

BENEFITS OF SLUM TOURISM IN KIBERA SLUM IN NAIROBI, KENYA

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Abstract

The study 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. 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. 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. Observing residents' life style and taking photographs were identified as major tourist activities in Kibera slum. 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.

Introduction

Slums are mostly found in urban areas because people tend to move to the city in search of better life. According to Dweks (2004) as quoted by Mowforth (2008), people are living in an increasingly urbanized world and this is likely to accelerate rather than reverse the growth of slums. In 2006 a report by the United Nation's city agency (UN-HABITAT) confirmed that the global urban transition is only at mid-point with projections showing that over the next 25 years the world's urban population is set to increase to 4.9 billion people by 2030, roughly 60% of the world's total population (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2006). Moreover, the most significant growth is projected to occur in less developed regions with sustained and rapid increases culminating in 3.9 million urban dwellers in these regions by 2030 (United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs, 2006). It is the nature of this growth that is of great significance with a rapid increase in the number of the poor, the majority of whom are likely to be concentrated into city slums (UN-HABITAT, 2003). Accumulation of people in a small area leads to both social and economic challenges such as very low levels of income and lack of proper sanitation.

Therefore as people continue to migrate away from rural areas and into cities, the numbers of people living in slums, shanty towns and informal settlements are skyrocketing. Currently, there are 200,000 of slum

communities across the world, according to the United Nation's Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, most of them are in and around cities. 90 percent of the world's informal settlements are in developing nations such as India and Brazil. The five largest slums in the world include Neza-Chalco-Itza in Mexico with roughly four million people, Orangi in Karachi, Dharavi in Asia, Khayelitsha in Cape Town and Kibera in Nairobi.

Life in Kibera Slum in Kenya

Kibera is the biggest slum in Kenya. Most of the residents are casual laborers who earn 100 shillings or less per day. They engage in low income economic activities such as art, dance, drama, sports projects, self-help groups and small scale businesses (CSG Kibera, 2007).

From a report of UN- HABITAT (2006), water and sanitation is still a key problem in Kibera. The report acknowledges that over the years, Kibera has received significant investment (both physical and financial) to alleviate the poor conditions that exist with respect to water, sanitation and health but no significant impact has been made. Other issues reflected in the report include little effort that has been made to link sanitation to income generation and livelihood for Kibera's residents. The vast majority of water and sanitation initiatives have not been integrated. It is therefore imperative that water, solid waste, sanitation (excreta management), and drainage need to be addressed in Kibera if there is to be a perceivable improvement in the living environment.

About 60% of the youths below 21 years are illiterate or semi-literate, majority have primary education only, Lack of jobs is the main problem and has led to social ills such as alcoholism, drug abuse and crime. About 80% of the population is either infected or affected by the AIDS scourge (Funke, 2008). Slums lack clean drinking water, proper plumbing, and access to health care facilities, poor electrification and other public services such as schools.

Slum communities from South Africa where slum tourism has been embraced have benefited socially and economically. Although there is no research carried out to show the contribution of slum tourism in other slums, slum tourism has given slum communities an opportunity to improve their living conditions, in that it provides them with job opportunities. Slum tourism therefore has the potential to improve the social economic status of Kibera slum community.

Slum Tourism around the World

Slum tourism targets the disadvantaged communities and therefore it is a good form of Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT). PPT aims at unlocking opportunities for the poor for economic gain, livelihood benefits, or participation in decision-making (Ashley, Roe and Goodwin, 2001) in which slum tourism has lot of potential. Slum tourism can also help in shifting focus from environment and wildlife-based tourism to poverty-reducing tourism which will have more benefits to the poor and less impact to the environment.

Tours to slums have existed for sometime. According to Mowforth (2003), originally tours to the slums were associated with the tours of townships in post-apartheid South Africa and in the volunteerism associated with cities such as Kolkata, India. Originally the potential for tourism in South Africa was primarily seen in the country's climate and its natural attractions. However, in the early 1990s a new kind of tourism started to develop in Soweto, an expansive slum in South Africa. It involved guided tours through the residential areas of the black population. This new form of tourism now amounts to 25% of the visits in South Africa.

According to Rolfers (2009), slum tourism was established in developing countries in the mid 1990s. The essential part of this tourism is visiting the most disadvantaged parts of the cities called slums. It is mainly

organized in form of the guided tours. Today, a lot of tours are operated and marketed by professional companies. Slum tours are offered in a relatively large scale in the South Africa cities such as Johannesburg and Cape Town, the Indian metropolises of Calcutta, Mumbai and Delhi as well as Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. Those involved in these tours are primarily international tourists. Indeed, the number of slum tourists is constantly increasing. It is estimated that 40,000 tourists visit De Janeiro slums each year, while in Cape Town the estimated figures are around 300,000 (Rolfes, 2009). Tour firms have therefore realized that slums are an attraction and are organizing slum tours (Armstrong, 2005) which are slowly becoming a common phenomenon in the cities of the developing countries. For instance, slum tourism is well established in Brazil where it started in 1992 in a shanty town in Rio de Janeiro (Funke, 2008). It then spread to the rest of the world including Africa, particularly in South Africa where it is well established. Today it has spread to other parts of African countries, including the Kibera slums in Nairobi, Kenya.

Although little research has been done on slum tourism, cases of slum tourism and its benefits exist as evident from various internet sites. A good example of such slum is prevalent in Soweto, the most populous black-urban residential area in South Africa with a population of 896, 995 as per the 2001 census (Moroney and Bart, 2008). Soweto residents formed Soweto Slum Tourism Association to get maximum benefit from tourism (Moroney and Bart, 2008). Its members include slum residents who are tour operators, caterers, entertainers and conference organizers. The association's major activities as stated by Moroney and Bart (2008), first is to encourage tourists to stay longer so that they can spend more. Secondly, is to launch 'get off' campaigns which encourage the tourists to get off the bus and meet people and experience their culture. Thirdly, is to market Soweto as the major tourist attraction in South Africa, and lastly, is to help the service providers to improve their services.

The biggest slum in Asia is called Dharavi. Tour guides take tourists around the slum. The guides explain what people do for a living (The Teregragh, 2008). The slum tourism has a package and bookings are made over the internet and payments made on arrival. Dharavi slum generates an annual turnover of 700 million dollars. It also provides livelihood to millions through income generating activities such as hand-made goods like clay pots, crafting items and garments and informal tour guide operation. The organizers of the tours create awareness among visitors about the way of life in the slum. Their visitors include foreign and local people. Some of the money raised goes to non-governmental organizations that rehabilitate slum residents. The money raised is also used to run schools for children and a dispensary. The tours have also helped to change visitors' perception about the slum residents. Most tourists tend to associate them with pick-pocketing but their thinking has been changing. As a result of these tours, residents have found new hope for better life (Mylan, 2007). Tourists are interested in seeing more than the pathetic living conditions in slums, but also seeing what people are doing to improve their living conditions (Mylan, 2007). Tour companies offer tours that combine sightseeing with volunteering. The companies discourage taking photographs on the tour and take only five people at a time to avoid disturbing the residents of Dharavi (Reality Tours and Travel, 2007).

Another slum where slum tourism takes place is Rocinha in South America. It is the biggest slum in South America and home to more than 200,000 people. Just like many slums, Rocinha lacks electricity, water, police, sewage systems and garbage removal arrangements. Tours in the slum are organized by local tour companies. The tours have been useful in raising awareness of poverty and bringing income to the needy communities (Friedman, 2007). The Rocinha Tourism Workshop trains local youngsters as guides to take tourists in Rocinho slum. The visits help local schools as well as create work opportunities within the community. Visitors to the slum are interested in understanding the lifestyle of the residents. They purchase locally handcrafted items and ready-made clothing while on tour (Armstrong, 2005). The money paid by the tourists in Rocinha is used to improve the schools. Before such tours were organized, children went unfed

for days and were forced to beg. However, three years after slum tourism was started, children moved off the streets. Income from the slum tours is used to educate and spread awareness about challenges in the slum (Guardian Unlimited Home, 2007).

Slum Tourism in Kibera Slum in Kenya

Kibera is the most visited slum in Kenya (Asudi, 2008). Tours to Kibera slum are organized by Victoria Safaris Tours and Travel Company. It is the company currently organizing and marketing tours to the slums (Asudi, 2008). Victoria safaris started this new idea of Kenya slum tourism as a means of creating awareness of the plight of the poor in Kenya to both foreign and domestic tourists. According to Mowforth (2008), the intention was to eradicate the slums in Kenya as a long term measure using tourism business and reducing poverty by engaging the poor to participate more effectively in tourism development in Kenya and by increasing the net benefit from tourism as a short term measure to the slum community. The aims of slum tourism therefore range from increasing local employment, to involving local people in the decision-making. It is therefore a pro-poor venture. Victoria Safaris hires and recruits its local staff for the slum tours programmers among the inhabitants of the areas where it performs the slum tours. These include tour drivers, slum tour guides and the tours' security teams.

Methodology

The objectives of the study were to:

- a) Determine the main tourism attractions in Kibera slum.
- b) Determine the perceptions of Kibera's slum dwellers, Kenya Tourism Board and Victoria Safaris of slum tourism.
- c) Determine if there were any benefits of slum tourism to the residents of Kibera slum.

Research Design

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. It entailed a description of the state of affairs based on information collected after administering questionnaires. This information was useful in highlighting the characteristics of tourists participating in this form of tourism so that it can guide decision on the kind of market segment to be targeted in the process of promoting slum tourism. It was also useful in identifying the product characteristics whose combined effect is the overall experience on the tourists when they visit Kibera as their destination. The exploratory and descriptive survey design was suitable for collecting information about people's attitudes towards development of slum tourism, opinions on its probable benefits, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues (Orodho and Kombo, 2002). The data collected from this study was basically qualitative. The qualitative data focused on such areas as response on the people's attitudes and opinion on issues of slum tourism.

Target Population

The target population of the study was 800,000 residents of Kibera slum (Ministry of Housing, 2006) who live in a total of 12 villages in the slum, 160 employees of KTB and 38 employees of Victoria safaris.

Sampling Techniques

Stratified sampling technique was used. There were three strata of the population comprising of residents of Kibera residents, employees of the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) and 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 subjects from the KTB were selected using simple random sampling method while all subjects from Victoria Safaris participated in the study.

384 subjects among residents of Kibera formed the sample. KTB respondents were 50 and Victoria safaris respondents were 38. This gave a total of 472 respondents.

Findings and Discussion

Tourist Attractions in Kibera Slum

According to Cooper (2005), attractions provide a single most important reason for touring a destination. Therefore, this study sought to identify the possible main attractions in Kibera slum. The responses from the residents of Kibera slum, employees of Victoria Safaris and KTB are summarized in Table 1 below.

	Kibera	KTB	Victoria safaris	Totals
Tourist Attraction	Frequency and %	Frequency and %	Frequency and %	
View houses of residents	30 (7.6%)	6 (12%)	7 (18%)	43 (9.1%)
View activities of residents	58 (15.3%)	12 (24%)	8 (21.1%)	78 (16.5%)
Taking Photographs	123 (32%)	12 (24%)	6 (15.8%)	141(29.9%)
	26 (6.8%)	0	0	26 (5.5%)
View transport system	109 (28.4%)	9 (18%)	7 (18.4%)	125(26.5%)
To get informed about residents problems	7 (1.8%)	0	0	7 (1.5%)
Sample residents food	19 (4.9%)	11 (22%)	10 (26.5%)	40 (8.5%)
Entertainment	12 (3.2%)	0	0	12 (2.5%)
Any other				
Total	384 (100%)	50 (100%)	38 (100%)	472 (100%)

With regard to tourists attractions in Kibera slum, 12(24%) of the KTB respondents indicated that the day-to-day activities of the slum dwellers or residents' lifestyle and photography were the key tourist attractions, while 10 (26.3%) and 123 (32%) Victoria Safaris employees and Kibera residents respectively indicated that entertainment presented by residents (such as dances, singing, drama and cinemas) and photography were main attractions respectively. Residents' challenges like lack of basic needs were the second attraction according to 109 (28.4%) respondents from Kibera. Out of 50 KTB respondents, 11 (22%) viewed entertainment by residents as second attraction. 58 (15.3%) respondents from Kibera indicated residents' day-to-day activities as an attraction while 8 (21.1%) respondents from Victoria Safaris were of the same view. On the overall, a higher number of the respondents across the three groups, 141 (29.9 %) indicated photography as main attraction, followed by tourists' interest in getting informed about residents' problems, 125 (26.5 %) and viewing of residents' activities 78 (16.5%)

Perceptions on the Tourist Visits in Kibera Slum

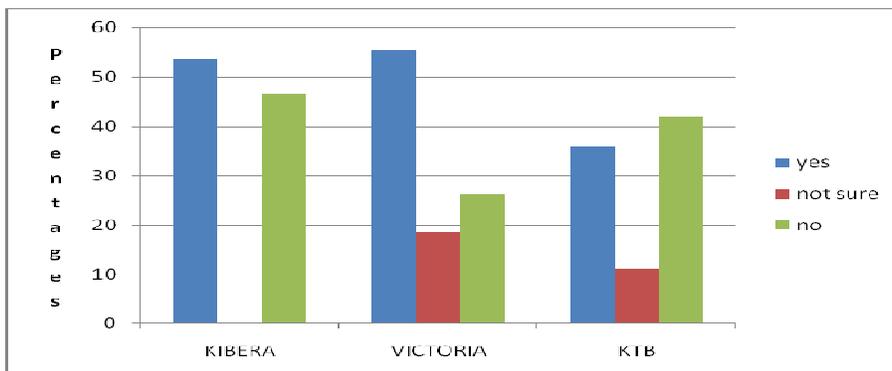
A summary of the perceptions of the residents of Kibera and employees of KTB and Victoria Safaris respondents on whether or not they favor or like tourist visits to Kibera Slum is presented in Table 2 below.

Respondents	I like slum tours					Totals
	Strongly like	Like	Not sure	Dislike	Strongly dislike	
Kibera	148(38.5%)	190(49.5%)	20(5.2%)	21(5.5%)	5(1.3%)	384(100%)
KTB	0(0%)	30(60%)	11(22%)	0(0%)	9(18%)	50(100%)
Victoria Safaris	7(18.4%)	21(55.3%)	5(13.2%)	5(13.2%)	0(0%)	38(100%)
Totals	155(56.9%)	241(164.8%)	36 (40.4%)	26 (18.7%)	14 (19.3%)	472(100%)

The opinions of the majority of Kibera respondents, 338 (88%), were in favour of tourism in the Kibera slum as evident from those who indicated that they “strongly like” it (148, 38.5%) and those who indicated that they “like” the tours (190, 49.5%). These results tally with those reported by Dweks (2004) as quoted by Mowforth (2008) who found out that most slum residents viewed the tours in an extremely positive light and some residents gained financially from the venture.

The opinions of the KTB employees on slum tourism were positive because majority (30, 60%), liked the concept, while 11 (22%) were undecided and the remaining 9 (18%) disliked the idea. On the other hand, majority of the Victoria Safaris respondents overwhelmingly supported the idea as 7 (18.4 %) and 21 (55.3%) of them “strongly liked” and “liked” the idea respectively giving a total of 28 (73.7%) who favored the venture. 5 (13.2%) were undecided. The responses across the three categories of respondents show that majority, 241 (164.8%), followed by 155 (56.9%) expressed their liking for slum tourism in Kibera.

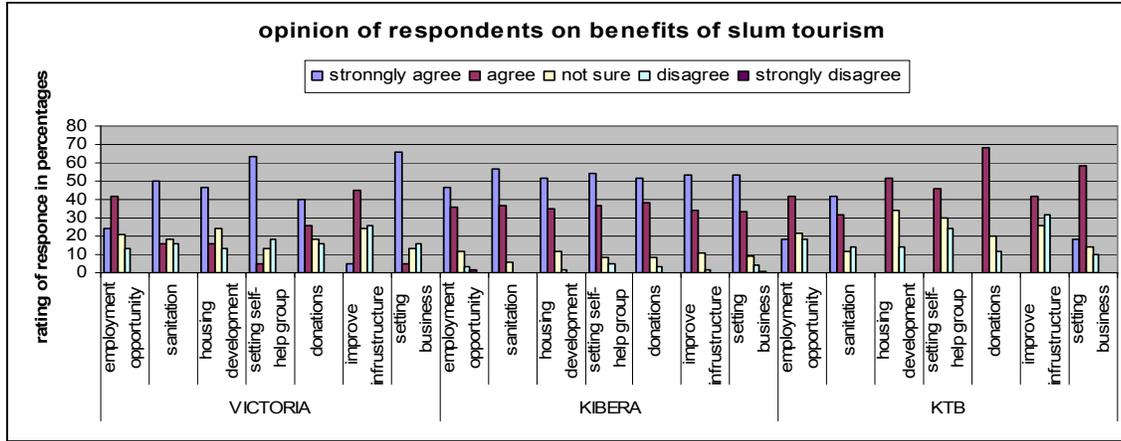
Responses on whether Kibera residents perceive slum tourism to be beneficial to them are summarized in Table 3 below.



Kibera residents view slum tourism as a beneficial venture. This is because when asked whether they had benefited, majority 206 (53.6%) responded in affirmative while a proportion of 46.4% indicated that they had not benefited. The respondents of Victoria Safaris concurred with Kibera respondents that slum tourism was of benefit to the residents. Out of the 38 respondents, 21 (55.3%) indicated that Kibera residents benefited from slum tours, 7 (18.4%) were not sure while 10 (26.3%) were of the view that the residents had not benefited. A larger number of KTB employees indicated that the residents had not benefited from the

venture as only 18 (36%) out of 50 respondents were of the view that they had benefited, 11 (22%) were not sure while a larger proportion of 21 (42%) indicated that they had not benefited.

The views of the respondents on contribution of slum tourism towards improving the living standards of slum residents are summarized in Table 4 below.



The residents of Kibera agreed that slum tourism had benefited them in number of ways. A larger proportion of the respondents “strongly agreed” (57%) and “agreed” (37%) that the venture is beneficial in improving sanitation in the slum. Kibera respondents also strongly agreed and agreed that the venture was of benefit in the following areas; creation of employment (45%, 36%), housing development (52%, 35%), setting self-help groups (53%, 38%), donations (51%, 39%), improvement of infrastructure (52%, 35%) and setting business (52%, 34%).

KTB respondents overwhelmingly responded in the affirmative (69%) that slum tourism benefited slum residents because of the donations they received from the donors. A larger proportion of KTB officials also were of the view that slum tourism had encouraged entrepreneurial spirit, leading to opening of small scale businesses. A large proportion also affirmed that slum tourism had created employment opportunities (19% and 41% respectively) and improved sanitation (41% and 31% respectively). They also agreed that slum tourism had contributed to housing development (52%), setting up of self-help groups (46%) and improvement of infrastructure (41%). On the hand, the employees of Victoria Safaris “strongly agreed” and “agreed” on a number of ways slum tourism had been of benefit to slum residents in terms of setting up businesses (65% and 5% respectively), setting up self-help groups (63% and 4% respectively), sanitation (50% and 17% respectively), housing development (47% and 15% respectively), creating employment opportunities (23% and 41% respectively) and improving infrastructure (4% and 45% respectively).

Conclusions

The research came up with the following conclusions:-

- a) Kibera slum is a tourist destination.
- b) Residents of Kibera slum perceive tourists’ visits to their slum in a positive way.
- c) Slum tourism is economically beneficial to the residents of Kibera as creates employment and businesses for them.
- d) The major tourist attraction in Kibera slum is taking photographs, followed by getting informed about residents’ problems.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations for policy and practice for slum tourism:

- a) The government of Kenya, through the Ministry responsible tourism should develop a policy that specifically addresses slum tourism to guide on different roles of the stakeholders with a view to streamlining related activities and services.
- b) Tour companies should work towards involving residents of Kibera slum in planning and offering slum tours, as well as ensuring that slum tours are not restricted to a routine visit since the tourists may only meet a selected minority.
- c) The Ministry responsible for tourism should encourage slum tourism in Kibera as a strategy for pro-poor growth of the slum community.
- d) Ministry responsible tourism should educate and create awareness amongst the residents so that they can carry out businesses around activities of slum tours as a way of creating employment for them.
- e) The Nairobi city council should direct their efforts and resources towards providing a secure and clean environment in Kibera so as to make it more appealing to potential tourists.
- f) Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) should devise marketing strategies for tourism in disadvantaged areas such as Kibera slum to enable the poor residents to benefit socially and economically from the tourist activities.

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