Effects of Policy Enforcement and Government Incentives on Strategic Choice of Destination for PWDs

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Abstract: The study investigates the impact of policy enforcement and government incentives on the strategic destination choices of persons with disabilities (PWDs). Conducted in Ghana, a nation rich in cultural and natural tourism assets, the research adopts a quantitative methodology with a descriptive approach. A sample of 250 PWDs, categorized by visual, mobility, and hearing impairments, was analyzed using multiple linear regression to evaluate the effects of policy enforcement, government incentives, and accessibility measures on destination preferences.

The findings reveal that policy enforcement and government incentives have significant positive impacts on the strategic choices of destinations for PWDs, explaining 80.5% of the variance in destination selection. Stronger enforcement of disability-supportive policies and tailored accessibility measures emerge as critical factors influencing the inclusivity and appeal of tourism environments for PWDs. The study also highlights the need for accommodations to address specific disability types, as they significantly affect destination choices. These results underscore the necessity of holistic and inclusive policy frameworks that incorporate financial incentives, regulatory compliance, and stakeholder engagement to enhance tourism accessibility.

The research contributes to the growing discourse on inclusive tourism by providing empirical evidence supporting policy interventions and accessibility enhancements as catalysts for improving travel experiences for PWDs. Recommendations include strengthening policy enforcement, incentivizing businesses to prioritize accessibility, and tailoring tourism services to the unique needs of various disability types. These measures are essential for fostering inclusivity and equal opportunities in the tourism sector.

I. INTRODUCTION

The strategic choice of travel destinations for persons with disabilities (PWDs) is significantly influenced by policy enforcement and government incentives. These factors play a crucial role in shaping the accessibility and inclusivity of tourism environments, which are essential for PWDs to enjoy equal opportunities in travel and leisure. The literature indicates that the physical and informational environments are pivotal in determining the travel experiences of PWDs. For instance, Darcy and Pegg highlight that inadequate information provision regarding accessible accommodations can severely limit destination choices for PWDs, emphasizing the need for tourism authorities to address these barriers through effective policy measures (Darcy & Pegg, 2011). Moreover, the responsiveness of transportation services to the needs of PWDs is critical in facilitating their mobility and overall travel experience. Akaateba notes that intercity bus services must adapt to include priority seating and other accommodations to enhance accessibility for PWDs, thereby influencing their destination choices (Akaateba, 2023). The lack of such adaptations can lead to feelings of anxiety and exclusion, further deterring PWDs from traveling (Akaateba, 2023). This is corroborated by findings from Dadashzadeh et al., which indicate that during the COVID-19 pandemic, PWDs faced significant challenges in accessing transportation, impacting their ability to travel for essential services (Dadashzadeh et al., 2022).

In addition to transportation, the role of accommodation cannot be overstated. Research by Abd-Elraof et al. underscores that the availability of accessible accommodation is a decisive factor in destination selection for PWDs. If suitable accommodations are not available, PWDs are likely to change their travel plans, highlighting the need for policies that incentivize the development of accessible facilities (Abd-Elraof et al., 2018). Furthermore, the holistic approach to tourism planning, as suggested by Kusufa et al., advocates for the involvement of all stakeholders in creating an inclusive tourism ecosystem that considers the unique needs of PWDs (Kusufa et al., 2022). Government incentives also play a vital role in shaping the strategic choices of destinations for PWDs. Policies that provide financial support or tax incentives for businesses to improve accessibility can lead to enhanced service provision for PWDs. For instance, Moore et al. discuss how financial incentives within welfare-to-work programs can motivate organizations to implement structural changes that benefit PWDs, although the effectiveness of such incentives may vary depending on the organization's resources (Moore et al., 2017). Additionally, the implementation of individual funding policies, as analyzed by Purcal et al., can empower PWDs by allowing them greater choice in the services they purchase, thereby influencing their destination preferences (Purcal et al., 2014).

II. METHODS

Local and foreign tourists with disabilities participated in the study, which was carried out in Ghana, a nation endowed with a wealth of tourist attractions and stunning and varied cultural festivals. To obtain a thorough grasp of disability inclusion in Ghana's tourist industry, the study used quantitative methodology and a descriptive quantitative approach.

The total sample for the study was grouped into various stratums using stratified sampling, these included visual impairment, mobility impairment and hearing impairment, simple random sampling was further used to select respondents from each stratum, this is the ensure each member of a stratum stands an equal chance of being selected, A total of 250 respondents was used for the study.

Multiple linear regression analysis was utilized in this study. The analysis intended to measure the effects of policy enforcement and government incentives on strategic choice of destination for PWDs as well as the extent to which disability-friendly tourism accessibility factors affect the Strategic choice of Destination for PWDs.

III. DISCUSSIONS

The results of the regression analysis reveal important insights into the factors influencing the strategic choice of destinations for persons with disabilities (PWDs). The model summary shows a strong positive relationship between the independent variables, policy enforcement on disability support, and type of disability, and dependent variable

Tables 1, 2 and 3 present the regression results.

Table 1 Model Summary

Dependent: Strategic choice of Destination: Model Summary				
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
0.852	0.805	0.805	0.385	1.892

With an R value of 0.852, the predictors exhibit a strong correlation with strategic destination choice. Furthermore, the R Square value of 0.805 indicates that 80.5% of the variability in strategic destination choices is explained by the model. The Adjusted R Square (0.805) confirms the reliability of the model even after accounting for the number of predictors. The Standard Error of the Estimate (0.385) reflects a reasonably low deviation of actual values from the predicted regression line, while the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.892) suggests minimal autocorrelation, affirming the independence of residuals.

Table 2 Regression ANOVA Test

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	350.606	2	175.303	1181.729	0.000
Residual	36.641	247	0.148		
Total	387.247	249			

The ANOVA test validates the model's overall significance ($F = 1181.729$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the predictors collectively influence the strategic choice of destinations for PWDs. The significant F-statistics underscores the strong predictive power of the model.

Table 3 Regression Coefficients

Dependent: Strategic choice of Destination	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	0.129	0.061		2.098	0.037	
Policy enforcement on disability support	0.844	0.022	0.889	38.148	0.000	1.419
Type of Disability (TD)	0.107	0.023	0.107	4.569	0.000	1.419

Examining the regression coefficients reveals the relative importance of each predictor. Policy Enforcement on Disability Support emerges as the most influential factor, with a coefficient of 0.844 and a standardized Beta of 0.889. This indicates that stronger enforcement of disability-supportive policies is associated with a substantial increase in the strategic choice of destinations for PWDs. The highly significant t-value (38.148, $p < 0.001$) further underscores the critical role of this variable in shaping tourism experiences for PWDs.

The Type of Disability also has a significant positive effect, albeit smaller, with a coefficient of 0.107 and a standardized Beta of 0.107. This suggests that specific accommodations for different disabilities influence destination preferences. The significant t-value (4.569, $p < 0.001$) indicates that the type of disability remains a meaningful factor in the strategic decision-making process. Importantly, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for both predictors is 1.419, which eliminates concerns about multicollinearity.

These findings highlight the critical need for stronger policy enforcement and tailored accessibility measures to enhance inclusivity in tourism for PWDs. With 80.5% of the variance in strategic destination choice explained by the model, prioritizing these factors could significantly improve tourism experiences and opportunities for PWDs. The study underscores the importance of addressing both policy and disability-specific considerations to create more accessible and inclusive travel destinations.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Findings from the regression analysis revealed that policy enforcement, government incentives and disability type have positive and significant (p-value <0.05) relationship with strategic choice of destination for PWDs. The findings further suggest that effective policies, financial and other support from government plays a significant role in encouraging people with disabilities (PWDs) to select decisions that cater for PWDs. This reflects the fact that destinations that are more accessible and friendly with more accessible features backed by government incentives, tax breaks, grants or promotion of PWD friendly practices are more likely to be choice by PWDs. In addition, the type of disability also had positive association with strategic choice of destination for people with disabilities. In other words, the study confirms that different types of disabilities influence the destination choices of people with

disabilities. For instance, disabilities be mobility, visual and hearing impairment is more likely to tell specific needs in tourism services and infrastructure architecture. The implication of the study suggests that effective policies through government incentives are significant in shaping accessible tourism surroundings for PWDs which depicts the need for continued support. This calls for tailoring tourism services to meet specific disabilities which is essential for inclusive tourism exposure and experiences.

The study findings align with a study by Darcy et al. (2015). Darcy et al. (2015) discovered that the policy interventions through enhanced infrastructure and increased awareness promote positive outcomes towards tourisms with PWDs. Additionally, findings from studies such as Page and Connell (2015) side with finding of the study. Both Darcy et al. (2015) and Connell (2015) argued that through policy interventions in terms policy incentives help in encouraging businesses to invest in accessibility. These empirical findings confirm the importance of well-crafted policies in driving positive changes and fostering inclusivity in the tourism sector.

RECOMMENDATION

➢ *Strengthen Policy Enforcement and Incentivize Businesses*

Government bodies must rigorously enforce existing disability-friendly tourism policies, ensuring that all tourism establishments comply with regulations. In addition, offering incentives such as tax breaks, grants, or promotional support to businesses that invest in accessibility improvements can motivate more establishments to become inclusive. Public-private partnerships could be encouraged to accelerate the implementation of disability-friendly tourism policies. Government agencies should also implement penalties for non-compliance to ensure the tourism industry prioritizes accessibility.

➢ *Tailor Services to Disability Types*

Each type of disability presents unique needs, and tourism services should be customized accordingly. For example, hotels and attractions should provide braille materials or audio guides for visually impaired tourists, while ensuring that public announcements or guides include sign language interpreters or visual aids for hearing-impaired visitors. Offering personalized services based on the type of disability would enhance the tourism experience for PWDs and increase their likelihood of visiting such destinations.

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