

Assesment of Slum Tourism Product: The case of Kibera in Nairobi, Kenya

Chege, penina wanjiku

Abstract:

The study was conducted in Kibera slum in Nairobi. It focused on assessing slum tourism as a viable tourism option. The objectives were to: determine the main tourism attraction in Kibera slum, establish the perceptions of Kibera's slum dwellers, Kenya Tourism Board and Victoria Safaris towards slum tourism, determine the benefits of slum tourism to Kibera slum dwellers, establish measures to be taken to promote slum tourism in Kibera and to determine the viability of slum tourism as a tourism product. The exploratory and descriptive survey research design was used. The target population of the study was 800,000 residents of Kibera slum who live in a total of 12 villages, 160 employees of Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) and 38 employees of Victoria Safaris. The sample size was 472 respondents, 384 from Kibera, 50 from KTB and 38 from Victoria Safaris. Simple random sampling was used to select 6 (50%) villages in Kibera. Snowball sampling method was then used to select respondents in those six villages. The initial subjects were identified using purposive technique. The subjects from the KTB were selected using convenient sampling method while all subjects from Victoria Safaris participated. Data was collected by the use of questionnaire. A pilot study was run in Kisumu Ndogo slum village. Reliability of the instrument was determined during the pilot study using test re-test technique. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze data. Data was then presented in tables and figures. The results of the study showed that slum tourism is a viable tourism product as majority of the respondents, 435 (92.2%), affirmed this. There was a strong liking for slum tourism across all categories as majority, 396 (83.9%), view it as beneficial to the slum residents in improving their living conditions. Poor understanding of slum tourism concept and lack of involvement of residents was the major challenge while lack of policy was the second major challenge. Observing residents' life style and taking photographs were identified as major tourist activities in Kibera slum while improvement of security and involvement of residents in tourism activities were identified as key ways for promoting slum tourism. The study recommends that there should be a deeper participation of residents in running and making decisions on slum tours to increase benefits to the residents. There is also need for government to develop a policy whose aim is to guide on ways of conducting slum tours. There is also need for Ministry of Tourism to educate the residents on how to take advantage of the venture and open up businesses like tour firms and how to provide other services in order to reap the benefits of slum tourism.