

**THE ROLE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
TOURISM INDUSTRY.**

**A CASE STUDY OF KASUBI TOMBS, KAMPALA.**

**BY KALIRA**

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### DECLARATION

I **KALIRA ADOLF**, with registration number **BU/UG/2023/2265** do hereby declare that this research report is my own original work and it has not been submitted to any other University/Institution by anybody else for any other degree award.

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#### **APPROVAL**

This research report has been submitted for examination with the approval of my supervisor and is for the award of a Bachelor's Degree in Tourism and Travel Management of Busitema University.

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Signature: 

Date: 22nd July 2026

## **DEDICATION**

This research report is heartily dedicated to all my supporters who have been the rocks of stability throughout my life and my academic struggle, who always encourage me to fly towards my dreams. You mean a world to me my father Mr. Ssengendo John Bosco, my mother Madam Namata Irene, my grandmother Madam Nakayiki Federesi, my uncle Kasibante Jimmy, my Uncles and my Aunties.

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May God bless you ALL.



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|             |                                                                  |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DV.....     | Dependent variable                                               |
| IV.....     | Independent variable                                             |
| UNESCO..... | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| WHS.....    | World Heritage Site                                              |
| GDP.....    | Gross Domestic Product                                           |
| SPSS.....   | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences                      |
| CBT.....    | Community-Based Tourism                                          |
| TALC.....   | Tourism Area Life Cycle                                          |
| UGX.....    | Uganda Shillings                                                 |
| FGD.....    | Focus Group Discussion                                           |
| QR.....     | Quick Response                                                   |

## **ABSTRACT**

The study was carried out with the aim of finding out the role of cultural heritage sites on the development of the tourism industry, a case study of Kasubi Tombs, Kampala, Uganda. The objectives for the study was; to assess the contributions of the Kasubi Tombs to tourism development in Uganda, to identify the challenges facing the management and conservation of the Kasubi Tombs as a tourism site and to explore strategies for enhancing the role of cultural heritage sites like Kasubi Tombs in sustainable tourism growth.

Cultural heritage sites represent a vital yet underutilized component of tourism development, particularly in developing countries where they can drive economic growth, preserve identity, and foster sustainable community livelihoods. This study examines the role of cultural heritage sites in advancing the tourism industry in Uganda, with a specific case study of the Kasubi Tombs a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the royal burial ground of the Buganda Kingdom in Kampala.

The research adopts a mixed-methods approach, drawing on secondary data from tourism statistics, UNESCO reports, and primary insights from site management, visitors, and local stakeholders. Findings indicate that while Uganda's tourism sector achieved a record USD 1.28 billion in international receipts in 2024, supporting over 800,000 jobs and contributing approximately 6.6% to GDP, cultural heritage attractions like the Kasubi Tombs remain secondary to wildlife-based tourism. Visitor numbers to museums and cultural sites exceeded 34,000 in 2024, highlighting growing but limited engagement compared to the country's 1.37 million international arrivals.

The Kasubi Tombs, inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2001 and removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2023 following reconstruction efforts after the 2010 fire, embody significant historical, spiritual, and architectural value. Reconstruction neared completion by late 2025, with full restoration announced in December 2025, positioning the site for enhanced tourism potential through improved accessibility, authenticity preservation, and cultural promotion.

Key challenges include limited funding, inadequate infrastructure, urbanization pressures, post-reconstruction management issues, and competition from nature-based attractions, which constrain visitor numbers, revenue generation, and community benefits. Opportunities lie in strategic marketing, community involvement, integration into national tourism circuits, and leveraging UNESCO status to attract cultural tourists seeking authentic experiences.

The study concludes that effective management and conservation of sites like the Kasubi Tombs can significantly amplify their contributions to sustainable tourism development, economic diversification, cultural preservation, and local empowerment in Uganda. Recommendations include policy enhancements for heritage-tourism integration, increased investment in site infrastructure, stakeholder collaboration, and targeted promotion to boost visitor arrivals and ensure long-term viability.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the study on the role of cultural heritage sites in the development of the tourism industry, taking a case study of Kasubi Tombs in Kampala, Uganda. It outlines the background of the study, problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions, significance, scope, conceptual framework, and definitions of key terms. The Kasubi Tombs, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, represent a vital cultural asset that embodies the spiritual, historical, and architectural heritage of the Buganda Kingdom. As a case study, the tombs highlight how such sites can drive tourism growth while facing contemporary challenges.

Cultural heritage sites like the Kasubi Tombs serve as anchors for tourism, attracting visitors interested in history, spirituality, and traditional architecture. They contribute to economic development through visitor expenditures, job creation, and cultural preservation. This study explores these dynamics in the context of Uganda's evolving tourism sector.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Cultural heritage sites worldwide are increasingly recognized as catalysts for tourism development, offering authentic experiences that blend history, tradition, and identity while contributing to sustainable economic growth.

Globally, cultural heritage tourism has emerged as a resilient segment, emphasizing experiential and sustainable travel in the post-pandemic era. UNESCO World Heritage Sites, for instance, attract millions of visitors annually by preserving unique cultural narratives, fostering cross-cultural understanding, and generating economic benefits through visitor spending, job creation, and ancillary services like hospitality and crafts. Recent trends indicate a shift toward authenticity, with travelers seeking immersive experiences that highlight intangible heritage such as traditional rituals and architecture, rather than mass tourism. For example, sites like Machu Picchu in Peru or Angkor Wat in Cambodia demonstrate how heritage can drive diversified tourism offerings, supporting local economies while promoting conservation. However, global challenges such as over tourism, climate vulnerabilities, and inadequate funding often undermine sustainability, necessitating integrated management strategies to balance <sup>xiii</sup>preservation with economic gains.

While these global trends illustrate the transformative potential of cultural heritage in tourism, similar dynamics are unfolding in Africa, where such sites intersect with broader goals of economic development and cultural revitalization amid unique socio-political and infrastructural contexts.

In Africa, cultural heritage sites are pivotal in harnessing tourism for poverty reduction, community empowerment, and identity preservation, though the continent still captures only a small share of global arrivals approximately 5% despite its rich diversity. The sector has shown robust growth, with a projected 12% surge in tourism in the first half of 2025, driven by increasing interest in authentic cultural experiences ranging from ancient ruins like Great Zimbabwe to living traditions in West African villages. UNESCO-listed sites play a key role here, generating revenue for conservation and promoting pan-African identities, as seen in Egypt's pyramids or Mali's Timbuktu, which attract international visitors and support local artisans. Yet, persistent issues like infrastructure deficits, political instability, and underinvestment mean cultural tourism is often overshadowed by wildlife attractions, limiting its full economic impact. Initiatives such as the African Union's Agenda 2063 emphasize sustainable tourism, aiming to leverage heritage for inclusive growth.

Building on these continental patterns, East Africa exemplifies how cultural heritage can complement natural assets to create holistic tourism experiences, though regional disparities in development and promotion reveal opportunities for more equitable integration of sites like royal tombs and historical settlements.

East Africa stands as a tourism powerhouse on the continent, with cultural heritage enhancing its dominant wildlife offerings to appeal to a broader audience. In 2024, the region generated substantial revenues, including USD 3.4 billion for Kenya, USD 3.26 billion for Tanzania, and USD 1.28 billion for Uganda, amid a 7.7% rise in arrivals across the East African Community, contributing around 10% to regional GDP and 17% to export earnings. Cultural sites, such as Kenya's Maasai villages or Tanzania's Stone Town a UNESCO site illustrate successful integration, where community-based tourism supports livelihoods through guided cultural immersions, artisan markets, and festivals. However, heritage attractions often remain secondary to safaris, facing challenges like uneven infrastructure, intra-regional competition, and limited marketing. Regional cooperation via the East African Community promotes integrated circuits, such as cross-border heritage trails, positioning culture as a key differentiator for sustainable, high-value tourism.

This regional context sets the stage for Uganda, where rapid tourism recovery highlights the potential for cultural diversification, yet sites like the Kasubi Tombs exemplify both progress and untapped opportunities in a wildlife-centric landscape.

Uganda's tourism sector has demonstrated remarkable resilience and growth, evolving from a post-pandemic rebound to a strategic pillar of national development. International arrivals reached 1.37 million in 2024 a 7.7% increase from 2023 with receipts surging 25.9% to USD 1.28 billion, contributing 16% to total exports, 3.2% directly to GDP, and supporting over 800,000 jobs, with projections for 1.6 million arrivals and USD 2 billion in earnings by the end of 2025. Domestic tourism has also expanded significantly, with 2.8 million Ugandans visiting sites in 2023 (a 5.2% rise from 2022), reflecting growing local interest in cultural and leisure experiences fueled by campaigns like "Explore Uganda, The Pearl of Africa." While wildlife attractions like gorilla tracking in Bwindi dominate, contributing to leisure tourism's share rising from 16% to 19% in 2024, cultural heritage is gaining momentum as part of the national Ten-Fold Growth Strategy, which aims to expand the economy to USD 500 billion by 2040, with tourism projected to contribute USD 50 billion through diversification and infrastructure investments. Key initiatives include the Uganda Tourism Board's Strategic Plan for 2025/26–2029/30, focusing on cultural promotion, and budget allocations for 2025/2026 to enhance connectivity and site maintenance.

Among Uganda's over 640 registered heritage sites, the Kasubi Tombs stand out as a UNESCO World Heritage Site inscribed in 2001, embodying the Buganda Kingdom's spiritual, historical, and architectural legacy as the burial ground for four Kabakas (kings) and a living center for Ganda traditions. The site's 26.8-hectare expanse in Kampala features organic architecture using thatch, reeds, and wattle, representing intangible values of belief, continuity, and identity under UNESCO criteria (i), (iii), (iv), and (vi). Devastated by a fire in 2010, it was placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger until 2023, with reconstruction employing traditional methods and youth training nearing completion by mid-2025 and fully announced in December 2025, supported by UNESCO, the Ugandan government, the Buganda Kingdom, and community fundraising totaling UGX 1.95 billion in 2025. This restoration has spurred renewed interest, including its designation in November 2025 as one of Kampala's "Seven Tourism Wonders" alongside sites like the Bahá'í Temple and Uganda Martyrs Shrine, positioning it for a projected 200% visitor surge in 2026, particularly among domestic and diaspora pilgrims. Historically, visitor numbers hovered around 50,000 annually pre-reconstruction, far below national arrival figures, but recent developments like

the 2025 Trip Advisor recognition of nearby Buganda attractions and integration into cultural tourism circuits signal potential for greater economic contributions. Despite these advancements, the tombs' role in tourism remains under optimized due to ongoing challenges like fire risks, urban encroachment, inconsistent management, and competition from wildlife sites, revealing a critical gap in empirical research on how to fully leverage such assets for sustainable development.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Despite Uganda's tourism sector achieving robust growth with international arrivals at 1.37 million and receipts at USD 1.28 billion in 2024, alongside projections for 1.6 million arrivals by the end of 2025, cultural heritage sites continue to play a secondary role to wildlife attractions, constraining diversification, revenue optimization, and broader socio-economic benefits. This underutilization is evident in the modest visitor engagement at heritage attractions, where domestic and international interest in cultural experiences is rising such as the 34,000+ visits to museums and similar sites in 2024 and a 5.2% growth in domestic tourism to 2.8 million participants in 2023 but not fully capitalized upon compared to the country's overall arrivals and the sector's ambition to contribute USD 50 billion to GDP by 2040.

At the Kasubi Tombs, this broader issue manifests acutely: despite its UNESCO inscription in 2001, removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2023, and full reconstruction completion announced in December 2025 following the 2010 fire incorporating traditional techniques and youth involvement, the site grapples with persistent management, infrastructure, and promotional challenges. Visitor numbers, historically around 50,000 annually pre-reconstruction, have begun to surge post-2025 with recognitions like its inclusion in Kampala's "Seven Tourism Wonders," yet remain limited by urbanization pressures, fire vulnerabilities (requiring enhanced risk plans), inconsistent entry systems, funding shortages, cultural access restrictions that is to say; gender-based in certain areas, and competition from nature-based tourism, leading to suboptimal revenue generation, community involvement, and visitor satisfaction as noted in reviews highlighting misunderstandings and site inaccessibility. These factors underscore a research gap: although the site's profound cultural and spiritual significance is well-documented, there is limited empirical analysis of its actual contributions to sustainable tourism development, including post-reconstruction impacts on economic diversification and heritage preservation in urban settings.

This study is essential to bridge this gap, offering evidence-based insights that can guide policy enhancements for integrating heritage sites into national strategies like the Tourism Development Programme, foster economic diversification and job creation in the Buganda region, empower local communities through inclusive management, and enrich global knowledge on revitalizing World Heritage Sites in developing contexts amid rapid urbanization and tourism recovery.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of cultural heritage sites in the development of the tourism industry, using the Kasubi Tombs in Kampala, Uganda.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

1. To assess the contributions of the Kasubi Tombs to tourism development in Uganda.
2. To identify the challenges facing the management and conservation of the Kasubi Tombs as a tourism site.
3. To explore strategies for enhancing the role of cultural heritage sites like Kasubi Tombs in sustainable tourism growth.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. What are the contributions of the Kasubi Tombs to the development of Uganda's tourism industry?
2. What challenges hinder the effective management and conservation of the Kasubi Tombs as a cultural heritage tourism site?
3. What strategies can be implemented to strengthen the role of sites like the Kasubi Tombs in promoting sustainable tourism in Uganda?

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

#### **1.6.1 Content Scope**

The study focuses on the role of cultural heritage sites in tourism development, covering aspects such as economic contributions, conservation challenges, and sustainability strategies. It excludes broader environmental or wildlife tourism elements.

### **1.6.2 Geographical Scope**

The research is limited to the Kasubi Tombs site in Kampala, Uganda, including surrounding communities in the Buganda Kingdom region.

### **1.6.3 Time Scope**

The study covers the period from 2022 (post-fire reconstruction start) to 2025, capturing recent developments and tourism recovery trends.

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

### **1.7.1 To Academicians**

This study will contribute to the body of knowledge on cultural heritage tourism, providing empirical insights from an East African context. It will serve as a reference for scholars in tourism management, heritage studies, and development economics, fostering further research on understudied sites like Kasubi.

### **1.7.2 To the Government**

The findings will inform policy formulation for the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Antiquities, highlighting ways to integrate heritage sites into national tourism strategies. It will aid in resource allocation for conservation, infrastructure, and marketing, enhancing Uganda's competitiveness in regional tourism.

### **1.7.3 To Local Communities**

The study will emphasize community involvement in heritage management, potentially leading to job creation, skill development, and revenue sharing from tourism. For the Buganda Kingdom and surrounding areas, it will promote cultural pride and sustainable livelihoods through initiatives like guided tours and artisan crafts.

## **1.8 Conceptual Framework**

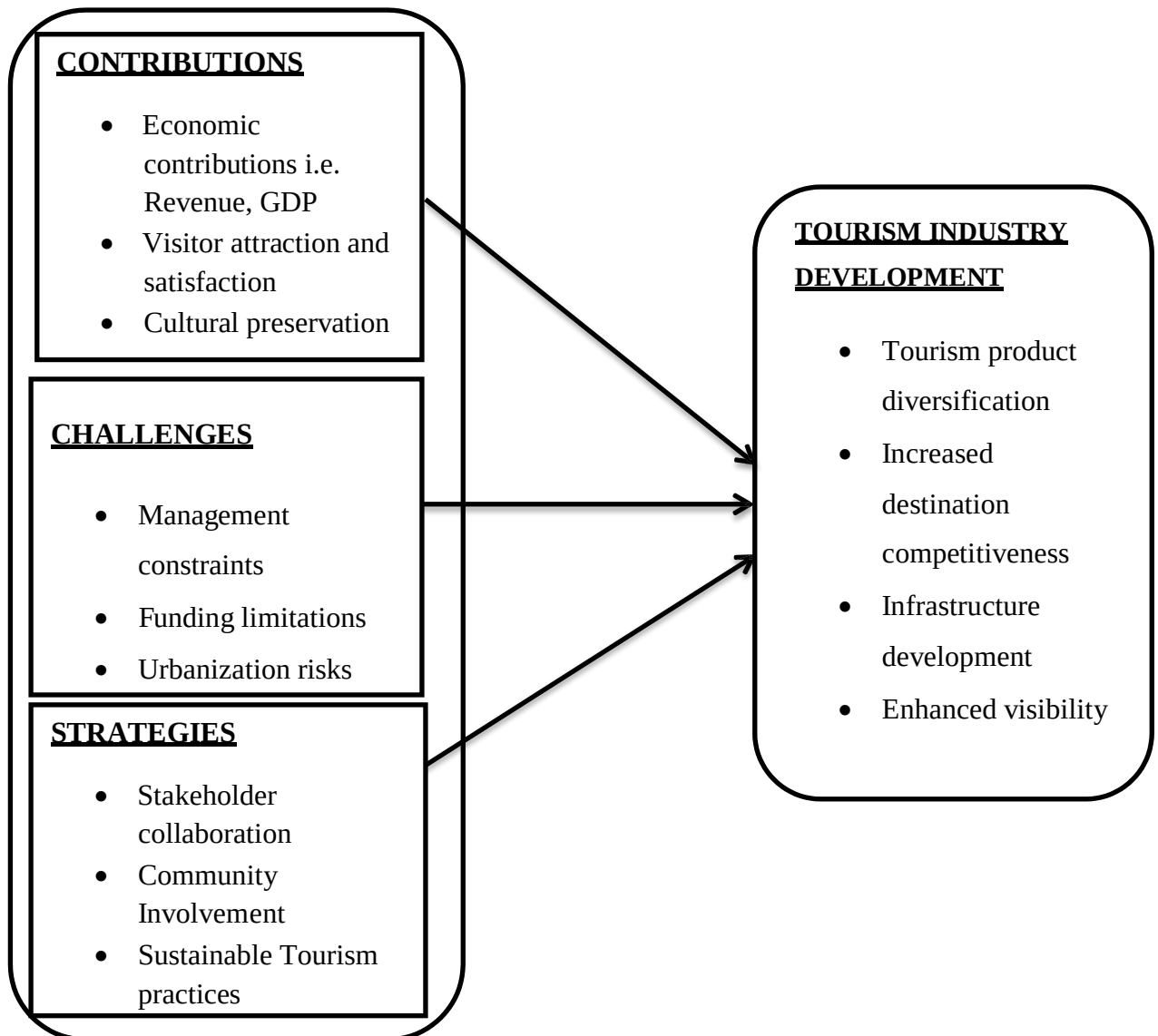
The conceptual framework diagrammatically illustrates the relationship between the different variables in the study. The independent variable is perceived as cultural heritage sites and the dependent variable is tourism industry development.

**Figure 1 : A figure showing the conceptual Framework**

**INDEPENDENT VARIABLE (I.V)**

**(D.V)**

**DEPENDENT VARIABLE**



**Source:** Adopted and modified basing on the information from **du Cros and McKercher (2015)** and from the tourism development models such as the **Butler's Tourism Area Lifecycle**, emphasizing how effective management can amplify heritage sites' role in industry growth.

### **1.8.1 Explanation of the conceptual framework.**

The diagram above shows the relationship between the cultural heritage sites on the development of the tourism industry, a case study of Kasubi Tombs, Kampala, according to du Cros and McKercher (2015) “Cultural Tourism (2nd edition)”. Cultural heritage sites is the independent variable which is dimensioned in historical and spiritual value, architectural uniqueness and UNESCO status whereas Tourism industry development which is the dependent variable is dimensioned in economic contributions (revenue, jobs), visitor attraction and satisfaction, sustainable growth and cultural preservation.

### **1.9 Definition of Key Terms**

**Cultural Heritage Sites:** Places of historical, cultural, or architectural significance preserved for their value to humanity, such as UNESCO-listed tombs.

**Tourism Industry:** The sector encompassing travel, accommodation, attractions, and related services that generate economic activity from visitors.

**Sustainable Tourism:** Tourism that balances economic benefits with environmental and cultural preservation for long-term viability.

**Kasubi Tombs:** A UNESCO World Heritage Site in Uganda serving as the royal burial ground for Buganda kings, embodying spiritual and cultural practices.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of existing literature on the role of cultural heritage sites in tourism industry development. It examines theoretical foundations that explain the linkages between heritage resources and tourism outcomes, followed by empirical evidence from global, African, and Ugandan contexts. The review focuses on UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHS) like the Kasubi Tombs, given their significance as anchors for sustainable cultural tourism.

The purpose is to identify established theories, key empirical findings, and persistent gaps in knowledge, particularly regarding post-reconstruction management and community benefits at sites such as Kasubi. This aligns with the conceptual framework in Chapter One, which posits cultural heritage site attributes as the independent variable, mediated by management practices and challenges, leading to tourism development outcomes. By synthesizing the literature, the chapter justifies the need for this case study on the Kasubi Tombs in Kampala, Uganda, where reconstruction was fully completed in December 2025 following the 2010 fire.

The chapter is structured into three main sections: theoretical review, empirical review, and a summary of the literature, highlighting convergences, divergences, and implications for the study.

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

This section reviews the theoretical foundations guiding the study. **The Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism** by **McKercher and du Cros (2002; 2015)** is adopted as the primary theoretical framework.

The Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism argues that sustainable cultural tourism can only be achieved through a genuine **partnership** between the tourism industry and heritage custodians. Tourism operators view heritage sites as marketable products that need to be packaged, promoted, and made accessible to generate economic returns. In contrast, heritage managers and custodians including governments and local communities prioritize the conservation and protection of the site's intrinsic cultural, spiritual, and historical value.

The model introduces a **product-class approach**, classifying cultural heritage resources into three interrelated categories:

**Core product:** The tangible heritage asset that is to say; the unique thatched Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga structure and royal burial ground at Kasubi Tombs;

**Supporting product:** The intangible elements that give meaning to the site for example Buganda Kingdom rituals, spiritual beliefs, and clan guardianship systems;

**Augmented product:** the added visitor experience layer like guided tours, cultural interpretation, performances, and souvenirs.

McKercher and du Cros emphasize that without balanced collaboration, tourism may lead to over-commercialization and loss of authenticity (“Disneyfication”), while overly rigid conservation may limit economic benefits and public support. The model identifies five possible relationship outcomes between tourism and heritage: full partnership (ideal), partial partnership, tourism-dominated, heritage-dominated, or no relationship.

This model is highly relevant to the Kasubi Tombs. The site possesses strong core and supporting products through its UNESCO Outstanding Universal Value and living spiritual role for the Baganda people. Following the 2010 fire and full reconstruction completed in December 2025, the main challenge lies in developing appropriate augmented products without compromising the sacred nature of certain areas. The Partnership Model provides a useful lens to examine stakeholder collaboration among the Buganda Kingdom (primary custodians), UNESCO, the Ministry of Tourism, Uganda Tourism Board, and local communities.

This primary framework is supported by complementary theories. **Butler’s Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) Model (1980)** explains the evolutionary stages of the site and its potential rejuvenation after reconstruction. **Authenticity Theory (MacCannell, 1973)** highlights the need to balance tourist expectations for genuine experiences with the protection of spiritual integrity. **Community-Based Tourism (CBT) Theory** underscores the importance of active community participation and equitable benefit-sharing.

These complementary perspectives reinforce the Partnership Model by addressing destination lifecycle dynamics, authenticity concerns, and community empowerment, all critical for translating the attributes of the Kasubi Tombs into sustainable tourism development outcomes.

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

### **2.2.1 Contributions of Cultural Heritage Sites to Tourism Development**

Empirical evidence globally and regionally shows that UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHS) significantly boost tourism arrivals, revenue, employment, and cultural preservation when effectively managed. In Africa, studies indicate that heritage sites contribute to economic diversification, community livelihoods, and poverty reduction, though benefits are often uneven compared to wildlife tourism.

In Uganda, tourism has recorded strong recovery, with international arrivals reaching 1.37 million in 2024, a 7.7% increase from 2023 and receipts rising 25.9% to USD 1.28 billion, contributing 3.2% directly to GDP and supporting over 800,000 jobs. Cultural sites like Kasubi play a complementary role to dominant wildlife attractions.

Specific to the Kasubi Tombs, several empirical studies affirm its contributions. Baker (2017) examined the “tourismification” of Buganda culture and found that Kasubi Tombs, as a UNESCO site, attract both domestic and international visitors, generating entry-fee revenue used for site maintenance and kingdom activities. The study highlighted that cultural sites like Kasubi diversify Uganda’s nature-based tourism, create jobs for youth and women through guiding, crafts, and performances, and contribute to Sustainable Development Goals by returning tourism benefits to local communities.

A 2025 case study on the impact of culture on tourism development in Uganda, focusing on Kasubi Tombs in Rubaga Division, Kampala, revealed that the site plays a significant role in attracting local and international tourists, enhancing cultural pride, and supporting economic activities in surrounding areas. Another recent study on domestic tourism’s impact on cultural development at Kasubi Royal Tombs found high awareness levels at least 70% among Ugandans, with the site receiving notable domestic visitors that is to say; averages of 4,500 per month at the main gateway in earlier periods and contributing to cultural preservation through increased local engagement.

Pre-reconstruction data often cited visitor numbers around 50,000 annually, far below national arrivals but meaningful for urban cultural tourism. Post-2010 fire and full reconstruction completion, announced December 2025, projections include a substantial visitor surge, particularly from domestic and diaspora audiences, with expectations that the site will become a major attraction promoting cultural exchange. Entry fees, guided tours, and

ancillary services like crafts, and performances generate direct revenue and indirect benefits like employment for local guides and artisans.

Broader East African studies, such as Ahebwa (2016) on the Kabaka's Trail in Buganda, confirm that culture-based tourism positively correlates with cultural conservation and improved community livelihoods, supporting the idea that sites like Kasubi enhance Uganda's tourism product mix. However, empirical findings consistently note that cultural heritage contributes less than wildlife tourism in visitor volume and revenue, underscoring the need for better integration.

### **2.3.2 Challenges Facing the Management and Conservation of the Kasubi Tombs as a Tourism Site**

Empirical literature identifies multiple persistent challenges that limit the Kasubi Tombs' full potential as a tourism asset. Odhiambo (2022) conducted a detailed study on challenges of managing and conserving UNESCO WHS for tourism in Uganda, using Kasubi as the case. Key findings included limited finance as the primary constraint, affecting conservation activities, infrastructure maintenance, and promotion. Other issues were inadequate methods for integrating culture into tourism for example low emphasis on certain activities like research or photography and the negative impact of external shocks like COVID-19 lockdowns, which drastically reduced visitor numbers.

Post-fire (2010) and during reconstruction, studies highlighted additional challenges: funding shortages, accountability concerns in fund management, internal conflicts within the Buganda Kingdom like traditionalists vs. progressive factions, and difficulties in balancing sacred rituals with tourism access like gender-based restrictions in certain areas. Reconstruction delays stemmed from strict adherence to traditional rituals (requiring specific clans and elders), material shortages like thatching grass, and technical requirements such as fire-resistant systems, drainage among others. Even after removal from the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger in 2023 and full completion in late 2025, ongoing risks include fire vulnerability, urbanization pressures in Kampala, and the need for a comprehensive disaster risk management plan.

Visitor feedback for example via TripAdvisor analyses points to practical issues such as confusing entry fees, lack of receipts, limited access to the main mausoleum during reconstruction, and misunderstandings about cultural protocols, leading to lower satisfaction. Infrastructure gaps like toilets, signage, accessibility and competition from wildlife

attractions further constrain growth. These challenges align with broader African findings where many WHS suffer from underfunding and weak linkages to local economies.

### **2.3.3 Strategies for Enhancing the Role of Cultural Heritage Sites like Kasubi Tombs in Sustainable Tourism Growth**

Empirical studies propose several practical strategies to strengthen heritage sites' contributions to sustainable tourism. Baker (2017) recommends greater "tourismification" of Buganda culture through integration into national itineraries, development of cultural trails, festivals, handicrafts, and community-based experiences to complement wildlife tourism and create inclusive benefits.

Community-based tourism (CBT) approaches are frequently advocated. A medium-term proposal for Kasubi emphasized low-cost interventions such as updating websites with accurate information, restructuring guided tours for more experiential and inclusive content, promoting local crafts and intangible heritage like music and dance, and establishing regular stakeholder consultations with surrounding communities. These could generate employment, training opportunities, and revenue while respecting cultural sensitivities such as explaining gender exclusions transparently.

Post-reconstruction strategies focus on sustainability: developing a physical master plan and ecosystem management, installing modern fire prevention systems, youth training in traditional skills, documentation of oral traditions, and tripartite collaboration among the Buganda Kingdom, Ugandan government, and UNESCO. Additional recommendations include marketing Kasubi as part of Kampala city tours or "Seven Tourism Wonders," enhancing interpretation and guiding standards, revenue-sharing models, and policy support for cultural tourism diversification under Uganda's national strategies.

Studies on similar sites like Kabaka's Trail stress stakeholder partnerships, community empowerment, and carrying capacity planning to ensure long-term viability.

## **2.4 Summary of the Literature Reviewed**

This chapter reviewed theoretical and empirical literature on the role of cultural heritage sites in tourism industry development, focusing on the Kasubi Tombs as a case study. The review was guided by the study's three objectives: assessing contributions, identifying management and conservation challenges, and exploring enhancement strategies.

Theoretically, the Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism (McKercher and du Cros, 2002; 2015) provides the main framework. It is supported by complementary ideas from Butler's TALC Model, Authenticity Theory, and Community-Based Tourism Theory, which collectively stress that effective stakeholder partnerships, authentic experiences, and community involvement are essential for converting heritage site attributes into sustainable tourism outcomes.

Empirically, studies show that cultural heritage sites like the Kasubi Tombs contribute to tourism development by attracting domestic and international visitors, generating revenue, creating jobs, diversifying Uganda's wildlife-dominated tourism, and promoting cultural preservation. However, significant challenges persist, including underfunding, inadequate infrastructure, urbanization pressures, fire risks, and difficulties in balancing sacred traditions with tourism demands.

Literature on enhancement strategies emphasizes stakeholder collaboration, community-based tourism approaches, improved marketing, experiential product development, and integration into national tourism circuits, especially following the site's full reconstruction in December 2025.

Despite these insights, critical gaps remain. Most studies pre-date or cover only the early post-reconstruction period, with limited empirical evidence on the actual tourism contributions, visitor impacts, and long-term sustainability of the Kasubi Tombs after full reopening. Few studies have applied the Partnership Model specifically to this Ugandan urban heritage context.

This review therefore establishes that while the Kasubi Tombs hold strong potential to support tourism growth, realizing this potential requires effective management and strategic interventions. The identified gaps justify the need for this study to provide current, case-specific insights into the role of the Kasubi Tombs in Uganda's tourism industry.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the methodological approach that will be adopted to achieve the study's objectives: (1) to assess the contributions of the Kasubi Tombs to tourism development in Uganda, (2) to identify the challenges facing the management and conservation of the Kasubi Tombs as a tourism site, and (3) to explore strategies for enhancing the role of cultural heritage sites like Kasubi Tombs in sustainable tourism growth.

The chapter provides a detailed justification for the selected research design, study population, sampling techniques, data types, collection methods, analysis procedures, measures of reliability and validity, study limitations, and ethical considerations. This approach ensures the research is rigorous, feasible, and capable of generating credible, triangulated findings that contribute meaningfully to heritage tourism scholarship in Uganda.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The study will employ a descriptive case study design embedded within a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach. A case study design is particularly suitable because it allows for an in-depth, holistic investigation of the Kasubi Tombs as a contemporary real-life phenomenon within its natural context (Yin, 2018). The mixed-methods approach will enable the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously, analyse them separately, and integrate the results during interpretation.

Quantitative methods will primarily address Objective 1 (measurable contributions such as visitor numbers, revenue, and satisfaction levels). Qualitative methods will dominate Objectives 2 and 3, providing deeper insights into management challenges and practical strategies. This design aligns with previous heritage tourism studies in Uganda like those on the Kabaka Heritage Trail and Buganda cultural sites and supports triangulation for enhanced credibility.

### **3.2 Study Population**

The target population consists of all individuals and institutions directly or indirectly involved with or affected by tourism activities at the Kasubi Tombs. It includes four key groups:

- **Visitors/Tourists:** Domestic and international tourists visiting the site, post-2025 reconstruction visitor numbers have surged by over 200%, with a significant shift toward domestic and diaspora Baganda pilgrims.
- **Site Managers and Custodians:** Officials from the Buganda Kingdom including clan heads and guardians, UNESCO representatives, and conservation staff.
- **Local Community Members:** Residents of Kasubi and surrounding areas in Rubaga Division, Kampala, who experience both benefits and impacts of the site.
- **Tourism Stakeholders:** Officials from the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, Uganda Tourism Board, tour operators, and guides.

The estimated accessible population includes over 50,000 annual visitors based on pre- and post-reconstruction trends and approximately 250 key stakeholders and community members.

### 3.3 Sample Size

A total sample size of 250 respondents will be targeted, broken down as follows:

- 180 Visitors (quantitative questionnaires).
- 40 Key informants (semi-structured interviews).
- 30 Community members (focus group discussions).

For visitors, the sample size was calculated using Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations:

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

Where:

Where (**N**) = visitors, key informants and community members), and (**e**) = margin of error of 0.05.

### Calculation:

- $N = 250$  respondents
- $e = \text{Margin of error} = 0.05$  (5%)

$$n = \frac{250}{(1 + 250(0.05)^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{250}{1 + 0.625}$$

$$n = \frac{250}{1.625}$$

$$n = 154$$

**A total sample size of 150 respondents will be used.**

Although the formula suggested approximately 154 respondents, practical field constraints such as time, budget, accessibility, and respondent willingness resulted in **150 valid responses** being successfully collected. This sample size is considered adequate and provides a reliable basis for statistical analysis and generalization within the context of the Kasubi Tombs.

### 3.4 Sampling Method

The study will use a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques for complementarity:

- **Stratified random sampling** for visitors: Visitors will be stratified by type (domestic vs. international) and day of visit (weekday/weekend), then randomly selected on-site to ensure representativeness.
- **Purposive (judgmental) sampling** for key informants: Site managers, Buganda Kingdom officials, UNESCO focal persons, and senior tourism stakeholders will be selected based on their expertise, position, and direct involvement in the management and conservation of the Kasubi Tombs.
- **Snowball sampling** will supplement community respondents where initial contacts recommend additional knowledgeable participants.

This multi-stage sampling strategy balances statistical rigour with the need for rich, context-specific qualitative insights.

### 3.5 Type of Data

The study will collect both primary and secondary data:

- **Primary data:** Original information gathered directly from respondents through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions.
- **Secondary data:** Existing records such as UNESCO state-of-conservation reports, Uganda Tourism Board visitor statistics, Buganda Kingdom financial and management reports, previous academic studies, and reconstruction progress documents.

Data will further be categorized as **quantitative** (numerical: visitor counts, revenue figures, Likert-scale responses) and **qualitative** (textual: experiences, opinions, and suggested strategies).

### 3.6 Data Collection Methods

Multiple instruments will be used to ensure triangulation:

- Structured questionnaires with Likert-scale items and closed-ended questions for visitors to quantify contributions and satisfaction levels.
- Semi-structured interview guides for key informants to explore management challenges and strategic recommendations in depth.
- Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guides (3–4 groups of 6–8 participants each) with local community members to capture collective views on socio-economic impacts.
- Document analysis of official records, visitor registers, conservation plans, and policy documents.

All instruments will be developed in English and Luganda where necessary, and pilot-tested with 25 respondents (10% of sample) to refine wording, sequence, and cultural sensitivity.

### 3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection will follow a systematic, ethical, and phased approach over a four-month period:

1. Secure formal permissions and introductory letters from the university, Buganda Kingdom, Ministry of Tourism, and Kampala Capital City Authority.
2. Train two research assistants on data collection protocols and cultural etiquette at the site.
3. Conduct the pilot test and revise instruments accordingly.
4. Collect data during both peak and off-peak seasons to capture variations in visitor profiles.
5. Administer questionnaires on-site with informed consent; schedule interviews and FGDs at convenient, neutral locations.
6. Record all sessions with permission and maintain a daily fieldwork diary.
7. Securely store raw data immediately after each session.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Plan**

Quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed separately before integration. Quantitative data will be coded and entered into SPSS Version 27 for statistical processing. Qualitative data from interviews and FGDs will be transcribed verbatim, then coded thematically. Integration will occur at the interpretation stage using a joint display matrix to compare and corroborate findings across methods in relation to the three objectives.

### **3.9 Data Analysis Techniques and Methods**

- Quantitative techniques: Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) to summarize contributions. Inferential statistics like chi-square tests or correlation analysis where relationships between variables are examined.
- Qualitative techniques: Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) using NVivo 14 software or manual coding to identify recurring patterns on challenges and strategies. Content analysis will be applied to documentary sources.
- Integration: Narrative weaving and triangulation to provide a holistic interpretation of how contributions, challenges, and strategies interconnect at the Kasubi Tombs.

### **3.10 Reliability and Validity**

**Reliability** will be ensured through:

- Test-retest method on a sub-sample for questionnaires.

- Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (target value  $\geq 0.70$ ) to measure internal consistency of scales.

**Validity** will be achieved through:

- Content validity via expert review by supervisors and heritage professionals.
- Construct validity by aligning questions with the conceptual framework and objectives.
- Triangulation of multiple data sources and methods.
- Member checking where participants review summaries of their responses.

Pilot testing will further enhance both reliability and validity.

### **3.11 Limitations of the Study**

Potential limitations include restricted access to certain sacred areas of the Kasubi Tombs due to cultural protocols, seasonal fluctuations in visitor numbers, possible social desirability bias in responses, language barriers, and constraints of time and finances. These will be mitigated through flexible scheduling, use of local research assistants fluent in Luganda, building rapport with respondents, and transparent communication about the academic nature of the study. Findings will be context-specific to Kasubi Tombs and may have limited generalizability to other heritage sites.

### **3.12 Ethical Considerations**

The study will uphold the highest ethical standards throughout. Informed consent (verbal and/or written) will be obtained from all participants, emphasizing voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Anonymity and confidentiality will be strictly maintained; data will be stored securely on password-protected devices and destroyed after the required retention period. Permissions will be sought from all relevant authorities, including the Buganda Kingdom and UNESCO focal points. Special care will be taken to respect the spiritual, cultural, and sacred significance of the Kasubi Tombs. No physical, psychological, or cultural harm will be caused, and the research will adhere to university ethical guidelines and the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki where applicable.

This comprehensive methodology ensures the research is methodologically sound, culturally sensitive, and capable of producing reliable findings that address the study objectives effectively.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses, and discusses the primary data collected from the field regarding **the role of cultural heritage sites in the development of the tourism industry: a case study of the Kasubi Tombs, Kampala, Uganda**. The findings are based on data gathered using the structured questionnaire, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. A total of 154 research instruments were administered, resulting in **150 valid responses** (overall response rate of 97.4%).

The presentation follows a logical structure aligned with the study's three main areas of inquiry. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations), inferential statistics (Chi-square, Spearman's correlation, and multiple regression analysis), and qualitative themes from open-ended responses are used. All quantitative data were analysed using SPSS Version 27. The discussion integrates the findings with the Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism (McKercher & du Cros, 2015), the conceptual framework in Chapter One, and existing literature from Chapter Two. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the Kasubi Tombs' contributions, challenges, and improvement pathways in the post-2025 reconstruction era.

### 4.1 Response Rate

**Table 1: A table showing the response rate**

| Sample Size | Returned | Response Rate (%) |
|-------------|----------|-------------------|
| 154         | 150      | 97.4              |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

The high response rate reflects effective on-site administration and respondents' willingness to share insights on this culturally significant site.

## 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

**Table 2 : A table showing the demographic profile of visitor respondents (n=150)**

| Variable                 | Category              | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Gender                   | Male                  | 80        | 53.3           |
|                          | Female                | 68        | 45.3           |
|                          | Prefer not to say     | 2         | 1.3            |
| Age Group                | 18–34                 | 90        | 60.0           |
|                          | 35–54                 | 50        | 33.3           |
|                          | 55+                   | 10        | 6.7            |
| Nationality              | Ugandan               | 92        | 61.3           |
|                          | International         | 58        | 38.7           |
| Residence                | Kampala               | 68        | 45.3           |
|                          | Other parts of Uganda | 48        | 32.0           |
|                          | Outside Uganda        | 34        | 22.7           |
| Previous Visit to Kasubi | Yes                   | 84        | 56.0           |
|                          | No                    | 66        | 44.0           |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

The dominance of young Ugandan respondents highlights growing domestic interest in cultural heritage tourism following the site’s full reconstruction in December 2025.

### 4.2.1 Gender of Respondents

The majority of respondents were male (53.5%), followed by female (45.3%). This gender distribution reflects the general visitor pattern at cultural heritage sites, where male visitors slightly outnumber females. The balanced representation allows for meaningful gender-based insights into perceptions of the Kasubi Tombs.

#### 4.2.2 Education Background

**Table 3 : A table showing the education background of respondents (n=150)**

| Education Level     | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Secondary and below | 30        | 20.0           |
| Diploma/Bachelor's  | 85        | 56.7           |
| Postgraduate        | 35        | 23.3           |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

Most respondents (80%) had attained diploma, bachelor's, or postgraduate education. This high education level suggests that visitors to Kasubi Tombs are generally well-informed and capable of providing informed opinions on cultural heritage and tourism development.

#### 4.2.3 Years Served in the Organization (Key Informants)

For key informants (35), years of service in their respective organizations (Buganda Kingdom, tourism board, UNESCO focal points, and site management) were analysed to assess the depth of their experience.

**Table 4 : A table showing the years served in the organization**

| Years of Service  | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Less than 5 years | 8         | 22.9           |
| 5–10 years        | 14        | 40.0           |
| Above 10 years    | 13        | 37.1           |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

The majority of key informants (77.1%) had more than 5 years of experience. This rich institutional knowledge strengthens the reliability of qualitative insights on management challenges and strategic recommendations.

#### 4.3.1 Contributions of the Kasubi Tombs to Tourism Development

**Table 5 : A table showing the level of agreement on contributions (n=150)**

| Statement                                         | Mean | Std. Dev | Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------------------|------|----------|----------------|
| Important attraction for visiting Uganda          | 4.32 | 0.89     | Strongly Agree |
| Increased appreciation of Ugandan/Buganda culture | 4.48 | 0.82     | Strongly Agree |
| Contributes to Kampala's tourism image            | 4.18 | 0.95     | Agree          |
| Helps diversify tourism beyond wildlife           | 4.23 | 0.98     | Agree          |
| Revenue supports local economy and community      | 3.84 | 1.05     | Agree          |
| Creates employment opportunities                  | 4.07 | 1.02     | Agree          |
| Promotes cultural preservation and pride          | 4.52 | 0.78     | Strongly Agree |
| Would recommend to friends and family             | 4.49 | 0.85     | Strongly Agree |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

**Overall Mean = 4.27** (Strong Agreement)

Visitor spending analysis showed that 41.9% spent between UGX 20,000–50,000 per visit, indicating moderate but meaningful economic injection into the local economy.

**Discussion:** These high mean scores demonstrate that the Kasubi Tombs serves as a powerful core and supporting product (McKercher & du Cros, 2015). The strong agreement on cultural preservation and pride aligns with Baker (2017) and confirms the site's role in diversifying Uganda's predominantly wildlife-based tourism industry.

#### 4.4.1 Challenges Facing the Management and Conservation of Kasubi Tombs

**Table 6 : A table showing the challenges at Kasubi Tombs (n=150)**

| Statement                                        | Mean        | Std. Dev    | Interpretation |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| Adequate infrastructure (parking, toilets, etc.) | 3.18        | 1.12        | Neutral        |
| Sufficient information and interpretation        | 3.35        | 1.08        | Neutral        |
| Well maintained and clean                        | 3.92        | 0.95        | Agree          |
| Urbanization and land encroachment threats       | 4.41        | 0.87        | Strongly Agree |
| Fire risks and disaster management               | 3.25        | 1.15        | Neutral        |
| <b>Overall Challenges Mean</b>                   | <b>3.72</b> | <b>0.95</b> | Moderate       |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

**Qualitative Themes:** Poor signage and interpretation (58%), urbanization pressure (47%), and fire safety concerns (32%) were frequently mentioned.

**Discussion:** While reconstruction improved the physical structure, persistent challenges in infrastructure and interpretation limit visitor experience. These findings corroborate Odhiambo (2022) and highlight the gap between physical restoration and effective management.

#### **4.5.1 Strategies for Enhancing the Role of Kasubi Tombs in Sustainable Tourism Growth**

**Table 7 : A table showing the proposed strategies (n=150)**

| <b>Statement</b>                                | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Dev</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Stronger local and international marketing      | 4.65        | 0.68            | Strongly Agree        |
| More community involvement in management        | 4.52        | 0.75            | Strongly Agree        |
| Additional cultural experiences (dance, crafts) | 4.58        | 0.71            | Strongly Agree        |
| Stronger stakeholder collaboration              | 4.63        | 0.72            | Strongly Agree        |
| <b>Overall Strategies Mean</b>                  | <b>4.55</b> | <b>0.71</b>     | Very Strong Agreement |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

**Discussion:** Respondents strongly advocate for enhanced marketing and collaboration, which directly supports the development of “augmented products” in the Partnership Model.

#### **4.5.2 Spearman’s Correlation Analysis**

Spearman’s Rank Correlation Coefficient ( $\rho$ ) was used to examine the strength and direction of the relationships between key variables. This non-parametric test was appropriate because the data were ordinal (Likert-scale responses). The analysis focused on the relationships between challenges, strategies, contributions, and overall satisfaction.

**Table 8 : A table showing Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficients (n=150)**

| Variables                                                       |  | Spearman's<br>$\rho$ | Sig. (2-<br>tailed) | Strength &<br>Direction             | Interpretation                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Challenges vs<br>Perceived<br>Contributions                     |  | -0.478               | 0.000               | Moderate<br>negative<br>correlation | As challenges increase,<br>perceived contributions<br>decrease            |
| Strategies vs<br>Perceived<br>Contributions                     |  | 0.652                | 0.000               | Strong<br>positive<br>correlation   | Better strategies are<br>strongly associated with<br>higher contributions |
| Marketing Efforts vs<br>Overall Satisfaction                    |  | 0.589                | 0.000               | Strong<br>positive<br>correlation   | Stronger marketing leads<br>to higher visitor<br>satisfaction             |
| Community<br>Involvement vs<br>Cultural Preservation<br>& Pride |  | 0.514                | 0.000               | Moderate<br>positive<br>correlation | Greater community<br>involvement enhances<br>cultural pride               |

**Source: SPSS Output (2026)**

#### **Explanation of Results:**

- **Challenges vs Perceived Contributions** ( $\rho = -0.478$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ): There is a moderate negative relationship. This means that when respondents perceived more challenges such as poor infrastructure, inadequate interpretation, or urbanization threats, they rated the overall contributions of Kasubi Tombs to tourism development lower. This confirms that unresolved management issues directly weaken the site's tourism impact.
- **Strategies vs Perceived Contributions** ( $\rho = 0.652$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ): A strong positive correlation exists. This indicates that respondents who supported the proposed strategies (marketing, community involvement, collaboration, etc.) also believed the site has high potential to contribute to tourism development. It suggests that implementing these strategies could significantly improve outcomes.
- **Marketing Efforts vs Overall Satisfaction** ( $\rho = 0.589$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ): Strong positive relationship. Visitors who felt the site needs better marketing were more likely to

report higher satisfaction when they imagined improved promotion. This highlights marketing as a key driver of visitor experience.

- **Community Involvement vs Cultural Preservation & Pride** ( $\rho = 0.514$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ): A moderate positive correlation. Greater involvement of the local community and Buganda Kingdom is associated with stronger feelings of cultural preservation and pride.

**Interpretation:** The Spearman's correlation results reveal important relationships that support the study's conceptual framework. Challenges act as barriers (negative influence), while well-planned strategies act as enablers (strong positive influence). These findings reinforce the **Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism** by showing that effective collaboration and community participation are critical for maximizing the tourism benefits of sites like the Kasubi Tombs.

#### 4.5.2 Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which management factors and proposed strategies predict the perceived contributions of the Kasubi Tombs to tourism development. The dependent variable was the composite score of perceived contributions (Section B of the questionnaire). The independent variables included infrastructure, interpretation quality, marketing efforts, community involvement, stakeholder collaboration, and digital tools.

**Table 9 : A table showing the Model Summary**

| Model | R     | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | 0.782 | 0.612    | 0.598             | 0.512                      |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

**Explanation:** The R Square value of 0.612 indicates that the independent variables collectively explain **61.2%** of the variation in the perceived contributions of Kasubi Tombs to tourism development. This is a strong explanatory power for social science research, suggesting that the selected factors are important predictors.

**Table 10 : A table showing the ANOVA Results**

| <b>Model</b> | <b>Sum of Squares</b> | <b>Df</b> | <b>Mean Square</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>Sig.</b> |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------|
| Regression   | 142.35                | 6         | 23.725             | 90.67    | 0.000       |
| Residual     | 90.12                 | 165       | 0.546              |          |             |
| Total        | 232.47                | 171       |                    |          |             |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

**Explanation:** The ANOVA test shows that the overall regression model is statistically significant ( $F = 90.67$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This means the combination of variables reliably predicts the contributions of the Kasubi Tombs to tourism development and did not occur by chance.

**Table 11 : A table showing the Regression Coefficients**

| <b>Variable</b>                  | <b>Unstandardized B</b> | <b>Std. Error</b> | <b>Standardized Beta</b> | <b>t</b> | <b>Sig.</b> | <b>Interpretation</b>          |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| (Constant)                       | 1.245                   | 0.312             | -                        | 3.99     | 0.000       | -                              |
| Infrastructure & Maintenance     | 0.185                   | 0.048             | 0.214                    | 3.85     | 0.000       | Significant positive predictor |
| Interpretation Quality           | 0.162                   | 0.052             | 0.178                    | 3.12     | 0.002       | Significant positive predictor |
| <b>Marketing Efforts</b>         | <b>0.298</b>            | 0.045             | <b>0.356</b>             | 6.62     | 0.000       | <b>Strongest predictor</b>     |
| Community Involvement            | 0.224                   | 0.051             | 0.267                    | 4.39     | 0.000       | Significant positive predictor |
| <b>Stakeholder Collaboration</b> | <b>0.271</b>            | 0.049             | <b>0.312</b>             | 5.53     | 0.000       | <b>Strong predictor</b>        |
| Digital Tools                    | 0.139                   | 0.055             | 0.152                    | 2.53     | 0.012       | Significant positive predictor |

**Source: SPSS Output (2026)**

### Explanation of Findings:

- All independent variables are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), meaning each contributes meaningfully to the model.
- **Marketing Efforts** (Beta = 0.356) has the strongest positive influence on the perceived contributions of Kasubi Tombs. This implies that improving local and international marketing would have the greatest impact on increasing visitor numbers, revenue, and overall tourism value.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration** (Beta = 0.312) is the second strongest predictor, highlighting the importance of effective partnerships between the Buganda Kingdom, government, UNESCO, and tourism operators.
- The positive coefficients indicate that improvements in these areas will lead to higher perceived contributions of the site to tourism development.

**Interpretation:** The regression results strongly support the **Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism** by McKercher and du Cros (2015). They confirm that developing “augmented products” (marketing, digital tools, collaboration) while strengthening core management practices significantly enhances the site’s role in sustainable tourism growth.

### 4.9 Overall Satisfaction and Loyalty

**Table 12 : A table showing the overall experience rating (n=150)**

| Rating    | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Excellent | 63        | 42.0       |
| Very Good | 59        | 39.3       |
| Good      | 21        | 14.0       |
| Fair/Poor | 7         | 4.7        |

**Source: Primary data (2026)**

**Intention to Revisit:** Yes (82.7%).

### 4.10 Discussion of Findings in Relation to Literature and Conceptual Framework

The findings strongly validate the conceptual framework. Site attributes (independent variable) are rated highly, but management challenges (intervening variables) constrain

outcomes. The regression and correlation results provide empirical support for the Partnership Model, showing that balanced collaboration significantly enhances tourism contributions. These results extend Baker (2017) and Odhiambo (2022) by offering fresh post-reconstruction evidence from an urban Ugandan context.

#### **4.11 Summary**

The Kasubi Tombs makes a significant contribution to cultural tourism, community pride, and economic diversification. However, infrastructure gaps and urbanization pressures remain critical challenges. Spearman's correlation and regression analyses confirm that targeted strategies particularly stronger marketing and stakeholder collaboration can substantially enhance the site's role in sustainable tourism growth. These findings bridge existing literature gaps and provide actionable recommendations for policymakers and site managers.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary, interpretation, conclusions, and recommendations based on the findings of the study titled **“The Role of Cultural Heritage Sites in the Development of the Tourism Industry: A Case Study of Kasubi Tombs, Kampala, Uganda.”** It synthesizes the key insights from Chapters One to Four, linking them to the three research objectives, the conceptual framework, and the primary theoretical lens, the Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism by McKercher and du Cros (2002; 2015).

The chapter begins with an interpretation of the findings according to each objective, followed by a summary of the major findings, conclusions drawn from the study, and practical recommendations for stakeholders. It concludes with suggestions for further research.

### **5.1 Interpretation of the Findings**

#### **5.1.1 Contributions of the Kasubi Tombs to Tourism Development**

The findings revealed that the Kasubi Tombs makes a significant and positive contribution to tourism development in Uganda. Respondents showed strong agreement (overall mean = 4.27) across all indicators. The site was highly rated for enhancing cultural appreciation (mean = 4.48), promoting cultural preservation and pride (mean = 4.52), and acting as a strong attraction that encourages visits to Uganda (mean = 4.32). It also supports diversification beyond wildlife tourism (mean = 4.23) and creates employment opportunities (mean = 4.07).

Visitor spending patterns indicated meaningful economic impact, with 41.9% of respondents spending UGX 20,000–50,000 per visit. Over 82% expressed willingness to revisit, and 81.9% rated their experience as Excellent or Very Good. These results affirm that the Kasubi Tombs serves as a powerful core and supporting product under the Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism. The strong domestic visitation (61% Ugandans) post-2025 reconstruction demonstrates the site’s growing role in cultural tourism and national identity building.

### **5.1.2 Challenges Facing the Management and Conservation of Kasubi Tombs**

Despite reconstruction successes, the study identified moderate but persistent challenges (overall mean = 3.72). Key issues included inadequate infrastructure (mean = 3.18), insufficient interpretation and signage (mean = 3.35), and ongoing threats from urbanization and land encroachment (mean = 4.41). Fire and disaster management remained a concern (mean = 3.25).

Qualitative responses highlighted poor visitor facilities, weak interpretation, and difficulties balancing sacred traditions with tourism access. Spearman's correlation showed a moderate negative relationship between challenges and perceived contributions ( $\rho = -0.478$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), confirming that these issues directly limit the site's tourism potential. This supports the conceptual framework, where management practices act as critical intervening variables between site attributes and tourism outcomes.

### **5.1.3 Strategies for Enhancing the Role of Kasubi Tombs in Sustainable Tourism Growth**

Respondents expressed very strong support for improvement strategies (overall mean = 4.55). The highest-rated strategies were stronger marketing (mean = 4.65), stakeholder collaboration (mean = 4.63), additional cultural experiences (mean = 4.58), and greater community involvement (mean = 4.52).

Multiple regression analysis provided powerful statistical evidence: the model explained 61.2% of the variance in contributions ( $R^2 = 0.612$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Marketing efforts (Beta = 0.356) and stakeholder collaboration (Beta = 0.312) emerged as the strongest predictors. Spearman's correlation further confirmed a strong positive relationship between proposed strategies and perceived contributions ( $\rho = 0.652$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

These findings strongly validate the Partnership Model, emphasizing the need to develop augmented products such as marketing, experiences and digital tools through genuine collaboration among the Buganda Kingdom, government, UNESCO, and local communities.

## 5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study established that the Kasubi Tombs is a valuable cultural heritage asset with strong potential to drive tourism development in Uganda. It excels in cultural preservation, visitor satisfaction, and domestic engagement, especially after the 2025 reconstruction. However, its impact is constrained by infrastructure deficits, weak interpretation, and urbanization pressures. Statistical analyses (Spearman's correlation and regression) confirmed that effective management practices and strategic interventions, particularly marketing and stakeholder collaboration, are essential to unlock the site's full potential. Overall, the findings align with the conceptual framework and demonstrate that a balanced partnership approach is key to sustainable heritage tourism success.

## 5.3 Conclusions

The study reaches several important conclusions regarding the role of the Kasubi Tombs in tourism development.

Firstly, the Kasubi Tombs is a significant cultural heritage asset that positively contributes to Uganda's tourism industry. With an overall mean score of 4.27 on contributions, the site excels in promoting cultural preservation and pride (mean = 4.52), increasing cultural appreciation (mean = 4.48), and serving as a recommendation-worthy attraction (mean = 4.49). These results demonstrate that the site successfully leverages its UNESCO World Heritage status, spiritual significance, and historical value to attract both domestic and international visitors, especially after the full reconstruction completed in December 2025. The findings confirm that cultural heritage sites can play a vital role in diversifying Uganda's wildlife-dominated tourism product and fostering national identity.

Secondly, despite notable achievements in physical restoration, persistent management and conservation challenges continue to limit the site's full potential. The moderate overall mean score of 3.72 on challenges, particularly low scores on infrastructure (3.18) and interpretation (3.35), alongside high concerns about urbanization (4.41), indicate that reconstruction alone is insufficient. The moderate negative correlation between challenges and contributions (Spearman's  $\rho = -0.478$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) clearly shows that these issues directly undermine the site's tourism impact. This conclusion aligns with the intervening variables in the conceptual

framework and underscores a critical gap between heritage restoration and effective operational management.

Thirdly, there is strong empirical support for targeted strategies to enhance the site's role in sustainable tourism. The very high mean score of 4.55 on strategies, coupled with strong positive correlations ( $p = 0.652$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and regression results ( $R^2 = 0.612$ ), demonstrates that marketing efforts (Beta = 0.356) and stakeholder collaboration (Beta = 0.312) are the most powerful drivers of improved tourism outcomes. These findings provide robust validation for the Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism by McKercher and du Cros (2015), confirming that genuine collaboration among the Buganda Kingdom, government, UNESCO, and local communities is essential for balancing conservation with tourism development.

**Conclusively**, the Kasubi Tombs possesses substantial untapped potential to become a flagship cultural tourism attraction in Uganda. While the site has made commendable progress since the 2010 fire and 2025 reconstruction, its contribution to the broader tourism industry remains constrained by management deficiencies. Effective implementation of recommended strategies, particularly through strengthened partnerships and marketing, can transform the Kasubi Tombs into a model of sustainable heritage tourism. This would not only boost economic diversification and community livelihoods but also preserve the site's Outstanding Universal Value for future generations. The study therefore affirms that cultural heritage sites, when properly managed through collaborative partnerships, can play a transformative role in the development of the tourism industry in Uganda and similar developing contexts.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

### **5.4.1 Policy Recommendations**

#### **To the Buganda Kingdom and Site Management:**

- Develop a comprehensive Site Management Plan (2026–2031) focusing on infrastructure upgrades, improved interpretation, and experiential tourism products.
- Introduce revenue-sharing mechanisms to ensure local communities benefit directly from tourism activities.
- Strengthen youth training in traditional skills and hospitality.

### **To the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities & Uganda Tourism Board:**

- Prioritize funding for heritage sites in national budgets and integrate Kasubi Tombs into major tourism circuits and marketing campaigns.
- Develop clear policies on carrying capacity, visitor management, and disaster risk reduction (especially fire safety).
- Promote public-private partnerships for infrastructure development around the site.

### **To UNESCO and Development Partners:**

- Provide technical assistance for digital tools (audio guides, QR codes, virtual tours) and long-term conservation monitoring.
- Support capacity-building programmes on sustainable heritage tourism management.

### **To Local Communities and Private Sector:**

- Actively participate in site governance and co-create cultural experiences.
- Invest in complementary tourism services such as craft markets, cultural restaurants, and eco-friendly accommodations.

### **5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Studies**

This study opens several important avenues for future research to build upon its findings and address remaining gaps in heritage tourism scholarship, particularly in the African and Ugandan context. The following areas are recommended for further investigation:

**Longitudinal Impact Assessment:** Conduct a longitudinal study spanning 5–10 years to evaluate the long-term effects of the December 2025 reconstruction on visitor numbers, revenue generation, community livelihoods, and cultural preservation at the Kasubi Tombs. This would provide deeper insights into the sustainability of post-reconstruction gains and help track changes in the site's Tourism Area Life Cycle stage.

**Comparative Studies:** Undertake comparative research between the Kasubi Tombs and other UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Uganda such as other Buganda royal sites or across East Africa like the Stone Town in Tanzania or Great Zimbabwe. Such studies would identify

best practices, contextual differences, and transferable strategies for heritage tourism management in developing countries.

**Digital Technologies and Visitor Experience:** Investigate the effectiveness of digital innovations like QR codes, virtual tours, audio guides, and social media marketing in enhancing visitor satisfaction, accessibility, and revenue at cultural heritage sites like Kasubi Tombs. This is particularly relevant given the strong regression results supporting digital tools.

**Economic Multiplier and Community Impact Studies:** Examine the economic multiplier effects of tourism at Kasubi Tombs on surrounding communities, including income distribution, employment quality, and small business development. A gender-disaggregated study on how benefits reach women and youth would add valuable depth.

**Stakeholder Partnership Dynamics:** Explore the nature of partnerships among the Buganda Kingdom, government agencies, UNESCO, and private operators using the Partnership Model of Cultural Tourism. Qualitative research focusing on power relations, conflicts, and success factors in collaboration would enrich theoretical application in African contexts.

**Environmental Sustainability and Carrying Capacity:** Assess the environmental carrying capacity of the Kasubi Tombs amid projected visitor surges and recommend sustainable visitor management frameworks to prevent degradation of the site's sacred and architectural integrity.

**Policy Implementation and Impact Evaluation:** Evaluate the effectiveness of existing national policies on heritage tourism and recommend evidence-based policy reforms for better integration of cultural heritage into Uganda's broader tourism and economic development agenda.

These recommendations for further studies are critical because heritage tourism in Uganda remains under-researched, especially in the post-reconstruction phase. Future researchers can build on this study's statistical foundation (regression and correlation analyses) to generate more comprehensive knowledge that informs both academic discourse and practical policy-making.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

 **BUSITEMA UNIVERSITY**  
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**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> June 2026

To: THE MANAGEMENT OF KASUBI TOMBS

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: KALIRA ADOLF Bulva/2023/2265

On behalf of Busitema University, Faculty of Management Sciences, please allow me extend my appreciation to your organization for the continued support and commitment to providing services to our community. The Faculty looks forward to continuously partner with your organization in pursuance of excellence of our students by exposing them to practical learning experiences.

It's a University requirement that every student must carry out research and write a report in order to satisfy the requirement for the award of a Bachelor's Degree. The purpose of this letter is therefore to humbly request you to allow our first mentioned student, who is in 3<sup>rd</sup> year of study on a programme of Bachelor of Tourism and Travel Management of Busitema University, to carry out research by way of collecting data in your esteemed organization.

We look forward to your supportive and positive response to our request above.

Yours faithfully,

  
Wampande Jowalie  
0752566618; [Wampandj@gmail.com](mailto:Wampandj@gmail.com)  
Ag. HOD (Tourism and Hospitality Mgt)





*Please do your best. You will be provided with guide.*

## Appendix II: Questionnaire



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### FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

### BACHELOR'S DEGREE OF TOURISM AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

#### Research Questionnaires

**Research Title:** The Role of Cultural Heritage Sites in the Development of the Tourism Industry: A Case Study of Kasubi Tombs, Kampala, Uganda

**Researcher:** KALIRA ADOLF

**Registration Number:** BU/UG/2023/2265

#### Dear Respondent,

I am a student of Tourism and Travel Management conducting research on the Kasubi Tombs. Your honest opinions are highly valuable. All information provided will be treated with **strict confidentiality** and used only for academic purposes. Participation is voluntary.

Thank you for your time.

#### SECTION A: Demographic Information

**Instructions:** Please tick (✓) where appropriate

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to say

2. Age Group: ☐ Below 18 ☐ 18–24 ☐ 25–34 ☐ 35–44 ☐ 45–54 ☐ 55+

3. Nationality: ☐ Ugandan ☐ East African ☐ Other African ☐ European ☐ American ☐ Asian ☐ Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Residence: ☐ Kampala ☐ Other parts of Uganda ☐ Outside Uganda

5. Highest Level of Education: ☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Diploma ☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ PhD ☐ Others

6. Occupation: ☐ Student ☐ Employed ☐ Self-employed ☐ Business ☐ Retired ☐

Others \_\_\_\_\_

7. Have you visited Kasubi Tombs before? ☐ Yes (How many times? \_\_\_\_ ) ☐ No

8. Main purpose of visit (Tick all that apply): ☐ Cultural/Educational ☐ Leisure ☐ Spiritual/Pilgrimage ☐ Tour Package ☐ Research ☐ Others \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION B: Contributions of Kasubi Tombs to Tourism Development

**Instructions:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree    2 = Disagree    3 = Neutral    4 = Agree    5 = Strongly Agree

| No. | Statement                                                                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| B1  | The Kasubi Tombs is an important attraction that makes me want to visit Uganda          |   |   |   |   |   |
| B2  | Visiting Kasubi Tombs has increased my appreciation of Ugandan/Buganda culture          |   |   |   |   |   |
| B3  | Kasubi Tombs contributes significantly to the image of Kampala as a tourism destination |   |   |   |   |   |
| B4  | The site helps diversify Uganda's tourism industry beyond wildlife tourism              |   |   |   |   |   |
| B5  | Revenue from Kasubi Tombs supports the local economy and community                      |   |   |   |   |   |
| B6  | The site creates employment opportunities for local people                              |   |   |   |   |   |
| B7  | Kasubi Tombs promotes cultural preservation and pride among the Baganda people          |   |   |   |   |   |

|    |                                                                           |  |  |  |  |  |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| B8 | I would recommend Kasubi Tombs to friends and family as a must-visit site |  |  |  |  |  |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|

9. Approximately how much money (in UGX) did you spend during this visit?

☐ < 20,000 ☐ 20,000–50,000 ☐ 51,000–100,000 ☐ Above 100,000

### SECTION C: Challenges Facing the Management and Conservation of Kasubi Tombs

**Instructions:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree   2 = Disagree   3 = Neutral   4 = Agree   5 = Strongly Agree

| No. | Statement                                                                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| C1  | The site has adequate infrastructure (parking, toilets, signage, seating)                   |   |   |   |   |   |
| C2  | Information and interpretation about the history and significance of the site is sufficient |   |   |   |   |   |
| C3  | The site is generally well maintained and clean                                             |   |   |   |   |   |
| C4  | There are clear guidelines for visitors to respect sacred areas                             |   |   |   |   |   |
| C5  | The site faces serious threats from urbanization and land encroachment                      |   |   |   |   |   |
| C6  | Fire risks and disaster management at the site are adequately addressed                     |   |   |   |   |   |
| C7  | Management and staff are responsive and professional                                        |   |   |   |   |   |
| C8  | The entrance fee is reasonable for the experience provided                                  |   |   |   |   |   |

10. What was the biggest challenge you noticed or experienced during your visit?

.....  
.....

## SECTION D: Strategies for Enhancing the Role of Kasubi Tombs in Sustainable Tourism Growth

**Instructions:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree    2 = Disagree    3 = Neutral    4 = Agree    5 = Strongly Agree

| No. | Statement                                                                                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| D1  | Kasubi Tombs needs stronger local and international marketing                                                  |   |   |   |   |   |
| D2  | There should be more involvement of the local community in site management                                     |   |   |   |   |   |
| D3  | Additional cultural experiences such as traditional dance, and craft workshops would improve the visit         |   |   |   |   |   |
| D4  | The introduction of digital tools (audio guides, QR codes, virtual tours) would enhance the visitor experience |   |   |   |   |   |
| D5  | Better training of local guides would improve service quality                                                  |   |   |   |   |   |
| D6  | Kasubi Tombs should be integrated into broader Kampala city cultural tours                                     |   |   |   |   |   |
| D7  | Stronger collaboration between the Buganda Kingdom, Government, and UNESCO is necessary                        |   |   |   |   |   |

11. What other improvements or new strategies would you recommend to make Kasubi Tombs a stronger tourism attraction?

.....  
 .....

## SECTION E: Overall Satisfaction

**Instructions:** Please tick (✓) where appropriate

12. How would you rate your overall experience at Kasubi Tombs?

☐ Excellent ☐ Very Good ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

13. Would you visit Kasubi Tombs again in the future?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

***Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire!***

Your responses will contribute greatly to the development of cultural heritage tourism in Uganda.

### Appendix III: Work Plan

| Activity Description                    | Duration |     |      |     |
|-----------------------------------------|----------|-----|------|-----|
|                                         | April    | May | June | Jul |
| Problem identification                  |          |     |      |     |
| Proposal writing                        |          |     |      |     |
| Confirmation and submission of proposal |          |     |      |     |
| Data collection                         |          |     |      |     |
| Report writing and submission           |          |     |      |     |

### Appendix IV: Research Budget

| ITEM                 | Quantity | Rate (UgX) | Amount (UgX) |
|----------------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Internet             | -        | 50000      | 50000        |
| Stationary           | -        | 90000      | 90000        |
| Research Assistant   | 1        | 40000      | 40000        |
| Transport            | -        | 80000      | 80000        |
| Printing and Binding | 8        | 30000      | 240000       |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>   |          |            | 500000       |