

The Perceptions of Low, Middle and High Income Socio-Economic Groups in Nairobi on Tourist Attraction Sites

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ABSTRACT.

Kenya is among the developing countries of the world and has actively supported the development of tourism to promote its economy and the livelihood of the people. Kenyans lack the perception that tourism is essential to life, unlike their counter parts in Western Europe and North America where travel is a symbol of socio-economic status. Tourism products and services are not well understood by many Kenyan's and therefore not well utilized. The study was conducted in Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya The groups and the study population were selected using the systematic random sampling technique from the zoning map by the Nairobi city council urban policy plan (NCCUP). The study adopted a descriptive survey design using both quantitative and qualitative research methods to gather data. Data were collected using the questionnaire, likest-scale and the interview schedule. This study purposed to investigate the factors that contribute to the minimal participation by locals in domestic tourism among low, middle and high income socio-economic groups in Nairobi, Kenya. Data were analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 12.5. Factors affecting perception of domestic tourists were subjected to Kaiser Criterion principle component (factor analysis) to reduce the number of variables by varimax rotation. Efforts to promote domestic tourism have continued to bear little fruit. Majority of Kenyans believe that the tourism industry and the hospitality industry that goes with it belong to the white man. This attitude was contributed by the ownership and management of economic activities related to the tourism industry that were entirely in the hands of foreign colonial settler population and later a few Indians. Education is an important factor in shaping the level of positive attitude towards domestic tourism. Residents have different perceptions on domestic tourism and vest the responsibility for their education and understanding on government and tourist service providers. The drop in the international tourists in the 1990s led to a decrease in revenue and had to be substituted by domestic tourism. Several approaches by the ministry of Tourism and wildlife (MTW) through Kenya Tourism Development Council of Kenya (DTCK) and African Tours and Hotels (AT & H) did not achieve much participation by locals remained low at 12.7% of the total visitors. The respondents who were negative about game parks were generally more than those who were in the affirmative. Their negative attitude could be because revenues generated from the national park go to the central government and tourist industry operators and little if not none trickles to communities living around these areas and even very little of this is spent on the economic development of the affected population The values of beliefs and the feelings of the people of Kenya if known will assist in alleviating misconceptions about tourist attraction sites and the hospitality industry. The domestic Tourism Council of Kenya (DTCK) should be revived to generate information and statistics on domestic tourists.

Key words: perceptions, socio-economic groups, domestic tourism

Introduction

Kenya is among the developing countries of the world and has actively supported the development of tourist, to promote has economy and livelihood of the people (WTO, 2002; KTB, 2008; WTTC, 2002; Ikiara, 2001b).

Kenyans lack the perception that tourism is essential to life, unlike their counter parts in Western Europe and North America where travel is a symbol of socio-economic status (Shaw & Williams, 1994). Domestic tourism in Kenya contributed 12.7% of the visitors to National Reserves and parks (Economic Survey, 2008), a contribution significant to the economy. This study purposed to investigate the factors that contribute to the minimal participation by locals in domestic tourism among low, middle and high income socio-economic groups in Nairobi, Kenya.

The research sought to fill the gap the statistical aspects of education from this study would aid policy makers and tourism developers in their struggle to increase domestic tourism participation. This study sought to find out how the respondents spent their free time. Over half the respondents indicated staying indoors during their free time with 50% in land mawe and Dandora Estates, 83% in south B and Golf course and 60% at Lovington and Karen. 75% of the males liked sports during their free time. Reading and writing was the most dominant way of spending free time among the respondents with 70% of males and 30% females. This was explained by the fact that 93% Nairobi residents can read and write (KIHBS, 2008). 53% males and 40% females visited friends and

relatives during their free time. 50.6% of the respondents had their leisure less often. Family and are active consumers of national park facilities.

This research indicated that the higher the education level of Nairobi residents, the higher the affinity towards visits to attraction sites like game parks and reserves. 77% out of the 22.8% interested in animal viewing college/University graduate were positive compared to only 9% for who secondary school level of education and 4% primary school leavers. It was therefore considered noble for tourist service providers to develop products and services to target those that were highly educated. Indigenization of the tourism industry in Kenya started in 1948 by the East Africa Tourist Travel Association (EATTA) which aimed at increasing Kenyan people's participation (Akama et al, 1995). EATTA was encouraged by the formation of Kenya Tourism Development Cooperation (KTDC) in November 1965. In order to collect and organize information on domestic tourism, the then ministry of tourism and wildlife (MTW) the aimed up with the private sector to set up domestic tourism council (DTC) (Sindiga, 1999). The government sponsored parastatal bodies such as Kenya Tourist Board (KTB), the Kenya Tourist Federation (KTF), the Kenya Association of Tour Agents (KATA) and the Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO) (Kiplagat, 2004). These bodies were given greater levels of independence and autonomy in their ability to make decisions regarding development of the tourism industry and maintaining Kenya as a tourist destination. The African Tours and Hotels (AT&H) was also formed along the DTC to cater for the domestic tourist participation. However participation did not improve as was projected; it remained below 10% (GOK, 2000; Sindiga, 1999).

The values of beliefs and the feelings of the people of Kenya if known will assist in alleviating misconception about tourist attraction sites and the hospitality industry. Land use policies in Kenya discourage native inhabitants from supporting wildlife (Bhandari, 1999; Akama, 1999; Ali, 1999). Kenya government has been committed to protected area conservation of wildlife and laid strict legislation and policies on land reservations and wildlife conservation. Communities who live around the tourist attraction sites view the government as only using game for the financial convenience of commercial hunters and hotel keepers (Sindiga, 1999). Careful planning of tourist attraction sites and zoning of protected areas will be of benefit to bio-diversity, local communities and local economies thus stimulating growth in income for the local communities such as the Samburu and Maasai who have co-existed with the wildlife for long besides boosting Kenyans Gross Domestic product (GDP).

Other strategies to promote domestic tourism in Kenya included use of Agricultural society of Kenya shows (ASK) and the Nairobi Trade fair to provide information on internal travel. Domestic tourist's exhibitions and mass media shows are used by tour companies in Nairobi to provide the same information. The wildlife clubs of Kenya (WCK), non-governmental organization was formed in 1968 with an aim of promoting wildlife and Environmental education (EE) all over Kenya (Kiplagat, 2004). The organization has been taking the largest number of youths to reserves and parks in Kenya. This has led to the growth of youth tourism due to the perception the organization has been promoting. Presented by the local's attitudes and perception so as to establish clear and appropriate marketing strategies that would ensure proper utilization of tourism products and services. The domestic tourism council of Kenya (DTCK) and the African Tours and Hotels (AT &H) did not achieve much in their measure to encourage Kenyan appreciate and utilize tourist facilities (Markandya, 2000; MOP, 2001).

Kenyans are not luxury hotels as much as foreign visitors to the county (Ondimu, 2000) there has been less supportive attitude from the wildlife host communities who traditionally considered tourism products as their and it played an important role in their local cultures, diets and economies (Kiplagat, 2004).

The Maasai pastoralists were displaced from their land during the establishment of protected areas in the colonial era (parkinpuny, 1996). This study was an insight of the three socio-economic groups in the city of Nairobi pertaining participation in domestic tourism.

Education is an important factor in shaping the level of positive attitude towards domestic tourism (Akama et al 1995). As a level of education increases the level of negative attitude towards domestic tourism decreases. The exact level of that may shape positive attitude is what we cannot tell from this study at least a minimum of secondary level of education is thought to be sufficient enough in shaping positive public attitude. Education increases the desire for people to see, experience new things people and places hence a very important catalysts in shaping attitude. It is against this background that the level of attitude among urban residents is higher than those of rural communities (Kiplagat, 2004).

Males and females differ in their knowledge of the attitudes towards wildlife and hence domestic tourism in protected areas (Kiplagat, 2004). Males generally have a greater interest in wildlife and tourism issues and hence are made likely to desire the necessary knowledge and urge to explore nature. Females exhibit more anthropocentric tendencies and are strongly concerned about their own safety and projection. They will remain excluded from being adventurous and finding out new things. Females would perhaps not take the chance of being the first to try venturing into the wild in the crucial role in shaping a negative attitude towards domestic

tourism in projected areas. In African culture women are home makers and are expected to be attending to the children when their husbands are out looking for the family bread.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted a descriptive survey design by Mugenda and mugenda to investigate the prospects of revitalizing domestic tourism in Kenya. The descriptive survey research was intended to produce statistical aspects of education that would interest policy makers, community developers and educators on domestic tourism. The formula that was used was Fischer et al (1998) since the population had characteristics that were measured.

A sample size of 240 was used and the sample frames (list of all households) in the residential estates are available from NCCUP at city hall and the Kenya National Bureau of random sampling technique was used to get three estates from the high, middle and low income socio-economic estates and the population since the estates under these categories are listed and known. The interval/systematic random technique were applied to identify households at equal intervals from the selected residential estates. To capture information on the perception of the respondents towards domestic tourism, a 21 item likert-scale type questionnaire was used. Secondary data was obtained from publications and official documents from the Nairobi City Council (NCC), Ministry of Tourism, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), Nairobi University (UON) and Kenyatta University libraries and publications from the Kenya Institute for public policy and analysis (KIPPRA), the United Nations (UN), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

In order to establish the perception of the residents towards domestic tourism, the likert-scale type questionnaire was used and respondents were asked to respond to 21 statements on whatever they strongly agree; Agree; No Opinion; Disagree; Strongly Disagree. The 21 likert questions were subjected to the factor analysis modes and varimax rotated based on Kaiser Criterion.

DATA ANALYSIS

Identification of Principal Factors Affecting Perception of Domestic Tourism by Factor Analysis Model.

In order to identify the principal factors affecting perceptions of domestic tourism, the 21 items on -Likert Scale were subjected to principle component (factor analysis) to reduce the number of variables by varimax rotation as shown in (table 4.13a). Kaiser criterion was used to select only factors having Eigen values of more than 1.0. These were then subjected to variance maximizing process. Figure 4.25 shows the seven factors out of 21 which had Eigen values of more than one. These factors were considered to influence perceptions of domestic tourism by residents. The factors therefore provide the basis for policy formulation and decision-making by service providers and government institutions.

Table 4.8a Principal Analysis

Variable	Factor	Eigen Values	% of Variance	Cumulative %
B1	1	7.468	35.561	35.561
B2	2	1.902	9.058	44.618
B3	3	1.778	8.467	53.085
B4	4	1.372	6.535	59.620
B5	5	1.299	6.187	65.807
B6	6	1.117	5.319	71.126
B7	7	1.041	4.956	76.082

Key

- B1 Local people should visit the attraction sites.
- B2 Attraction sites should not be visited by local people.
- B3 It is costly for local people to visit attraction sites
- B4 Cheap to visit attraction sites
- B5 Awareness that tourist icons can be visited by Kenyans
- B6 No information of tourist icons being visited by local people.
- B7 The last time I visited an attraction site I had an exciting experience.

All the seven factors extracted had Eigen values of more than one (as shown on Table 4.13a). The results of factor analysis shows that factor 1 accounts for more than 35.5% of the variance; factor 2 accounts for 9%; factor 3 accounts for 8.5%; factor 4 accounts for 6.5%; factor 5 accounts for 6.2%; factor 6 accounts for 5.3% and factor 7 accounts for 5.0% of the total variance. The other factors from 8-21 were not important in predicting the domestic tourism status as they account for a very negligible percentage. The factors have been further rotated (table 4.9) in order to arrive at those with Eigen values > 0.450

Factor 1 concerned with awareness, of tourist attraction sites and icons had B5 with factor loadings of 0.910 which indicated that Kenyans are aware that they can visit tourist icons. The other item that supported Factor 1 was B1 with factor loading of 0.497 concerned with local people visiting the attraction sites. Nairobi residents are literate (95.3%) can read and write. They are aware and have sufficient education of domestic tourism (Economic Survey, 2006).

Factor 2 was concerned with use of tourist service facilities had B18 having factor loadings of 0.873 greater on it. It is not a waste of time to visit game parks and reserves. Indeed Kenyans love to travel were it not for the challenges including high costs of travel, security and poor infrastructure (KACC, 2006).

Factor 3 concerned with cost was supported by B8 with factor loadings of 0.916 indicated that the last time the person went out he wasn't excited. This shows that the standards in the attraction sites should be improved, packages improved and the products and services diversified in order to attract repeat visitors.

Factor 4 was concerned with Hotel rates and was supported by B16 with factor loading of 0.912 which shows the attitude that locals have about domestic tourism. They believe in diversification of products and services so that host communities could be allowed to farm on protected areas which could fetch more for the host community than wildlife which doesn't benefit them directly.

Factor 5 was concerned with education of the locals. B9 had factor loading of 0.955 on this factor. Hotel charges in the tourist attraction sites are affordable. The local traveler especially those of the corporate world and the business people can afford the hotel charges. The prices are subsidized by their employers. They can enjoy other amenities within the hotel. Kenyans lack the perception that tourism is essential to life and do not view travel as a symbol of socio-economic status (Shaw and Williams, 1994). Kenyans are not leisure-minded (Ondimu, 2000).

Factor 6 was concerned with transport and B2 had a factor loading of 0.943 on this factor which state that they shouldn't visit the icons. The infrastructure; road, railway and air are all a challenge to travel in Kenya. Railway connectivity is low, road transport is expensive and tedious due to all weather roads of earth and gravel especially to the tourist attraction sites and icons. Naivasha and Mombasa have become popular destinations to Nairobi Residents since recarpeting of the Nairobi-Mombasa Road and the great north road leading to Naivasha (KTB, 2007).

Finally factor 7 concerned with satisfaction had B7 with factor loadings of 0.859. B7 indicated that the last visit to the attraction site was not exciting. This call for diversification of tourism products and services especially through eco-tourism. There is consumer demand for tourism that benefits the local people and protects the environment (people and the planet 2000-2001).

Table 4. Rotated factor matrix and factor loadings

Variance	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
B5	.910	.079	.031	.011	.053	.062	.114
B1	.497	.401	.228	-.025	.308	-.288	.339
B18	.106	.873	.089	-.035	.108	.070	.195
B8	.046	.092	.916	-.021	-.008	.046	-.037
B16	.001	-.023	-.023	.912	.048	.131	.069
B9	.066	.092	-.006	.047	.955	.042	.147
B2	.038	.045	.044	.116	.043	.943	.019
B7	.173	.213	-.055	.089	.199	.029	.859
B19	.118	.095	.129	.227	-.050	.202	.052
B6	.189	.028	.120	.103	.045	.071	.008
B12	.059	.219	.049	.073	.033	-.046	.172
B13	.090	.091	.099	.047	.022	.151	.114
B17	.074	-.037	.038	.220	.168	.084	.075
B4	.125	.051	.282	.158	.209	.046	-.088
B21	.190	.168	.204	.103	-.038	.011	.060
B10	.150	.191	.205	.094	-.003	.151	.205
B14	.146	.255	.145	.178	.159	.086	-.116
B20	.238	.083	.061	.139	.104	.173	.132
B15	.134	.235	.084	.159	.042	.048	.124
B3							

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The tourism products and services are not well understood by the locals due to the present public attitude towards domestic tourism. Locals perceive tourism as belonging to whites and foreigners and do not utilize hotels and lodges, which according to their view must be expensive. Income, occupation, gender, age and education levels influence preference of domestic tourism. There was a significant relationship between the preferred sites and the economic status of the respondents. This indicated that income was the main influencing factor for the local travelers. The understanding of domestic tourism differs between different income groups.

The low income group perceive tourism as leisure travel, the middle income have the perception that it is adventure travel, whereas the high income group perceive tourism in terms of adventure travel to tourist attraction sites. There was an agreement among respondents that hotel and restaurants' charges for accommodation, food and recreation were expensive. Owing to these perceptions majority of the Kenyans who travel stay in some medium-size and small hotels which tend to be far from national parks and thereby reduce the ability to access the tourist attraction sites. The study revealed that income, occupation, gender, age, education levels influence the locals preference of domestic travel to the tourist attraction sites. There was a very strong relationship between the preferred sites and the economic status using chi-square analysis. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. The demographic factors of age, gender and education levels were correlated with the attraction sites and no relationship was established. The null hypothesis was therefore true (accepted). Respondents did not receive expected services at the tourist attraction sites. No significant relationship was registered between local's services at the tourist attraction sites and variables that measure expectations which were; last time no experience, previously visit no experience, time in social activities satisfying and visiting tourists sites more satisfying. The null hypothesis proved to be true and was therefore accepted.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The study concluded that preference for the product and services available within particular attraction sites (Flora and Fauna and the activities in different sceneries) influenced and controlled by the kinds of occupation and the nature of activities the residents are involved in economically and socially. The study registered an agreement of 56% among all ages that people should visit parks and reserves. Residents dealing in different disciplines and fields indicate a liking for attraction sites that tend to widen their scope of knowledge and improve their skills. For instance historians prefer historical sites within the museums, art galleries and animal parks. Domestic tourism competes with other forms of expenditures like school fees, household expenses and medical care for the incomes of residents in Nairobi. Charges from accommodation within the tourist attraction sites were considered exorbitant by the respondents owing to meager disposable income. The results of the study further indicate that the residents within the six estates had different perception on domestic tourism. Kenya is perceived as a mass tourism destination with traditional marketing relying on beach and safari holidays which encourage crowding on single a single attraction sites. The government institutions in partnership with the private sector and the parastatals dealing in tourism products and services should diversify existing products and services marketed traditionally and undifferentiated, tailor-made tour packages should be made to encourage domestic travelers.

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