



## TOURISM ACTIVITIES IN A PLACE CALLED BATKANU IN SIERRA LEONE

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of writing this journal is to unveil certain monuments that are hidden at Batkanu. It was a very important aspect to discover monuments that are of touristic interest. Tourism is a science subject and because of that a lot of research has to be done to discover major sites, attractions including Batkanu which is my focus in writing this journal.

**KEYWORDS:** Tourism, activities, Batkanu.

### INTRODUCTION

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2013, that was the stated day for the tourism department to go on a tour to Batkanu. The purpose of that tour was to research on certain monuments and relics that will be of touristic interest Also to train students on how to understand a trip for tourism research. The problem was that most students think that accessing Batkanu will be difficult but it was not so, because understanding is an important part of undertaking tourism activities.

The route started from Jomo Kenyatta Road, Merry Weather School, Pademba Road, Circular Road way down to Macauley Street and to mountain cut. The bus stopped at kissy road because one of us wanted to buy a gallon of water. After which the driving continued towards up gun and way up to shell. From shell we passed through several places. We saw hills and other attractive views such as a herd of cattle's grazing in a field we passed another settlement where I saw a fleet of bikes and a strange man appeared asking for money. As we

went along, I saw a cotton tree which has a small hut like structured which serves as a focal point between the people and their oracles.

Finally, we reached Batkanu. We were warmly welcomed by the chief and the locals. Immediately a village drum was sounded and crowd started forming and joined us at the chief's barray (chief cut).

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research work was a heavy task to collect the needed data. However, the following methods were used to collect these data:

### **Interview**

Interview were also constructed to bring out clearly the facts needed by the researcher, people in Batkanu and strangers were also interviewed which yielded a very good result.

### **OBSERVATION**

An observation method was also used to collect this data. Most tourism product are consumed on site in terms of experience and feelings the research brought out facts based on personal observation throughout the conducted tour at Batkanu in Sierra Leone.

## **RESULTS**

We went to discuss monuments at Batkanu and also to study the history of Batkanu and it's significant to tourism development.

The chief told us that Batkanu is made up of 26 chiefdoms. He took us to a pyramid that we called monuments in tourism which was having Inscribed names on it. The names were those who fought bravery for the freedom of the Loko's in Libeisy Galunca Town in Batkanu. He told us that Batkanu was headed by district commissioner. Four white colonial masters died there and were buried in the land. Many white men left most of their properties and flee away because of the black mosquitoes that cause malaria at that time. The pyramid (monument) has a hole on the left part. It was having an inscription of names in it. At first during the rebel war, rebels tried all they can to open it but they failed. Names that were inscribed on the iron plate were as follows:

### **White Colonial Masters**

Lt.Cox Harold Galway Warren

District Commissioner Kenema District

Died 5<sup>th</sup> March, 1919 As A Result Of Black Water Fever

Past Intervention of the Libeisy

Gahun Chiefdom

Mr. Y. D. Sesay

P.C. Bai Yankay Gbatongoh

Mr. Lamin M. Sidique

Dr. James Sesay

Mr. Sangster Sesay

Mr. John Salkeld Durra Colonial

Civil Servant Born 29<sup>th</sup> June 1876

Died 8<sup>th</sup> March, 1913

After which, he showed us to an open field which he said there the British trained their troops for world war. Another part he also showed to us at the edge of the field which he said the white men used there to hang criminal alive. That place also served as an exclusion center for the locals living there.

Warriors who fought Loko's freedom in Libeisy Gahun.

Pa Alimamy Bangura, Bondi Manso Gbanteh, Mende Kargbo Santigie Kargbo, Kondi Kargbo and other few.

Also, he showed us some old white men's grave. After which he gave us a brief lecture about the ball like tank we saw. He said that the tank served the white officials who were residing there at that time. The commissioner's house was also shown to us. The house had an underground basement which serves as a hideout in case of any attack. Other places where shown to us such as the prison and a lawn tennis court.

### **The Town**

Batkanu town is fairly a big one compared to yester years standard; With it's old reservation area circulated with those savanna forest, to give it flavor to any of the tourist who might want to visit the town. It has a deserving friendliness of warm people, acceptable to all shades and views of civilization in turn treating to education their fellow tribes'men.

Batkanu had hosted the colonial administrators and officers, in good faith. Batkanu has its own town plans different from most northern town of the country, their street, though dusty, but very wide with approximate measurement of forty feet wide and with a stretched of 100 – 200 meters long. Most of the street assembled to the town square where a tower was built as a symbol of greatness or authority. The tower has compartments where document are kept. The tower was near the governor's dwelling house which was used as a hiding segment in case of invasion. On the tower, there were mark of all inscription of colonial hero and warriors and administrators etc. the compartment which host the document has no easy access because it contain vital and valuable information for the purpose of other successors of the district. Those documents, if access will provide valuable assets for both historians and other already mentioned in this write up. The stay at Batkanu last for two hours. Places visited at Batkanu includes, the administrator's grave and other warriors prison house, the hospital which was use during the 1846s and still in use, it is strong enough to be used for other purposes. Batkanu, as I have stated earlier, has a topography of administration, dusty roads, with those managbesseh trees use as a local shaving stick bounding the road on both sides, some amount of narrow bridges alongside the road towards the town.

Tower and its insignia from 18, 00-1919.









### White Colonial Settings of Batkanu Include

1. Lt. colonial: - Harold Galway Warren. (District Commission) died by the black water disease. He was buried in Batkanu on the 5<sup>th</sup> march 1919. He serves for 23 years as colonial administrator and commissioner.
2. Mr. John Salkeld Durra: - Colonial Senior Civil Servant born on the 29<sup>th</sup> march 1876 and died on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1913.
3. Captain Henry Edwin Bailey: -District Commissioner of Karennia District from 1863 and died on the 14/11/1913 as Colonial Administrator. They sent to those places as punishment for being so criminal in their country of origin.
4. Change of the chieftdom from Karennia to Libeisyay Gahun Chieftdom in 1919 and a Paramount Chief was elected to oversee the district when it was divided in to two parts , the Portloko District and the other to Bombali Shebura District.

5. War against the Loko group by the Mende far Northern Sierra Leone. The Mende were given Bloody noise war and driven back to the access of Bauya and left the Rotifunk access to be ruined by a Loko Administrator who later on in 1940-44 annexed and named Moyamba as the second Loko District ruled by both the Sherbro Balloms and the Lokos as joint administration of Rotifunk on to present date.
6. Names of the warriors:
  - Pa Alimamy Bangura
  - Kondae Kargbo
  - Santigie Kargbo
  - Fojowa Kargbo
  - Sebbeh Korgorjie
  - Santigie Kuama Forna
  - Yankay Bangura
  - Mende Kargbo
  - Manso Gboajah Binde
  - Santigie Binde Falama
  - Junseh Batilor

#### **Ruler – From 1838 – Present**

- Sangor Kortiaka I, II, III
- P.C. Bai -yankay Gbatongoh I, II, III, IV
- P.C. Bindice Gbatongoh Iii
- PC Santigie Sahid Bangura The V
- P. C. Kapri Lawyer Bangura The VI.

#### **Past Interlectuals of Karena and Libeisay Gahun Chieftdom in 1900-1960**

1. Mr. Y. D. Sesay (Yankay Sesay First Graduate in Science)
2. Bai -yankay Gbatongoh
3. John David Bangura First Brigadier of Sierra Leone
4. Mr. James Sesay First Graduate in History
5. Mr. Sangster Sesay First Graduate in Economics
6. Mr. John Depillar Smart Teacher and Mentor of the first stone for the Wesleyan Church of the District
7. John Karefa Smart First Octogenarian of the District.

**In Memory Of Senior Administrators of Karena District**

1. Hanorl Galway Warren.
2. Lieutenant Colonial Limerick City Field Artillery of the Karena District Died at Batkanu on the 6/2/1919.

**Erection of Monument**

It was erected by the paramount chief of the Karena Chiefdom in collaboration with the following chiefdom and their subject.

1. Buya Chiefdom
2. KasseChiefdom of Bai Burreh Fame
3. Lokokensara Bara Lokomakont'e
4. Loko Muyanda
5. Loko Sengbe
6. Loko Mayanke
7. Loko Gbendenbu
8. Loko Makama
9. Loko Masungbala
10. Loko SafrokoTinne
11. SandaLoko
12. Dibia Chiefdom
13. Koinamakka
14. Buya Romende
15. Sanda Chanraren
16. Sanda Magholontor
17. Sela Limba
18. Tambaka Sinibunji
19. Dibia Loko
20. Sanda Rogbonko
21. Susu Limba
22. Tambaka Yobanji
23. Alimamy Samba



### The Grave Site

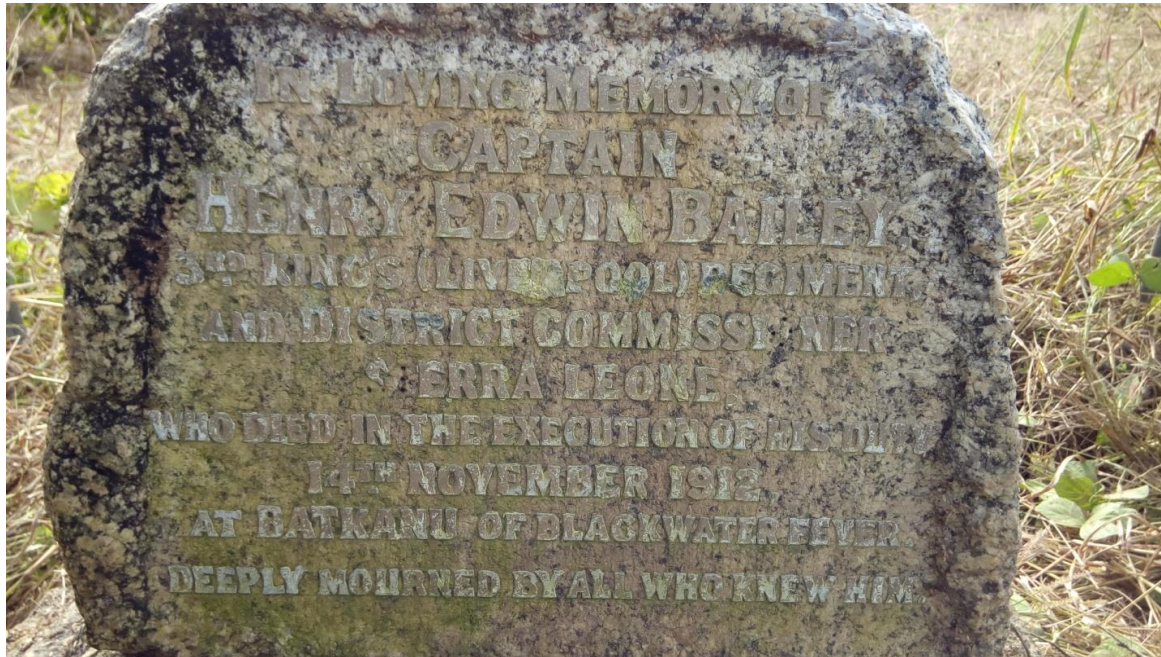
Lt, Col

1. Harold Galway Warren Senior District Commissioner Batkanu.
2. John Salkeld Barra Colonial Civil Servant
3. Late Royal Dublia Fusiliers, Second Surviving Son of James Selkeld and Eleanor Margret Durra.
4. Bochanger Kenninghon Kent
5. Born At Bockhanger June 29<sup>th</sup> 1876.









### Reservation Areas

These were the living quarters of those who died as a result of the black water river diseases. It was an escaping root for dwellers. The forest was so thick that, it has served as a no go area for most of the inhabitant for fear of having to be contaminated with the black water fever disease.





### The Sole Prisoner

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century there was one prisoner who was a Fullah by the name of Sheik Alie Gumba who was arrested in Guinea and was made to serve his sentence in Sierra Leone taken to Batkanu as a form of punishment while in prison, looked – up, Shiek Gumba only came out of his cell to pray and return back without removing his clothes. After prayers he use his magical powers to enter the cell again this situation continues for years when he was later released and he asked the commissioner to hand him over to the French Authority for the fear of being killed. So he was handed over to one of the learned sons of Batkanu by the name of Lamin Sidike Sesay for protective measures. Batkanu will serve the Sierra Leone civil servant better, taken into account after the burning down of the civil service training school in Freetown.

Those documents that were burnt in Freetown during the so called tyranny (war).

The name Batkanu Was derived from the founder Pa. Kapri Kanu who decided to start the town Closer to the stream, by the mouth of the riverside. Pa Kapri Kanu was a farmer whose agricultural knowledge was not only with him to the production of rice and maize, cassava, but he went further to introduce the animal husbandry. This was enhanced by the company of the Fullah to continue the cattle rearing up till today. So economically Batkanu is viable in standard of civilization, Agriculture and wild life and monuments display for Tourism purposes.





## DISCUSSION

This research work also involves several discussion programmes conducted with the chief and prominent personalities at Batkanu pertinent issues concerning the tourism industry were discussed.

The main aim of this research work was to assess the extent to which tourism activities at a place called Batkanu in Sierra Leone. Below are the specific objectives:

- To discover some monument in Batkanu
- To have the first hand information about the history of Batkanu.
- To have a sight of the monument and relics found at Batkanu.
- To interact with the locals at Batkanu.

The outcome of these objectives will lead to confidence building in visitors to visit Batkanu in Sierra Leone, which will in turn provide employment and increase revenue for Sierra Leone.

The topography of Batkanu

Travelling to Batkanu through its dusty road and savanna trees coming allover on both sides are marks to assess culminating light in the search for a beautiful tourist destination without difficulties or pains.

The road to Batkanu is a worthy pain taken ventures with purposeful ideas account for any learning process about Sierra Leone especially those civil servant searching for a knowledgeable theory for the development of the civil service of the country. Our ultimate idea was to venture reactivation of our history, economic contribution, political advantages, geography and social development of the late 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries Sierra Leone.

The “Hidden Gem” of civil service lottery of the north has highlighted a transcendental review of the following:

- Civil service of Sierra Leone is the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- The night of the Sierra Leone tradition coupled with its customs, for a better life of those involved during the colonial era (tourism of fact finding)
- Batkanu was the back bone of the Northern Province colonial administration compared to any other part of the country as it had twenty two (22) chiefdoms under its administration. An historical review will determine a real sense of responsibility towards learning and development. Socio-cultural dominance as against other malaise of the past and present Sierra Leone, especially the north.
- The observation and recognition of the cultural identity of the main African contributors “that is the Loko’s” of all excluding Makeni city. The chiefdom administrations headquarter of Karennia district as it was known had its focus on the dignity and pride of the people of Batkanu and its surrounding.

The colonial staff by then put premium on many developmental aspects including self sufficiency in food production, education and social balance of its people. The karinness (women) used their education for the good of the district.

### **A Town Called Batkanu**

Batkanu town is fairly a big one; with its old reservation area circulated with those savanna forests, to give it flavor to any of the tourist who might want to visit the town. It has a deserving friendliness of warm people, acceptable to all shades and views of civilization in turn treating to educating their fellow tribe’s men.

Batkanu had hosted the colonial administrators and officers, in good faith. Batkanu has its own town plan different from most of the northern town of the country; their roads though dusty, but very wide with approximately 40ft wide and with a stretched of 100-200 meters long, most of the roads are around the town square where a tower was built as a symbol of

greatness of authority. The tower has a compartment where documents are kept. This tower has tunnels which lead into the governor's dwelling house used as a hiding segment in case of invasion. On the towers are marks of all the inscriptions of colonial heroes, warriors and administrators, the compartment which hosts the documents had no easy access because it contained vital and valuable information for the purpose of other successors of the district.

Those documents, if accessed, will provide valuable assets.

The stay at Batkanu was a blessed and fruitful one. Other visits were made to the administrator's graves and other warriors' prison house, the hospital which was used during the 1846-2 and still in use, it is strong enough to be used for other purposes.

### **Literature Cited (Review)**

The subject under review is quite accurate and as such considerable literature on it dealing with specific aspects such as literature concerning tourism activities at a place called Batkanu in Sierra Leone and the challenges and prospects of its development in Sierra Leone. At this juncture it is worth of note that, unlike tourism in West Africa especially Gambia and Kenya for example, limited studies have been conducted on the tourism system and activities at Batkanu. Hence no specific book has been written solely on the challenges and prospects of tourism activities at a place called Batkanu in Sierra Leone, but pieces of information have been obtained from various tours and visits taken by the Tourism Department Milton Margai College of Education and Technology (MMCET), Brookfields campus. The research therefore, takes the opportunity to give a review about tourism activities in a place called Batkanu in Sierra Leone.

### **Definition of Tourism Intermediaries**

According to William Theobald, 1996, p. 143 defines tourism intermediaries as someone or groups to agree with each other over a specific tourist destination. According to website dictionary, it means someone or group who tries to help two people to agree with each other. From the tourism point of view, tourism intermediaries are referred to those tourism services transportation providers whose responsibility is to act as a go between sectors, cultures, travel agencies as well as to remedy the existing gap between the consumer and these service providers. All of these different entities make a good opportunity for tourism intermediaries.

### Planning and Development Issues

The emergency and maintenance of tourism as a dynamic rather than a statistic industry depends in large measure upon the adoption of a strategic approach is largely dependent upon a systematic and structured analysis of the board environmental factors affecting tourism demand as essential part of planning process.

According to Chris Cooper, 1998, P. 170 since tourism demand is highly discretionary, a strategic approach to tourism marketing essential for a long-term effectiveness. The current international pre-occupation of advertising among tourism service provider, promoters, and agencies may well be counter-productive to sustained visitors growth and can progressively undermine any competitive tourism advantages currently enjoyed by a destination area.

Historically, in Latin America, tourism began as a tool for economies of Brazil and most of the Latinspeaking countries south of the united state had been devastated. According to Michael Morgan 2004, p. 90, in any country, the emergency and continuation of tourism as a dynamic and viable industry is dependent upon the adoption of a strategic approach to planning and marketing. The hall markets of such an approach are the inclusion of a systematic and structured analysis for broader environmental factors that are affecting tourism demand as integral part of the planning process.

The construction of travelers and tourist typologies is not a new undertaking in travel and tourism marketing.

Report published in the proceedings of the travel and tourism.

Research association has covered this issue regularly – (Darden and Darden, 1976). Social science approaches to tourism research repeated touched upon typological methods (Cohen, 1988, DannEtal, 1988, Pearce 1982). It is also a common practice to consider traveler or tourist types as potential market segments for tourism marketing (smith, 1989) a concept of travel philosophy has been developed as part of research into market segment in a number 4r of studies that were conducted by tourism Canada. It is part of a threefold segmentation process that is based on the following assumptions.

- There should be recognizable groups in the population based on how people, organize and value travel, how they think about travelling.

- There should be recognizable groups in the population based on the benefits sought from specific pleasure trips.
- There should be recognizable groups in the population based on the required in order to realize those benefits sought from previous specific pleasure trips.
- There should be recognizable group in the population based on the activities, interest location and facilities required in order to these benefits sought from previous specific pleasure trips.

All four of these segmentations needs an understanding of the tourist consuming waste in the same way, the first one must be pertinent to the topic and style of travel. This aspect is concerned with how people think about travel in terms of its value to them, how they go about organizing travel and how they must actually travel. This data will provide a source from which to answer the last three and reach destination areas.

### **Tourism Intermediaries**

Information, this aspect of any tourist destination becomes a tourist intermediary because it explain to the tourist the concept of life in that particular destination. In a destination area, such as, Sierra Leone cultural activities such as local traditional and religious festivals that take place each year will be of evidence.

***The National Dance Troupe:*** – Sierra Leone culture ambassadors will be incomplete without the traditional or culture dance. The national dancing troupe is the embodiment of all the ethnic groups that portray the country rich heritage and unique social and cultural thought that traditional and songs that the troupe has gained in international performance over the year, through its excellent exhibition and they have performed in the united states of America, Canada, England, Iran, Libya and other West Africa countries and won laurel in all of these performances. The troupe is well known for its artistic, exotic exiting and exhilarating traditional movies during performances.

***Food:*** - Thai, Indian, Italy, Lebanese, Mexican or simple five international cuisines you will always find something to tantalized your taste buds in Sierra Leone. If tourist who are interested in Sierra Leone cuisine, local staple dishes such as (plazas) cassava leaf (most favorite to most people) potato leaves, green etc. sauce cooked with a thick red palm oil, vegetable oil, nut oil etc. served with rice is always available everywhere and it will be served in generous skewered meat, fried plantain, grilled snails, article, black eye beans. Best of all

dine on a snappers fresh from the Atlantic ocean with fries are all the rage at the capital city Freetown.

**The Lantern Festival:** - This is also known as lantern parade, is one of the country's most celebrated event. It is a yearly event organized during independence anniversaries. This event has some historic, cultural and religious significance.

Historically, it portrays artifacts and artistic display of the slave trade, colonialism, and the economy the attainment of independence and the statutes of important figures as well as Sierra Leoneans. The festival also blends its culture through arts and craft, music and religious tolerance.

**Masquerades:** - various masquerades are organized throughout the country especially during public holidays and the end of festive periods such as Eidu, Adha, New Year day celebration and Easter Holidays. These masquerades attract famous groups with Paddle, obese, Bloody Mary to name but a few. In the provinces also different types of masquerades are also exposing during this festival periods.

**Tangains festivals:** - this festival is normally organized by the free tong players (Group which uses cultural means to pass on message and information to the public). It is celebrated yearly during the festive season of December. The event brings the past into the present wherein Sierra Leone is seen in alters during the pre-colonial and the colonial eras. Culture is also display to experience the richness of the country's culture, because, people from all over the country are invited to show case their cultural exhibits. Cultural practices in Sierra Leone are very important as it can be used as a means of communication and the tourist to actually know and learn about the culture of the land.

### **Transportation**

Travel and tourism are normally used inter changeable in normal conversations although the two do not mean one thing. Even though the transport industry gives the link that is armed dwelling and destination regions of tourist, but the industry's role as an agent responsible for making tourist reach this destination has become considered as tourism. Tourism world over cannot exist in isolation from transport and therefore it can be stated in other terms that, there is a strong positive component of tourism. The imprudent of modernization of transport of deterioration of the same has a direct impact on tourism. The history of tourism and that of

transport provides a clear understanding of this shared relationship as verruca of civilization. Transportation cannot be discussed without taking tourism into consideration vice versa. Clearly tourism cannot thrive without travel. Transportation is an essential part of tourism industry and is principally due to the improvements of transportation that tourism has expanded or develops.

Transportation links diverse destination, commodities and service between these places. Tourism is much about travel and therefore the role of transportation in its operations is vital. The advent of air travel has struck the world and the motor vehicle have made travelling anywhere a possibility, this reality together with changing work partners and innovative marketing have propelled international mass tourism throughout the year.

According to Culpa, 1987, p. 12 identified transportation mode and management as important ingredient for international tourism system, acknowledging that connection for air, sea, and land is essential for the operations as well as the availability of support service like fuel station, auto repairs, hotels, motels, and rest facilities for land travel.

Advance in transportation have wide widely eased travel. Without fear of contradiction it can be sufficiently stated that wide spread growth of nature tours can be attributed to the ease and availability of modern transport.

Transportation in tourism is just seen as a part of tourism system for bringing tourist to their destination and leaving those destinations once their stay is over.

According to Page and Lampson (2004) agrees that transportation system of a tourist destination has an impact on tourism experience which explains how people travel, their choice on forms of holiday, destination and transport mode. The improvement of the modes of transportation coupled with how these fares are seen accessible of the areas seen as of the beaten-path rise.

### **Travel Agencies**

According to the U. S. travel data center defines travel agents as follows travel agencies make travel reservation for the public and sell transportation lodging and other travel services on behalf of the producers of the services. They are retailers; they sell travel services provided by major tour operators to the final consumer.

In 1996, there were 47,100 travel agency locations in the United States. Although the large travel agencies are the most visible, the smaller agencies with gross billing (i.e. ticket and travel package sales) under \$ 5 million annually, still constitute the largest majority of travel agencies. Smaller agencies however, have been hit especially hard by the airlines actions in cutting back commotions they pay to travel agencies from 10-8 percent. Reportedly this has been a major factor in a 6 percent reduction in the number of small agencies (Gross Billing under \$2 Million) between 1993-1995.

Although airline commission have reduced, hotel, tour package, and cruise line commission, which range from 10-15 percent, encourage travel agencies to devote more of their efforts to selling those products to travelers.

Moreover although the commissions have been reduced for airlines sales, travel agencies sold 10 percent more airline ticket in 1997 than in the previous years and there commission income rose to its percent level. Travel agents not only made reservation and sell tickets but also sell package tours. It's clear that travel agents have considerably influence on the consumers and, this, on the sales of other firms serving travelers. The majority of pleasures, for instance, seek the advice of their travel agent on hostel selection, package tour choice, and car rental. Roughly 70 percent of business travelers use travel agent to make their arrangement.

**Travel Wholesalers** – Makers tour brokers arrange to purchase space and services from the entire firms that serve travelers-carriers, hostels, restaurants and attractions. Then, they sell the services of this firm consumer, generally trough rental travel agent in return for a commission on these sales. Major traveler agent such as American express often rent their own tours, but they also rent with rental travel agencies that sell the tour package to customers in their local markets. Carries (such as airline, bus and rail operators) and act as a wholesaler of package tours. Tours wholesaler purchase services at deep discount. They make their package attractive by offering a retailer price that is still significantly less than the cost of all the package elements if the travelers purchase them separately. Even after this discount both the booker and the retailer travel agent has margin for their operating cost and profit.

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