies. While some of them have been cautious not to alienate their established distribution partners, eg Lufthansa, which is running monthly ticket auctions as a marketing event and promotion for the Web-site which also features direct booking, others, eg Delta Airlines, are aggressively pushing the direct sales channel; Up to the point that Delta has attempted to impose a penalty fee for all non-online bookings.

A. New Intermediaries: Online Booking Servers

More important and potentially more dangerous for travel agents is the emergence of so called online booking servers. They act as a kind of virtual travel agent or even travel supermarket providing booking facilities for air, hotel, car rentals, or holiday packages, as well as many additional information retrieval services. With respect to the tourism value chain they can be regarded as new intermediaries, setting up an additional distribution link from the CRS/GDS to the consumer, bypassing travel agents. The cooperation agreements with CRS/GDS follow from the fact that the latter are the only electronic systems available which supply both a worldwide product set as well as the necessary reliable functionality. *(Werthner, 1999)*

Traditional tourism players like Sabre with Travelocity or THISCO with Travel Web run some of these booking servers while others have been set-up by new entrants like Microsoft with Expedia. The sheer size and attractiveness of the travel and tourism market combined with lowered entry barriers has attracted new entrants from outside the traditional tourism market, especially from companies from the media and ICT field such as Bertelsmann or Microsoft. These companies appreciate the huge interest from the consumer's side in tourism applications in the Internet and want to exploit the possibility of linking users to other Internet services offered. They provide multimedia content and Internet mediating transactions to earn money. Since tourism is an information business, it fits well with their knowhow and business processes. These companies perceive tourism as one of the most important application fields for emerging

electronic markets. While, for many years, the tourism market has been characterized by a high level of regulation and little external competition, this situation has changed fundamentally and we have seen new entrants rise to major players during the past four years*(Werthner, 1999)*

The list of the top travel sites, i.e, Expedia [http:// www.expedia.com], ITN [http://www.itn.net], Preview Travel [http://www.previewtravel.com], and Travelocity [http://www.travelocity.com], demonstrates the dominant US position. These servers have enormous annual growth rates, for example Travelocity tripled its gross sales from January 1998 to January 1999 when it reached US$40.5 million. As a major way to increase Web traffic nearly all these servers follow a strategy of distribution deals with portal sites. The strategic goal of these companies is to be among those that will occupy a strategic position in this future market. This strategy, however, requires ongoing major investment. This competition and comparability implies a permanent innovation in the field of technology, tourism products and business processes. Moreover, since tourism is one of the main application fields of the WWW, it is often a test field for new technological developments.This will further increase the competition. In consequence, further financial linkages with economical powerful companies, either from the tourism field or from outside, can be expected.*(Werthner, 1999)*

According to *Kaewkitipong, L. (2010)*from the intermediary (travel agents and tour operators) perspective, while the Internet allowed suppliers to contact directly to travel consumers more easily than ever, many online travel agents also realized that they could add tremendous values to the travel consumers by providing all the information the consumers may need in one place. According to Buhalis and Law (2008), e-business technologies allow the travel agents to add further value to their services by empowering the customers to not only search and book single components, but also to assemble and book whole travel arrangements in real-time by means of web-based technologies. Agrawal, Agrawal and Singh (2006) suggested infomediary as an appropriate business model for non-physical products like flight and hotel reservation which requires marketing value added into the product distribution. Nevertheless, despite many alternatives to add values to their services, online travel agents are still facing challenges posed by suppliers' move to online. Many online travel agent sites have been used merely as price-

comparison sites, and then the customers jumped to suppliers' sites for direct purchase (Euromonitor, 2008).

B. New Infomediaries – Agents of the Customers

In addition to direct sales (disintermediation) and virtual travel agents or supermarkets, innovative business models have emerged on the Web that combines the notions of flexible pricing and customer advocacy (Hagel and Singer 1999). TravelBids[http://www.travelbids.com], eg, runs reverse auctions, in which customers specify their travelplans and travel agents bid to fulfill them. Priceline [http://www.priceline.com] portrays itself as a demand collection system. Customers can specify their preferences including the price. Priceline then advertises these binding offers to airlines who can decide whether they want to fulfill this additional demand at the customer's price. Systems like Priceline are focusing on specific product characteristics of tourism products in general and schedule flights in particular: The products are perishable and the marginal cost for an additional traveler is very low. The infomediaries have strategically positioned their applications in order to generate benefits for customers and suppliers which are not feasible in a direct sales model.They: - reduce coordination and communication cost for buyersand sellers;generate volume for the suppliers;pool homogeneous demand in order to give individual; customers access to suppliers' volume discounts;improve the likelihood for order fulfillment for thecustomers;separate or even isolate the coordination mechanism from other sales and distribution channels and by this way limit spill-over effects of price discounts; andoperate with varying levels of transparency.*(Werthner, 1999)*

2.1.4. Crs/ GdsAs Backbone Of TheElectronic tourism Market

Most of the online booking servers have direct links to one or several of the CRS/GDS, for example Expedia uses Worldspan or ITN has links to all of them (Dombey1997). The CRS/GDS themselves follow a variable strategy, they act as backend booking machines and at the same time they attempt to position their systems as frontend systems.*(Werthner, 1999)*

2.1.5. Opportunities of ICT in Travel and Tourism

By *Dhaigudeet al.,(2016)* and citing other scholars ICT has the ability to transform the entire business processes in the T&T industry into an integrated operation and firms that fail to adopt ICT will lose their competitive advantage (Law &Jogaratnam, 2005). ICT implementation helps firms improve the quality of services offered, enhances operational efficiency, increases their global reach and reduces costs, resulting in better consumer experience (Law, Leung, &Buhalis, 2009). The variety and intensity of ICT usage in the T&T industry is increasing by leaps and bounds, resulting in the transfer of accurate information demanded by customers at the right time (Connolly & Lee, 2006; Singh &Kasavana, 2005). ICT has become the must-have factor for operations in the T&T industry. As Poon (1993) stated, 'a whole system of information technologies is being rapidly diffused throughout the tourism industry and no player will escape information technologies impacts'. Unlike manufacturing firms, which have a uniform adoption process, the T&T industry has variations in terms of level of adoption and uses of ICT among the members of the value chain, resulting in a high level of complexity in the diffusion process of ICT. The nature of ICT adoption in the T&T industry, coupled with increasing investment in ICT, makes it necessary to formulate a holistic method for the ICT adoption process (Law et al., 2009). There are methods available to measure technology acceptance, popularly known as the technology adoption model (TAM).

2.1.6. Treat of Internet and ICT on travel agent in digital era

The first impact for a reduced role of travel agent by the information and communication technologies (ICTs) is not popular as before because consumers can find information on trips or booking via the Internet, rather than using the services of a travel agent. According to Laverty & Media, said that "one of the largest impacts on the travel agency has been the rise of online booking. Customers looking to book a trip no longer need to visit an agency - they can go online to companies such as Expedia or Priceline and book an entire trip themselves.*(World press, 2018)*

The second impact for a reduced role of travel agent by the information and communication technologies (ICTs) is some customer they can find the price of the room or the price of trip cheaper by themselves. Bug, T. Said that "part of the reason why there is a general perception

amongst consumers that the Internet is still the sole source of cheaper travel products and services than use by travel agents. *(World press, 2018)*

2.1.7. High competitors of ICT in Travel agent

In the recent years, the Information Communication Technology (ICT) has changed the competitive environment in travel market by passing travel agents and selling directly to consumers. So, its effect to travel agent by has more competitors. According to Kibe the study reported that adopted an exploratory cross-sectional survey design involving managers drawn from 55 travel agencies operating in Nairobi, Kenya. The number of years of firm only about 7% had used ICTs for less than five years, 32.7% has used ICTs for 6-10 years, 27.3% had used ICTs for 11-15 years and 32.7%had used ICTs for over 15 years"(p.4) Moreover, it's will bring to a mass-market online travel agencies (OTAs) such as Expedia, TripAdvisor, etc. From Konwiser said that "TripAdvisor causes Expedia's stock to plummet about 27% in one-day and now. It's down about 20% on the year which being attacked of all side".*(World press, 2018)*

2.1.8. Impact of ICT to Travel Agents Changes to Structure of the Organization

In the present internet, social media, online media, and information and communication technology (ICT) are easy access to have a role in the way of life. In the travel and tourism industry, this widespread of ICT have many effect to tourism industry such as a changes to the structure of the organization, changes to the process in the organization, including the problem of employment. And ICT is effect directly to tourism industry like supplier can contact directly with customer without intermediary. According to Yamanouchi, (2004) said that "The internet has provided opportunities for travelers to book their travel directly online thereby circumventing the traditional travel channels i.e. travel agencies. Nowadays even airlines have started encouraging travelers to book tickets directly on their websites thus avoiding having to pay 10% commission to the travel agents. This it has made it an urgent need for traditional travel agents to find new methods and strategies to stay in business." So, ICT effected to travel agents or intermediaries are replacing by online media. *(World press, 2018)*

2.1.9. Challenges of Travel Agency by ICT evolution

A. Self-Service booking

According to *Law R.; et al; (2007)* and their citation the supplier perspective of online marketing: - The Internet is an effective, efficient and low-cost marketing channel. However, it can also reduce the opportunities for suppliers to have direct human contact with customer Stockdale (2007) thus proposed using self-service technology to handle customer relationship management (CRM) to deal with this issue.*(World press, 2018)*

B. Downside of Internet connection

As stated and cited by *Mihajlovic, I. (2012)* Travel agents who successfully used internet as distribution channel had an easier access to global market. In such a way internet created the possibility to penetrate new market segments, and encouraged global alliance with the aim of enriching tourist offer, advertising and booking through cross-organizational booking systems. New distribution channels cannot be seen separately from other operating segments (Mamaghani, 2009). In the domain of ICT development, displayed either through the possibilities that internet placed before a modern tourist, or through travel agents that derived benefit from the inclusion in GDS systems, there is an evident quantitative growth in traffic, accompanied by a qualitative transformation of travel intermediaries. Especially conspicuous are those entities that apply ICT in the creation of new offer and affordable trips (Almandari, 2002).

C. Disintermediation (Online discount given by airlines)

According to *Kamau, W. (2015)* Tourism service providers such as the airlines and tour wholesalers are slowly by passing the travel agents by selling their products and services directly to clients. Cited by *Kamu, W. (2015)* The changes in the distribution chain are mainly as a result of advances in technology (Cooper, Fletcher, Flyall, Gilbert &Wanhill, 2008; Wang, 2007; Page & Connell; Davidson & Rogers; Doganis; Sharpley, (2006); Buhalis, 2003). As a result of disintermediation, the need for TAs has declined (Wensveen, 2007). However, the face-to-face selling, their expertise and ability to save time on information search give the TAs an added advantage (Holloway, 2004; Bogdanovych, Berger, Simoff& Sierra, 2006; Goeldner& Ritchie, 2009).

D. Loose link by social media/ other device

As stated and cited by *Mihajlovic, I. (2012)*Travel agents have to adapt their websites and online bookings to the overall "experience" and expectations of tourists; moreover, future travel agents will have to keep up with competing destinations that offer user friendly activities, values and conveniences (Mamaghani, 2009). This way the technology does not change only one business segment, but with efficiency and performance of its innovative tools it bears upon the radical changes in distribution channel and/or methods of its implementation and promotion regardless of the market entity in question, thus leading to higher or lower competitiveness.Those travel agents who ignore new technologies or avoid their implementation (due to high costs or lack of staff expertise) reduce the possibility to compete and adapt to dynamic market environment.

2.1.10. Possible Strategies by ICT

According to *Mihajlovic, I. (2012)*Travel agents who successfully used internet as distribution channel had an easier access to global market. In such a way internet created the possibility to penetrate new market segments, and encouraged global alliance with the aim of enriching tourist offer, advertising and booking through cross-organizational booking systems. New distribution channels cannot be seen separately from other operating segments (Mamaghani, 2009). In the domain of ICT development, displayed either through the possibilities that internet placed before a modern tourist, or through travel agents that derived benefit from the inclusion in GDS systems, there is an evident quantitative growth in traffic, accompanied by a qualitative transformation of travel intermediaries. Especially conspicuous are those entities that apply ICT in the creation of new offer and affordable trips (Almandari, 2002). Travel agents have to adapt their websites and online bookings to the overall "experience" and expectations of tourists; moreover, future travel agents will have to keep up with competing destinations that offer user friendly activities, values and conveniences (Mamaghani, 2009). This way the technology does not change only one business segment, but with efficiency and performance of its innovative tools it bears upon the radical changes in distribution channel and/or methods of its implementation and promotion regardless of the market entity in question, thus leading to higher or lower competitiveness. Those travel agents who ignore new technologies or avoid their

implementation (due to high costs or lack of staff expertise) reduce the possibility to compete and adapt to dynamic market environment.

Similarly according to *Law R.; et al; (2007)* and their citation websites are incredibly important, mission critical, and cost effective marketing tools for businesses. Having a good website not only generates more business opportunities, but also enhances a company's image and supports the interactivity with both institutional and individual customer. To increase web effectiveness, web designers should also consider network limitations, demographics, and the culture and soul of the site (Corfu &Kastenholz, 2005). As stated by Rob Law; et al (2009) the supplier perspective online marketing: - The Internet is an effective, efficient, and low-cost marketing channel. However, it can also reduce the opportunities for suppliers to have direct human contact with customers. Stockdale (2007) those proposed using self-service technology to handle customer relationship management (CRM) to deal with this issue. Internet has also been introduced to maintain a close relationship between companies and customers, with research results showing that the adoption of E-relationship Marketing (e-RM) is positively associated with the size of hotel companies (Bai, HU & Jang, 2006). The adoption of IT and relationship marketing (RM) could help tourism organizations maintain competitiveness and improve the management of business relationships with customers (Alcarez, Martin, &Casiells, 2007). A case study in Singapore showed that the majority of Singapore's hotels were at the "database collection" level in RM (Gan, Sim, Tan & Tan, 2006), and that customers with different socio-demographic characteristics has a significant willingness to provide contact information for permission marketing. To attract customers to provide such information, the means by which customer contact information is collected should be varied (Brey, o, Kim & Morrison, 2007). Hu Han, Jang and Bai (2005) stressed that both the hospitality and tourism industries and academic institutes need to maintain a good relationship with their prospective customers.

As cited by Rob Law; *et al* (2009) the ultimate focus of a business is performance and the maximization of profit. Computerized yield management systems can help managers increase their revenue and yields to improve profitability and financial performance (Emeksiz, Gursoy, &Icoz, 2006). In a similar way the empirical research findings by Januszewska, M., et al (2015) state that The effects of ICT use by tourism enterprises (the case of Lower Silesia entities)

Development of ICT has an undeniable impact on development possibilities of tourism enterprises, on a local scale, as well as globally. It is estimated that the world's 40% turnover in tourism sector results from the application of ICT techniques, which are most often associated with travel agencies' web sites or aggregators of these agencies offers which provide electronic transactions and online booking systems for hotels and airlines.

IAB Europe research indicated that in 2012 in the world approx. 75% of airline tickets sales occurred online. As many as over 13% of plane tickets purchased in Poland in 2013 were booked on-line. 42% of the Internet users choose to pay by means of electronic banking facilities, over 50% of Poles travelling by planes decide to invest in budget airlines, which can be booked only on-line. 40% of the Internet reservations are made outside the hours 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., 15% of on-line bookings are done on Saturdays and Sundays, every second ticket booked on the Internet can be issued completely automatically. The above information confirms the significant role played by ICTs with regard to activities performed by tourism enterprises and their extensive influence on such entities' functioning. In the RaportPhoCusWright (2012) it is estimated that the value of tourism market in Poland has grown up to about 4 billion USD in 2013. Major part of this amount originates from selling the available offer by traditional distribution canals. However, the dynamics of on-line tourism services sales is extremely high. According to performed estimations Poles spent about 850 million PLN on purchasing tourism services via the Internet, including about 300–350 million PLN on airfares. It is estimated that in 2013 the value of tourism offer on-line sales amounted to over 1 billion PLN.

2.2.Empirical Review

Wahab, (2017) analyze the role of information technology in tourism industry: impact and growth. He used a descriptive research design in order to answer the stated objectives. The findings of his study revealed that Information Technology or IT has played a critical role not just in the advancement of tourism, but it has helped in spreading the phenomenon of tourism to every part of the world and has made travel safer. IT brought in some radical changes that have altered the scenario of travel and tourism, making travel easier, bridging the gap between customer as well as the seller and by providing the right information at any point in time. The finding further revealed that one of its major contribution lies with the increase in the supply of information to be shared with a larger audience. Secondly, IT helps in reducing the cost

inculcated in the dissemination of knowledge. It has also reduced the inefficiencies pertaining to the spread of information. Thirdly IT has greatly helped in the reduction of barriers caused by distance and time.

Mihajlović, (2012) made a survey analysis on the impact of information and communication technology (ICT) as a key factor of tourism development on the role of Croatian travel agencies. He used a descriptive approach and data were collected from 200 travel agencies. The paper further seeks to understand the mission and the usage of ICT through its influence on the development of tourism subjects supply, especially intermediaries on tourism market. The occurrence of the phenomenon of tourism is the result of socio - economic conditions related to the development of technology and innovations. The analysis revealed that the integration of personal approach with ICT is significant, with new technologies having complementary and not substitutive function. Benefits of new technologies enable development of travel agencies and make communication with customers and other entities easier, which is the foundation for building competitiveness. The study further revealed the role of ICT in strategic formation of travel agencies in the context of understanding the necessity to apply ICT in all business segments all the way to the level of coalition of new technologies in the market through the launch of proper or someone else's products (travel arrangements) and/or services. Technology considered as a means of partnership, and not as a threat in the eyes of respondents, is a valuable result of this survey which shows that there is room for self-development of agencies and for overcoming the barriers sometimes created by technology due to knowledge deficit and low level of IT awareness.

Tichaawa, Mhlanga and Sicwebu, (2017) assess the impacts of information communication technologies (ICTs) on tourism businesses. A case study approach was followed; and a questionnaire survey was carried out where the questionnaires were measured in Likert scale. The results show that the ICT was perceived to impact relatively little on company image improvement, tourism businesses should use such technology to improve company image. The uniqueness of this article lies in it revealing the impacts of ICT on tourism business from an African country perspective.As stated by Januszewska. M., *et al*. (2015) development of ICT has an undeniable impact on development possibilities of tourism enterprises, on a local scale, as well as globally. It is estimated that the world's 40% turnover in tourism sector results from the

application of ICT techniques, which are most often associated with travel agencies' web sites or aggregators of these agencies offers which provide electronic transactions and online booking systems for hotels and airlines.

Bethapudi, (2013) used a descriptive research design in order to the role of ICT on tourism industry in India. using purposive sample of 112 managers of tourism, travel and hospitality enterprises were surveyed through a questionnaire with the Managing Directors, Directors, General Managers, Team Leaders and Senior Managers. The study explores the business development, revenue generation, minimization of cost and reaching the customers. The paper explains the gaps between tourism business and ICT influence and suggests measures to fill the gaps in tourism enterprises. The findings of the study show that it is essential that the current information and communications technologies should be updated, upgraded and seamless integration both internally and externally should be done to improve the tourism business operations. The integration of ICT in tourism would benefit both, service providers and customers bringing together other stakeholders as well, on a common platform. The study further revealed that the selection of right information communications technology tool is crucial to match the customer requirements with service dimensions. The proliferation of technology throughout tourism distribution channels and professionals use the new tools in order to retrieve information, identify suitable products and perform reservations. ICTs integration provides a powerful tool that brings advantage in promoting and strengthening tourism industry.

Sava and Mateia, (2014) analyze the impact of information technology on travel agents in Timişoara, Romania. They used a descriptive research design; the analysis revealed that the online reservations of travel packageswas 24.2% ofthe total number of tourist packages sold in 2013, by 12.6percentage points more than in 2005.With the appearance of Web, users were able to interact with dynamic websitesoftravel agencies. The analysis further shows that it was beneficial for smaller agenciesenabling them to promote tourism products withouthaving to purchase expensive computer programsfor promoting and creating their own websites. Potentialcustomers now have access to the desired informationthrough cheap portals, such as the web browser, and theycan choose the best package making an easier and effortlessly comparison between offers in a short time. Thus, both small travel agencies and customers are favoredby the appearance, development and use of informationa technologies.In the RaportPhoCusWright

(2012) it is estimated that the value of tourism market in Poland has grown up to about 4 billion USD in 2013. Major part of this amount originates from selling the available offer by traditional distribution canals. However, the dynamics of on-line tourism services sales is extremely high. According to performed estimations Poles spent about 850 million PLN on purchasing tourism services via the Internet, including about 300–350 million PLN on airfares. It is estimated that in 2013 the value of tourism offer on-line sales amounted to over 1 billion PLN.

Shanker, (2008) conduct a qualitative analysis entitles with ICT and tourism: challenges and opportunities in India. The findings of the study confirm that,the most important benefit associated with the access to the new technologies is the increase in the supply of information. Information is shared and disseminated to larger audience. Secondly it reduces the cost of production. Knowledge is produced, transmitted, accessed and shared at the minimumcost. With the reduction in the transactional costs, there is also a reduction in the degree of inefficienciesand uncertainty. Thirdly it has overcome the constraints of distance and geography. The finding further shows that ICTs have cut acrossthe geographic boundaries of the nation states and buyers and sellers are able to share information,specifications, production process etc across the national borders. It enables all to know the comparativeadvantage in the market economy. It leads to the larger markets and increased access to global supplychains. Fourthly it has led to more transparency.

Januszewsk et al., (2015) conduct a descriptive research on the effects of the use of ICT by tourism enterprises. The findings of the study show that online sales in tourism sector amounts to 40%, whereas the relevant level in the overall economy is 17%. Tourism represents the sixth sectorwhere ICT tools are most often used. The finding further revealed that the differences in the observed advantages and barriers for ICT implementation by tourism enterprises, which may represent the effect of both the specific nature of performed activities and the offered product. Furthermore, tourism intermediaries approach ICT as the means for increasing revenues which, however, is not pointed out by hoteliers. In spite of ICT importance, emphasized in the subject literature as the method for transaction costs reduction in running a business in tourism sector, however the analysis shows that entrepreneurs do not perceive this advantage as crucial. An individual perception of ICT advantages dominates over the general outlook among the respondents.IAB Europe research indicated that in 2012 in the world approx. 75% of airline

tickets sales occurred online. As many as over 13% of plane tickets purchased in Poland in 2013 were booked on-line. 42% of the Internet users choose to pay by means of electronic banking facilities, over 50% of Poles travelling by planes decide to invest in budget airlines, which can be booked only on-line. 40% of the Internet reservations are made outside the hours 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., 15% of on-line bookings are done on Saturdays and Sundays, every second ticket booked on the Internet can be issued completely automatically. The above information confirms the significant role played by ICTs with regard to activities performed by tourism enterprises and their extensive influence on such entities' functioning.

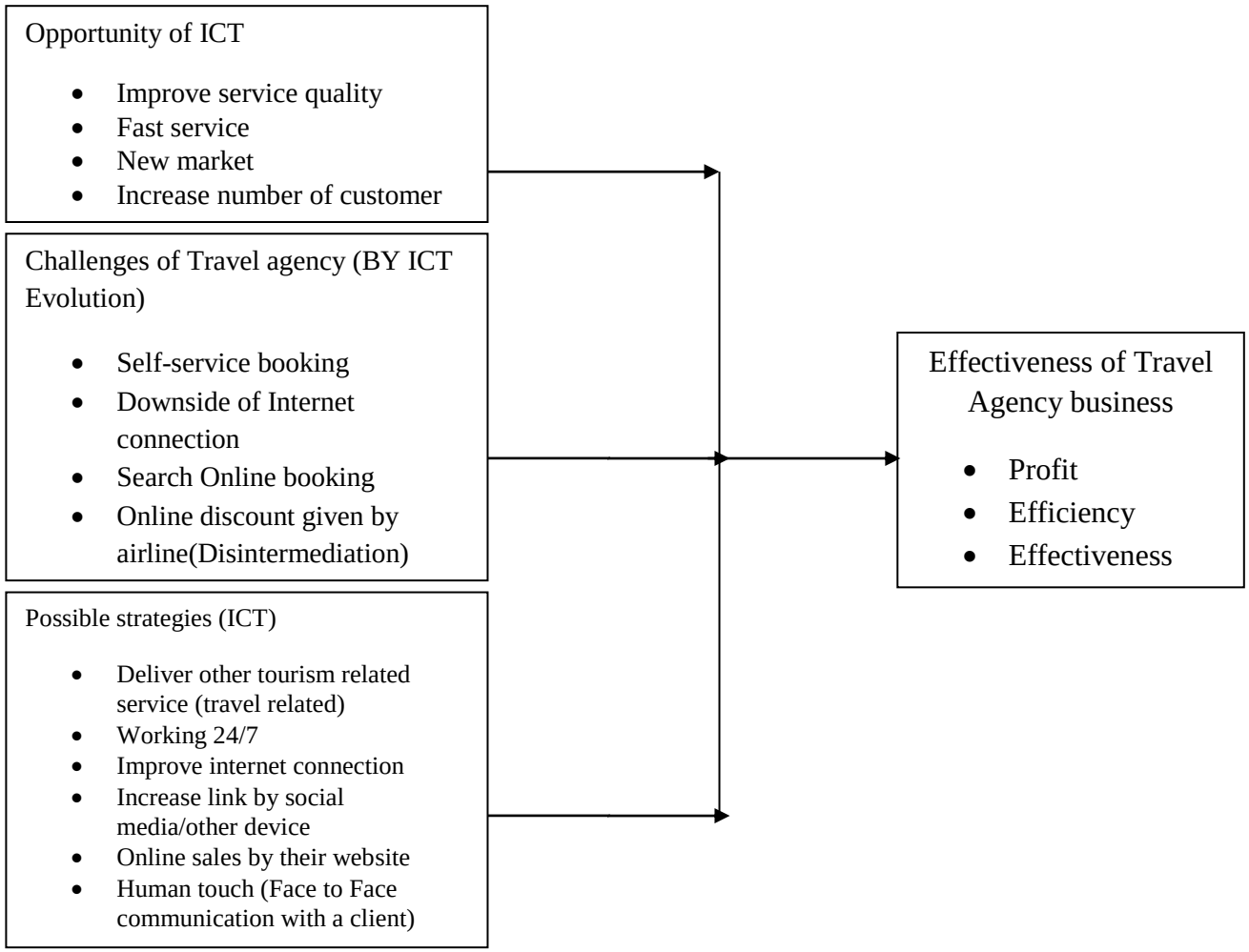
2.3.Conceptual Framework

The conceptual model focused on the opportunity that ICT offer for the Travel Agency, the challenges that arise from ICT evolution and possible strategies to address the challenges faced due to the ICT effect.The frame work has an important basis for application to examine the nature of response by travel agencies in Addis Abeba as a result of internet innovations and implications (Figure 1.1). The variables in the framework included Independent and dependent variables.

Independent Variables The main independent variables in the study included ICT offer that are improve service quality, fast service, new market, increase number of customer and higher income. Challenges of travel agency (By ICT evolution) which encompass, self-service booking, downside of internet connection, Commission caps & cuts, online discount given by airline, Loss link by social media/other device

Dependent Variable The dependent variable in the study is the effect of travel agency which is the profit of the organization.

Figure2.2: Conceptual Framework



Independent Variables **Dependent Variable**

Source: Own constriction with inputs from S. Chepkoech (2013); (Januszewska. M., et al.2015); Mihajlovic, I. (2012).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

As it is stated in the objective, the very essence of this research is to determine the effectiveness of ICT on travel agencies business specifically in the city of Addis Abeba and to get an answer for all mentioned on the research question this research used causal and descriptive research design.As well for this study the researcher use quantitative research designs, techniques and measures to produce numerical quantifiable data.

3.2 Research Approach

Further, the study used mixed research approaches, which include both qualitative and quantitative data. By qualitative data, the description is in words rather than numbers by believing it helps the study to go beyond the statistical results that are reported in the quantitative research.

3.3. Population and Sampling Techniques

The target population of this study isthe entire 473 travel agencyCompany found in the city of Addis Abeba. Further, to address the research question the researcher used probability and Non probability sampling technique. Probability sampling technique which is specifically Cluster random sampling because the population have homogeneous character; by taking the population which are the entire 473 companies found in Addis Abebaand divide into sub-cities like Bole, Yeka, AkakiKaliti, Ledeta, Gulele, Arada, Kirkos, NefasselkLafto, KolfeKeranio and Addis Ketemasub-cities that are going to say clusters or geographical cluster, and samples are then randomly select from each cluster. By Non Probability sampling technique taking a sample purposively related to my study; purposive sampling conducted.

3.3.1. Sample Size Determination

The sample size for students was calculated basedon Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1967)

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where, n = the sample size

N= the size of population

e =the error of 5 percentage points

By using Yamane's formula of sample size with an error 5 % and with a confidence coefficient of 95% (Yamane, 1967), the calculation from a population of 473 travel agency company came up to a sample of 218 travel agency found in Addis Abeba. Therefore, 218 travel agency representatives were selected randomly.

3.4. Source and Procedure of Collection

In order to conduct a successful research and, to answer the research questions raised, primary data were collected from managers and ticket agents in Addis Ababa and the instrument for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire and interview. Quantitative data collected through distribution of a questionnaire which by believing on the respondents was given the reply genuinely. The questionnaires are delivered on hand and email to the mangers and ticket agents.

3.5. Method of Data Analysis

Upon collection of all data, the data are processed, edited, classified and organized in order to enable the researcher interpret and summarize the data. Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics techniques. In descriptive statistic the researcheruse percentages, correlation and frequencies as well as mean and standard deviationthat help to analyze the data where as in the inferential techniques which is known as regressions particularly Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method were used, which shows not only the relationships or associations existing between variables it helps to analyze the extent to which one (independent)

variable predicts the other (dependent) variable. Further, the collected raw data were classified and compiled to make assessment manageable and understandable using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) as well as Excel.

3.6. Validity and Reliability Test

3.6.1. Reliability Test

Reliability is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha method was used to test the reliability of the data, and therefore, the data was 70.6% reliable

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	215	98.6
	Excluded[a]	3	1.4
	Total	218	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.706	49

3.6.2. Validity Test

In general, Validity is an indication of how sound your research is. More specifically, validity applies to both the design and the methods of your research. Validity in data collection means that your findings truly represent the phenomenon you are claiming to measure. Valid claims are solid claims. Therefore, in order to measure the validity Pearson correlation method was employed, accordingly based on the significant value obtained by the sig. (2-tailed) 0f 0.000 < 0.05, so it can be concluded that all of the items was valid.

Opportunity of ICT for Travel Agency	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gender		.433**	.000
Age group		.357**	.000
Education		.348**	.000
number of years		.301**	.000
job status		.322**	.000
The Travel Agency improves service quality by the introduction of ICT.		.202**	.000
ICT gives fast service for the travelers.		.269**	.000
ICT helps the Travel Agency to penetrate to the new market.		.162*	.000
Due to ICT the numbers of customers are increased comparing from the previous.		.538**	.000
The Travel agency generate higher income because of the ICT revolution		.167**	.0014
The Travel agencies face a problem by customer's self-service booking with the independent of the agency.		.446**	.0032
The downside of high speed internet connection make difficult to serve a travelers request on time.		.208**	.0022
The travelers search online first, then come book with an agent; this create to challenge for the travel agency.		.469	.0011
The online discount given by the airlines and other travel booking website create downsize of the sales.		.902**	.0014
The travel agencies have faced a problem on how to keep in touch with their clientele using a variety of medium like mobile devices and others.		.892**	.0049
Delivery another travel related service like tour package, rent a car and some others.		.843**	.000
Allowing clients the ability to book their trips without the constraints of office hours or worrying about their schedule.		.764**	.000
Improved Internet connections and speeds.		.762**	.000
Travel Agency has to keep in touch with their clients using a variety of mediums.		.211**	.000
Create a website and sell by their own website		.534**	.000
The travel agencies have to create person to person communication with travelers. (i.e. the "human touch")		.161*	.041
The travel agency is still in profitable venture even if there is online booking and discount offer by Airlines.		.140*	.000
Using ICT the travel agency produce the intended or expected result (Being effective)		.214**	.000
By using ICT the travel agency performs or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort. (Being efficient)		.136*	.032

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.6.3. Ethical consideration

The researcher has to know and respect the willingness of the respondents and has not disclosed the respondent's identity, and will not have used the information for personal purpose. Additionally, all participants for the success of the research should be acknowledged. Further, the researcher seeks informed consent of the respondent and the research data remained confidential throughout the study and the researcher ensure respondents participation in this study voluntary.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Demography Characteristics of Respondents

4.1.1. Age Classification of Respondents

Respondents age were categorized in to three age groups, the first groups are those respondents who are between 20 and 35 years of age which accounts 56.42 percent of the respondents; the second group were 36 to 50 years of age, this age groups incorporate 40.37 percent of the respondents and the last and the third group were 51 to 65 years of age which contain 3.21 percent of the respondents. The analysis indicated that most of the employees who work in travel agent industry belong to young age group.

Table 4.1 Age clasificaiton of resppondents

Age ofRespondent	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
20-35	123	56.42%	56.42
36-50	88	40.37%	96.79
51-65	7	3.215	100.00
Total	218	100.00%	

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.1.2. Education of Respondents

Under this sub-topic respondents were asked if they took any tourism related education trainings at certificate or advanced level; accordingly, respondents replied based on their qualification and they choose more than one option if they have both. In line with this, out of the total respondents 112 of them had certificate on tourism related trainings. 55 respondents were diploma holders and 26 respondents had tourism related advanced diploma. Furthermore, 26 respondents had International Air Transport Association approved Diploma, 65 respondents also had tourism related degrees; however out of the total respondents 9 of them didn't have any tourism related education. The analysis implied that except a few majorities of the employees who worked in travel agent profession had both qualification of certificate, diploma and degree, which indicates the employees, invest more time on upgrading their educational status.

Table 4.2 Tourism Related Education/Training

Tourism related education	Yes	No	Total
Certificate	112	106	218
Diploma	55	163	218
Advanced Diploma	26	192	218
IATA approved Diploma	93	125	218
Degree related to Tourism Industry	65	153	218
None	9	209	218

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.1.3. Current Status on TheAgency

The researcher categorizes the current status of respondents in to four; accordingly, 18.80 percent of the respondents were at executive level and 4.12 percent of them were non-executive status. The rest 27.06 and 50 percent for the respondents were owners and employees. The statistics show that very few the respondents are the owners of the business; however, majority of the respondents were employees of the travel agents, furthermore, few amounts of the respondents were at executive level, this shows that since the higher level officials are bust in most cases it is difficult to access them; so that the nears employees would be the responsible guy to respond for such assessments.

Table 4.3 current status of respondents at the organization

Current or most recent job status	Frequency	Percentage
Executive	41	18.80%
Non-Executive	9	4.12%
Owner	59	27.06%
Employee	109	50%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.1.4. Experience on Tourism Industry

Respondents were also asked for how many years so far they are engaged on tour and travel industry in general; accordingly, majority (44.5%) of the respondents stayed in tourism industry between 4 to 6 years, 32.11 percent of them stayed in tourism industry so far between 1 and 3 years. The rest 12.39 and 11.01 percent of the respondents were stayed in tourism industry for less than 1 year and above 7 years respectively. The findings indicate that majority of the

respondents serve the industry more than 4 years, hence to some extent it is possible to conclude that the travel agent business is senior and old type of business since the country had many places to visit.

Table 4.4 Total year of experience in tourism industry

Year of Experience on working in travel industry	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Less than 1 yr	27	12.39	12.39
1-3 Years	70	32.11	44.50
4-6 years	97	44.50	88.99
Above 7 years	24	11.01	100.00
Total	**218**	**100.00**	

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.1.5 Experience on current organization

In the previous sup-topic the researcher tried to show for how many years respondents in general stayed in tourism and travel industry including different organization. However, in this sub-topic respondents were asked for how long they were working for their current organization. Accordingly, 39.91 percent of the respondents stayed in their current organization for less than one year, again 39.91percent of the respondents replied that they stayed in their current organization for 1 to 3 years. . The rest 14.68 and 5.50 percent of the respondents worked for their current organization for 4 to 6 years and above seven years respectively. This implies that on the travel agency business employees not stay in one organization for longer period of time. They will catch an experience from one company and sift to their own business or to other competitor company.

Table 4.5 Current organization experience

Year of experience oncurrent travelagency	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Less than 1 year	87	39.91	39.91
1-3 years	87	39.91	79.82
4-6 years	32	14.68	94.50
Above 7 years	12	5.50	100.00
Total	218	100.00	

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.1.6 Locations of Travel Agencies

For travel industry location of the company is the most important factor for its success, hence, the location of sample travel agencies was also analyzed. 21.10 percent of the travel agencies were exists in Bole sub-city, 9.63 percent of them were in AkakiKality sub-city, and 8.29 percent of the agencies are addressed in Gulele sub-city. 17.89 percent of the agencies make their address in Kirkos sub city, 10.55 percent of the agencies were found in Yeka sub-city, 4.13 percent of them were in Lideta sub-city and 11.93 percent of them were in Arada sub-city. Furthermore, 4.59 percent of the agencies were found in Nefas Silk Lafto sub-city and the rest 5.5 and 6.42 percent of the travel agencies were found in KolfeKeranio and Addis Ketema sub-city respectively. Although, the proportion of the location seems proportional, however, more numbers of the agency location is at bole sub-city this is because it is the place that near to the airport, and helps to catch customers easily compared to the others.

Table 4.6 Current existing location of travel Agencies

Travel agency Location	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Bole	46	21.10%	21.10
AkakiKaliti	21	9.63%	30.73
Gulele	18	8.26%	38.99
Kirkos	39	17.89%	56.88
Yeka	23	10.55%	67.43
Ledeta	9	4.13%	71.56
Arada	26	11.93%	83.49
Nefasselklafto	10	4.59%	88.07
KolfeKeranio	12	5.50%	93.58
Addis Ketema	14	6.42%	100.00
Total	**218**	**100.00**%	

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.1.7 Travel Agencies Daily Booking

Number of daily booking for travel agencies is the most considerable things in their daily business; the analysis shows that 39.91 percent of the travel agencies had 1 to 10 bookings per day, 20.18 percent of the agencies had 11 to 20 bookings per day and 13.76 percent of the agencies had 21 to 30 bookings per day. The rest 26.15 percent of the some agencies had more

than 30 bookings per day. This show that how much the travel agency active air ticket booking and sales and shows lots of travelers in the city of Addis Abeba.

Table 4.7 Description of travel agencies daily bookings

Travelagencybooking perday	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1-10	87	39.91	39.91
11-20	44	20.18	60.09
21-30	30	13.76	73.85
Above 30	57	26.15	100.00
Total	218	100.00	

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.1.8. Adopted ICT and Mode of Communication

Mode of communication in a sense means, what mode of communication is mostly used by the travel agencies in their everyday business. In this context respondents tick more than one option if the company employees more than one mode of communication; accordingly, out of the total sample agencies 190 of them used electronic mail for their mode of communication, 152 of the agencies used telephone, and 50 agencies used Fax as a means of communication for their daily operation. Furthermore, 41 and 91 agencies also responded that they used Printed media such as letters, posters, handouts and face to face mode of communication respectively. In addition to these, the respondents were also asked what type of information communication technology is their company used mostly; here also respondents gave a multiple responses sine the company uses more than one instruments. The findings of the study shows that out of the total sample agencies, 202 agencies used internet service, 122 used mobile phone and 95 agencies used Phones i.e land lines. Furthermore, 55 and 200 agencies used Fax machines and Global Distribution System (GDS) respectively. The implication of the most frequently used communication device which is computer (email) and telephone shows that the industry is more comfortable or prefer its simplicity comparing to others. The other thing ICT adoption in the firm or in the travel industry rely on internet an Global Distribution System (GDS) without adoption of those ICT's the travel agency cannot perform everyday business.

Table 4.8 Mode of communication and technology adopted

	What mode of communication is often used in everyday business in your firm?	
	Yes	No
Computers (email)	190	28
Telephones	152	66
Fax	50	168
Print media e.g letters, posters, handouts	41	177
Face to face	91	127
	Type of ICTs adopted in your firm	
	Yes	No
Internet	202	16
Mobile Phone	122	96
Phones i.e land lines	95	123
Fax machines	55	163
Global Distribution System (GDS)	200	18

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.2. Descriptive analysis of Effectiveness of ICT on the performance of Travel Agencies Business

The effect of information communication technology on travel agency businesses were observed from three perspective, Opportunity of ICT for Travel Agency, Challenge of Travel Agency due to ICT evolution and Possible strategies to overcome the problem faced by ICT. Each of the anticipated issues is discussed below. Furthermore, for likert scale data from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) if the sample is approximately normally distributed the interpretation should be for mean up to 2.8 is "Disagree", mean between 2.9 and 3.2 is "Neutral", and mean above 3.2 is "Agree" (Scott 1999). Therefore, the decision of the each variable statistics is done based on these criteria's.

4.2.1. Opportunity of ICT for Travel Agency

In this sub topic the opportunity offered by information communication technology would be discussed. The findings of the analysis shows that more than 90 percent of the respondents replied that the travel Agency improves service quality by the introduction of ICT, close to 95 percent of the sample respondents also said that the application of ICT helps them to gives fast

service for the travelers. In addition to these, 92.2 percent of the respondents replied that ICT helps the Travel Agency to penetrate to the new market; on top of this more than 91 percent of the respondents confirmed that due to adopting information communication technology their numbers of customers are increased comparing from the previous seasons; in addition to these, majority (91.71%) of the respondents replied that the travel agencies were generates higher income because of the ICT revolution.

The grand analysis further shows that and as confirmed by 92.74 percent of the respondents of ICT created tremendous opportunities for travel agencies in terms of generating additional income and improve service qualities. In addition to this the grand meanof Opportunity of ICT for Travel Agency is 4.53; as referred by Scott (1999) the mean value is fall on agree level. Therefore, this indicates that at greater extent the technology of ICT creates a good opportunity for travel agencies and makes their business more reliable and fast; as a result of this the travel agencies could penetrate and enter to a new markets which helps them to recruit new customers and makes more profitable and generate higher incomes.

Table 4.9 Opportunities of ICT for travel industry

Items	**Level of Agreement**					**Mean**	**St. Dv**
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
The Travel Agency improves service quality by the introduction of ICT.	0%	0.92%	5.5%	34.86%	58.72%	4.51	0.6456
ICT gives fast service for the travelers.	0%	0%	5.05%	30.28%	64.68%	4.59	0.5868
ICT helps the Travel Agency to penetrate to the new market.	0.92%	0.46%	6.42%	32.57%	59.63%	4.49	0.7200
Due to ICT the numbers of customers are increased comparing from the previous.	0.92%	2.75%	5.05%	26.61%	64.68%	4.51	0.7929
The Travel agency generate higher income because of the ICT revolution	0.46%	2.30%	5.53%	21.66%	70.05%	4.58	0.7412
Opportunity of ICT for Travel Agency	**0.46**%	**1.28**%	**5.51**%	**29.19**%	**63.55**%	**4.53**	**0.6973**
Where level of Agreements: 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree							

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.2.2. Challenge of Travel Agency Due to ICT Evolution

Apart from the opportunity created by the application of information communication technology an assessment were performed if there is any challenges confront by the travel agencies due to the current status of ICT implementation. Accordingly, 53.67 percent of the respondents confirmed that the travel agencies face a problem by customer's self-service booking with the independent of the agency; on the other hand, 34.40 percent of the respondents neither agree nor disagree regarding the problem by customer's self-service booking with the independent of the agency. 50.92 percent of the respondents confirmed that the downside of high speed internet connection make difficult to serve a travelers request on time, however, considerable (15.145) amounts of respondent didn't agreed that the downsize of high speed internet creates a problem on their activities. 58.26 percent of the respondents said that when the travelers search online first and then come book with an agent creates a challenge for the travel agency; in this regard 25.81 percent of the respondents neither agree nor disagree. Although 5.07 percent of the sample respondents said that the online discount given by the airlines and other travel booking website didn't reduce the amount of the sales, however, 69.13 percent of the respondents confirmed that the online discount given by the airlines and other travel booking website create downsize of the sales. Apart from these, more than 73 percent of the respondents confirmed that the travel agencies have faced a problem on how to keep in touch with their clientele using a variety of medium like mobile devices and others.

The overall analysis regarding Challenge of Travel Agency due to ICT evolution implied that, 61.07 percent of the respondents confirmed that the travel agencies are challenged by the current status of ICT service such as difficulty to serve a travelers request on time, although, small percentage of respondents denied that. Furthermore,challenge of travel agency due to ICT evolution hadthe mean score of 3.73; which suggested as referred by Scott (1999) the mean value is fall on agree level. Therefore, this indicates that at greater extent the evolution of ICTtechnology make the business of travel agents more challenging; the challenges comes from two direction, the first classified challenge were the status of the countries internet service, the speed of the internet is very slow due to that the travel agent got difficulty to contact new and existing customers; the other perspective of challenge was the access of ICT make things simple,

particularly, now a day's customers contact directly with airlines without needing the travel agents for their accommodation service and other related thins and this creates a threat for travel agents.

Table 4.10 Challenges of travel agencies due to limed ICT

Item	Level of Agreement					Mean	St. Dv
	1	2	3	4	5		
The Travel agencies face a problem by customer's self-service booking with the independent of the agency	0.46%	11.47%	34.40%	31.65%	22.02%	3.63	0.9663
The downside of high speed internet connection make difficult to serve a travelers request on time.	1.38%	13.76%	33.94%	34.86%	16.06%	3.50	0.9660
The travelers search online first, then come book with an agent; this create to challenge for the travel agency.	0.92%	7.80%	33.03%	42.20%	16.06%	3.64	0.8741
The online discount given by the airlines and other travel booking website create downsize of the sales	0%	5.07%	25.81%	42.40%	26.73%	3.90	0.8502
The travel agencies have faced a problem on how to keep in touch with their clientele using a variety of medium like mobile devices and others.	1.38%	7.34%	17.89%	34.86%	38.53%	4.01	0.9928
Challenge of Travel Agency due to ICT evolution	**0.82**%	**9.08**%	**29.01**%	**37.19**%	**23.88**%	**3.73**	**0.9298**
Where level of Agreements: 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree							

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.2.3. Possible Strategies to Overcome the Problem Faced by ICT

Once the problem is identified a mechanism should be developed in order to tackle the investigated problems; in line with this respondents were asked to rate the possible strategies that can contribute for effective and successful travel agency businesses. Accordingly, 70.64 percent of the respondents agreed that delivery of another travel related service like tour package, rent a car and some others would contribute more for the success of the travel agencies, whereas 7.8 percent of the respondents didn't agreed on investing related business. 77.06 percent of the

respondents also agreed that allowing clients the ability to book their trips without the constraints of office hours or worrying about their schedule is the best option to tackle the confronted problems; others (79.36%) also suggested that improving the current internet connections and speeds would contribute a lot for catalyzing the business. Apart from this, since it is difficult to relay on current internet connection speed, travel agencies has to keep in touch with their clients using a variety of mediums, this was confirmed by 83.95 percent of the respondents; others (82.11%) also suggested that creating a permanent website and selling the service is the best option for effective travel agency business.

Generally, respondents were requested whether the mentioned strategies could contribute for the success of travel agency businesses. Accordingly, the grand analysis suggested that more than 80 percent of the respondents agreed that the above mentioned determine and influence the success of travel agency business. Apart from these, the grand mean score was 4.14; according to Scott (1999) a mean score greater than 3.2 falls in the range of agree level; this suggested that respondents were strongly agreed that the forwarded strategies determine the effectiveness of travel agency businesses. Therefore, in order to bees more competent and successful travel agents should incorporate alternative solutions for their business simultaneously; they should have to create person to person communication with travelers, in order to avoid losing of customers due to low internet access; further, travel agencies has to keep in touch with their clients using a variety of medium apart from the internet. In addition to these, travel agents should deliver another travel related service like tour package; rent a car and some others.

Table 4.11 Possible strategies to overcome the problem faced by ICT

Item	Level of Agreement					Mean	St. Dv
	1	2	3	4	5		
Delivery another travel related service like tour package, rent a car and some others.	0.92%	6.88%	21.56%	43.12%	27.52%	3.89	0.9172
Allowing clients the ability to book their trips without the constraints of office hours or worrying about their schedule.	0%	4.13%	18.81%	50%	27.06%	4.00	0.7916
Improved Internet connections and speeds.	0.46%	1.83%	18.35%	47.71%	31.65%	4.08	0.7814
Travel Agency has to keep in touch with their clients using a variety of mediums.	0.92%	1.83%	13.30%	47.25%	36.70%	4.39	.5327
Create a website and sell by their own website	3.21%	4.13%	10.55%	37.16%	44.95%	4.16	0.9931
The travel agencies have to create person to person communication with travelers. (i.e. the "human touch")	0%	1.84%	11.06%	36.87%	50.23%	4.35	0.7505
Possible strategies to overcome the problem faced by ICT	**0.91**%	**3.44**%	**15.61**%	**43.69**%	**36.35**%	**4.14**	**0.794**
Where level of Agreements: 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree							

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.2.4. The ICT effect on Travel Agency outcome

Under this sub-topic the overall perception of respondents towards the effect of ICT on travel agency businesses would be discussed. Accordingly, although 5.51 percent of the respondents said that the travel agency is not in profitable venture even if there is online booking and discount offer by Airlines; however 70.18 percent of the respondents confirmed that the travel agency is still enjoying profit even if there is online booking and discount offer by Airlines. Apparently, more than 80 percent of the respondents also confirmed that using ICT the travel agency produce the intended result and by using ICT the travel agencies functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort.

The overall grand mean of ICT effect on travel agencies were 4.14, based on the analysis of Scott (1999), this particular variable also fall on agree level because, according to him, if the mean score is greater than 3.2 the mean value represents agree level. Using and adopting ICT

make the business of travel agents simple and reliable, by using ICT the travel agencies perform or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort. This helps travel agent to be more profitable and helps them to achieve the intended goal.

Table 4.12 The overall effect of ICT on travel Agencies

Item	Level of Agreement					Mean	St. Dv
	1	2	3	4	5		
The travel agency is still in profitable venture even if there is online booking and discount offer by Airlines.	1.38%	4.13%	24.31%	42.66%	27.52%	4.09	0.8593
Using ICT the travel agency produce the intended or expected result (Being effective)	0.92%	4.13%	14.68%	49.08%	31.19%	4.05	0.8406
By using ICT the travel agencies perform or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort. (Being efficient)	0%	5.05%	8.72%	37.16%	49.08%	4.30	0.8314
The ICT effect on Travel Agency outcome	**.76%**	**4.43%**	**15.90%**	**42.96%**	**35.93%**	**4.14**	**0.8437**
Where level of Agreements: 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree							

Source: Own survey, 2018

4.3. Correlation Analysis

Apart from the descriptive analysis the correlation analysis is used to see if there is any association between each variable. The analysis shows effective travel business had significant association with opportunity of ICT for travel agency and possible strategies to overcome the problem faced by ICT. Accordingly, effective travel agency business had significant ($r = 233$, $p = 0.001$) and positive association with opportunity of ICT for travel agency. The finding also shows that there is positive and significant ($r = 264$, $p = 0.000$) association between effective travel agency business and possible strategies. The analysis in the table below further indicates that opportunity of were positively and significantly (($r = .185$, $p < 0.007$) correlated with possible strategies of ICT.

Table 4.13 Correlation analysis between each variable

Correlations

		Effective	Opportunity	Challenge	Strategy
Effective	Pearson Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	218			
Opportunity	Pearson Correlation	.233**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001			
	N	217	217		
Challenge	Pearson Correlation	-.032	-.176**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.638	.009		
	N	217	216	217	
Strategy	Pearson Correlation	.264**	.185**	.326**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.007	.000	
	N	217	216	216	217

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.4. Regression Analysis

4.4.1. Preliminary Tests

A. Test of Multicollinearity

A VIF test was used to test the existence of multicollinearity problem. The results of the test indicates the highest VIF is 1.20 with $R^2 = 0.527$; which indicates the model performed with no major multicollinearity problem among the explanatory variables (table 4.14).

Table 4.14 Multicollinearity Test

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
Strategy	1.20	0.832869
Challenge	1.19	0.841378
Opportunity	1.10	0.907931
Mean VIF	1.16	

Source: Own survey, 2018

B. Test ofHetroscedasticity

One of the important assumptions of the classical linear regression model is that the variance of each disturbance term *ui,* conditional on the chosen values of the explanatory variables, is some constant number equal to $\sigma 2$ (Gujarati 2003). Although there are different ways and techniques to check the existences of hetroscedasticity, for the purpose of this research Breusch-Pagan test was used. The interpretation of Breusch-Pagan test is done using the p values, if the p value is less than 5% significant level it is the indication of hetroscedasticity problem; however if the p value is greater than 5% level of significance it implies there is no a problem of hetroscedasticity. Accordingly, as shown in the table below the results of the test shows that there is a problem hetroscedasticity since the p values is significant. Consequently, consequently, it has been employed weighted least squares to estimates the reasonably accurate test statistics.

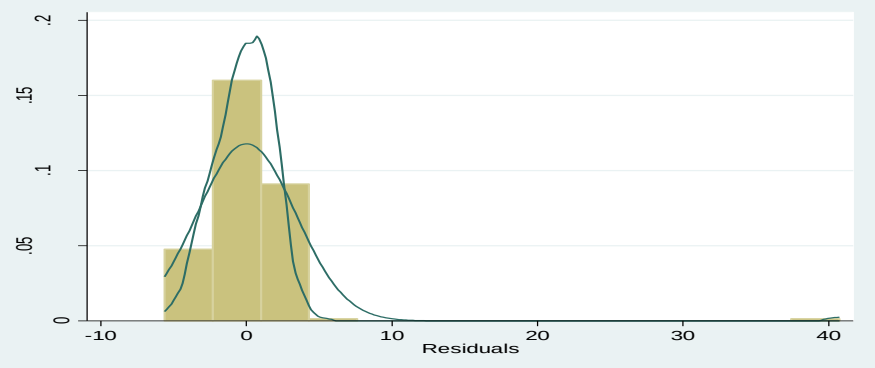
Table 4.15 Analysis of heteroskedasticity test

Breusch-Pagan / Cook-Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity
Ho: Constant variance
Variables: fitted values of effective
chi2(1) = 14.82
Prob> chi2 = 0.0001

.Source: Own survey, 2018

C. Test of Normality

In order to run ordinary least square method the error term or residuals must be normally distributed; therefore, in order to test the normality histogram map was used; and as shown in the graph below the residuals are normally distributed.



D. Autocorrelation Test

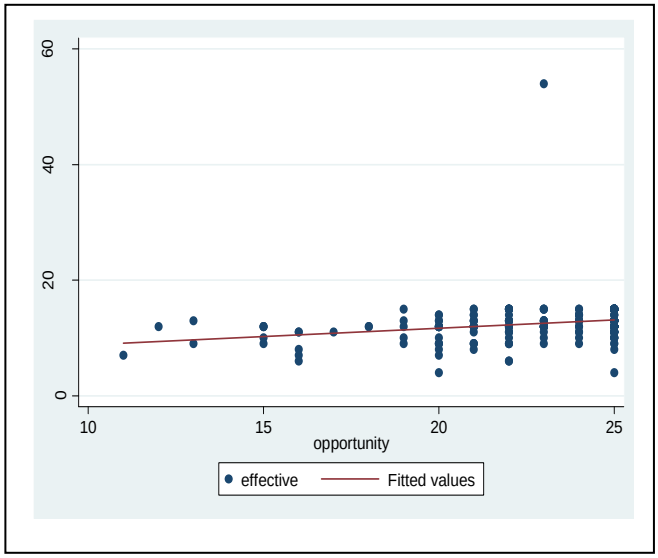
Although residuals are normally distributed, however there should not also be serial correlation between them. Breusch-Godfrey method is one of the means to test this problem, as shown below in the table the significant value is greater than 5%, therefore, this tells us if it is not significant it is the indication of no serial correlation between residuals.

Breusch-Godfrey LMtest for autocorrelation		
lags(p)	chi2 df	Prob> chi2
1	10.658 1	0.1100
H0: no serial correlation H1: serial correlation		

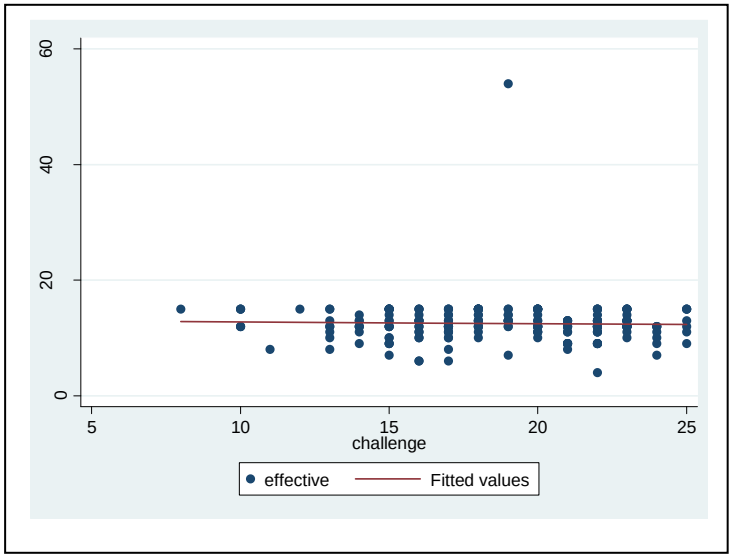
Source: Own survey, 2018

E. Linearity assumption

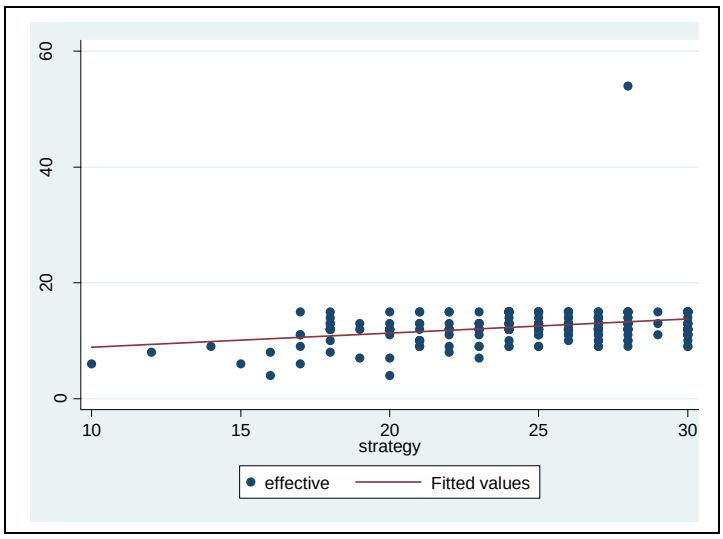
The assumption of linearity says the dependent and each independent variable should have a linear relationship. Therefore, scatter plot technique was employed to test the linearity assumption and as shown in the graph below the assumptions are fulfilled.



Effectiveness VS Opportunity



Effectiveness VS Challenge



Effectiveness VS Strategy

4.4.2. Results of OLS Estimation

As shown in the previous sub topic all of the assumption was fulfilled except Hetrosckedasticity, therefore in order to avoid the problem effectiveness of travel agency business was estimated using the weighted least squares method. As shown in the Model summary and ANOVA table below the coefficient of determination (R^2) for the model is 0.525 (F= 52.075, $p < 0.001$) showing that the model explained 52.075% of the variation in the level oftravel agency business effectiveness and the overall model is statistically significant.

The results of the econometric model estimation revealed that, opportunity of ICT for travel agency and possible strategies to overcome the problem faced by ICTwere found to contribute significantly and positively to effective travel agency business. In contrast, challenge of travel agency due to ICT evolution show negative and significant effective on travel agency business.

opportunity of ICT for travel agency had a positive and significant effect ($p<0.05$) on effective travel agency business, the positive coefficient of this variable suggested that, as the application of new or existing ICT technology by travel agencies increases the business effectiveness of the agencies also increases. The other perspective were the possible strategies to overcome the problem faced by ICT, this variable shows positive and significant ($p<0.05$) effect on effective travel agent business; findings shows that, the positive coefficients of this particular variable suggested that when the travel agencies increase the application of those and related strategies the probability of their success also increases. Unlike to the above variables, challenge of travel

agency due to ICT evolution had negative and significant effect on effective travel agent business; the negative coefficient of this variable indicated that the more the challenges the less will be the effectiveness of travel agent business.

According to Frias*et al.* (2008) the development of new ICT will lead to a greater efficiency and reorganization of both communication strategies and business of tour operators.). This is the way to improve efficiency and promote interoperability and personalization, accompanied by constant networking of travel agents. Efficient time management is indispensable for competitiveness of travel agencies, while the use of ICT in all business segments facilitates activities which are prerequisite to the coordination of tasks and agency functions, whereas it must be said that partial efficiency of particular function impacts the overall business performance (Mihajlović, 2012).Wahab, (2017) also argues that Information Technology or IT has played a critical role not just in the advancement of tourism, but it has helped in spreading the phenomenon of tourism to every part of the world and has made travel safer. Further, whenever employees had various IT company devices at their disposal it enables them perform their duties better and the more the application and use of IT the more is organizational performance(Alex, 2015).The empirical work shows that information systems are developed coherently with enterprise strategic imperatives. Moreover, research results provide evidence that such alignment positively affect the overall business performance.

Model Summary

Multiple R	.652
R Square	.525
Adjusted R Square	.417
Std. Error of the Estimate	.192
Log-likelihood Function Value	-485.474

Source: Own survey, 2018

From the model summary we can see R Square is 0.525 which shows the dependent variable explains the independent variable very well.

Anova

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	5.771	3	1.924	52.075	.000
Residual	7.794	211	.037		
Total	13.565	214			

Source: Own survey, 2018

From the Anova table we can see level of significance which is 0.000 which means it is significance.

Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	Std. Error		
(Constant)	.587	1.372			.428	.669
Opportunity	.253	.049	.283	.055	5.143	.000
Challenge	-.138	.044	-.173	.055	-3.147	.002
Strategy	.318	.035	.522	.057	9.164	.000

Source: Own survey, 2018

In the Coefficients table we can see the independent variables Opportunity, Challenge and Strategy are significant.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summary of Major Findings

This research was carried out in order to assess the effect of ICT on travel agent business using a cross-sectional data; in line with the research questions the following are the key findings of this research:

- The first findings of this study were related to the opportunities created by ICT. Accordingly, ICT created good opportunities for travel agencies in terms of generating additional income and improve service qualities. ICT creates a good opportunity for travel agencies and makes their business more reliable and fast; as a result of this the travel agencies could penetrate and enter to a new markets which helps them to recruit new customers and makes more profitable and generate higher incomes.
- The travel agent were mainly challenged by two things concerning ICT; the first challenge face the travel agents were low speed of internet accesses; the low speed of internet access create difficulty to serve a travelers request on time, the speed of the internet is very slow due to that the travel agent got difficulty to contact new and existing customers; the other perspective of challenge was the access of ICT make things simple, particularly, now a day's customers contact directly with airlines without needing the travel agents for their accommodation service and other related things and this creates a threat for travel agents.
- Travel agencies should do alternative and related business in order to stay in the market and to be more competent; Therefore, in order to bees more competent and successful travel agents should incorporate alternative solutions for their business simultaneously; they should have to allow clients the ability to book their trips without the constraints of office hours or worrying about their schedule, create a website and sell by their own website; furthermore, they should have to create person to person communication with travelers, in order to avoid losing of customers due to low internet access; further, travel agencies has to keep in touch with their clients using a variety of medium apart from the internet. In addition to these, travel agents should deliver another travel related service like tour package; rent a car and some others.

- Opportunity of ICT for travel agency had a positive and significant effect on effective travel agency business, as the application of new or existing ICT technology by travel agencies increases the business effectiveness of the agencies also increases. Possible strategies to overcome the problem faced by ICT had also positive and significant effect on effective travel agent business; findings show that, when the travel agencies increase the application alternative strategies the probability of their success also increases. Unlike to the above variables, challenge of travel agency due to ICT evolution had negative and significant effect on effective travel agent business; the more the challenges the less will be the effectiveness of travel agent business.

5.2. Conclusion

The tourism industry is widely acknowledged and accepted to be one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Thus, the sector cannot be excluded from the current upsurge in technology and its huge impacts. In line with this study analyzed the effect of ICT on travel agency business effectiveness using a cross-sectional data. Empirical research has shown that ICT has strong positive potential for the performance of firms. The analysis confirmed that the new and existing ICT interventions increase the success of those travel agency enterprises. The integration of personal approach with ICT is significant, with new technologies having complementary and not substitutive function. Benefits of new technologies enable development of travel agencies and make communication with customers and other entities easier, which is the foundation for building competitiveness. The study further revealed that the opportunity created by information communication technology increases the business effectiveness of travel agencies. However, the travel agencies are challenges by the current service of unstable internet connection and it creates difficulty to keep in touch with their clientele using a variety of medium like mobile devices and others.

5.3 Limitation of the study

The study is limited in terms of its respondents. The bias and hesitations of respondents affect the analysis of the survey in a significant manner and the research also limited to one city which is Addis Abeba.

5.4. Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study the researcher forwards the following recommendations:

- The findings of the study show that the implementation of ICT contributes much for the success of travel business agencies; therefore, for tourism businesses to increase their competitive position, the conclusion is drawn that they should incorporate ICT in their business practice so as to increase their performance and their effectiveness. As a result, tourism enterprises need to understand, incorporate and utilize ICT systems strategically in order to: serve their target markets; improve their efficiency; maximize their profitability; enhance their services; and maintain their long-term profitability.
- To overcome the challenge faced by private travel agent, the best solution is try to be advanced by Information Communication Technology (ICT) in terms of the use of communication between customers, travel agents and suppliers. Now tourism industry becoming more active online and on social networks. Most hotels and travel agents have their own active Website, Facebook and Twitter page and application which opening 24 hour and available every day of the year with up to date information. They use the website as a communication channel to interact with customer and to promote themselves and also build a good relationship with the public. Today ICT allows customer to check in online before a flight or booking tour program from their computer because of the options that provide by online travel agents and airlines.
- The country online payment system have to be promote and the government have to work on to make our bank payment card international and our country will equally computable to the tourism market like other country.
- By considering that the customers will fear of technology the travel agencies have to promote very well about the positive impact of Information Communication Technology.

REFERENCE

Aldebert, B., Dang, R. J., &Longhi, C. (2011). Innovation in the tourism Industry: The case of Tourism @ *Tourism management*, 32(5), 1204-1213.

Alex, K. (2015) *Impact Of Information Technology On Organizational Performance : Case Of Population Services Kenya*.

Amaro, S., & Duarte, P. (2013). Online travel purchasing: A literature review. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *30*(8), 755-785.

Anckar, B., & Walden, P. (2001).Self-booking of high-and low-complexity travel products: exploratory findings. *Information Technology & Tourism*, *4*(3-1), 151-165.

Ashari, H. A., Heidari, M., &Parvaresh, S. (2014).Improving SMTEs' business performance through strategic use of information communication technology: ICT and tourism challenges and opportunities. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*, *4*(3), 1-20.

Ayazlar, R. A. (2014). Dynamic packaging applications in travel agencies.*Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *131*, 326-331.

Bethapudi, A. (2013) 'THE ROLE OF ICT IN TOURISM', *Journal of Applied Economics and Business*, (4), pp. 67–79.

Bojnec, Š.,&Kribel, Z. (2004). Information and communication technology in tourism.

Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the Internet—The state of eTourism research. *Tourism management*, *29*(4), 609-623.

Buhalis, D. (2003). *eTourism: Information technology for strategic tourism management*. Pearson Education.

Dhaigude, A. S., Kapoor, R., &Ambekar, S. (2016). A conceptual model for adoption of information communication technology in the travel and tourism industry. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *41*(1), 49-59.

Frias, D. M., Rodriguez, M. A., Castaneda, J. A. (2008). Internet vs. travel agencies on pre-visit destination image formation: An information processing view, Tourism Management, Vol. 29. No.1, pp.163-179.

Hojeghan, S. B., &Esfangareh, A. N. (2011).Digital economy and tourism impacts, influences and challenges. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *19*, 308-316.

Inversini, A., &Masiero, L. (2014).Selling rooms online: the use of social media and online travel agents. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *26*(2), 272-292.

Januszewska, M., Jaremen, D., &Nawrocka, E. (2015).The effects of the use of ICT by tourism enterprises. *Scientific Journal of University of Szczecin" Service Management"*, *16*(2).

Kaewkitipong, L. (2010). Disintermediation in the tourism industry: Theory vs. practice. In *Sustainable e-business management* (pp. 160-171).Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.

Kamau, W. (2015). Travel agencies response to internet evolution in Nairobi country: An analysis of competitive strategies

Kayani, K (2014). Impact of ICT on Bricks & Mortar Agents and Changes in Supply Chain Positioning.

Lawton, L. J., & Weaver, D. B. (2009). Travel agency threats and opportunities: The perspective of successful owners. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, *10*(1), 68-92

Mihajlovic, I. (2012). The impact of information and communication technology (ICT) as a key factor of tourism development on the role of Croatian travel agencies.*International Journal of Business and Social Science, 3(24).*

Osborne, S., Nagendra, P., & Falcone, T. (2001). The changing nature of the travel agency industry: technological and agency theory issues. *Proceedings of the 2001 United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship*.

Rob Law , Rosanna Leung &DimitriosBuhalis (2009) Information Technology Applications In Hospitality And Tourism: A Review Of Publications From 2005 TO 2007 , Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 26:5-6, 599-623

Sandoval, E., & Olivares Urbina, M. Á. (2015). Technology and Business Performance: Travel Agency Case.

Sava, C., &Mateia, A. N. (2014). The Impact Of Information Technology On Travel Agents In Timişoara, Romania. *ImpaCt of Internet on BUSIneSSaCtIvItIeSInSerBIa and WorldWIde*, 23.

Shanker, D. (2008) 'ICT and Tourism : Challenges and Opportunities'.

Sharma, D. (2016). Enhancing customer experience using technological innovations: A study of the Indian hotel industry. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, *8*(4), 469-480.

Smith, E (2018). Technology Used in Hospitality & Tourism. *Small Business - Chron.com*, http://smallbusiness.chron.com/technology-used-hospitality-tourism-31033.html.

Stanley.C.(2013). Effect of Relationship marketing on Customer Satisfaction in the Airline Industry in Kenya.

Statista, (2018). https://www.statista.com/statistics/238852/online-travel-bookings-worldwide/

Tichaawa, T. M., Mhlanga, O. and Sicwebu, S. (2017) 'The Impact of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) on Tourism Businesses in East London , South Africa.

Wahab, I. (2017). Role of Information Technology in Tourism Industry: Impact and Growth. *An international Conference on Recent Trends in IT innovations: International Journal of Innovative Research in Computer and Communications Engineering*, 260-263

Wahab, I. N. (2017) 'Role of Information Technology in Tourism Industry : Impact and Growth', *International Journal of Innovative Research in Computer and Communication Engineering*, 5(2), pp. 260–263.

Werthner, H., & Klein, S. (1999). ICT and the changing landscape of global tourism distribution. *Electronic markets*, *9*(4), 256-262.

World press.(2018). Impact of Internet and ICT on travel agent in digital era.Retrieved from https://impactsofinternetandictontravelagentandtouristguideindigitalera.wordpress.com/about/.

Zeng, B. (2013). Social Media in Tourism. J Tourism Hospit 2:e125. doi: 10.4172/2167-0269.1000e125

APPENDIX

St. Mary's University

School of Graduate Studies

DEPARTEMENT OF GENERAL MBA

Questionnaire to be filled by respondents

Dear respondent,

This questionnaire is designed by a graduate student from St. Mary's University to conduct a study in partial fulfillment of a master`s degree program in General Management. As part of the requirement for the award of the degree, I am expected to undertake a research study The Effect of Information Communication Technology on Travel Agency Business, Current practice in Addis Abeba. Therefore, seeking your support to fill the questionnaires attached. This questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete. Kindly reply all the questions.

The outcome of this study will determine the opportunity that ICT offer for the travel industry for the city of Addis Abeba. After determine the opportunity examine the challenges and find out the possible strategies that ICT offer for the travel industry for the city of Addis Abeba. Participation in this study is voluntary, and all who participate will remain anonymous. Your name is not required. All information offered will be treated confidentially, and the results will be presented in such a way that no individuals may be recognized.

Thank you in advance for the available information you are sharing and the precious time you are going to spend for this purpose.

If you have any enquiry please don't hesitate to contact the researcher on:

Email- zequni@yahoo.com

Cell phone: +251 911 247901(YordanosBirru)

Travel Agency Questionnaires

Travel Agent Questionnaires

SECTION I: Travel Agent Personal Information.

Kindly fill out all the fields as this will help us to capture accurate data. Please tickyour selected fields.

1. Gender: a. □ Male b. □ Female

2. Please specify your age group:

a. □ 20 - 35 b. □ 36 - 50 c. □ 51 - 65 d. □ > 65

3. Please specify your highest travel and tourism related education/ training (please tick all relevant)

a. □ Certificate Program

b. □ Diploma

c. □ Advanced Diploma

d. □ IATA approved Diploma

e. □ Degree related to Tourism Industry

f. □ None

4. Current or most recent job status?

a. □ Executive

b. □ Non Executive

c. □ Owner

d. □ Employee

5. Please indicate the number of years that you have been working in the travel industry? (tick one)

a. □ Less than 1 year b. □ 1 – 3 years c. □ 4 – 6 years d. □ Above 7 years

6. Please indicate how long you have been working for the current travel agency?

a. □ Less than 1 year b. □ 1 – 3 years c. □ 4 – 6 year d. □ Above 7 years

SECTION II: Travel Agency and ICT usage related Questionnaire

7. In which sub city your travel agency located?

a) □ Boleb) □ AkakiKalitic) □ Guleled) □ Kirkos e) □ Yeka f) □ Ledeta g) □ Arada h) □ NefasselkLafto i) □ KolfeKeranio j) □ Addis Ketema

8. How many travel bookings does your travel agency make in a day? (Those which actually convert into a sale, please tick one).

a. □ 1 - 10 b. □ 11 - 20 c. □ 21 - 30

d. □ Above 30

9. What mode of communication is often used in everyday business in your firm?

a) □ Computers (email) b) □ Telephones c) □ Fax d) □ Print media e.g letters, posters, handouts e) □ Face to face

10) Type of ICTs adopted in your firm

a) □ Internet b) □ Mobile Phone c) □ Phones i.e land lines d) □ Fax machines e) □ Global Distribution System (GDS) f) Others (please specify) _____

SECTION III: Questionnaires regarding opportunity challenge and possible strategy Information and Communication Technology (ICT) offers for Travel Agency.

Please, indicate your level of agreement on the statements by ticking once as per the numbers in the column using the following rating scale.

Where level of Agreements: 1=StronglyDisagree 2=Disagree 3= Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

Ser. No	**Opportunity of ICT forTravel Agency**	**Level of Agreement**				
1	**Opportunity of ICT for Travel Agency**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1.1	The Travel Agency improves service quality by the introduction of ICT.					
1.2	ICT gives fast service for the travelers.					
1.3	ICT helps the Travel Agency to penetrate to the new market.					
1.4	Due to ICT the numbers of customers are increased comparing from the previous.					

1.5	The Travel agency generate higher income because of the ICT revolution					
2	**Challenge of Travel Agency due to ICT evolution**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2.1	The Travel agencies face a problem by customer's self-service booking with the independent of the agency.					
2.2	The downside of high speed internet connection make difficult to serve a travelers request on time.					
2.3	The travelers search online first, then come book with an agent; this create to challenge for the travel agency.					
2.4	The online discount given by the airlines and other travel booking website create downsize of the sales.					
2.5	The travel agencies have faced a problem on how to keep in touch with their clientele using a variety of medium like mobile devices and others.					
3	**Possible strategies to overcome the problem faced by ICT in Addis Ababa**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3.1	Delivery another travel related service like tour package, rent a car and some others.					
3.2	Allowing clients the ability to book their trips without the constraints of office hours or worrying about their schedule.					
3.3	Improved Internet connections and speeds.					
3.4	Travel Agency has to keep in touch with their clients using a variety of mediums.					
3.5	Create a website and sell by their own website					
3.6	The travel agencies have to create person to person communication with travelers. (i.e. the "human touch")					
4	**The ICT effect on Travel Agency outcome**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4.1	The travel agency is still in profitable venture even if there is online booking and discount offer by Airlines.					
4.2	Using ICT the travel agency produce the intended or expected result (Being effective)					
4.3	By using ICT the travel agency performs or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort. (Being efficient)					

If you have any other opinion, please, specify:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

You have completed the survey. Thank you for your valuable time and opinions.

Interviews for Travel Agents

Interviews

Travel Agents

1. Which age range do most of your customers fall into? For example mainly students or families of the retired?
2. Do you find your customers are Internet savvy or know-how?
3. Does your travel agency give online service? If not why?
4. Do you consider your travel agency to be 'customer centric' - offer alternative terms.
5. Can you enlarge on why ICT is so important to your business?
6. Schedule convenience - the ability to re-schedule a customer's journey at short notice - do you find that a valuable service?
7. How important is the web to your business and why?
8. Are there any additional services you think will help bring in the customers?

DECLARATION

I, the under signed, declare that this thesis is my original work, prepared under the guidance of WondimenehMamo(Assistant Professor). All sources of material used while working on this thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or in full to any other higher learning institution for the purpose of earning any type of degree.

_____

_____

Name **Signature and Date**

ENDORSEMENT

This thesis has been submitted to St. Mary's University College, School of Graduate Studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

_____

_____

Advisor Signature