

# Development of sports tourism in selected regions of Kenya: perceptions of tourists and government officials

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## Abstract:

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The purpose of this study was to assess the perceptions of tourists and government officials on the development of sports tourism in selected regions of Kenya. A Survey research design was adopted for the study. The independent variables that were assessed included, sports as a pull factor that interest tourist to the Kenyan market, the extend of sports facilities, hosting of international sports event, cultural sporting activities, beach sports, high and low attitudes training centers, sports for sports icons. The study also looked at effectiveness of marketing, the level of security and political stability. A validated self administered questionnaire was used to collect the data. The sample size of 776 respondents that were randomly selected for the study included 46 government officials from the Ministry in-charge of Sports and Ministry in-charge of Tourism in the headquarters Nairobi, and 730 both local and international tourists who resided in starred hotels and high altitude training centre within the eight tourism circuit were also visited for data collection. The eight tourism circuits included central Kenya region, Nairobi, coastline, southerri region, eastern region, north rift, south rift and western Kenya. Chisquare was used to analyze the data. The findings indicated that sport is a pull factor for the tourists who visit the Kenyan market 564(77.3%) tourists and 37(80.45%) government officials agreed that sports was a significant activity in attracting tourists in the Kenyan market. On average 190(26%) of the tourists were of the view that facilities and infrastructure were not adequate while30( 65%) of the government official were of the same view. 252(34.4%) tourists were of the view that security and political stability was not fully explored for the development of sports tourism in Kenya. 24(52.2%) of the government officials were of the view that Kenya is capable of hosting major international sports events while 221(30.4%) disagreed on the same.14( 30.4%) of the government officials did not agree on the promotion of cultural activities while 290(39.7%) of the tourist were of the view that cultural event was a viable product for the development of sports tourism. 363(46.77%) of both tourists and government officials were of the view that high altitude training centers were fully explored for sports tourism development but when-it come to low altitude 396(51.03%) of both had no opinion. 117(16%) of the tourists 'were of the view that organization of sports for Kenya's sports icons was not fully explored while 16(34.73%) of the government officials were of the view that it was fully explored. Ministries in-charge of Sports and Tourism needs to encourage sports tourism as a package in the Kenyan market. Recreational sporting facilities should be a requirement for starred hotels in Kenya. The Ministry of Youth Affairs Sports and Tourism should market sports tourism as a tourism package. Ministries in-charge of Sports and Tourism should beef up security; create more high and low altitude centers, and stadia to host cultural sporting events. Ministries in-charge of Sports and Tourism through the Ministry in-charge of Sports and Ministry in-charge of Tourism need to expand sports tourism as a package and encourage its growth in Kenya.