



Central Ethiopia Leadership Academy

Potential of Tourism & Handicraft Industries for Job Creation Opportunities in Central Ethiopia Regional State (CERS): With Underlying Challenges & Prospects

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CSA.....	Central Statistical Agency
ETTC.....	Ethiopian Tourist Trading Enterprise
ILO.....	International Labor Organization
ITC.....	International Trade Center
MFI.....	Micro Finance Institution
MoCT.....	Ministry of Culture and tourism
MoFED.....	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MoTI.....	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MSME.....	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NGO.....	Non-Governmental Organization
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SSE	Small Scale Enterprises
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
UNWTO	United Nation World Tourism Organization
VCA	Value Chain Analysis
WTO	World Tourism Organization



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Abstract

This study focused on examining the potential of tourism and the handicraft industries in relation to create new job opportunities in the CERS with its underlying challenges. To this effect, the study used descriptive research design and mixed research approach. The target populations of the study were officers and employees who served in bureaus, departments and offices of the Cultural & Tourism and the Job Creation Opportunities & Enterprise sectors which were hierarchically organized at regional, zonal/ special woredas and woreda levels respectively. Likewise, community representatives, souvenir shop employees and travel agents were targeted to participate in the research. Accordingly, the research data were collected using questionnaire survey, key informant interview, focus group discussion (FGD), field observation and document review. In effect, 394 survey questionnaires were employed and 21 key informant interview and 40 FGDs were carried out for this research. Quantitative data was analyzed with the help of SPSS version 27 and qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis with identification of common themes. The findings of the research proved that the CERS has huge natural and cultural tourism resources which comprises around 50 natural forest sites, 29 cave and cliff sites, 22 high mountain sites, 7 lake sites, 10 hot and cold water spring sites, 35 water fall sites, 33 plant stone and cemetery sites, 41 religious sites and 28 intangible cultural sites of tourism resources. In spite of such abundant availability, the research findings reveal that the tourism sector was facing some constraining factors which have been responsible for its underdevelopment and the subsequent low contribution to create job opportunities. The challenges of the tourism sector comprise of poor accommodation service, shortage of communication infrastructure, poor supply of power infrastructure, shortage of tourist information centers and poor sanitation. On the other hand, the study found out about 100 handicraft production items in the region. Accordingly, the CERS has tremendous potential of ethnographic handicraft objects which would generate profitable employment opportunities. However, due to the various challenges, the employment opportunities created in the handicraft sector is far below its potentials. These challenges comprise of poor funding, poor technological applications, poor marketing strategies, lack of collaboration and synergy between the handicraft and tourism sector for mutual benefits. Overall the research recommended an urgent need to establish an Integrated Museum Center which helps to promote tourism & serve as a catalyzer of future employment creation tool. Likewise, each city center should have an Integrated Handicraft Hubs which helps to facilitate Handicraft Tourism. Furthermore, in order to attract a number of foreign tourists into the region, government agencies should start launching domestic tourism development with the best marketing strategy.

Key words: Handicraft, Job opportunities, Marketing, Potential, Strategies, Tourism



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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Tourism is regarded as a complex trade covering all movements of people outside their own communities for all purposes except migration or regular daily work. To this effect, the world tourism organization (WTO) defined tourists "...as the set of activities of a person traveling to a place outside his or her usual environment for at least one night, but less than a year..." In fact, tourism comprised of a wide range of industries, aims to serve and support domestic, international, and business and leisure visitors. Thus, tourism industries range from accommodation and transportation to food and beverage, retail, culture, sports and recreation that bring people together (WTTC, 2019).

Tourism makes a tremendous contribution serving as a source of foreign exchange, promoting micro and small-scale enterprises, creating employment opportunities, and ensuring sustainable development (MoCT, 2009). Kim and Littrell (2001) argued that handicraft purchase is major component of travel activity. In other words, collection of handicraft and mementos is a popular activity for most visitors to a destination. These handicrafts then serve as tourism marketing tools by telling a story of the destination and adding to the travel experience. Thus, one of the economic benefits of tourism market is to flourish the handicrafts market of the tourist destination areas.

Essentially, every territory has certain tourism potential. This is to mean that different territories have different potential for different types of tourism. However, it is important to stress the fact that not all areas can develop economically vital tourism. Accordingly, scholars argued that the tourist attractiveness of an area is determined by different factors. According to Cheng-Fee, Hsun-Inn and Huery-Ren (2010), performance of tourism is dependent upon the quality of services provided as well as the socioeconomic and socio-cultural background of the tourists. In general, Lee, Olasehinde-Williams and Akadiri (2021) argued that the attractiveness of the geographical environment play a special role than any other determinant factors.



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- I. Physical aspects include geographic terrain, regional connectivity and vehicular accessibility, versatility in accommodation system, guide and tourist information factors, local souvenirs, telecommunication systems, availability of quality and special foods, parking and other recreational facilities.
- II. Social factors include existing tourist influx, intensity of fairs and festivals, timing to visit a spot, duration of stay, compatibility of the spot with surrounding land use, safety and security for the visitors, probability of social crimes, behavioral aspects of the operators or service providers etc.
- III. Environmental aspects are probability of natural calamity during a specific time window, natural and anthropogenic threat, hazardous land-use, quality of air and water, and pollution etc.

The existence of tourism resources and tourism sites is perceived as one of the most important indicators for evaluating the primary tourism potential based on both the natural and the manmade recreational tourism resources. Existence of water basins and streams on the territory characterizes the existence of water resources as one of the main factors of tourist attraction. Due to the importance of sea recreation, the seaside zones are always included in the areas with a considerable primary tourism potential. Existence of forest areas is also included in the tourism resources. The forest vegetation with its healing and prophylactic role is considered to be as areas with a considerable primary tourism potential.

In the case of Ethiopia, the cultural wealth and natural resources constitute valuable resources. Ethiopia registered 18 heritage sites (13 tangible and 5 intangible) at UNESCO's World Heritage Sites. These include: the Rock Hewn Churches of Labella, the Simien Mountains National Park, the Fasil Castle, the Obelisks of Axum, the Megaliths of Tiya, the Lower Valley of Omo, the Lower Valley of Awash, the Walled City of Harar, the Konso Cultural Landscape, the Paleontological site of Hadar, the Bale Mountain National Park, the Melka Kunture & Balchit, the Gedeo Cultural Landscape, the Ethiopian Epiphany/ Meskel, the Gada System of the Oromo, the Fiche Chambalala of the Sidama, the Xeer Ciis of the Somali-Isa, the Shuwalid Festival of the Harari and the Gifata of Wolayta.



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On the other hand, handicraft industries can be defined as products which are produced either by hand or with the help of tools (Swanson and Horridge, 2004). According to Gordon (1986), handicrafts are traditionally made by the ethnic population using local raw materials such as silk, stone, cloth and paper. Thus local communities sell handicraft products that are tangible representations of their culture and serve as source income beside to satisfying the tourist want for memory (Chang, Wall, & Hung, 2012). Rogerson and Sithole (2001) characterize handicraft production as a labor-intensive industry that can support a number of part-time and fulltime employees. Gordon (1986) categorizes handicraft products into five groups:

- I. The first group includes pictorial images like postcards, which helps tourist to remember situations in static form.
- II. The second group includes pieces of rock souvenir such as shell found from natural environment.
- III. The third group comprises symbolic shorthand souvenir such as model of pyramid of Egypt.
- IV. The fourth category includes markers as souvenir, which are objects printed with specific word and sign of a destination.
- V. The fifth group contains local products which are only available in local destinations such as jewelry, cloth, and utensils.

Essentially, the craft industry has substantial contribution for economic development of the poor people. Based on traditional skills and with low investment requirements, handicraft production is one of the few possibilities which poor people have to help them increase their income. In countries, like Ethiopia, the tourism sector offers many opportunities for poor people to sell handicrafts, as tourists spend significant amounts of money on souvenirs and other craft products. In general, Ardahaey (2011) argued that tourism is an integral part of tourist experience. In other words, tourism and handicraft industries are mutually interdependent. Thus, tourism is not possible without handicraft and the handicraft cannot thrive without tourism. On the whole, a country can attract tourists toward its culture by developing a strong market of handicrafts.



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1.2. Statement of the Problem

It is widely acknowledged that Ethiopia possesses remarkable tourism potential in its unique and largely unexplored natural resources. Those resources are the basis for building a strong tourism industry. As a result, it appeals to domestic and international tourists and needs to be commercialized and changed into a special tourism product (Robinson & Jonker, 2014).

The Central Ethiopia Region also owned many cultures, languages, and prehistoric, historical, and natural resources. Thus, the CERS is rich in natural and cultural tourism resources with a great diversity of attractions. In effect, the region is endowed with unique and largely unexplored natural resources as well as pleasant climate and friendly people. In addition to this, the region has an advantage of geographic proximity to the political center of the country, Addis Ababa. Overall, the CERS is rich in natural and cultural tourism resources and it has comparative advantages for tourism development. Despite its rich endowments of natural and cultural tourist attraction potentials, the region was generating job opportunities from the tourism sector at a level far below its potential in the CERS.

On the other hand, the social and cultural diversity of the region can multiply particular forms of cultural attractions and different items of artifacts. In the whole, the availability of rich natural resources and the presence of diversified cultural resources and the comparative advantages of the regional state appeal to domestic and international tourists and needs to be commercialized. Essentially, a variety of handicraft products are being produced in the region.

However, due to significant changes happened by the Industrial Revolution since the 17th and 18th centuries, there was a decline of handicraft production throughout the world. Subsequently, the utility of indigenous craft items are being replaced by ceramics, plastic or metallic products with the large scale inflow of machine-made products. As a result, several numbers of local artisans hardly make enough income from the business. Moreover, most of the artisans abandon the handicraft business in search of better paying jobs. Furthermore, the handicraft sector has got inadequate attention and the progress of indigenous technology has been adversely affected. Despite the fact that there was a considerable potential of craft industry that can be maximized,



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the traditional handcraft industry in the CERS has failed to create vast employment opportunities.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

This study was carried out based on the following main and specific objectives.

1.4. Main Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to explore the available potential of tourism and the handcraft industry to generate job opportunities in the CERS together with its underlying challenges.

1.5. Specific Objectives of the Study

The study had the following specific objectives:

1. To explore the available tourism resources in the CERS,
2. To explore the most frequent handcraft items being produced in the CERS,
3. To investigate the potential of tourism to create new job opportunities in the CERS,
4. To investigate the potential of handicrafts to create new job opportunities in the CERS,
5. To investigate the bottlenecks of tourism and handcraft industries to create employment opportunities in the CERS.

1.6. Research Questions

This study was conducted to generate research data that answered the following research questions:

1. What were the available tourism resources in the CERS?
2. What was the most frequent handcraft items being produced in the CERS?
3. What was the potential of tourism to create new job opportunities in the CERS?
4. What was the potential of handicrafts to create new job opportunities in the CERS?
5. What were the bottlenecks of tourism and handcraft industries to create new job opportunities in the CERS?



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1.7. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study were supposed to provide crucial inputs for policymakers, the private business entrepreneurs, investors, academicians and the local communities.

- For policymakers: the study was supposed to be essential because it confirmed that tourism and handicraft have huge potential to accelerate job creation opportunities.
- For private business entrepreneurs and investors: it might provide valuable insights for who would take part in the tourism and handicraft sector in the CERS.
- For local community: the development of tourism and handicraft industries in the CERS might enable the local communities to benefit from the better employment opportunities.
- For academicians: it might serve as literature for future researchers who would be interested in this area of study.

1.8. Scope of the Research

The scope of the study was delimited in terms of conceptual frame, geographical area, unit of analysis and the methodology applied. Conceptually, this study was delimited to assess the potentials of tourism and handicraft to create new job opportunities with its underlined challenges and prospects. Geographically, this study was delimited to seven zones and three special woredas of the CERS. In terms of unit of analysis, the aggregate responses of the research data were used to draw conclusions about different situations in the regional state under study. Methodologically, this study applied a quantitative and qualitative research approach and descriptive research design. To this effect, pertinent data were gathered using interviews, FGD, field observation and document analysis.

1.9. Organization of the Study

This research document was organized into five chapters. The first chapter contained an introduction part consisting of the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, specific objective, research questions, significance of the study and scope. Under chapter two, a review of related literature which comprises theoretical and conceptual frameworks. In the third chapter, the methodology of the study which includes descriptions of the study area, sample and sampling technique, data sources, data collection technique and



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ethical considerations were described. In the fourth chapter, presentation, analysis and interpretation of the research data was carried out. Finally, the fifth chapter comprises key findings, conclusion and recommendations on the bases of the research objectives.



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CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviewed the existing literatures related with cultural brokerage theory and conceptual frameworks of the study.

2.1. Cultural Brokerage Theory

Smith (2001) defines the term cultural broker as “the intermediates between demand and the supply sides of tourism”. This definition defines Cultural broker roughly as the intermediates between tourism supplier and guests in tourism settings (Jennings & Weiler, 2006). Handicrafts are central to the tourism experience. It can also help in promoting tourism destination and experiences to potential visitors, which is an effective means of developing the tourism industry (Olalere, 2020). Therefore, handicrafts are considered as one of the most significant materials, and tangible markers and mementos of travelling experiences and memories, that play a significant role in intermediating cultural interaction between tourists and host people (Kong & Chang, 2016).

Handicrafts are very important in the promotion of tourism they are produced to depict various themes in the culture, and other unique resources that have something to do with the country. Handicrafts build a positive image of the country to attract more potential tourists (Owusu, 2013). Handicrafts seem to be a vital promotional tool for tourism in any country. Hence, handicrafts could be used as links between tourists and destinations. Handicrafts play a form of cultural sharing through the souvenir product in tourism (Jahan & Fariha, 2021). Handicrafts work as an additional attraction for any tourism market. Countries with diversified cultures have several opportunities to explain their characters, pride and rituals as representations of intangible values and beliefs in the form of souvenirs (Swanson and Horridge, 2004). Therefore, by developing a strong market of handicrafts, a country can attract tourists toward its culture.

Cultural brokerage theory focuses on the role of intermediaries in facilitating cultural exchange and communication between different groups (Lingo and O'Mahony 2010). This theory could be relevant to this study because souvenirs may serve as intermediaries that promote understanding and cultural exchange between tourist and locals in CERS.



2.2. A Conceptual Framework of the Study

Handicraft products as a cultural broker act as a bridge between a destination with different cultural background and foreign tourist. Since souvenirs are a mediator and symbols of one's own culture, and link between the tourist and the souvenir supplier, the souvenir should be a symbolic that promotes the culture. Based on the revised paradigm of culture broker souvenirs have three main characteristics in term of cultural context: representing, responding, and intermediating, which are important attributes acting as culture broker (Yang, Ryan & Lingyun, 2014). Therefore, this conceptual framework depicts souvenirs as cultural broker between tourist and tourism suppliers in promoting tourism destination.

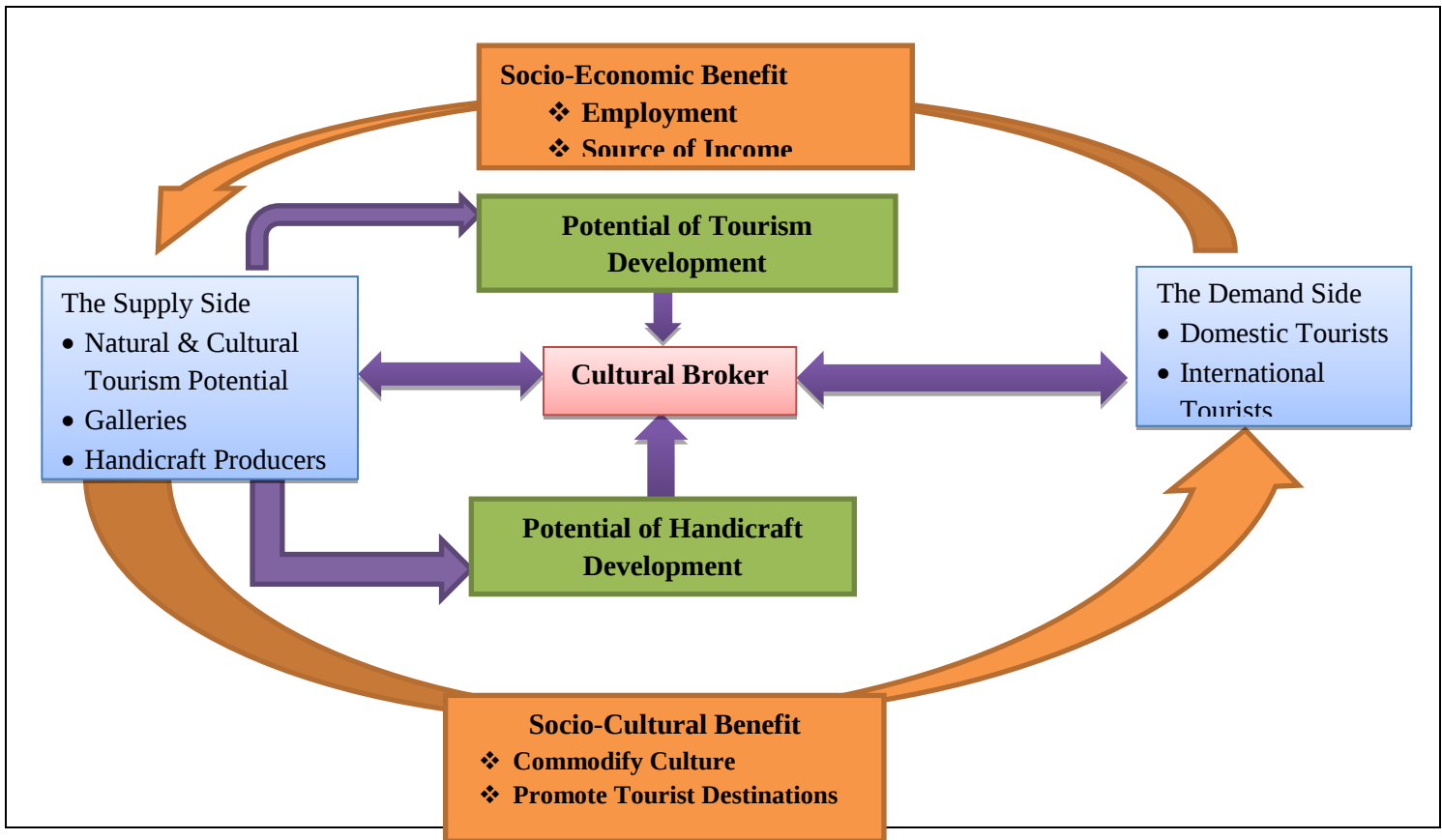


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of handicraft as Cultural Broker in Promoting Tourism Destinations



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CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter covered description of the study area, research design, research method, source of data, data collection instruments, sampling and sampling method to include target population, sampling techniques, sample size, data collection procedure, method of data analysis as well as validity and reliability of the research data.

3.1. Description of the Study Area

Central Ethiopia Regional State was one of twelve regional states and two city administrations that collectively form the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The CER was geographically located in the central part of Ethiopia between 7° 04' and 8° 03' latitude and 37° 20' and 38° 60' longitude. The regional state shared a regional border in the northern, western, and eastern directions with the Oromiya regional state; in the southern direction with the Southern Ethiopia Region; and in the southwestern direction with the Southwestern Ethiopia Peoples Regional State. The regional administration covered a total area of 1,515,600 hectares, which accounts for 1.38% of the country's total area coverage (Plan Bureau; 2023).

The regional administration comprised 7 zones, 3 special woredas, 50 woredas, twenty-nine town administrations, and 1310 town and rural kebeles (Ibid). The total estimated population number inhabiting the region is 7,039,772, which was projected from the 2007 population and housing census (CSA, 2007). The estimated regional population number covers 6.47% of the total population of the country. Among the total population of the region, about 80.7% were living in rural areas, while 19.3% are urban dwellers. The settlement pattern of the region was 464 persons per square kilometer. According to the data obtained from the Plan and Development Bureau, the annual development rate of the regional population is estimated to be 2.9%. Comparing the urban-rural population rate of the region, the acquired data indicates that the urban population rate is 4.8%, but the rural population rate is 2.8% (Plan Bureau; 2023).

The Central Ethiopia Regional State can be categorized into three climatic zones which locally termed as Dega, Woyina Dega and Qola. The presence of climatic zones between two extreme positions resulted in diversified ecology in the region, which made the region a home of diverse



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natural resources, agricultural systems, ways of life and cultural diversity. Moreover, the region owns standing stones and cemeteries which manifest the cultural values of various nations and nationalities in the region. In the whole, the region has become a home of diversified physical tourist attraction sites and an interaction place of multicultural groups of different ethnic and religious identities who developed common values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

3.2. Research Design

This study aimed at exploring the potential of tourism & traditional handicraft industries for new job creation opportunities with underlying challenges. Therefore, an explanatory sequential mixed research design was found to be appropriate to describe the attractiveness of selected places and to figure out the existing hindering factors and to identify the potential contribution of selected sights for new job creation opportunities in the region.

3.3. Research Method

The method chosen for this study was a mixed approach which employed both quantitative and qualitative information for the analysis. The quantitative method was used to handle the situation objectively and to test what was happening by taking representative sampling from the population under investigation. On the other hand, the qualitative research method of enquiry was primarily selected as the principal method for the study because it enables the researchers to critically evaluate the existing challenges of tourism and handicraft industries under study.

3.4. Source of Data

The research data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected through questionnaires, personal field observations and interviews. The research also consulted secondary data, both published and unpublished, to validate the findings of primary data.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

Survey questionnaire, focus group discussion, key informants interview and non-participant observation were used to generate relevant data for this study. Moreover, document review



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through review of journals, official government recodes/ reports, publications, unpublished sources and internet search were also employed.

3.6. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

3.6.1. Target population

The target population of the study were stakeholders of the Regional Bureaus of Culture and Tourism and the Job Creation & Enterprises. Accordingly, the first group stakeholders refer to the governmental offices which comprise leadership and experts who were serving at lower government structures (Zones/Special Woredas, Woredas and City Administration Offices). The second group of stakeholders refers to businessmen and the third group of stakeholders refers to the local community which include high school teachers who were in charge of coordinating the *Hagerin Iwok* Clubs (ሀገረን እውቅ) as well as community leader and local craftsmen.

3.6.2. Sampling Technique

The sampling techniques used for this research were both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Moreover, purposive sampling technique from the non-probability sampling technique was used in order to select sample areas. Accordingly, from each zones of the CERS, two sample woredas were selected based upon the higher possession of tourism resources. Moreover, purposive sampling was used to get research respondents who can contribute rich and reliable data for the research.



3.6.3. Sample Size

Table 3.1 : Participants of the KII and FGD to investigate the Potential of Tourism

Government Structure	Participants of Key Informant Interview	Participants of Focus Group Discussion	Total
Universities & Regional Bureau	- Head of the Regional Culture and Tourism Bureau (1 KII) - Vice Head of the Regional Culture and Tourism Bureau (1KII) - Academicians of Universities (2 KII)	Experts of the Culture and Tourism Bureau (1 FGD)	3KII & 1FGD
Zonal/ Special Woreda Offices	Head of each Zones'/ S.Woredas' Culture and Tourism offices (10 KII)	Experts of each Zones/ S.Woreda Culture and Tourism offices (10 FGD)	10 KII & 10 FGD
Sample Woreda Offices	Head of the Sample Woreda Culture and Tourism Office (7 KII)		7 KII & 10 FGD
Municipal Offices	Head of the Zonal/ S.Woreda City Administration of the Culture and Tourism Offices (10 KII)		10 KII
Tourist Destination Areas		Community Leaders (10 FGD)	10 FGD
Total	30 KII	21 FGD	30 KII & 31 FGD

In the table 3.1. above, the sample sizes of participants of the KII and FGD to investigate the potential of the tourism sector has been elucidated. Accordingly, 30 KII and 21 FGDs were carried out at different governmental structures.

Table 3.0.2: Participants of KII and FGD to investigate the Potential of Handicraft Industry

Government Structure	Participants of Key Informant Interview	Participants of Focus Group Discussion	Total
Regional Bureau & TVTE	- Head/ Vice Head of the Regional Job Creation & Enterprise Bureau (1 KII) - Academicians of TVTE (2 KII)	Experts of the Regional Job Creation & Enterprise Bureau (1 FGD)	3 KII & 1 FGD
Zonal/ Special Woreda Offices	- Head of each Zones'/ S.Woredas' Job Creation & Enterprise offices (10 KII) - Owners of souvenir shops (10 KII)	Experts of each Zones/ S.Woreda Job Creation & Enterprise offices (10 FGD)	10 KII & 10 FGD
Woreda offices	Head of the Sample Woreda Job Creation & Enterprise Offices (7 KII)		7 KII
Municipal Offices	Head of the Zonal/ S.Woreda City Administration of the Job Creation & Enterprise Offices (10 KII)	Community Leaders (10 FGD)	10 KII & 10 FGD
Total	40 KII	21 FGD	30 KII & 31 FGD



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In the table 2. above, the sample sizes of participants of the KII and FGD to investigate the potential of the handicraft industry has been elucidated. Accordingly, 40 KII and 21 FGDs were carried out at different governmental structures. In general, participants of this study were recruited from a broad range of institutions within the wider tourism and handicraft value chain in the study areas. By engaging a diverse range of actors, this study brings light and strives to develop a holistic understanding of factors that hinder the successful development of tourism and the handicraft industries and recommended possible intervention.

For the tourism survey questionnaire, the number of sampled respondents was determined based upon the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table of sample size determination. According to such sample size determination, a sample size of 384 can be representative for a population of 100,000. Therefore, the sample size (394) which is used for the tourism survey questionnaire can be considered to be representative. Using simple random sampling method, the number of questionnaire distributed and returned back is depicted following table: in the

3.7. Data Gathering Procedures

In order to collect the primary data for the research, data collectors travelled to the research sites where the target groups were found. To this effect, special care was taken in order to facilitate the data collection process. Brief explanations about how to respond to the questionnaire were given to respondents to avoid any inconvenience. The primary data of the research was collected simultaneously so that FGD participants and survey respondents were given two hours' time to carry out the discussion and to complete the questionnaire.

3.9. Method of Data Analysis

The study was systematically verified, described, analyzed and interpreted using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Quantitative data obtained using the questionnaires were analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics techniques. To this effect, SPSS software version 26 was employed. Qualitative data were first tabulated and categorized thematically and ultimately written up into narratives. Qualitative data were then integrated with quantitative data based on explanatory sequential mixed approach to triangulate the reliability of research data.



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3.10. Validity and Reliability of Data

Before the analysis of data, it is a must to measure the validity and reliability of the qualitative data. Reliability refers to the research trustworthiness repeatability, consistency, stability & reproducibility of findings. The overall reliability of every question item was tested by using Cronbach's alpha: Validity measures research's accuracy and depiction of phenomena, while reliability ensures consistency, stability and reproducibility of findings (Creswell, J.W., 2012). Accordingly, the overall reliability on every question item was tested by using Cronbach's alpha as follows:

Table 3.3: Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the research items

Items of Survey Questionnaire	Cronbach's Alpha value	No of items	Degree of Reliability
Potential of handicrafts	0.802	16	Reliable
Potential of tourism	0.889	32	Reliable
Challenges of tourism	0.774	10	Reliable
Challenges of handicraft	0.844	2	Reliable



CHAPTER FOUR:

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected by using Survey Questionnaire, Key Informant Interviews (KII), Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Field Observation and Document Analysis to address the basic research objectives. The first part of the chapter is dedicated to the data presentation, analyses and interpretation of tourism questionnaire and the second part of the chapter is dedicated to the data presentation, analyses and interpretation of the handicraft questionnaire.

4.1. The Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 4.1: *Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

Demographic Variables		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	302	76.6%
	Female	92	23.4%
Age of Respondents	20-30	170	43.1%
	31-40	159	40.4%
	41-50	45	11.4%
	Above 51	20	5.1%
Educational Background	Diploma	49	12.5%
	First Degree	252	64%
	Second Degree	93	23.7%
Marital Status	Single	106	26.9%
	Married	285	72.3%
	Widowed	0	0%
	Divorced	3	0.8%

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025

The tables 4.1 above reveals that out of the total 394 participants, the majority (76.6%) of them were male and some (23.4%) of them were female. This indicates a higher proportion of male respondents than female. Moreover, in the table 4.1 above, the age of participants was divided into four age groups: those between the ages of 20 and 30, those between the ages of 31 and 40, those between the ages of 41 and 50 and finally those above the ages of 51. Regarding the respondent's age, 43.1% of the respondents were in the age category between 20-30; and 40.4 %



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were in age group 31-40, while 11.4 % were 41-50 years aged and 5.1 % were in age group above 51 years. This finding indicates that the majority of respondents were youngsters and adults in the age between 20-40 years of age who can understand the concept of tourism and its potential to create new job opportunities.

Regarding the respondent's educational background, the data in the table 4.1 above indicated that more than half of the total participants (64%) were first degree holders; whereas, some (23.7%) of them were second degree holders and few (12.5%) were diploma holders. Likewise, as depicted in the table 4.2 above, the majority (72.3%) of participants were married whereas some (26.9%) of the respondents were single and few (0.8%) of them were divorced. This finding indicates that the majority of respondents were educated adults who can understand the concept of tourism and its potential to create new job opportunities.

4.2. Potential of Tourism Resources in the CERS

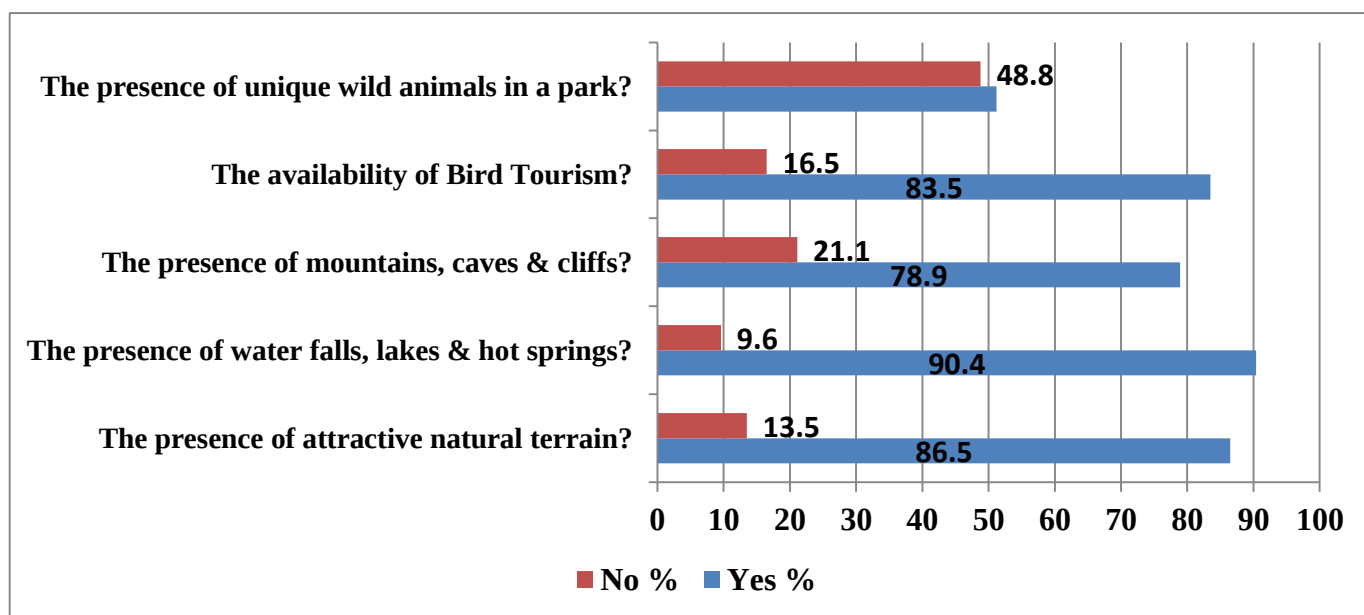


Figure 2. *The potential of natural tourism in the study area*

On the bases of the data illustrated in the Fig. 2 above, one can safely order the potential development of natural resources to attract tourists. Accordingly, the first position (90.4%) goes to the water falls, lakes & hot springs which are available in the CERS. Likewise, the second position (86.5%) goes to attractive natural terrains and the third position (83.6%) goes to bird



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tourism. On the other hand, one can safely order the three least natural resources that have a potential of tourist attraction. Accordingly, while the first least position (51.2%) goes to the unique wild animals, the second least position (78.9%) goes to high mountains, caves & cliffs. Therefore, it can be effective to facilitate new job creation opportunities based upon such potential development orders to attract tourists in the region.

The other aspect worth analyzing is exploring the potential development of historical and cultural tourism resources in the CERS. The data illustrated in the figure below indicated the potential of historical and cultural tourism resources in the regional state.

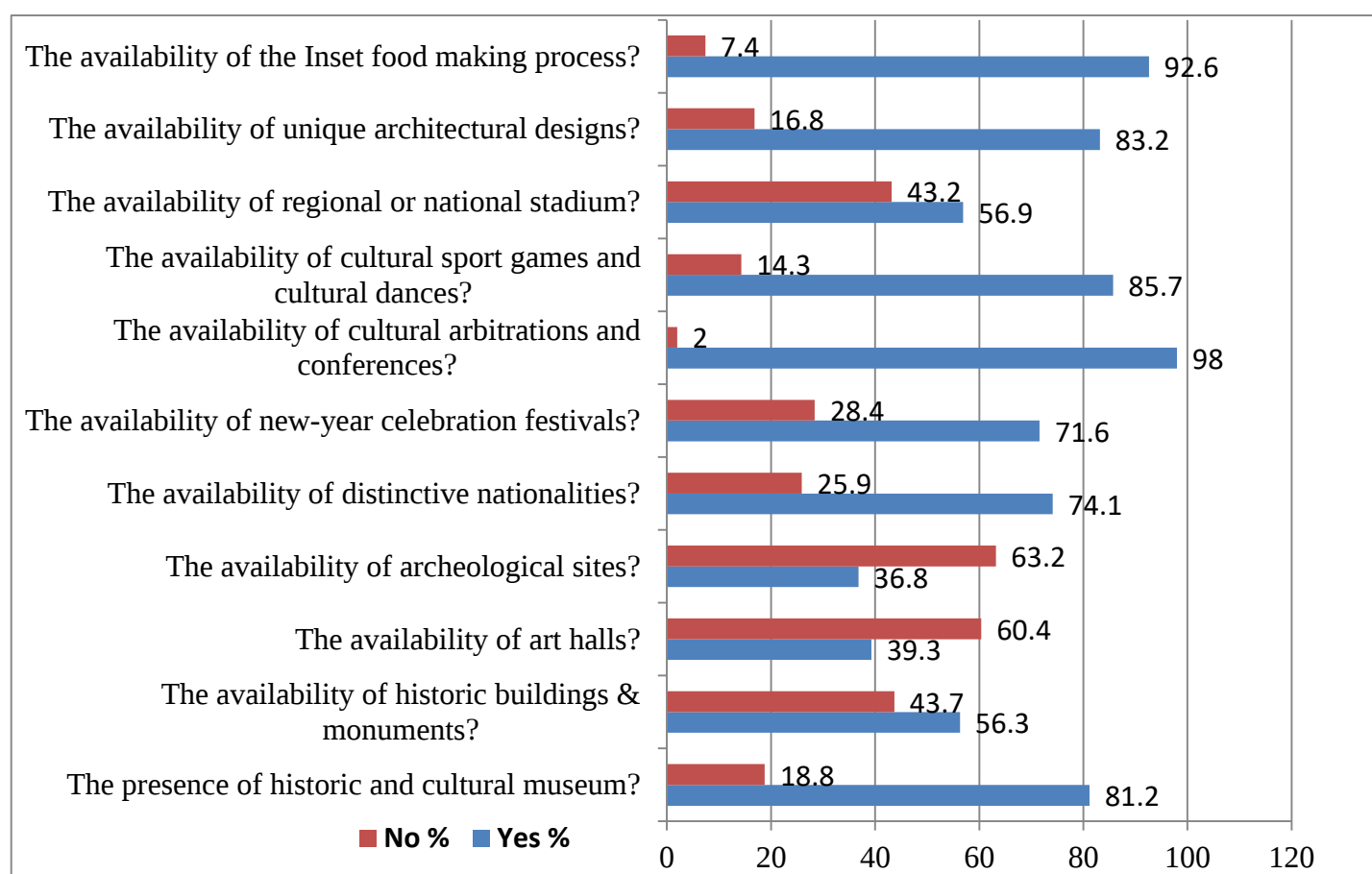


Figure 3. *The Potential of Historical and Cultural Tourism in the CERS*

On the bases of the data illustrated in the Fig. 3 above, one can safely order the eight top historical and cultural tourism potentials in the study area. Accordingly, the first position (98%) goes to the cultural arbitrations and conferences which exist abundantly in the CERS. The



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second position (92.6%) goes to the Inset plantation, harvesting and food making process; the third position (85.7%) goes to cultural dances and sport games; the fourth position (83.2%) goes to unique architectural designs; the fifth position (81.2%) goes to historic and cultural museums; the sixth position (74.1%) goes to distinctive nationalities; the eighth position (71.6%) goes to new-year celebration festivals.

On the bases of the data illustrated in the Fig. 3 above, one can also safely order the three least historical and cultural tourism potentials in the study area. Accordingly, the first least position (36.8%) goes to the archeological sites, the second least position (39.3%) goes to art halls and the third least position (56.3%) goes to historic buildings & immovable monuments. Therefore, it can be effective to facilitate new job creation opportunities based upon such potential development order of historic and cultural resources to attract foreign tourists in the region. In general, there are several historical and cultural tourism resources that can potentially attract tourists into the regional state. Practically speaking, both primary and secondary data sources of the research indicate that the study area is gifted with enormous historical and cultural tourism resources, which is a great opportunity for developing the regional tourism industry and the creation of new job opportunities. In effect, cultural resources have a large share in the tourism industry and serve as a potential for new job creation opportunities.

In order to explore the potential development of religious tourism resources in the CERS, respondents were asked whether their local areas have been endowed with religious tourism resources in their respective areas. To this effect, the data illustrated in the Figure 4 below shows the availability of different religious resources in the study area.



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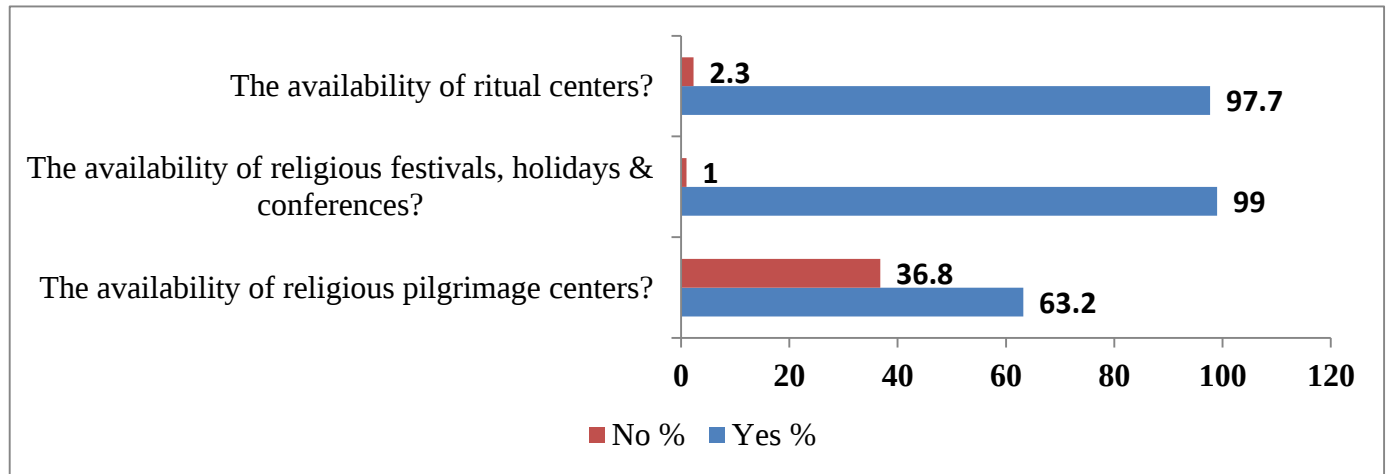


Figure 4. *The potential of religious tourism resources in the study area*

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025

On the bases of the data illustrated in the Fig. 4 above, one can safely order the potential development of the religious tourism resource in the CERS. Accordingly, the first position (99%) goes to religious festivals, holidays & conferences in the CERS. Likewise, the second position (97.7%) goes to the religious ritual centers and the third position (63.2%) goes to religious pilgrimage centers. In general, there are several religious tourism resources that can potentially attract foreign tourists into the regional state. In effect, religious tourism resources have a large share in the tourism industry and serve as a potential for new job creation opportunities.

4.3. Potential of Tourism and Its Employment Opportunities in the CERS

In this part, the potential of tourism for job creation opportunities in the CERS was explored. On the bases of data obtained from FGD, KII, Field Observation and Secondary Sources, the potential of natural and cultural tourism resources and their employment opportunities in the Central Ethiopia Regional state were presented here under.



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Table 4.2: Potential of Natural Tourism Resources and their Job Creation Opportunities

Types of Natural Resources	Available Natural Resources	Types of Jobs to be Created in Line-up
Forest Sites	50 Natural Forest sites were identified in the region	Conservation officer, lodge manager, wild life monitor, guide tour operators, photographer, videographer, website managers etc.,
Caves & Cliff Sites	29 Cave and Cliff sites were identified in the region	Technical cave guides, adventure tour coordinators, safety officers, speleologist, paleontologist, adventure tourism photographer/ videographer etc.,
High Mountain Sites	22 High Mountain sites were identified in the region	Trekking guide & expedition experts, mountain rescue specialists, athletic coaches & altitude training consultants, mountain lodges and catering managers etc.,
Lake Sites	7 Lake sites were identified	Lakeside resort/hotel/lodge staff, boutique accommodation owners, catering & event staff, boat operations, sunset cruises etc.,
Hot & Cold Water Spring Sites	10 Hot & Cold water spring sites were identified	Specialists in therapeutic bathing, geology & ecology interpretive guide, health-focused food & beverage vendors, transport service operators etc.,
Water Fall Sites	35 water fall sites were identified	Water fall site managers, water fall guide, lifeguard or swift water rescue technician, souvenir & retail shop staff, café & restaurant owners, hydrologist etc.,

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025.

As it has been indicated in the table 4.2 above, 50 forest sites, 29 cave & cliff sites, 22 high mountains, 7 lake sites, 10 hot & cold water spring sites and altogether 153 natural resources were identified in the CERS. Moreover, the data obtained from KII, FGD and field observation confirmed that most of the natural forest sites in the CERS have extraordinary topographic features and a wide variety of plant and animal species and have great aesthetic value. Hence, these natural forests can contribute for tourism development and employment opportunities because of their importance for photography, nature touring, wildlife viewing, forest exploration education and other nature-associated activities. Thus, the development of forest sites in the region can create new job opportunities for conservation officer, lodge managers, wild life monitors, guide tour operators, photographers, videographers and website managers etc.,



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Likewise, the data obtained from KII, FGD and field observation asserted that cave & cliff sites in the region have great aesthetic value to develop speleo tourism. Thus, the development of cave & cliff sites in the region can create new job opportunities for technical cave guides, adventure tour coordinators, safety officers, speleologist, paleontologist and adventure tourism photographer/ videographer etc.,

Moreover, the data obtained from KII, FGD and field observation affirmed that High Mountain sites in the region have astonishing natural places for tourists as they have high potential for ecotourism. In other words, the presence of high mountain sites can be considered to be a great opportunity to develop viewpoints at the mountains; for bird/animal watching; for mountain lodges and other kinds of shelters and catering capacities. Thus, the development of High Mountain sites in the region can create new job opportunities for mountain lodges and catering managers, trekking guide & expedition experts, mountain rescue specialists and athletic coaches & altitude training consultants etc.,

In addition to these, the data obtained from KII, FGD and field observation asserted that Lake Site areas in the region can be considered as a great potential to develop ecotourism as it can be used for swimming, for sunbathing or for observing the scenic beauty of both sunrise and sunset. Likewise, hot and cold spring water sites in the study area can be considered to be a great opportunity for domestic tourists because they are daily visited by hundreds of domestic tourists for therapeutic (healing) purposes. Thus, the development of Lake Site areas in the region can create new job opportunities for lakeside resort/hotel/lodge staff, boutique accommodation owners, catering & event staff, boat operations and sunset cruises etc.,

Furthermore, the data obtained from KII, FGD and field observation affirmed that Hot & Cold Spring Water Sites in the region can be considered to be a great opportunity to develop the tourism industry and to create employment opportunities for the local communities. Thus, the development of Hot & Cold Spring Water Site areas in the region can create new job opportunities for specialists in therapeutic bathing, geology & ecology interpretive guides, health-focused food & beverage vendors and transport service operators etc.,



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Finally, the data obtained from KII, FGD and field observation affirmed that Water Fall Sites in the region can be considered to be a great opportunity to develop the tourism industry and to create employment opportunities for the local communities. Thus, the development of Water Fall Site areas in the region can create new job opportunities for Water fall site managers, water fall guide, lifeguard or swift water rescue technician, souvenir & retail shop staff, café & restaurant owners, hydrologist etc.,

Table 4.3: Potential of Cultural Tourism Resources & their Employment Opportunities

Types of Cultural Resources	Available Cultural Resources	Types of Jobs to be Created in Line-up
Plant Stone and Cemetery Sites	33 Plant stone and cemetery sites were identified in the region	Historical Researchers, death heritage interpreters, monument conservators, visitor service coordinators, café or tearoom managers etc.
Religious Heritage Sites	41 religious sites were identified in the region	Site custodians, ritual facilitators, hospitality & pilgrim service providers, security & safety personnel, food & beverage venders, retail & souvenir shop owners, transport service providers, translators, religious art & craftsmanship, photographers & videographers etc.,
Intangible Tourism Resource Sites	28 Intangible cultural sites were identified in the region	Intangible heritage curators, oral historians, cultural narrators, resident experts, artisan retail & story sellers, cultural performers & ritual coordinators, festival directors & event managers, transport service providers etc.,

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025.

As it has been indicated in the table 4.3 above, around 33 plant stone and cemetery sites, 41 religious heritage sites, 28 intangible tourism resource sites and altogether 102 cultural heritage sites were identified in the CERS. In effect, each zones and special woredas in the region has the potential of cultural tourism resources in their jurisdictions. This implies that cultural tourism resources can be evenly developed across each administrative structures in the region. On the other hand, the data obtained from KII, FGD and field observations confirmed that most of the Plant Stone and Cemetery sites in the study area were considered to be a great opportunity to develop the tourism industry in the region. Hence, Plant Stone and Cemetery sites were considered to be crucial for film industry and for historical, anthropological and archeological



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research activities. Thus, the development of Plant Stone and Cemetery areas in the region have potential to create several types of new job opportunities for historical researchers, death heritage interpreters, monument conservators, visitor service coordinators, café or tearoom managers etc.,.

Likewise, the existences of religious sites of tourism resource in the study area are considered to be a great opportunity to attract tourists and to create vast job opportunities. In effect, religious sites in the CERS have great astatic and spiritual value that can attract both domestic and foreign tourists. Hence, these religious sites are crucial for cultural and historic tourism because of the annual ceremonies which are colorfully celebrated in the presence of large group of people who would come from different part of the country. Accordingly, the development of Religious Sites in the region have potential to create several types of new job opportunities for site custodians, ritual facilitators, hospitality & pilgrim service providers, security & safety personnel, food & beverage venders, retail & souvenir shoppers, transport service providers, translators, religious art & craftsmanship as well as photographers & videographers etc.,

Finally, the existence of intangible cultural resources in the study area were considered to be a great opportunity to develop tourism industry and to create seasonal job opportunities for the local community. Accordingly, the development of religious sites in the region have potential to create several types of job opportunities for intangible heritage curators, oral historians, cultural narrators, resident experts, artisan retailers & story sellers, cultural performers & ritual coordinators, festival directors & event managers, transport service providers etc.,

4.4. The Efforts of Stakeholders to Improve the Practice of Tourism

The other aspect worth analyzing is the effort of stakeholders to improve the practice of tourism in the CERS. To this effect, respondents were asked about the role of stakeholders for the development of Tourism in their locality. Accordingly, the data illustrated in the Figure 5 below shows the role of various stakeholders to improve the practice of tourism in the CERS.

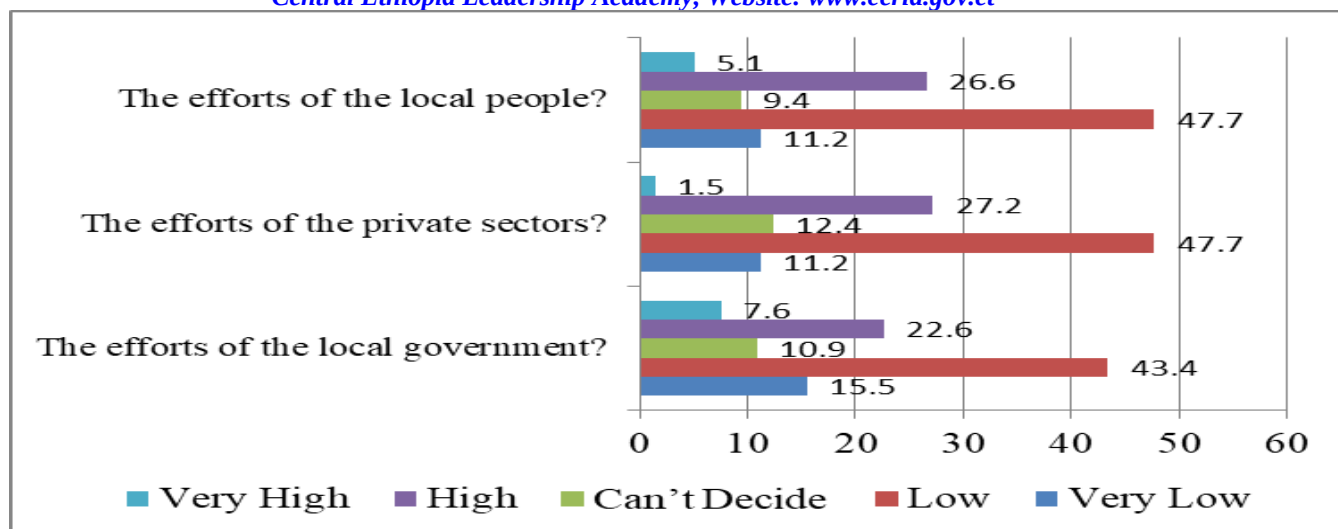


Figure 5. *The efforts of stakeholders to improve the practice of tourism in the CERS*

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025

As it has been depicted in Fig. 4 above, the majority of the respondents (58.9%) confirmed that the efforts made by the local governments has been low and very low, some respondents (30.2%) agreed the efforts of the local government has been high and very high and the remaining few respondents (10.9%) could not decide. Regarding the role of the private sector, the majority of respondents (58.9%) confirmed that the efforts of the private sector has been low and very low, whereas some respondents (28.7%) agreed that the efforts of the private sector has been high and very high; but the remaining respondents (12.4%) could not state their decision. Regarding the efforts made by the local people, the majority of the respondents (58.9%) confirmed that the efforts of the local people has been low and very low; whereas, some of them (31.7%) agreed that the role of the local people has been high and very high but the remaining few (9.4%) of respondents could not state their decision. In general, the data illustrated in the figure 5 above implies that the role of various stakeholders to improve the practice of tourism in the CERS was low and very low.

On the other hand, the information obtained from KII and FGDs asserted that local governments have some contributions for the development of tourism in their respective jurisdiction. To start with, the regional government usually allocate capital budget for the construction and development of tourist infrastructures. Moreover, the efforts of the local government focused on



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creating implementation plans, developing strategies for the growth of tourism, mapping and making inventory of local tourist destinations, evaluating service-providing standards and organizing awareness creating trainings on how to provide high-quality services. In effect, the regional state government tried all its best to assure a relatively peaceful and hospitable environment for the tourists. Furthermore, the major regional state media outlets carry out advertisement work to inspire domestic and foreign tourists to visit the tourist sites of the regional state. Finally, the Cultural and Tourism Bureau of the CERS provide some awareness-raising training on hospitality management for its staff members, hotel managers and the local tour operators.

Nevertheless, neither the local governments nor the community has paid off attention for the betterment of tourism practice in their respective jurisdictions. According to the information obtained from KII and FGD discussants, the development of tourism in the region has been severely hampered by shortage of funding and inadequate government attention to the tourism industry. In general, the tourism potential of the regional state was not deeply investigated and local governments did not draw sufficient attention to the diverse tourist resources.

4.5. The Potential of Handicraft Industry in the CERS

The other aspect worth analyzing is exploring the potential development of handicraft industry in the CERS. To this effect, participants of this research were asked to list out the most frequent craft products locally produced in their respective areas. The answer of respondents was organized in the table below:



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Table 4.4: Handicraft items which are produced in the study area

Product category	The Most Frequent Handicraft Items being Produced in the Region:
Sanging Products (Alalaa sifet)	1. Mesob, Agelgil, Lemat, Sefed, Quna, Kobo 2. Ye gedegeda get, Muday, Weskembay 3. yemekina Webber lay Ye miqemet Sefed
Adornment Products	1. Handmade Beaded Necklaces, Beaded Bracelets, Earing adornment, 2. Hand and neck adornments made from animal skin materials
Textile Products	1. T-shirts, Women's Dress, Coat, Traditional Huts, Skirts and Neck Scarves with local ethnic patterns 2. Gabi, Netela, Buluko, 3. Stylish Head Wears, Hand Bags 4. Home Decors (cushion covers, table covers, pillow covers).
Decorative Needlework products	1. Dentelles (Decorative Cover for Thumb/ Mesob, Decorative Cover for the Robb/ Rekebot, Decorative Sofa-cloth, Decorative Walls) 2. T-shirts, Neck Scarves, Hats 3. Hand Bags 4. Embroidery (Decorative Cover for a Bed/ Bedspread, Decorative Curtains, Decorative Pillow Covers)
Metallic Products	1. Cultural knives, axes and sickles, spears, swords 2. Incense holders, plates, bud vases
Wood Products	1. Gems & Figurine Equipment of birds, animals, and other small items 2. Candle holders, Mirror Cases, 3. Various milking vessels, 4. Pyrography, Combs, 5. Christian statues/sculptures, 6. Wooden Islamic statues/sculptures
Bamboo-made Products	1. Fencing, Place Mats, Small Chicken House, 2. Small Bench, Table and Chairs, Armchairs, and shelves, 3. Basket, Bags, Hats
Pottery Products	1. Water pots, Powder Storage and Vases, 2. Coffee pots, Cooking pots, Boiling butter, Butter Storage, 3. Eating chopped meat pan, Eating roasted meet pan, Baking pan, 4. Incense Burners, Lamps and Charcoal Stoves
Hide & Leather Products	1. Sitting and sleeping sheet, Bed and chair covers, Saddles, Robes, Packs of grind powders or honey, 2. Local flat shoes, Fans/Bufs, Cultural belts, Bags and wallets, 3. Decorating interior walls and roofs, Ornamented whips, A travel lunch picnic, 4. Musical instruments like drum making
Horn Handicrafts	1. Traditional Spoon, Traditional Cups, Wine-drinking Jars 2. Cigarette Case, Table Lamps, Pepper & Salt Sets 3. Pen Stands, Ornaments

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025



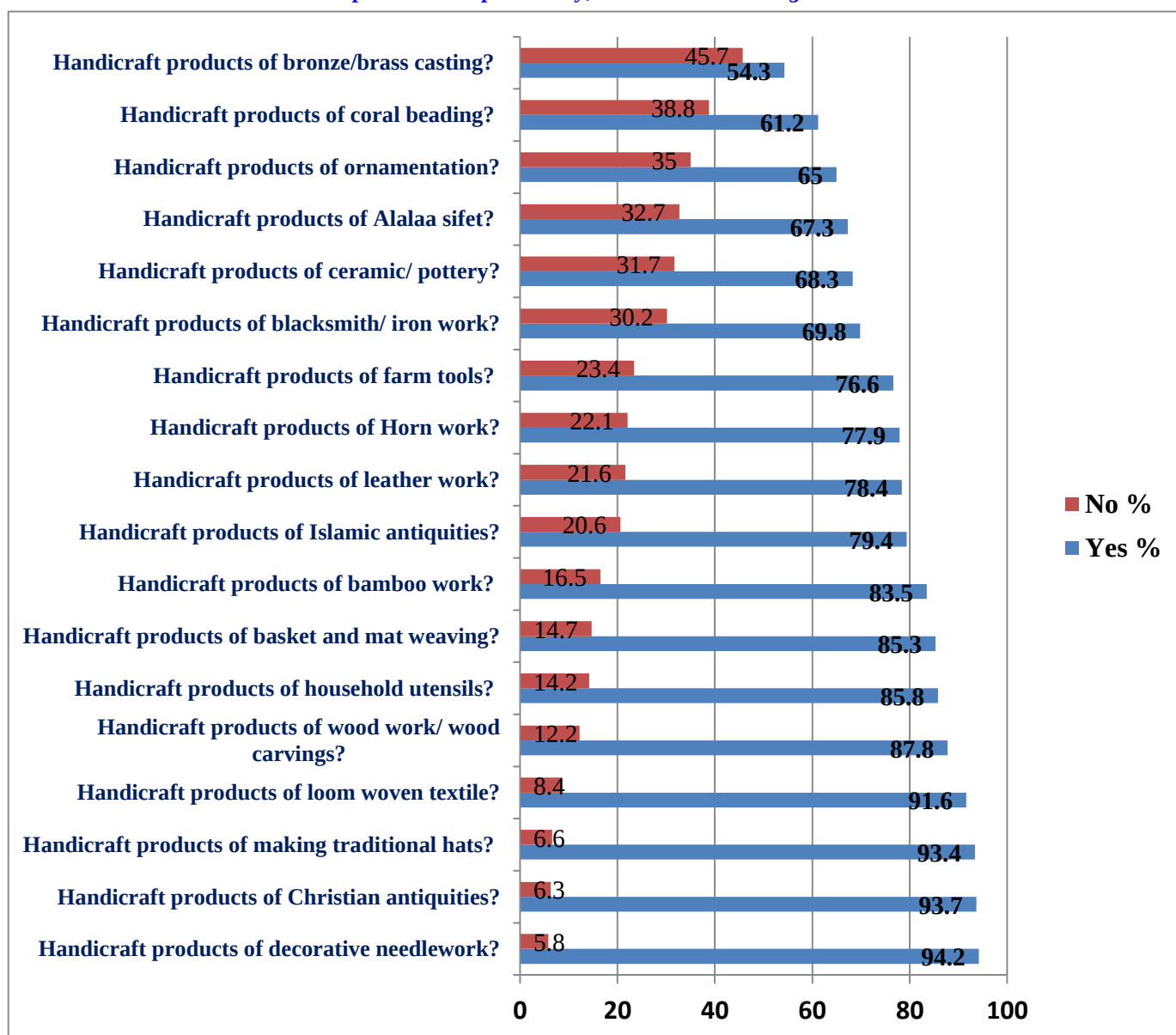
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As it has been indicated in the Table 4.11 above, the handicraft items which are produced in the study area were classified into ten various categories and about 100 different items of handicraft products were being produced in the CERS. Practically speaking, every ethnic group in the regional state has its own indigenous handicraft products as it was the essential part of their cultural heritage. These traditional handicraft products can be made up of cotton, leather, cattle horns, beads, clay soil, grass, wood, metal, and bamboo as well as palm trees. These locally produced handicraft items are being produced by adding some modern values and creativity without losing their original traditional content. In general, the research data illustrated in the table 4.4. above asserted that the study area was endowed with enormous handicraft products which can serve as a potential for new job creation opportunities.

Essentially, the data obtained from KIIs, FGD discussant and field observation assured that the market demand for the handicraft products was increasing over the past few years. In effect, the interest of tourists towards traditional handicraft products, particularly the interest towards traditional ethnic clothes would increase dramatically during special occasions, like wedding, birthday ceremonies, and public holidays and during special governmental meetings. During such occasions, people usually dressed up suit and tie of the traditional ethnic cloths.

4.5. The Potential of Handicraft Products to Attract Tourists

The other aspect worth analyzing is the potential of handicraft products to attract domestic tourists in the CERS. To this effect, respondents were asked whether handicraft products have a potential of attracting tourists in their respective areas. To this effect, the data illustrated in Figure 6 below asserted that the potential of handicraft products to create new job opportunities is very high.



Source: Field Survey, January, 2025

Figure 6. The potential of handicraft products to create new job opportunities in the study area

On the bases of the data illustrated in the Fig. 6 above, one can safely order the ten top handicraft products which have the potential to attract tourists. Accordingly, the first position (94.2%) goes to the handicraft products of decorative needlework; the second position (93.7%) goes to handicraft products of Christian antiquities; the third position (93.4%) goes to handicraft products of making traditional hats; the fourth position (91.6%) goes to handicraft products of loom woven textile; the fifth position (87.8%) goes to handicraft products of wood work; the



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sixth position (85.8%) goes to handicraft products of household utensils; the seventh position (85.3%) goes to handicraft products of basket and mat weaving; the eighth position (83.5%) goes to handicraft products of bamboo work; the ninth position (79.4%) goes to Islamic antiquities and the tenth position (78.4%) goes to handicraft products of leather work.

However, on the bases of the data illustrated in the Fig. 6 above, one can also safely order the five least types of handicraft products which have the potential to attract tourists in the study area. Accordingly, the first least position (54.3%) goes to the handicraft products bronze/ brass casting, the second least position (61.2%) goes to handicraft products of coral beads; the third least position (65%) goes to handicraft products of ornamentation; the fourth least position (67.3%) goes to handicraft products of alela sifet and the fifth least position (68.3%) goes to handicraft products of ceramic/ pottery products. Therefore, the regional state is supposed to facilitate new job creation opportunities in line with such handicraft potential development orders to make the craftsmen more effective in business.

The other aspect that needs worth analyzing was the contribution of handicrafts to promote tourism in the CERS. To this effect, respondents were asked to rate the role of handicraft products to attract tourists in their respective areas. Accordingly, the data illustrated in Figure 7 below asserted that the handicraft industry could not contribute its maximum potential to promote tourism.

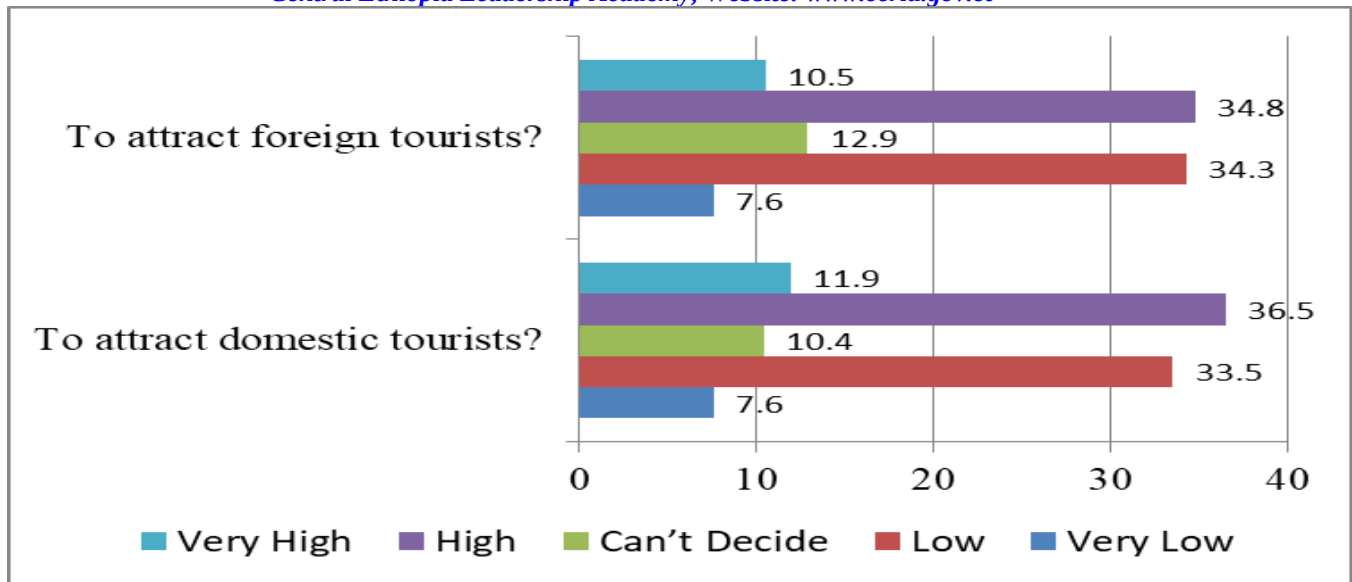


Figure 7. *The role of handicraft to promote tourism*

Source: *Field Survey, January, 2025*

As it has been revealed in Fig. 7 above, respondents were asked about the contribution of handicrafts to promote foreign and domestic tourism in their locality. To this effect, a number of respondents (42.2%) confirmed that the contribution of handicrafts to attract domestic tourists has been low and very low. In contrast, almost half (48.4%) of the respondents agreed that the contribution of handicrafts to attract domestic tourists has been high and very high but the remaining 10.4% of respondents cannot decide. In general, the data illustrated in the figure 7 above implies that the contribution of handicrafts to attract domestic tourists in the CERS has been (48.4%) high and very high.

Likewise, a number (42.4%) of respondents confirmed that the contribution of handicrafts to attract foreign tourists has been low and very low. However, almost half (47.9%) of the respondents agreed that the contribution of handicrafts to attract foreign tourists is high and very high but the remaining 12.9% of respondents cannot decide. This result implies that although the contribution of handicrafts to attract domestic and foreign tourists is high and very high. In general, the data illustrated in the figure 7 above implies that the contribution of handicrafts to attract foreign tourists in the CERS has been (47.9%) high and very high. According to the data



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obtained from KII and FGD; however, the handicraft industry in the CERS hardly contribute its maximum effort to promote tourism.

4.6. Challenges of Tourism and Handicraft Industries in the CERS

The other aspect that demanded worth analyzing is the challenges of tourism and handicraft industries to promote job creation opportunities in the CERS. To this effect, respondents were asked to rate the challenges of tourism to create new job opportunities in their respective areas. Accordingly, the data illustrated in the Figure 8 below asserted that the tourism industry could not contribute its maximum potential to promote tourism because of several hindering factors.

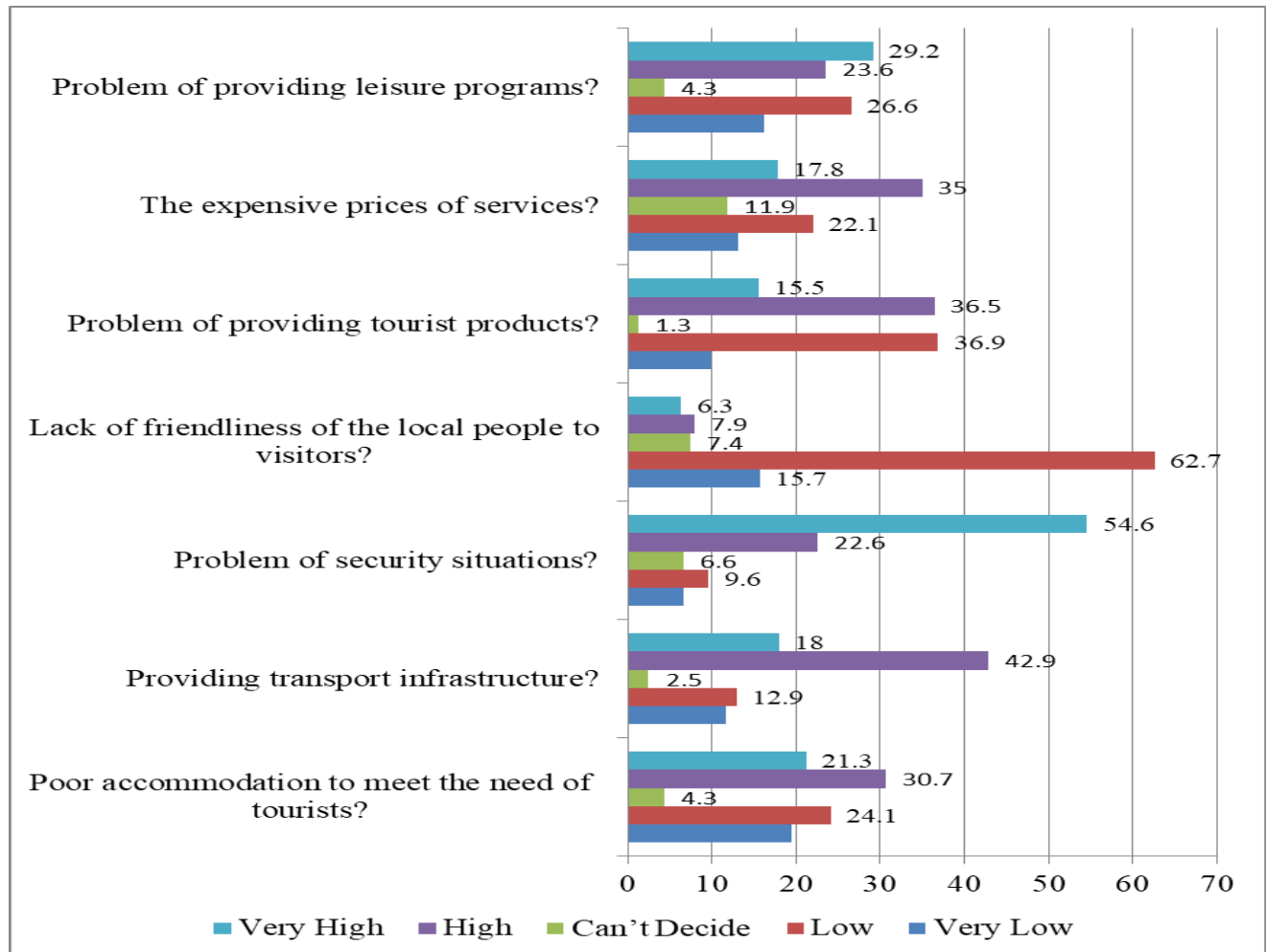


Figure 8. Challenges of tourism development in the study area

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025



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On the bases of the data illustrated in the Fig. 8 above, one can safely order the five top challenges of tourism industry to create new job opportunities in the study area. Accordingly, the first challenge (77.2%) goes to the problem of security situations; the second challenge (60.9%) goes to the inadequate transport infrastructure; the third challenge (52.8%) goes to the problem of providing leisure programs; the fourth challenge (52.8%) goes to the expensive prices of services; the fifth challenge (52%) goes to the problem of providing tourist products and the sixth challenge (52%) goes to the poor accommodation to meet the need of tourists. However, the least challenges of the tourism sector to create new job opportunities in the study area goes to lack of friendliness of the local people to visitors.

In addition to such quantitative results, the data obtained from KII and FGD discussant argued that lack of necessary infrastructure, poor accommodation service, shortage of pure water supply and sewage and poor sanitation, lack of road access, shortage of power infrastructure (electric power) and shortage of communication infrastructure and shortage of tourist information centers were preventing tourism resources from being fully utilized.

On the other hand, the data illustrated in the Figure 9 below depicted the challenges of the handicraft industry to contribute its maximum potential to promote new job creation opportunities.

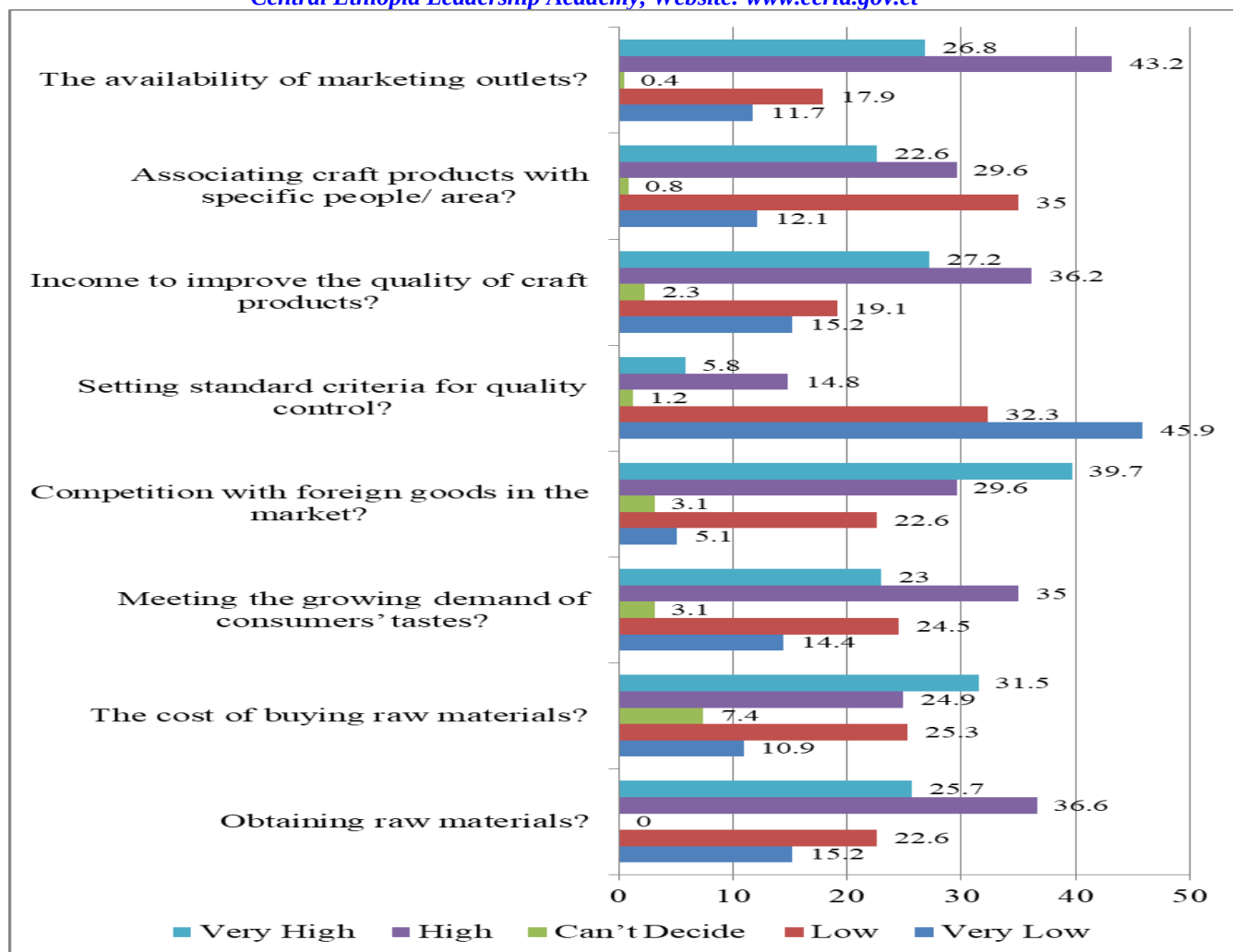


Figure 9. *Challenges of traditional handicraft production in the study area*

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025

On the bases of the data illustrated in the Fig. 9 above, one can safely order the five top challenges of handicraft industry in the CERS to create new job opportunities. Accordingly, the first challenge (70%) goes to the availability of marketing outlets; the second challenge (69.3%) goes to competition with foreign goods in the market; the third challenge (63.4%) goes to the low income to improve the quality of craft products; the fourth challenge (62.3%) goes to obtaining raw materials; the fifth challenge (58%) goes to meeting the growing demand of consumers' tastes; the sixth challenge (56.4%) goes to the high cost of buying raw materials and the seventh challenge (52%) goes to associating craft products with specific people/ area. In



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contrast, the least challenges (20.6%) of the handicraft sector goes to setting standard criteria for quality control of craft products.

Like such quantitative results, the data obtained from KII and FGD discussants assured that the scarcity and inaccessibility of purchasing centers for traditional handicraft products become one of the challenges facing the handicraft industry. In most cases, craftsmen have little knowledge of how to make contact with buyers, which causes them to depend on the middlemen to sell their products. This situation made handicraft producers to earn low profit; they may even struggle to cover the cost of production. As such, the handicraft industry is not perceived as a means of sustainable livelihood.

Moreover, the data obtained from key informant interview, FGD discussant and field observation assured that the great majority of local craftsmen have faced capital shortage to improve the quality of their products. As a result, the sector stagnates and it fails to embrace technology to improve the quality and quantity of the traditional handicraft products.

Furthermore, the data obtained from KII, FGD discussant and field observation assured that traditional handicrafts have faced strong competition from foreign products. The rising demand for machine-made craft products is putting the traditional craft industry under threat of decline. Furthermore, the availability of raw materials for the production of traditional handicrafts is very scarce and the high cost of buying raw materials hindered the development of the handicraft industry.

4.7. Potential of Tourism and Handicraft Industries to Create New Job Opportunities

The potential of tourism and handicraft industries to create new job opportunities in the study area is worth analyzing. To this effect, respondents were asked potential of tourism and handicraft products to create new job opportunities in their respective areas. Accordingly, the data illustrated in the Figure 10 below asserted that tourism could not contribute its maximum potential to create new job opportunities.



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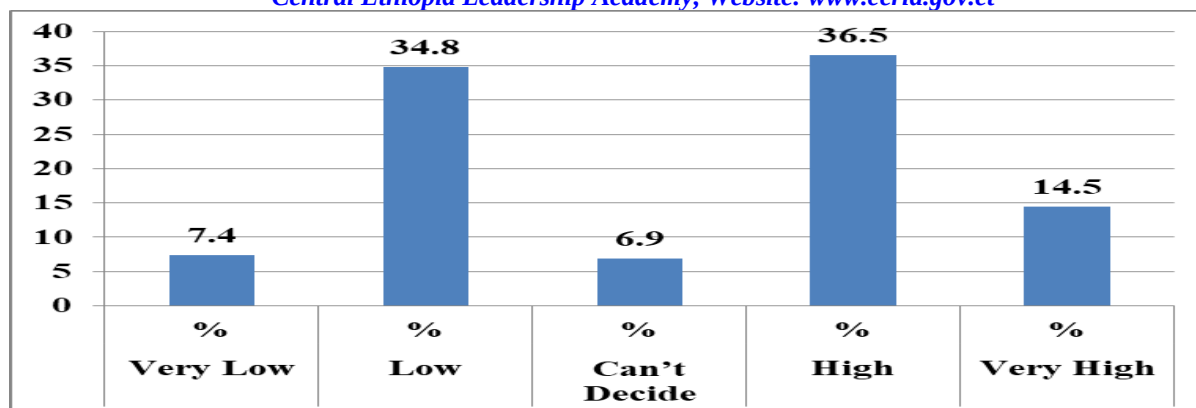


Figure 10. The Potential of Tourism to Create New Job Opportunities in the Study Area

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025

As it has been revealed in Fig 10 above, the respondents were asked about the contribution of tourism for job creation opportunities in their locality. Accordingly, some (42.2%) of the respondents confirmed that the job creation opportunities of tourism for the local people has been low and very low. However, almost half (51%) of the respondents agreed that the job creation opportunities of the tourism sector has been high and very high but the remaining 6.9% of respondents cannot decide. This result implies that although the contribution of the tourism sector for new job opportunities is high and very high, it lagged behind its maximum contribution potential for new job creation opportunities.

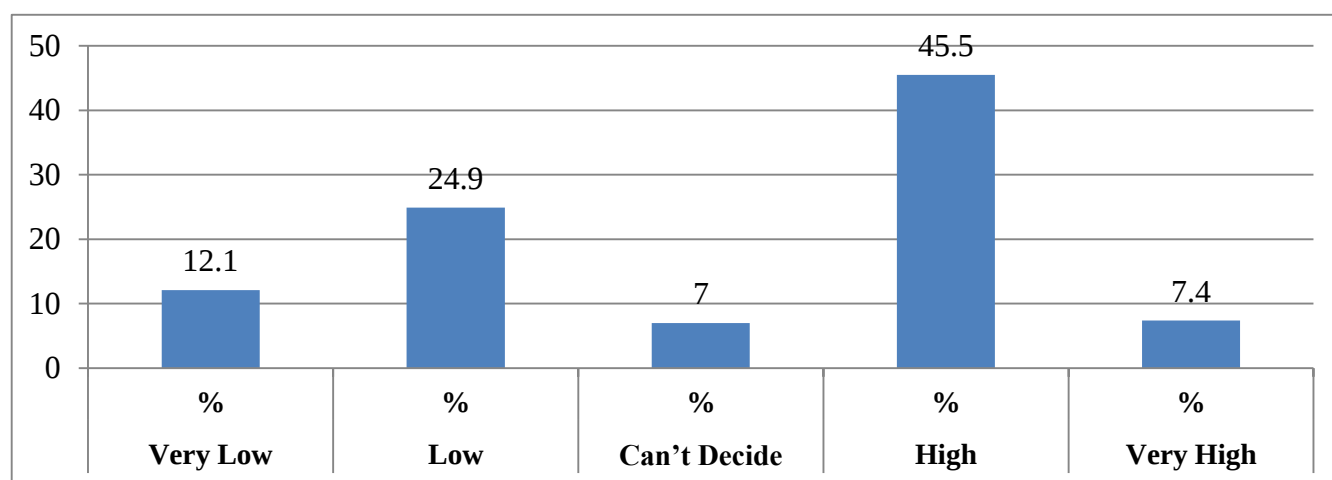


Figure 11. The Potential of Handicraft to Create New Job Opportunities in the Study Area

Source: Field Survey, January, 2025



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As it has been depicted in the Fig. 11 above, 37% of the respondents confirmed as if the job creation opportunities of the handicraft industry was remained low and very low; whereas 52.9% of them agreed as if it was high and very high. This result implies that although the contribution of the handicraft sector for new job opportunities was high and very high (52.9%), it lagged behind its maximum contribution for new job creation opportunities.

In addition to the respondents of the questionnaire survey, the data obtained from key informant interview, FGD discussant and field observation assured that tourism and handicraft industries created a variety of employment opportunities for the local population. However, the contribution of traditional handicrafts to create new job opportunities for the local community was minimal. In other words, the number of job opportunities which were created by tourism and the handicraft sector was insignificant as compared to the anticipated potential.



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CHAPTER FIVE

KEY FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This section provides key findings of the research covered in the document. The findings of this research project were organized based upon its five research objectives: the available tourism potential, the available handicraft potential, the potential of tourism to support new job creation, the potential of handicrafts to support new job creation as well as the bottlenecks of tourism and handicraft development in the CERS.

5.1. RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS

Findings on Potential of Tourism to Support Employment

- ✚ The research data assured that the CERS has tremendous potential of natural tourism sites which can generate profitable employment opportunities. To this effect, around 50 natural forest sites, 29 cave & cliff sites, 35 River and water fall sites, 22 High mountain sites, 7 lake sites and 10 hot and cold water spring sites were identified.
- ✚ The research data assured that the CERS has tremendous potential of cultural tourism sites which can generate profitable employment opportunities. To this effect, around 33 cemetery sites, 41 religious sites and 28 intangible cultural resources were identified.
- ✚ Essentially, the role of tourism sector to support new job creation opportunities in the region has lagged behind from its maximum potential.
- ✚ Moreover, there was great prevalence cultural tourism over natural tourism to support new job creation opportunities in the study area.
- ✚ Furthermore, the research data confirmed that there was great prevalence of domestic tourism potential over international tourism to support new job creation in the CERS.



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Findings on Potential of Handicrafts to Support Employment

- ✚ The CERS has tremendous potential of ethnographic handicraft objects which can generate profitable employment opportunities. Accordingly, the study found out about 100 handicraft production items in the CERS.
- ✚ The research confirmed that the potential of craft items which used smart technology was higher than craft items which used traditional technics to create employment opportunities.
- ✚ The study also asserted that the potential of handicrafts was higher than the potential of tourism sector to generate employment opportunities.

Findings on Challenges of Tourism to Support Employment

- ✚ This study uncovers the most constraining factors for the slowing down of the regional state tourism which comprises of low quality services in the sector which include: poor accommodation service, shortage of communication infrastructure (such as lack of internet access), poor supply of power infrastructure (electric power), shortage of tourist information centers and poor sanitation makes the abundant tourist sites to be underutilized.

Findings on Challenges of Handicraft to Generate Employment

- ✚ This study uncovers the multifaceted hindering factors for the slowdown development of the handicraft industries include: the large scale inflow of machine-made craft items at relatively cheaper cost, inadequate social amenities, inadequate capital & skills, poor marketing strategies and shortage of raw materials.



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5.2. CONCLUSION

This study aimed at exploring the interplay between tourism and the handicraft industry and its contribution to the creation of job creation opportunities in the Central Ethiopia Regional State. Accordingly, the findings of the study offer substantial theoretical and policy implications for stakeholders of tourism and handicraft industry in CERS. From the practical point of view, the research findings might be of interest to relevant stakeholders of the handicraft and tourism sectors in developing successful tourism destinations that duly consider the sustainable development of handicrafts as core tourism products

This study assured the availability of diverse range of tourism resources and the production of handicraft items in the CERS. Accordingly, the study established a huge potential to use tourism and handicraft industries as a vast employment opportunities.

In the meanwhile, the study figure out the major hindering factors which affected the potential of tourism and handicrafts to generate employment opportunities. In effect, this study uncovers that although the CERS endowed with rich potential tourism resources and handicraft industries, this potential was not properly utilized due to several challenges.

Therefore, it is important to address the existing challenges of tourism and handicraft in order to maximize the employment opportunities they provide. Unless these challenges are overcome by the government and other stakeholders, the minimal contributions of tourism and the handicraft industries towards job creation opportunities will continue in the CERS. In conclusion, concrete measures are required to overcome the current challenges of tourism and the handicraft industries in the region.



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5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the research key findings and conclusions, the study proposed a series of recommendations addressed to important stakeholders of tourism and handicraft sectors to maximize job creation opportunities in the study area.

For the Government:

- The regional government should establish an Integrated Museum Center which helps to promote tourism & serve as a catalyzer of future employment creation tool.
- Each city center should have an Integrated Handicraft Hubs which helps to facilitate Handicraft Tourism.
- The regional government needs to design appropriate handicraft business development and management policies that encourage handicraft producers, create a market for their products, link them with the tourism sector and supervise their profitability and continuity.

For the Non-Governmental Organizations/ NGOs:

- Non-Governmental Organizations/ NGOs should work to establish entrepreneurial networking (Council of Handcrafters) which helps to facilitate funding, information, technologies, raw materials, marketing & advertisement.

For Technical and Vocational Education Training Colleges and Engineering Colleges:

- The study recommended that Technical and Vocational Education Training Colleges (TVETs) should revisit their training curriculum so as to give due concern to provide training on handicraft production.

For the Private Business Entrepreneurs:

- Businessmen who have been engaged in hotel industry are expected to improve the quality of services in relation to bedrooms, pensions, cafes, restaurants and bars.
- Handicraft producers should utilize the latest technology (such as AI, the 3D, web-technologies) to improve the design & add aesthetic value of their production.



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