

**INFLUENCE OF CONFERENCE TOURISM IN ENHANCING NAIROBI  
COUNTY AS A COMPETITIVE TOURISM DESTINATION IN KENYA**

**BY  
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## DECLARATION

### Declaration by the Candidate

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## **DEDICATION**

This research thesis is dedicated to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Munyao who have supported me unconditionally and have always instilled in me the willpower to succeed.

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## ABSTRACT

The Kenyan tourism products have over the years been predominantly based on wildlife and beach attractions. Due to diminishing number of tourist attracted by wildlife and beach products, the country is diversifying into other tourism products like conference, culture and sports tourism in order to enhance its competitive advantage. This study sought to determine the influence of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination. The specific objectives were to: determine the relationship between elements of conference tourism and Nairobi County as a competitive conference tourism destination, assess the effects of emerging issues in conference tourism on enhancing Nairobi County as competitive a tourism destination and explore the relationship between conference tourism promotional strategies and Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination in Kenya. The study was guided by integrated model of destination competitiveness. The study adopted descriptive and explanatory research designs that involved collecting, analysing, and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data to explain the phenomenon under study. The target population comprised of 288 operational staff and 9 senior managers from 9 selected tourism organizations. Slovin's formula was used to determine the sample size of 167 operations staff. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 167 operational staff while purposive sampling was used for the 9 senior managers. Questionnaires and interview schedule were used to collect primary data from operations staff and senior managers respectively. Primary quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data was analysed using content analysis. Cronbach's alpha results revealed pre-tested questionnaires had an acceptable internal consistency for tourism elements ( $\alpha=0.8$ ), emerging issues ( $\alpha=0.7$ ) and adopted promotional strategies ( $\alpha=0.7$ ). This therefore, indicated that questionnaire were reliable and fit for data collection. Oral interview with key informants (managers of tourism organizations) established that overall, key conference tourism elements, tourism promotional strategies adopted emerging issues. These have influenced Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination. Regression model ( $r^2=0.610$ ) indicated that conference tourism influenced 61% of destination competitiveness variability. The study revealed conference tourism destination elements ( $\beta=0.575$ ) influenced the most. Multiple linear regression analysis results revealed that key tourism elements ( $\beta=1.748$ ,  $p=0.001$ ), emerging issues ( $\beta=0.074$ ,  $p=0.001$ ) and promotional strategies adopted ( $\beta=0.218$ ,  $p=0.001$ ) significantly influence the enhancement of Nairobi County as a tourism destination. The study concludes that available tourism elements, emerging issues in conference industry and promotional strategies adopted for conference tourism in Kenya have significantly enhanced Nairobi County as a tourism destination. In order to enhance Nairobi County as a tourism destination the study recommends for the improvement of quantity and quality of accommodation facilities in order to attract high numbers of tourist. The study also recommends for development of strategies to address emerging issues that may hinder or enhance the competitiveness of Nairobi County as tourism destination.

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## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

According to Johnson and Christensen (2008) operation definition of terms is used to specify the operation or procedure that the study used to obtain measurements of phenomena's and also helps create consistency of the study. In this study the following terms were used throughout the study to understand features or phenomenon and to define the procedure used to obtain measurement of different variables in the study.

**Competitive Destination** - Is a city, town or area that has the ability to deliver goods and services that perform better than another are, on the aspects of tourism experiences that are considered important by tourists, by providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences (Dwyer & Kim, 2003).

**Competitiveness** - As used in this study it is the ability to increasingly attract tourist, increase volume of repeat visit, create new tourism investments opportunities, increase tourism earnings and create destination awareness while satisfying customer expectations by providing them with satisfying memorable experience while enhancing the wellbeing of destination residents (Dwyer & Kim, 2003)

**Conference Tourism:** Tourism that includes business activities or meeting of people for the purpose of discussions, consulting, problem solving, it includes elements of tourism as it requires travelling to conference destinations and in some cases using various tourism services (Rogers, 2007).

**Destination** - A place that attracts visitors for a temporary stay, including continents, countries, states, cities, villages and purpose resort areas and are dependent to a significant extent on revenues from tourism (UNWTO, 2020).

**Emerging Issues** - These are issues that are contemporary to tourism development and cannot be ignored because they affect the tourism industry either negatively or positively (Shaikh, 2016). This study conceptualizes emerging issues as a possible new technology, health issues, environmental issues, safety and security, a potential public policy issue or a new concept or idea that could mature and develop into a critical mainstream issue in the future (Swarbrooke, 2011).

**Operational Staff** - Officials working within various departments in an organization, they may work with managers or head a department. This study used officials working in various departments in selected tourism organizations as respondents in the study.

**Promotional Strategies** - This study conceptualized promotional strategies as activities, developments and expenditures designed to increase tourism numbers, including and not limited to marketing, publicizing or diversifying of tourism products for the purposes of attracting and welcoming tourists to a destination.

**Tourism Elements** - They are the fundamental reasons why prospective visitors choose a destination over the other. They include; attractions natural, cultural or man-made accommodation, infrastructure, accessibility, amenities and auxiliary services.

**Tourism:** Comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (UNWTO, 2020).

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

CBD	-	Central Business District
CCA	-	Comparative and Competitive Advantage
CTICC	-	Cape Town International Convention Centre
CVB	-	Convention Visitor Bureau
DMO	-	Destination management organisation
DMO	-	Destination Management Organisation
EAC	-	East African Community
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GOK	-	Government of Kenya
ICC	-	International Convention Centre
ICCA	-	International Conventions Council Association
ICT	-	Information Communication Technology
IMDC	-	Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness
KICC	-	Kenyatta International Convention Centre
KNBS	-	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KNCB	-	Kenya National Convention Bureau
KQ	-	Kenya Airways
KTB	-	Kenya Tourist Board
KTDC	-	Kenya Tourist Development Cooperation
Mgr	-	Manager
MICE	-	Meetings Incentives Conventions Exhibitions
MOT	-	Ministry of Tourism
O. I	-	Oral Interview
TRA	-	Tourism Regulatory Authority

UN	-	United Nations
UNWTO	-	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WEC	-	World Economic Forum
WTO	-	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	-	World Travel and Tourism Council

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Overview**

This chapter presents background to the study on conference tourism and tourism giving an overview of the development of conference tourism and also the growth of conference tourism over the decades in the global, regional and Kenyan perspective. The chapter also presents the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, study objectives, research questions and the justification and limitation of the study.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Conference tourism is a fundamental and contemporary field of Meetings Incentives Conventions Exhibitions (MICE) tourism. It complements conventional tourism products with the aim of the volume and value of tourism to local people and host destination. Conference tourism is now widely promoted as a supplementary and alternative product that widens developing countries beyond conventional tourism products.

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing economic activities significant to most countries in the world (UNWTO, 2020). Despite the unpredictable uncertainties and ever-increasing terrorist attacks, political instability, to health pandemics, the tourism industry is still resilient (Crotti & Misrahi, 2015). The industry has been instrumental in economic and social development worldwide, with benefits such as opening up countries for trade, business, capital investment and job creation (Du, Lew & Ny, 2016). Further, the World Travel and Tourism Council, (2019) describes tourism as a crucial pillar for economic growth supporting an estimated 330 million jobs, 1 in 10 jobs around the world and contributing 10.3% of global GDP in 2019. United Nations World Tourism Organization (2020) notes that the international



tourism has indicated continuous growth for the 10th consecutive year reporting 1.5 billion international tourist arrivals in 2019 and estimated 1.8 billion of international tourist arrivals by 2030. Of great benefit has been the conference industry which is an important and growing segment of the tourism industry with a great potential.

In the tourism industry, conference tourism is the fastest and largest growing segment of the modern tourism sector. It is a niche tourism segment that holds out great promises for the continued growth of the economy (Chiu, Dong and Wu, 2016). In the tourism industry, Conference tourism is the fastest and largest growing segment of the modern tourism sector. It is a special tourism market that holds out great promise for the continued growth of the economy (Chiu, Dong and Wu, 2016). Conference tourism is considered as one of the advantageous international tourism markets, being tapped into as a measure for national building, destination marketing and economic development and enhancing of destination competitiveness.

Jin and Weber (2013) observed that conferences are being extensively and increasingly used as an important part of enhancing tourism destinations. According to Rogers and Davidson (2015), conferences normally happen for a few days to a week and generate a high level of demand for travel, of hospitality services, including lodging, food and beverage, catering, convention service, convention facility supply, transportation, attractions, retail, and entertainment and thus bears great importance for the local economy of a destination (Yang & Gu, 2012).

Further, Pike and Page (2014) acknowledges that conference travellers can be used to boosting visitor numbers and destination appeal through developing a distinctive selling proposition that sets apart the destination from its competition. This is because

they are made up of a market segment of people motivated and interested to travel to attend events, in which they later become tourists (Getz, 2008).

In Kenya, conference, tourism is being promoted as part of the key areas of economic development sectors for realizing the country's Vision 2030 (Waweru, 2016). (Odunga, *et al.*, 2011), also acknowledged that conference tourism can be an alternative tourism strategy for the development and diversification of the tourism industry in Kenya. Mihajlović (2017) also stated that conference tourism is a vital and fast growing sector that has a significant interaction with the tourism industry.

A report by the Kenya National Tourism Blue Print (NTB) 2030 recognises conferences as a strategic gateway to Kenya's tourism competitiveness (NTB, 2017). Kenya has successfully hosted a diverse portfolio of successful conferences events. Conference tourism is considered an important driving force in tourism and in recent years the industry, has experienced global growth. Today this sector is one of the most lucrative and competitive market segments, making an enormous contribution to the economies of many countries (Mair, Binney, & Whitelaw, 2018). However, the concern remains that these conferences need to be a competitive environment. Welthagen (2019) points out that, conferences events are subject to continual research to determine the contribution and range of individual factors of competitiveness. Further Gert and Page (2019) points out that, in a conference context, conference events have become more prevalent. It is important for conference managers to recognise, conceptualize and manage diverse factors to claim a competitive edge in the market place, both nationally and internationally. In terms of competitiveness, Crouch (2007) argues that the multidimensional factors which influence the tourism industry should be carefully balanced in order to remain competitive.

Accordingly, various researchers have argued that the constant expansion in global tourism and increased competition require the development and implementation of strategies and actions in order to maintain a competitive edge and foster tourism growth (Du-Plessis, 2017). From a conference perspective, this would relate to increasing revenue through conferences, attracting more tourists and offering them a memorable and satisfactory experience at the conference, and after the conference as well as enhancing the wellbeing of the host community (Du Plessis, 2017).

There are many studies and models on the importance of other forms of tourism and competitiveness of destinations, but few of these include the aspect of conference tourism. Further, the numerous studies that have been done on conference tourism have not addressed the issue of conference tourism in enhancing destination competitiveness. A study by (Mirrin, 2017) on strategic planning and management in the MICE sector a case study of the Auckland region in New Zealand only identified attributes influencing conference tourism, a study by (Marta, *et al.*, 2017) on conference tourism development in the city łódź city Poland revealed the opportunities and limitations in conference tourism. A study by Monshi and Scott (2018) on the influence of conference tourism in Saudi Arabia found that conference tourism has spurred economic development. The same was noted by Jamgade (2018) in a study on the scope of MICE tourism in Bangalore City, South India. The study revealed that conference tourism is one of the emerging drivers of hospitality industry. A study by Bavuma and Spencer (2018) on the importance of conference tourism to the economy in South Africa revealed the economic benefits of conference tourism. Kalleab (2016) conducted a study on conference tourism challenges and prospects in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, while a study by Rwigema (2020) on impact of conference tourism in Rwanda identified conference sector as one of the mainstays of the

economy. A report by Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) on performance of Uganda MICE tourism revealed that conference tourism is a very lucrative tourism product (UTB, 2016). The report further note the MICE tourism contribute heavily to the existence and survival of tourism enterprises especially hotels and probably even more than accommodation (UTB, 2016).

Finally, conference studies in Kenya have focused on policy and the economic benefits of conference tourism. A study by Mesa (2019), focused on the effectiveness of exhibition events in promoting the tourism industry in Nairobi city, Kenya

From the studies on conference tourism across the world, there is currently no framework indicating the competitive factors of conference tourism elements, and how they can enhance the competitiveness of tourist destinations. This informed the purpose of this study to understand the elements influencing competitiveness from the conference tourism perspective. Crouch and Ritchie (2003) ascertains that a destination's competitive position is shaped by global or macro environmental forces and micro environmental influences and circumstances. In addition, Dwyer and Kim (2003) affirms that destination competitiveness is conceptualised as a function of core resources and attractors, supporting factors and resources, emerging issues and destination management aspects. The core resources and attractors include the primary elements which attract tourists to a destination. These are considered to be the fundamental reasons that prospective visitors choose one destination over another (Crouch & Ritchie, 2003). Collectively various supporting elements like accommodation, amenities, and resources can provide a foundation for the development of a strong tourism sector (Dwyer & Kim, 2003).

Emerging issues as described by (Hanifah, 2016) are the contemporary modern day issues like health issues and pandemics, safety and security, technology, environmental issues, global economic crisis and these factors have the capacity to modify the influence of the other elements either positively or negatively. These emerging issues as pointed by Enright and Newton (2004) may limit the capacity of a destination to attract and subsequently to satisfy potential tourists. In this way, they may impact upon destination competitiveness.

Destination management involves activities to enhance the appeal of the core resources and attractors, to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of the various supporting factors, and to any constraints imposed by the emerging issues. And these include the various promotional strategies applied by destinations to market its destination. According to Buhalis (2000); Dwyer and Kim (2003); Crouch and Ritchie (2003) tourism destination competitiveness can be enhanced through various destination promotional strategies like marketing rebranding and product diversification. Further, a study on competitiveness of the city of Hong Kong as an international conference destination in South-East Asia by Qu *et al.* (2017) identified some vital elements for competitiveness. These included accessibility, accommodation, safety and security conventional amenities and venues as well as a strong infrastructural system as important elements to increase competitiveness of a destination.

In addition, Kim (2003) in their analysis of Seoul as an international conference destination pointed out service quality, transportation, meeting room facilities and destination attractiveness as major attributes for choosing a conference destination. Jamieson (2016) revealed long-term profits and continued patronage as being essential in attaining competitive advantages. Wang, Hsu, and Swanson (2012),

findings revealed that China's tourism competitiveness relies on five underlying dimensions: destination management, tourism resources, tourism superstructure, infrastructure and destination-supporting factors.

While the various empirical studies on conference tourism and destination competitiveness have given exhaustive list factors influencing competitiveness of tourist destination, it is clear that three major influences are evident in the case of conference tourism, namely conference tourism elements, trends and issues and destination management strategies. However, the empirical studies fail to address how the various critical elements like attractions, accessibility, amenities and accommodation can enhance the competitiveness of specific destinations like cities which are major conference tourist destinations.

Further, the conference tourism just like any other tourism industry is prone to unpredictable uncertainties like health pandemics, safety and security in the tourism industry. Included in these are natural disasters and climate change, environmental issues, E-commerce and emergence of new technologies among other modern day contemporary emerging issues. These have not been captured in the various empirical studies for enlightened but are important for a conference tourism destination to be competitive. Finally, while destination management strategies are critical for the success of conference destination, it is important to find out how various destination management strategies have been used to promote conference tourist destinations. Therefore, these three critical empirical gaps are what the study endeavoured to fill by addressing the influence of conference tourist elements in enhancing Nairobi as a tourist destination. The study also endeavoured to identify how current emerging issues influence the competitiveness of tourist destination. It finally explored how

various promotional strategies have influenced the competitiveness of Nairobi City as a tourism destination.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) touts the conference segment of tourism as being among the main sectors which have contributed to tourism development, as well as the production of income, employment, and investment (UNWTO, 2020). The Conference industry has grown over the past decades. It is not only known as a service industry but also as one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry (Fenich, 2015). This industry is multifaceted as it combines different sectors such as trade, transport, travel, leisure, accommodation, food and beverage, venues, information technology and finance (Jamgade, 2018). According to Goeldner and Ritchie (2012) conference tourism is a high quality yield form of tourism and can be positioned as a key tourism product because it is resilient to the type of events and economic downturns that affect leisure tourism. Conference tourists spend more, not only on hotels and restaurants but even on leisure activities such as visits to local attractions such as wildlife parks, museums entertainment facilities and shopping centres (Li-Ting & Zheng, 2017). In fact, they have been found to spend three times more than an average leisure tourist (Deery, 2010). This is attributed to the notion that most of their travel expenses are paid for by the organisations they represent, leaving the tourists with substantial disposal income. This in return generates foreign exchanges and creates job opportunities and also decreases seasonality, produces greater tourism receipts on average, and increases brand awareness (Deery, 2010).

Globally according to the County and City rankings report 2020 by ICCA evidence indicates that Europe, North America, Asia, Latin America take the lead in all the continents. Europe had the largest share in the conference sector and has over the

decades remained stable, with North America having the second largest share of the conference sector clientele, Asia comes third while, and Latin America took the fourth position in the conferences held in 2019 (ICCA, 2020).

Within Africa, South Africa was the most popular conference destination in Africa, followed by Morocco, Rwanda, Egypt and finally Kenya took the fifth position in the continent (ICCA, 2020). City wise the city of Cape Town hosted the most conferences in 2019, Kigali city in Rwanda came second in the number of conference events held, while the Nairobi was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> after the cities of Cairo and Marrakech (ICCA, 2020).

According to the ICCA Africa's global market share in the conference industry is only 3.3%, this shows that the continent is yet to exploit fully the benefits of the tourism industry (ICCA, 2020). This means that Kenya has to put in place proper strategies to be able to benefit from the 3% market share that Africa enjoys to be able to realize its tourism potential.

For many African Countries, Kenya included; safari and beach tourism has been the lifeline of the tourism sector. Consequently, the Kenyan tourism destination has relied mainly on its traditional products that comprise of beach and wildlife tourism and over the years this product has become increasingly non-competitive. Kenya is experiencing competition from South African and East African countries who offer similar tourism products (De-Sausmarez, 2013). There is need therefore, for Kenya to offer an alternative demand driven tourism product and conference tourism has been touted as this new product that will steer Kenya in the next tourism frontier (Odunga, *et. al.*, 2011). However, conference tourism has either been ignored or underestimated



largely due to the fact that safari and beach tourism is an invisible import generating much needed foreign exchange (Kariuki, 2016).

In Kenya, evidence indicates significant growth in conference tourism. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) report shows that the number of international conferences and delegates increased by 6.8 per cent and 5.6 per cent, respectively, in 2018 (KNBS, 2019). Further, the report notes that overall conference capacity utilisation improved from 11.5 per cent in 2017 to 11.9 per cent in 2018 (KNBS, 2019). According to the annual performance report by KTB in 2019, the improved performance was attributed to a conducive environment for conference tourism, withdrawal of travel advisories and high-profile international conferences held in 2018 (KTB, 2019). Some of the high-profile conferences included: The First ordinary session of the African Union Ministerial Sub-Committee on Tourism; the 79th International Skala World Congress; Sustainable Blue Economy Conference and; The African Hotel Investment Forum (KTB, 2019).

According to Getz (2008) conference tourists are made up of motivated and interested people who travel to attend business or work related events, in which they later become tourists. Therefore, conference events can boost visitor numbers and destination appeal through developing a distinctive selling proposition that sets apart the destination from its competition (Pike & Page, 2014). Therefore, a destination that wishes to realise the full potential of its tourism industry should make use of conference tourism as an enhancing strategy in ensuring their destinations remain competitive (Zetiu & Berteau, 2017). The above background forms a basis on which the study seeks to find out the influence of conference tourism as a tool for enhancing the competitiveness of Nairobi County, as a tourism destination in Kenya.

According to Rwigema (2020) the conference clientele is looking for a destination where conference activities can be augmented with a holiday particularly safari tourism options pre and post conference excursions and travel. Nairobi County which is Kenya's capital city offers this experience to the conference tourist for it not only offers a breath taking idyllic venues and accommodation facilities but also offers the finest safari experience in the Nairobi national park, safari walk and the Nairobi animal orphanage. The county boasts of the National museum with a large collection of artefacts portraying Kenya's rich heritage through history, culture and contemporary art (Kariuki, 2016).

The county is endowed with a variety of historical buildings, monuments, cultural sites among other attractions, wide options of entertainment, recreation, shopping, sporting activities, nightlife and sightseeing. While the county of Mombasa in Kenya has cemented itself as the beach destination of East Africa while Maasai Mara established itself as a leading wildlife destination in Kenya, Nairobi city has not utilised its available resources to reach its potential as the conference destination of choice. Nairobi boasts of world class conference venues and facilities, accommodation but its uniqueness is found in its amazing fauna and flora, golfing, shopping, entertainment and world class financial options human resource capacity (KTB 2019).

Being a cosmopolitan city, it enjoys robust economic activities and is in a better position to attract high end conference events and visitors from all over the world. The county is also home to many regional headquarters of several international organisations and companies, Further, Nairobi County being home to two UN headquarters is an added advantage to the county, hence making the city an international hub where international communities convene. Nairobi is a destination

that not only offers the conference experience, but also a variety of extra conference activities. Nairobi has enormous potential in becoming as one of the leading continent's conference destination Africa. The city is endowed with physical infrastructure, cultural and natural attractions which cater for the conference type of tourist. However, there exists a marketing gap towards harnessing the great potential in conference tourism and complimenting it with the various tourism products that Nairobi has to offer. Destination management organisations in the county have failed to make city tours as a part of conference program. As a result, there is an awareness problem among these pertinent bodies about the importance of making city tours one part of their program.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Conference tourism is a fundamental and contemporary field of MICE tourism as a new form of tourism offering in the developing world to increase the volume and value of tourism to local people and host destinations. Conference tourism offers a supplementary and alternative product that widens the Kenyans tourism menu beyond nature based tourism and beach tourism. Consequently, the conference clientele is increasingly looking for new destinations as the developed World has become saturated.

In Kenya, evidence indicates significant growth in conference tourism. Available data by KNBS indicate an increase in international conferences and delegates by 6.8 per cent and 5.6 per cent, respectively, in 2018. Further, the overall conference capacity utilisation improved from 11.5 per cent in 2017 to 11.9 per cent in 2018 (KNBS, 2019). While this may show a significant growth and role of the conference tourism within Nairobi County, it is certainly a notable paradox that the number is still very low compared to the numbers of holiday tourists. Therefore, an effort is needed to

enhance Nairobi City County's tourism industry, to recoup the tourist numbers and increase tourism revenues.

A clear disparity still lies in the growth and preference of the country's tourism as concentration of tourism marketing efforts still remains in the conventional tourism products leaving the conference sector underutilised and not well marketed (Odunga, Belsoy, Nthinga & Maingi, 2011). Consequently, the role of conference tourism in Kenya remains secondary to leisure tourism. In the recent past, the National tourism blueprint 2030, identified conference tourism as one of the ways in which tourism source markets can be diversified while providing a cushion against seasonality (GOK, 2017). Essentially, the conference market is seen as a stopgap measure when leisure tourists are not forthcoming; as a panacea for the struggling industry rather than a significant market segment.

Although attempts have been made to describe the conference tourism segment in Kenya, it has mainly been with regard to policy (Kodi, 2017) and isolated case studies by Odunga *et al.* (2011), thus data on Kenya's conference tourism is still scanty. A study by Ogembo (2016) only highlighted the role of MICE tourism in sustainable development while a study by Mayaka (2018) sought to examine the choice consumers make when choosing conference venues in Nairobi. It is clear from the empirical studies on conference tourism in Kenya none has addressed the influence conference tourism plays in enhancing the competitiveness of a destination. Consequently, little has been documented on conference tourism elements, emerging issues and strategies geared towards enhancing the conference tourism market.

Diversifying in the conference tourism segment will require a timely audit of important tourism elements that enhance the competitiveness of Nairobi as a tourist

destination. Further to this, timely adequate information is needed on how current emerging issues in modern day tourism influence the competitiveness of Nairobi as a tourist destination. Finally, for Nairobi to experience optimum visitor numbers, will depend on the promotional strategies it adapts to market the destination. This presents a need for a study influence of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination in Kenya.

### **1.3 Study Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

To investigate influence of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

1. To determine the relationship between elements of conference tourism and Nairobi County as a competitive conference tourism destination.
2. To assess the effects of emerging issues in conference tourism on enhancing Nairobi County as competitive a tourism destination.
3. To explore the relationship between conference tourism promotional strategies and Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination in Kenya.

### **1.4 Research Hypothesis**

- H<sub>01</sub>** There is no relationship between conference tourism elements and Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination.
- H<sub>02</sub>** Emerging issues in conference tourism do not enhance Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination.
- H<sub>03</sub>** Adopted conference tourism promotional strategies have not enhanced Nairobi County as a tourism destination in Kenya.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The study contributes towards providing information on the influence of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi city as a competitive tourism destination by investigating the elements that influence a competitive destination. The knowledge of the elements that influence destination competitiveness could help the ministry of tourism formulate policies geared toward enhancing conference tourism to be a competitive form of tourism.

The study could benefit National and Nairobi County governments, to formulate policies for addressing various emerging issues in the conference tourism sector. The study is expected to provide practical knowledge on planning, development, organising and marketing to Kenya Tourist board, Kenya National Convention Bureau, the hotel industry and other conference tourism suppliers. Finally, in the field of research the study will add new knowledge especially in the field of conference tourism destination competitiveness which has been scanty in Kenya by linking conference tourism to destination competitiveness.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study targeted organisations in the tourism industry in Nairobi County both public and private. The study involved operations staff as respondents working in the departments of ICT, marketing, customer service, hospitality, business development, transport and logistics, planning and policy development and safety and security. It also involved senior managers as key informants. The study was conducted from March 2016 to November 2016 in Nairobi County; the study only collected information on the influence of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination.

### **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

Despite the fact that many bodies as well as academic institutions have carried out a wealth of research on this industry, there still remains a problem of creating a reliable picture of this industry. Even in their report on the economic importance of the meetings industry (UNWTO, 2020), acknowledges the impossibility of measuring the industry accurately due to lack of consistency in data, concepts and definitions. During the research period the following limitations were encountered. Lack of adequate documented data on conference tourism since not much of specific studies have been conducted in this field. This limitation was countered by searching for as much relevant materials as possible. The study experienced the challenge of the respondent's fear to give information regarding their operations which is usually guarded and held in confidence. This limitation was addressed by assuring the management of institutions and respondents that the study is purely an academic exercise and the research findings will not capture information that is detrimental to the respondents.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Overview**

This chapter begins with defining the concept of destination competitiveness, followed by theoretical review of theories related to tourism destination competitiveness, then a critical review of the theories is presented, subsections of literature on elements influencing the competitiveness of conference tourism destination, emerging trends and issues and strategies adopted in enhancing of conference tourism are discussed. A summary of the literature reviewed is given and research gap identified and finally the conceptual framework is discussed derived from the theories and literature reviewed.

#### **2.1 Tourism Elements Influencing the Competitiveness of Conference Tourism Destination**

The competitiveness of a tourism destination is dependent on the key tourism elements. These key elements are those areas of the tourism industry which come into direct contact with tourists. These elements comprise of sales, accommodation, transport, activities, attractions, and ancillary services as well as indirect support sectors (McCabe, 2010). According to Díaz and Rodríguez (2016), tourism destinations are made up of an amalgam of tourism factors and that these factors are combined to provide tourist with an integrated tourism experience. Crouch and Ritchie (2003) regard tourism influencing elements as the critical attributes of a destination that attract visitors and form the basis of destination competitiveness. These tourism elements are discussed in the sections below.



### **2.1.1 Key Tourist Attractors**

Key attractors also referred to as core resources are the fundamental reasons why visitors choose one destination over the other (Pearlman, 2014). There are various types of attractors, natural, cultural and events which provide the foundations for memorable tourism experiences. Cultural attractions are represented by three distinct features which are artistic, archaeological and ecological features (Mihalic, 2000). A high proportion of international conference travellers are now interested in cultural activities as observed by Richards and Monsters (2010).

Events, leisure activities, nightlife and shopping are also primary motivations to visit a destination. Crouch and Ritchie (2003) asserts that events do extend the seasonal life, especially in tourism destinations with inbuilt seasonality. Entertainment is a key component to the tourism industry. Dwyer and Kim (2003), asserts that entertainment occupies a major position in the destination competitive strategy. A research study by Weber (2005) demonstrates that while shopping is rarely mentioned as a primary reason for travel, it is the most universal of tourist activities. Weber (2005) further states that shopping tourism can be seen as a vehicle to revitalize traditional urban centres. Zang (2007) also identified extra conference opportunities such as entertainment, shopping, sightseeing, recreation and professional opportunities.

In their research on event tourism Yoo and Chon (2008) emphasize that conference attendees usually look to combine business and leisure. Yoo and Chon (2008) further suggest that extra conference activities should be a pull factor for conference planners when choosing conference destination. Accordingly, Davidson (2008), notes that conference travellers may often decide to extend their trip because it might be a once in a lifetime opportunity to visit that particular destination.

Davidson (2008) identifies on the site, extra-conference or post conference activities as entertainment, recreation and shopping, sporting activities, nightlife and sightseeing. The convention industry tends to attract high spending visitors and those who can make repeat visits to a destination. McCabe (2010) notes a new trend has begun to develop among several business travellers; that of mixing business with pleasure. He points out that spouses and children are accompanying the business traveller domestically and internationally, and with the availability of resort activities this usually means the visitor will stay for one or two days longer, in the hope of developing a mini vacation. Crouch and Louvere (2004) also considers the dimensions of entertainment, shopping, and sightseeing, recreational and professional opportunities. Additionally, Hanifah (2016) identifies entertainment, sightseeing and climate as the very first factors considered by conference planners. Crouch and Ritchie (2003) on the other hand found out those opportunities for sightseeing and recreation as influential elements in destination competitiveness.

Crouch and Weber (2002) on a study exploring events, argues that conference tourist looks for the three E's; that is, enterprise, excitement and entertainment. They, Crouch and Weber (2002) suggest that this can be achieved by incorporating pre-conference, inter-conference and post-conference excursions into the whole conference package. Pike and Page (2014) asserts delegates attending a conference can combine leisure and business, they found out that one way for this group of travellers to mix work and leisure is for them to extend their trip and engage in post conference excursion opportunities.

Davidson (2006) suggested five ways in which conference delegates can incorporate inter conference and post-conference excursion activities in their conference experience. This may include; professional opportunities like visiting local clients,

business negotiations, business deals, selling and marketing contracts, entertainment activities like restaurant and bars, theatre, cultural performances as well as festivals or night club experience. It also comprises of sightseeing activities which may include local tours, city architecture, museums, monuments, parks and historical site visits, amongst other attractions. Others experience may include visiting shopping malls, exhibitions centres and departmental stores and souvenir shops. Recreation is another experience that includes sports activities, either as a spectator or as a participant and other leisure recreational activities.

Zhang (2007) suggested that the host hotels can organise a party for the delegates either as a welcome or as a farewell and this can go on to show their hospitality and also show their best knowledge and skills and that can guarantee them a repeat visit and also referrals. According to McCabe (2010), golf is one of the inter-conference excursion activities that conference attendees prefer as golf tends to be included in a number of different conference functions to give the attendees the opportunity to network outside of the conference room and also incur some physiological benefits as well.

### **2.1.2 General Infrastructure**

General infrastructure (amenities) provides the foundations upon which a tourism destination can be built. According to Gunn (2012) even if a destination possesses a great quality of attractions it requires support of other elements in order to adequately receive tourists. Crouch and Ritchie (2003) asserts that a destination should possess infrastructure that cover the road systems, transportation, communication, medical facilities, sewage and sanitation. With regard to general infrastructure Rogers (2007), points out the need for ease of access to rooms, conference venues, restaurants, taxis,

public transport as well as need for effective signage around the conference venue and accommodation.

Khadaroo and Seetanah (2008) shed light on the relevance of transport infrastructure as a critical component of a successful tourism destination. Tourism transportation relevance has been extensively recognized both in the tourism planning (Gunn, 2012; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012). Telecommunication is also a fundamental factor for tourism both in the operation of accommodation and other tourism services especially conference travellers.

### **2.1.3 Tourism Hospitality Services**

Tourism hospitality services constitute one of the pull factors of a destination, if they are not accessible or are not provided by the host destination, there will be constraints in the destination's ability to pull tourists (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Hospitality has been defined as the very essence of tourism (Whitfield, 2005). Tourism hospitality services include quality of accommodations, quantity of accommodations, tourist accommodations, food service quality, tourist-oriented services and environmental friendliness of tourist accommodations.

Yoo and Chon (2007) further notes that accommodation facilities are an important conference tourism influencing element which includes aspects of capacity, security, cost and availability of accommodation facilities. Baloglu and Love (2015), in their study pointed out that, conference facilities should have capacity, good layout, and ambience security for a complete experience. Kim (2003) in their study on an analysis of Seoul as an international convention destination stated that conference room facilities, service quality and restaurants are key accommodation features influencing a competitive conference destination.

According to Crouch and Weber (2002), the services provided in a destination and its facilities are critical for the success of the conference destination. Qu, *et al.* (2000) in their study on conference tourism in South East Asia concluded that accommodation is a key determining factor in a competitive tourism destination, while Crouch and Weber (2002) highlighted the importance of availability of conference and accommodation facilities as crucial factors in a destination. Further, Crouch and Lourviere (2004) in their study on conference site selection in Australia concluded that conference and accommodation facilities are critical factors in a destination but must offer additional factors in order to succeed in an ever more competitive environment.

Swabrooke (2011) states that a good conference destination should offer a suitable conference venue, adequate accommodation, attractions and good accessibility to the generating markets and effective transport system within the destination. Crouch and Ritchie (2003) also identified conference facility factor mattered just like the accommodation category, this dimension include cost, and whether the venue is available, capacity of the venue to host the conference and the level of safety (Crouch & Louvere, 2004). Other dimension in accommodation, as identified by Crouch and Ritchie (2003) is layout of the venue, its ambience and prior experience of the venue. Other factors are climate at the site, setting of the site and infrastructure it has developed.

#### **2.1.4 Conditioning and Supporting Factors**

According to Khadaroo and Seetanah (2008) conditioning and supporting factors can strengthen or weaken the impact of other competitive destination factors. Conditioning and supporting factors incorporates measures related to accessibility of a destination. Accessibility is concerned with ease of accessing a tourist destination,

proximity to other tourist areas and attractions (Khadaroo & Seetana, 2008). Crouch and Ritchie (2008) in their research on site selection in tourism destinations focused mainly on the criteria used by planners when selecting a site. They identified accessibility as a primary factor in site selection with the associated dimension being the cost of attending the conference, the amount of time required attending the conference, and how convenient it is to travel to the conference destination and finally barriers to attending the conference. Khadaroo and Seetana (2008) evaluated the role of transport infrastructure in conference tourism as an important consideration of destination competitiveness. Yoo and Chon (2008) underscored the convenience and frequency of direct flights as important accessibility necessities while Crouch and Ritchie (2008) in accessibility discusses the ease of visa applications in the given destination, On the other hand, Claudio and Constanza (2017) asserts that speed, ease and cost accessing a destination are more important, they also point out that the geographical location, transport infrastructure especially air access are vital considerations in conference decision making. According to Rogers (2007) the location of the hotel is a key source of satisfaction, pointing out that proximity of the hotel to the conference venue is an important consideration.

Ladkin (2006) argues that accessibility is an important factor given the high regard of many conference planners. However, Crouch and Ritchie (2008) has a contrary opinion that accessibility is not a key factor in destination tourism planners. The authors agree that attractions and accommodation are key factors in planning a competitive destination. One of the primary categories distinguished by Crouch and Ritchie (2008) is that of site environment attributes like destination climate, the attractiveness of the destination environment, the suitability and the standard of local infrastructure and the extent to which the host organisations and community excels in

welcoming visitors. Zhang (2007) also highlights the issue of travel ability which include factors like time required to travel and the total cost of attending the conference as well as attendee's own personal finance situation. Destination links with major source markets depends on the professional, organisational and personal ties that stimulate tourists to visit the destination (Gunn, 2012). Conditioning and supporting factors also involve the aspects of value for money in a destination and tourists' experience in a destination. Gunn (2012) argues that the cost of using tourism services and facilities is a significant factor for the competitiveness of a tourist destination.

Accordingly, Goeldner and Ritchie (2012) notes that the price a tourist pays to visit and enjoy a destination plays a key role in determining the choice the tourist makes when selecting a destination. Further, Wall and Mathieson (2006) identifies the presence of local businesses as an important conditioning factor that is essential for this local business service. The tourism industry and the local producers fully contribute to the local economy. Page (2005) identified management capabilities of tourism firms as a crucial conditioning and supporting factor. On the same note, Buhalis (2000) argues that the skills level and human resources management of local firms play a strategic role in improving the quality of the tourism product and enhancing the competitive position of tourism destinations. Conditioning factors are also associated with the hospitality of the locals and the environment quality and lastly the security of the destination.

### **2.1.5 Image**

Davidson and Rogers (2006) bring out the image factor in the site selection process; they argue that 80% of the site selection process by conference organisers is influenced by the image of the destination. They point out that organisers will only

select a destination if it has a positive image. A destination has to attract delegates to it and if it fails, the conference registration will, and conference income will be compromised. Davidson and Rogers (2006) states that destination image is now recognized as the primary driver for demand as opposed to price. Crouch and Weber (2002) asserts that an appealing destination image is critical factor influencing a competitive destination. Chacko and Fenich (2000) further, states that promotional appeal of the conference venue is a vital contributor in the overall destination competitiveness. Dwyer and Forsyth (2012) argue that if a destination lacks a particular image or have a negative image; it will struggle to appeal to the conference market.

## **2.2 Emerging Issues Affecting the Conference Tourism Industry**

Dwyer and Kim (2003) view a tourism destination as that which is operating in the interactive and interrelated contexts of the competitive and global environments. Destination competitiveness is conditioned or limited to many emerging issues either outside or inside the destination or within the destinations immediate arena of tourism activities and competition (Crouch & Ritchie, 2003). Enright and Newton (2004) states that tourism destinations are influenced by a range of global factors namely laws and regulations, social-cultural and demographic changes, new technologies and the internet, environmental factors and state of the economy. Swarbrooke (2011) acknowledges that the tourism industry is a competitive environment shaped by emerging issues belonging to the present and these trends results in vibrancy and growth in the tourism industry.

Various current and future trends have contributed to the growth of the industry globally and also more future trends are expected to influence the conference market in the coming years (Fenich, 2015). Researchers outside and inside the conference



industry are forecasting continuous growth in the conference industry, though many issues can come across due to unpredicted circumstance those can affect conference industry (Kodi, 2017).

### **2.2.1 Information Communication Technology**

According to ICCA (2019) applications of information communication technology (ICT) is a general issue in the conference industry and possess both negative and positive effects on the social changes in the provision of events services. Conference events are getting more tech savvy and the rise of conference applications being downloaded on mobile devices, pads and Facebook pages for conferences being opened. This application of ICT assists conference organisers with registration and information to delegates, programmes thus offering them easy ways for them to get feedback before or after the conference. Further, Swabrooke (2011) identifies note taking through iPod's webcast, podcast, teleconferencing, video conferencing and interactive multimedia as common technology tools in the corporate world. The use of LCD projectors and latest audio visual technological tools have totally transformed the industry with buyers increasingly valuing technologies such as wireless internet access, networking, language interpretation and attendee feedback technologies (Roger, 2007).

Weber and Ladkin (2004) utilised a Delphi study to assess the trends affecting the conference sector within the United Kingdom. They found out that conference attendees expect to see high increased high standards of technology in venues and also anticipated to conduct registration and payments for conferences online. Cizmar and Weber (2000) also observed that enhanced communication between conference planners, venues and suppliers has led to efficiency of service delivery. Wilde and

Cox (2008) also found similar trends in the USA in a meetings market survey conducted by the meetings and conventions magazine.

### **2.2.2 Global Economic Crisis**

The global economic crisis of late 2008 has had significant impacts on the conference industry and also on tourism business across the World (Phillips, 2012). This led to a number of organisations downsizing and this further resulted to number of redundancies. As Braley (2008) asserts most times when recession occurs the first budgets to be cut are those for travel, training and conferences and this obviously has a grave impact on those companies whose business is servicing the tourism industry. Braley (2008) further notes that training, meetings and travel expenses, unlike other business cost are not fixed and in many cases they are not seen as essential for the day to day running of business. As Mair and Jago (2012) affirm as long as countries around the world experience recession the effects will likely impact on the tourism industry at large and it is an important trend and issue that governments should analyse to come up with minimizing effective measures. Finally, Davison (2007) observes that despite the on-going divergences and continuous intimidation from terrorism attacks worldwide, the global economy should continue to recover over the next five years and this is excellent news for the conference industry as it clearly depends on the worldwide economic situation (Davidson, 2007).

### **2.2.3 Environmental Issues**

According to Mair and Jago (2012) the value of environment is vital to the successful performance of the conference industry. Mair and Jago (2012) also argued that constructive environmental impacts at the basic levels and the destination hosting conferences need to ensure that the physical environment is maintained in a clean and healthy condition since delegates expect to find conference localities tidy and

attractive. Environmental issues, particularly global warming and carbon emissions have received considerable attention in the conference industry due to the negative environmental impacts. Davidson and Cope (2003) particularly identifies the transport sector especially in the area of pollution and fuel cost of air travel as major environmental impact to the environment. Additionally, Davidson and Cope (2003) states that majority of international conference journeys are made by air and aviation is identified as the highest source of green gas emissions and a key contributor to climate change. Environmental issues, particularly global warming, have in recent times been the subject of considerable media attention. The result of this attention has been a perceived pressure on business to be proactive regarding environmental issues and to manage their business in an environmentally friendly manner. According to Mair and Jago (2012) this has resulted in responses by demand for environmentally friendly conference products and also for conference business to manage their business in an environmentally friendly manner.

Park and Boo (2010) in their research on assessing conference tourism potential to contribute to environmental sustainable growth, conclude that gaining competitive advantage is been seen to be green. Lawson (2010) identifies that conference centres now utilise pro environmental strategies and tactics like use of solar panels, natural airflows and natural lighting features. In addition, an increasing number of tourism businesses, including those in the conference sector are now involved in environmentally green schemes such as green globe and carbon zero, to demonstrate their commitment to environmental harm minimisation. These environmental issues are becoming usual worries and challenges inside the conference industry. With proper strategies the conference industry has the potential to produce beneficial

results on the environment of a destination by contributing to the development and conservation of the environment.

#### **2.2.4 Safety and Security in the Tourism Industry**

Safety and security issue inevitably play a key role for tourist deciding whether to visit a particular destination or not. Yoo and Chon (2008) in their study on conference decision making process established safety and security as one of the key dimensions tourist consider when choosing a travel destination. Davidson and Rogers (2006) also states that the existence and thoroughness of safety and security measures in a destination as a key influencing factor for tourism destinations Worldwide. Accordingly, Weber and Chon (2012) point out that growing prominence of safety and security issues in the tourism industry is a clear sign of it being a critical factor of consideration when promoting tourism destinations.

The tourism industry will be facing the challenge of responding to the burden of terrorism on tourism as there has been an increase in terrorism targeting tourism destinations in the World like New York, London, France, Spain and Madrid (Yoo & Chon, 2008). Though terrorism occurs frequently in different parts of the world, it affects nearly all sectors of the tourism industry. As a result of the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 terrorist attacks in the USA, the tourism and conference industry suffered more simply because of its reliance on air travel and this particularly affected national and international conferences (Weber & Chon, 2012).

Yoo and Chon (2008) also establish that issues of crimes like robbery, murder and kidnapping of tourists have been on the rise in many leading tourist destinations and the results are often detrimental to the overall image of a destination. Schroder (2014) additionally, establish that tourist destinations must consider the possibility of terrorist

attacks or political instability which might result in civil disturbances with potential harm to tourists.

### **2.2.5 Health Issues, Natural Disasters**

According to Bauer (2008) health and hygiene issues are of crucial importance for many tourists when choosing a tourism destination. Further, a travel and tourism report by the World Economic Forum has recognised health and hygiene issues as one of the tourism destination competitive pillars (Blanke, 2009). The tourism industry is often adversely impacted by effects of pandemic diseases such as the avian flu (bird flu), severe acute respiratory system (SARS) and Ebola. Further, Page (2009) noted that implications of this pandemic are that tourists flee the affected regions as the fear of diseases reduces demand for travel. Most travellers avoid areas that have high health risk and many airlines suffer as most diseases are spread through international aviation (Blanke, 2009).

Several authors have emphasized on the vulnerability of tourism destinations to various natural disasters. According to Cappola (2010), natural disasters appear to have become more frequent in the recent years. Further, Dwyer (2011) observes that the emergence of these natural disasters like storms, hurricanes, wild fires and flooding has become a contemporary issue in the tourism industry due to the havoc they cause on tourism destinations hence reducing the competitiveness of destinations. Hurricanes in the South Eastern UK and tsunamis in Asia and the Pacific region have caused mass destructions on tourism facilities and destroyed landscapes and many tourist attractions while flooding after heavy rains have destroyed the natural environment (Burke, 2011).

### **2.2.6 Competition and Emerging Markets**

It is widely acknowledged within the tourism literature that competition to host conference events has dramatically increased in the past two decades and it seems likely that this trend will continue in the coming years (Ladkin, 2006). According to Davidson (2007), the number of conference industry tourism firms like the hotels, airlines, transport and transfer services, tour companies and all the supporting companies is growing worldwide. The main objective is to provide a professional conference package for the participating delegates.

As Weber (2005) observes, new destinations are challenging more mature destinations, within the USA known traditional City conference destinations like Detroit, New York and Washington are being overtaken by alternate new destinations such as Las Vegas, Atlanta and Orlando (Hinkin & Tracey, 2003). Asia and Pacific regions have also been the fastest growing tourism markets surpassing the USA and European markets (Ladkin, 2006). The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has become a global tourist destination though previously had solely depended on the petroleum industry but now it has a strong tourism industry. In the Asian region, the growth in the number of multipurpose built convention centres has exponentially increased in the past two decade, with Countries such as China, India, Thailand, Singapore and United Arab Emirates (Ladkin, 2006). As Yoo and Chon (2008) notes, the Asian region is not only emerging as a tourism market to watch in the near future but it is also becoming a major player within the conference sector and boast having some of the largest and most modern facilities in the World. Further, Yoo and Chon (2008) observes that China and India are the destinations to watch in the tourism arena, for together they account for about two thirds of the population and each country's

economy is literally exploding with a greater segment of the population anxious to travel.

Africa also offers a tremendous potential for future tourism development, particularly in the conference industry. Africa is currently the worldwide focus for business with many of her nations listed among the fastest growing economies in the world (Idowu, 2010). However, Africa's global market share in the event/conference industry is only 3.3%, with South Africa and Kenya as the industry leaders (ICCA, 2019). Kenya however is facing alarming competition from its East African counterparts - Rwanda which is an emerging conference destination as well as Tanzania. Enright (2005) concludes that competition among tourism destinations will continue increase as long as tourism infrastructural developments occur and nations should seek to form strategic alliances for mutual support and move away from competing against one another to operating together.

As indicated in the literature, the promotion of conference tourism is likely to be influenced by various emerging issues and trends. At the macro level, the desire to travel, income level, time and level of a country's economic growth appears favourable for further development of the tourism sector. At the micro level an amalgam of trends and issues are expected to influence direction of tourism destinations in relation to economic growth, social cultural changes, environmental issues, sustainable development, regional and international competition, demand conditions and information technology. This emerging trends and issues are considered as external factors which have the potential to influence destination competitiveness.

### **2.3 Promotional Strategies Adopted to Enhance Conference Tourism**

A range of tourism authors have stated that destination competitiveness should be enhanced through the application of strategies like marketing, destination management and sustainable development (Buhalis, 2000; Dwyer Kim, 2003; Crouch & Ritchie, 2003). This is because tourism destinations serve a range of needs for tourists and tourist related ventures; these needs present many complex challenges and opportunities for interventions and strategic management development (Buhalis, 2000).

According to Buhalis (2000) destination competitiveness can be achieved through adopting strategies that bring a positive change to a destination, this can be done by various destination management stakeholders. Arguing from a market perspective, Buhalis (2000) identified product development, promotion and communication, distribution channels and pricing. Ritchie and Crouch (2003) proposed a variety of competitive interventions, which emphasise destination management approaches and activities like organisations information, marketing, and quality of service experience, human resource management, visitor management, resource stewardship and finance and venture capital. Ritchie and Crouch (2003) view these destination interventions as a complete avenue for achieving destination competitiveness.

Further, Dwyer and Kim (2003) proposed five (5) destination management strategies that may influence competitiveness. They are destination management organisations, human resource development, and destination marketing management, destination planning and development and environmental management. These strategies should be undertaken by both the public and private sector as they are crucial for the success of a tourism destination (Dwyer, *et al.*, 2004).



### **2.3.1 Tourism Policy and Planning**

Tourism policy can be defined as a set of regulations, rules, guidelines, directions, developments, promotion objectives and strategies that provide a framework within which the collective and individual decisions directly affecting long-term development and daily activities within a destination are taken (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012). Tourism planning involves having the best strategy for development, infrastructure, land and resource use organisation, human resources, government and non-governmental organisations. Hang (2000) states that tourism planning needs a comprehensive and integrated approach which recognises that resource services, facilities and infrastructures are interrelated with one another and with social, cultural and natural environment whereas. Gunn (2012) observes that the most important aspect of tourism planning is to combine the tourism destination promotion with social and economic life of the community.

Collaboration among public sector organisations is an important strategy for any tourism destination. Wall and Mathieson (2006) claims that organisations at all levels should try to coordinate development and planning initiatives, Gunn (2012) further, points out that an important planning effort would be greater collaboration among public and private sector. Though, Gunn (2012) also asserts that antagonism and lack of collaboration between public and private sector denies the private investors adequate freedom to operate. Hall (2000) argues that a destination should develop a series of positive inter organisational relationships in which common goals should be established.

### **2.3.2 Destination Management**

While tourism policy is a set of framework within which a competitive destination can be managed in the long term, destination management on the other hand deals

with various destination factors in a short time horizon, in order to ensure economic profitability while avoiding degradation of the elements that forms the competitive position of a destination (Crouch & Ritchie, 2003). According to Buhalis (2000) destination management incorporates various indicators related to destination marketing and promotion. Buhalis (2000) further, asserts that destination marketing facilitates the achievement of tourism policy. Kodi (2017) points out that a highly competitive market, segmentation, positioning and communication strategies are crucial factors to destinations aiming to develop or consolidate visitor interest and expenditure.

Destination management also involves effectiveness in crafting tourism experiences to the visitor so as to increase experiences that overtake the more inactive tourism. Gunn (2012) notes that of more important factor in destination management is to provide visitor guidance and information which Gunn (2012) refer as visitor satisfaction management. Further, Ejargue (2015) asserts that visitor satisfaction relates to product development and quality issues that can only be met through improved training and cooperation between the public and private sector and tourism industry.

Destination management organisation (DMO) serves as a coordinating body for many organisations involved in tourism (Ejargue, 2015). Destination management organisation is also a crucial factor in destination management as (Crotts, 2008) asserts tourism is a composite sector which includes a network of interconnected stakeholders and organisations both in public and private. Crotts (2008) further, states tourism as a very fragmented and heterogeneous industry with many small businesses. The primary aim of DMOs is to promote partnerships among the various tourism operators and may cover a country, state, region, specific city or town. Ejargue (2015)

suggests that DMO member may include government bodies, business operators, individual or firms that directly or indirectly support tourism destination activities. DMOs play a crucial role in ensuring tourism businesses build a sustainable competitive advantage and create competitive advantage for the entire destination (Sainaghi, 2006).

## **2.4 Theoretical Review of Literature**

This study was guided by the theory of Comparative and Competitive Advantage (CCA) and the Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness (IMDC). This study linked the theory of CCA and IMDC into a unified conceptual framework to provide a better understanding of the key underlying determinants of destination competitiveness within conference tourism context. The theory of CCA is used to understand the relationship and influence between the conference tourism elements and destination management strategies and in enhancing the competitiveness of destination competitiveness. The IMDC was used to examine the relationship between the various situational conditions or emerging issues in conference tourism within which the destination operates and its influence on competitiveness.

### **2.4.1 Theory of Comparative and Competitive Advantage**

The theory of CCA was authored by Ritchie and Crouch (2003) to conceptualise destination competitiveness as a function of five crucial determinants. These are destination policy and planning, destination management, qualifying and amplifying determinants, core resources and attractors and supporting factors and resources for a destination to be competitive. The theory identifies global and macro environmental forces and issues, as well as competitive micro environmental factors which influence a destinations competitive position. From the theory, natural and cultural resources form the basic elements which attract tourists. Supporting resources provides a

foundation for the development of a strong tourism industry. Qualifying determinants include factors which have the capacity to modify the influence of the other components, positively or negatively. These qualifying determinants may limit the capacity of a destination to attract and subsequently to satisfy potential tourists. In this way, they may impact upon destination competitiveness.

Destination management involves activities that enhance the appeal of the core resources and attractors, to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of the various supporting factors, and to minimise any constraints imposed by the qualifying determinants. The theory informs this study as the various determinants conceptualised in the theory are used as constructs in the independent variables. The study conceptualises attractions and supporting factors like accommodation, amenities and accessibility as the elements influencing the competitiveness of Nairobi as a competitive tourism destination, while the destination management factors as the strategies used to promote competitive tourism destinations. This theory provides an avenue to understand the complex, fragmented and interrelated nature of the tourism industry and internal relationships among factors.

The theory has successfully been applied in various destination competitiveness studies. For instance, Qu, *et al.* (2000) used the theory to identify the various elements influencing the city of Hong Kong as a competitive international conference tourism destination in South-East Asia. Accordingly, the theory of CCA has been used by Wang, Hsu, and Swanson (2012), in measuring the China's tourism competitiveness. The findings revealed that the determinants identified by the Ritchie and Crouch (2003) do enhance china's destination competitiveness.

### **2.4.2 Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness**

The Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness (IMDC) was adopted from a model developed by Dwyer and Kim (2003), a researcher in the tourism field. Though the models identify similar determinants of destination competitiveness contained in the theory of CCA by Ritchie and Crouch (2003). However, the model gives an explicit recognition to the situational conditions identified by Ritchie and Crouch (2003) as qualifying determinants. Dwyer and Kim (2003) describes the situational factors as any outside element that influence the competitiveness of a destination and this may include factors like security, environmental issues, natural disasters and health pandemics and new technologies. These factors as described by the Model are elements of competitiveness that can moderate, modify, mitigate, strengthen and enhance all other determinants like core resources, attractions supporting factors and destination management factors. Accordingly, these qualifying determinants may limit the capacity of a destination to attract and subsequently satisfy potential tourists.

The Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness by Dwyer and Kim (2003) has successfully been tested on the Korea and Australia tourism destination and its methodology has been applied to evaluate the competitiveness of Slovenia as a tourism destination (Gomezelj & Mihalic, 2008). The literature review on theory of Comparative and Competitive Advantage by (Crouch & Ritchie, 2003) the model of Integrated Destination Competitiveness by Dwyer and Kim (2003) identifies a substantial number of concepts and factors for measuring destination competitiveness. The two theories have provided insights into identification of major factors which are perceived to be important in determining the competitiveness of tourism destinations. According to Wilde and Cox (2008) both theories have discussed the nature and structure of destination competitiveness in view to comparative and competitive

advantage while discussing the important determinants or sources of competitiveness in the tourism sector.

A number of apparent similarities mean that it is appropriate to apply theories developed for tourism destinations to measure destination competitiveness. According to Falcon (2003) there is a close similarity between the conceptualisations of the Theory of CCA and Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness on tourism destinations. This study applies the theory and the model in the context of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination in Kenya. For the purpose of this study, components existing destination competitiveness theory and mode models may be classified into three major categories: tourism elements, emerging issues and tourism promotional strategies. For the purposes of the present study, the integration of these three categories of destination competitiveness provided a framework to explore the key underlying determinants of competitiveness within the conference tourism context.

## **2.5 Critical Review of CCA and IMDC**

One of the gaps in the theory of destination competitiveness is that the factors identified have not been ranked or weighted. Zhou, Deng and Selin (2015) argue that not all factors are equally important in terms of their contribution to destinations competitiveness. Enright and Newton (2004) have recognized the critical importance of ranking the destination competitive factors. However, Crouch and Ritchie (2003) has stated that it is difficult to rank the factors because their relative importance is unknown and the consistency of respondent's ratings cannot be detected. It is against this background that the study attempted to rank the factors based on the ratings of different respondents on Likert type scale of various organisations in Nairobi County.

Hanifah (2016) critically reviewed the model of Integrated Destination Competitiveness by Dwyer and Kim (2003) and theory of Comparative and Competitive Advantage by Crouch and Ritchie (2003) and purports that one of its weaknesses is that the theories have exhaustive lists of tourism destination factors without prioritizing their importance. Furthermore, Dwyer and Kim, (2003) theory is a simplified model of the Crouch and Ritchie theory and most of the factors are not based on empirical testing. Additionally, the destination competitiveness theories only serve as a framework determining the competitiveness of an entire country but not a specific destination like a city or county as a tourism destination.

## **2.6 Knowledge Gaps**

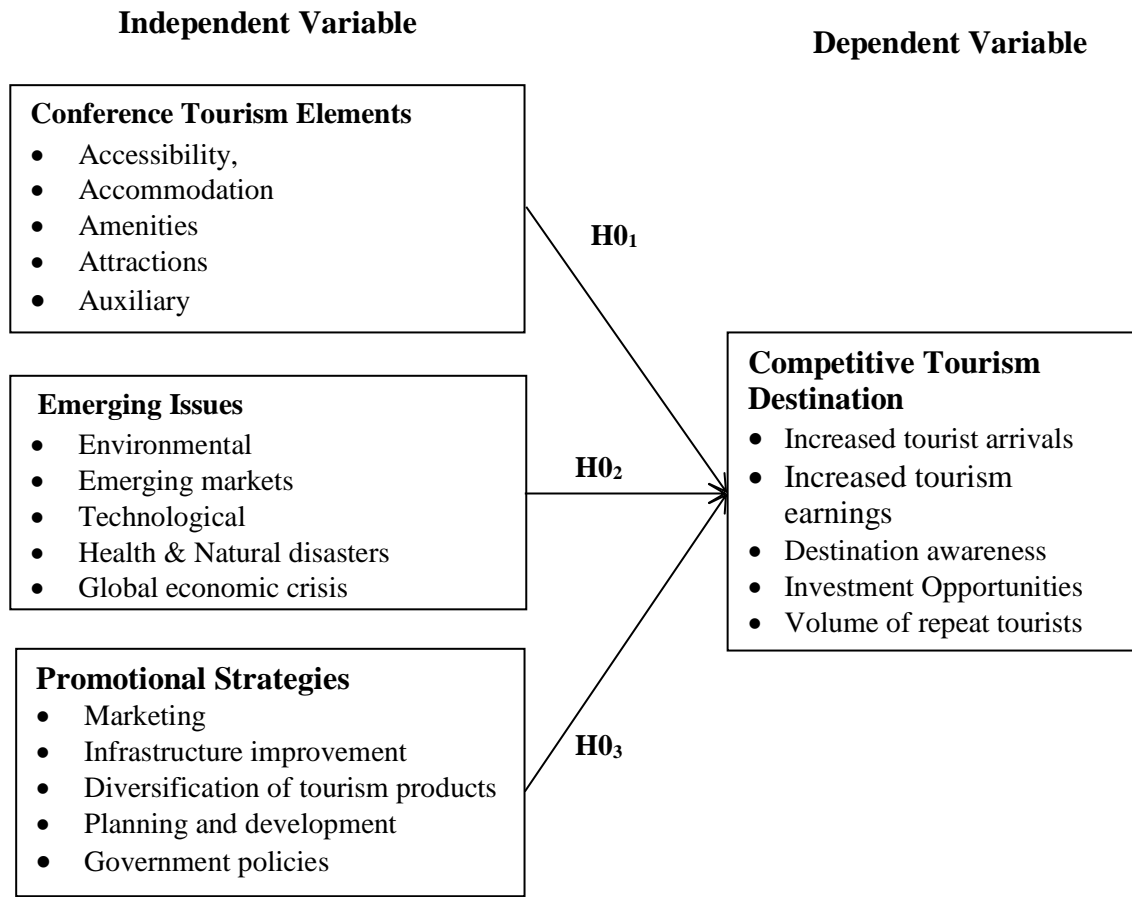
The literature reviewed showed that conference tourism is increasingly taking centre stage in the tourism industry. In this regard, it can contribute to competitiveness of tourism destinations through increase of tourism revenues to host cities, as well as curbing seasonality and increasing tourist arrivals, creating destination awareness, opening up new tourism investments and finally increasing the volume of repeat visits. This can go actively into the realization of Vision 2030. From the literature reviewed and theories there have been attempts at investigating the influence of tourism elements to enhance competitiveness. However most of the documented studies have not investigated the influence of conference tourism elements in enhancing destination competitiveness. Further, most of the documented studies have not focused on Africa or Kenya for that matter. Evidently, the studies undertaken in Kenya have not attempted to investigate the link between conference tourism and destination competitiveness in Nairobi County. This creates a gap that this study sought to bridge.

Finally, from the literature reviewed, another gap the study established is that it's clear that empirical studies on competitiveness differ from one study to another and also from one destination to another. This implies that competitive determinants regarding destinations can never be the same for all destinations. It is also quite clear that studies on competitiveness do not share the same concepts, methodological approach or ways of evaluation and therefore, a challenge lies in trying to attain a deeper understanding of specific salient elements influencing competitiveness of a destination. The study bridged this gap by categorising frequently highlighted destination competitiveness elements into few relevant variables applicable to Nairobi as a conference tourism destination in Kenya with the aim of investigating the main elements influencing destination competitiveness.

## **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework shown is based on the theory of Comparative and Competitive Advantage by Crouch and Ritchie (2003) as applied in tourism destinations as well from literature reviewed. The diagrammatic relationship between the independent and dependent variables are presentation in Figure 2.1.





**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**

**Source:** Author (2016); adapted and modified from (Crouch & Ritchie, 2003)

The study conceptualises that conference tourism has a positive impact on destination competitiveness which is the dependent variable. Conference tourism elements form the primary factors which attract tourists to a destination. They are the fundamental reasons why prospective visitors choose a destination over the other. They include; attractions, natural, cultural or man-made. The support resources are the basic foundation elements in a destination and include accommodation infrastructure, accessibility, amenities and auxiliary services.

Promotional strategies on the other hand enhance and strengthen the appeal, the quality and effectiveness of the tourism elements and best adapt to situational conditions or emerging issues. They include; marketing, planning and product development and government policies. Emerging issues influence (either positively or

negatively) the potential of a destination's competitiveness. They mitigate destination competitiveness by filtering the influence of tourism elements and promotional strategies. Each of these factors positively or negatively influences volume of tourist arrivals, volume of repeat visits, investment opportunities and destination awareness.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Overview**

This chapter outlines the study area and presents the methodology used in the study. These sections included the research design, target population, sampling size and sampling design and data collection instruments used in the study. The procedure of validity and reliability testing was presented, data analysis techniques for both quantitative and qualitative data are provided and finally ethical considerations of collecting the data are explained.

#### **3.2 Study Area**

The study was conducted in Nairobi County which is Kenya's capital city. Nairobi County is one of the 47 Counties in the Republic of Kenya. It borders the counties of Kiambu to the north and west, Kajiado to the south and Machakos to the east. The county has a total area of 696.1 Km<sup>2</sup> and is located between longitudes 36° 45' East and latitudes 1° 18' South. It lies at an altitude of 1,798 metres above sea level.

Nairobi County presents an amazing tourist destination experience to the conference tourist for it not only offers a breath taking idyllic venues and accommodation facilities but also offers the finest safari experience in the Nairobi national park, safari walk and the Nairobi animal orphanage. The county boasts of the National museum with a large collection of artefacts portraying Kenya's rich heritage through history, culture and contemporary art (NTB, 2018).

The county is endowed with a variety of historical buildings, monuments, cultural sites among other attractions, wide options of entertainment, recreation, shopping, sporting activities, nightlife and sightseeing. While the county of Mombasa in Kenya

has cemented itself as the beach destination of East Africa while Maasai Mara established itself as a leading wildlife destination in Kenya, Nairobi city has not utilised its available resources to reach its potential as the conference destination of choice. However, there exists a marketing gap towards harnessing the great potential in conference tourism and complimenting it with the various tourism products that Nairobi has to offer. Destination management organisations in the county have failed to make city tours as a part of conference program. As a result, there is an awareness problem among these pertinent bodies about the importance of making city tours one part of their program. Nairobi boasts of world class conference venues and facilities, accommodation but its uniqueness is found in its amazing fauna and flora, golfing, shopping, entertainment and world class financial options human resource capacity (KTB 2019).

The County is predominantly a terrestrial habitat that supports a diverse web of biodiversity and ecosystems. It is home to about 100 species of mammals, 527 bird species and a variety of plant species. The County has a fairly cool climate resulting from its high altitude. Temperature ranges from a low of 10° C to a high of 29° C. It has a bi-modal rainfall pattern. The long rains season falls between March and May with a mean rainfall of 899 millimetres (mm) while the short rains season falls between October and December with a mean rainfall of 638 mm. The mean annual rainfall is 786.5 mm.

The County population projections in 2009, 2018, 2020 and 2022 based on the 2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census by age cohort and gender with an intercensal growth rate is 3.8 per cent. In 2009, the County population was projected to be 3,138,369 and is expected to rise to 4,941,708 in 2018, 5,433,002 in 2020 and 5,958,338 in 2022 respectively.

The total road network covers 3,602 Km out of which 1,735 Km are tarmac while 1,867 Km is earth roads. Nairobi County hosts three airports; Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Wilson Airport and Eastleigh Airport. Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) being the biggest airport in East and Central Africa, and is the focal point for major aviation activities in the region. Its importance as an aviation centre makes it the pacesetter for other airports in the region. JKIA, located 18 kilometres to the East of Nairobi City Centre, is served by 49 scheduled airlines. It has direct flight connections to Europe, the Middle East, Far East and the rest of Africa. JKIA has five cargo facilities with a capacity to handle 200,000 tonnes of cargo annually, and an animal holding facility which occupies 4,318.95 square feet. The Airport has a runway measuring 4,117m long and 45m wide on 4,472.2 ha of land.

Wilson Airport is the second airport in the County. It has two runways, one that is 1,463m long and 24m wide while the other is 1,558 m by 24m wide with displaced threshold giving a landing distance of 1,350m. Eastleigh Airport is used by the Kenya Air Force. The County has a railway network of 75 Km and a total of 10 functional railway stations, these are: Embakasi, Makadara, and Nairobi main terminal, Dandora, Githurai, Kahawa, Kibra, Dagoretti, JKIA and Syokimau. The established Makadara and Imara Daima railway stations and expansion of Nairobi platform has improved public transportation in Nairobi and with it, socio-economic development.

Nairobi County being the host of the country's capital city has the highest concentration of financial institutions. There are 43 commercial banks with a network of 364 branches that operate in different parts of the County with the city centre having the highest concentration. The County has 94 Forex Bureaus and 44 Microfinance Institutions (MFIs). Mobile banking is also growing with the help of

Safaricom, the largest telecommunication company. The huge network of financial institutions coupled with highly skilled personnel makes the county a regional hub for financial services.

The main economic activities in Nairobi County are businesses that offer various services to the large population that reside in the county. Nairobi commands the largest share of formal sector wage employment in Kenya with a total of 453,000 people. The manufacturing industry accounts for the highest wage employment followed by trade, restaurants and hotels. The construction, transport and communications industries also play a key role in generation of wage employment. Other important sectors include finance, real estate and business services. The main formal economic zones in Nairobi are the CBD and Industrial area.

Nairobi County is a major centre of tourism in the region. Its relative proximity to several tourist attractions areas both in Kenya and East Africa makes it an asset of great importance in the tourism sector. As the capital city and commercial centre, it attracts many conference and leisure tourists. This is partly because the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA), the main point of entry to Kenya by air, is located in the County. Nairobi County has major parks and museums which serve as the main tourist attraction and activities centres. The main national parks are Nairobi National Park, Nairobi Safari Walk and Nairobi animal Orphanage. The Nairobi Safari Walk is a major attraction to tourists as it offers a rare foot experience for wildlife viewing. The County boasts of the Nairobi National Museum which houses a large collection of artefacts portraying Kenya's rich heritage through history, nature, culture and contemporary art. Other important museums include Nairobi Gallery and the Nairobi Snake Park.

The main wildlife conservation areas in Nairobi are game parks, reserves, conservancies, and game ranches. For instance, Nairobi Animal Orphanage which is located in Nairobi National Park serves as a treatment and rehabilitation centre for wild animals. It hosts lions, cheetahs, hyenas, jackals, serval cats, warthogs, leopards, monkeys, baboons, buffalo and various bird species like parrots, guinea fowls and ostriches.

Nairobi County is home to three gazetted forests managed by Kenya Forest Service namely: Karura, Ngong Road Forest and Nairobi Arboretum. Karura Forest is the largest of the three with 1,041 hectares and one of the largest urban gazetted forests in the world. About 632 hectares contain exotic tree plantations while indigenous trees cover 260 hectares. The rest of the forest is shrubs and other plants. Ngong road forest covers 538 hectares with 80% being indigenous trees and 20% exotic eucalyptus plantations. Nairobi Arboretum is 30 hectares of wooded landscape and situated about three kilometres from the city centre. The forests are rich in different species of trees, plants and insects.

Nairobi City County is considered the safari capital of the world and has many spectacular hotels to cater for safari bound tourists. It has a number of world class hotels and restaurants together with excellent conference facilities. There exist eight 5-star hotels and eight 4-star hotels with a combined bed capacity of 5,700 beds, five 3-star hotels, six 2-star hotels and 122 unclassified hotels. It is also home to the largest ice-skating rink in East Africa at the Panari Hotel's Sky Centre covering 15,000 square feet and accommodates 200 people.

Some of the major hotels in the County with conference facilities include: Villa Rosa Kempinski, The New Sarova Stanley, Laico Regency, Intercontinental, Hilton

Nairobi, Ole Sereni, Oakwood, Panari, Hotel La Mada, Fairmont the Norfolk, Eka Hotel, Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi Safari Club, Serena and Boma hotel and Spa, Radisson Blu, Southern Sun Mayfair, Sankara, Jacaranda, Park Inn by Radisson among others. Bed occupancy within the high class hotels within the County has been growing at an average rate of 9.7 % with the occupancy averaging 90%. Other conferencing venues and facilities in Nairobi, apart from these hospitality institutions include learning institutions like the University of Nairobi, Strathmore university business school, Kenya Utalii College, Kenya School of Monetary Studies, Catholic University amphitheatre. Others are KICC, Bomas of Kenya and the United Nation headquarters in Gigiri.

### **3.3 Research Design**

Research design is the process and procedure of collection and analysis of data and the conceptual structure within which research is conducted (Kothari, 2014). Research design is a road map of how research will be conducted to answer the research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A research design stipulates the resources and instruments to be used to collect primary and secondary data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The study adopted a descriptive and explanatory research design. The two research designs were adopted as supplementary approach to get in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. This was so on realisation that one design approach was not adequate to provide reliable information on the phenomenon that is not widely researched.

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012), explanatory research design attempts to connect ideas to understand the effects of the variables on the phenomenon under study. Explanatory demands priorities, generates operational definitions and provides a better-researched model. According to Creswell and Poth



(2017), explanatory research looks for causes and reasons and provides evidence to support or refute an explanation or prediction. Explanatory research design is chosen when the phenomenon under study is not well known or is under researched (Malhotra & Malhotra, 2012). In this study, explanatory research design was adopted due to limited available information and studies on the influence of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination. The choice of this design was informed by limited empirical evidence of studies on influence of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive destination. Key in-depth interview schedule was used to collect information regarding the study.

Descriptive design was used because it guided the researcher to understand more of the idea or to provide details of the phenomenon under study. According to Kothari (2014), descriptive research design directs the study on what items to measure in an effort to discover causes of current situation of phenomena under investigation. Creswell (2018) and Kothari (2014) assert that descriptive research design state affairs as it exists at that particular time. Descriptive research design according to Kothari (2014) and Kumar (2011) incorporates surveys and fact-finding enquiries aimed at discerning the phenomena under study. This research design is appropriate for this study because it describes the state of affairs as they exist at present without manipulating study variables. Descriptive research design is also suitable for this study since it allows for a mixed method of data collection by adopting a survey approach to collect both qualitative and quantitative primary data. Analysis of data collected using descriptive research design help to make a critical evaluation of the material for the purpose of making comparisons and correlations of the research findings. This research design helps to determine reasons or causes of the status of the phenomena under study.

### **3.4 Target Population**

The target population for this study comprised of organisations in the tourism industry in Nairobi County both public and private. The target population comprised of 288 operations staff working in 9 selected organisations in the tourism industry. Operations staff comprised of middle level managers working in various departments of selected organisations. These departments were ICT, marketing, customer service, hospitality, business development, transport and logistics, planning and policy development and safety and security. In each of the eight departments, 4 (four) operations staffs were targeted from each organisation selected, thereby giving a total of 32 subjects. In addition, the study targeted nine (9) senior managers; one (1) per selected organisation for interviews, therefore the study targeted 288 operations staff and 9 senior managers, making a total of 297 respondents.

The operation staff and senior managers were drawn from the nine (9) tourism organisations selected for the study which comprised of (5) public tourism organizations and (4) private tourism organisations. The organisations were purposely selected because of the crucial role they play in the tourism sector development and decision making process and were are expected to be knowledgeable on the variables in the study and provide useful information for the study on matters of marketing, ICT policy making and planning events management and tourism development in Nairobi County. Table 3.1 presents the target population per category of the respondents.

**Table 3.1: Target population**

<b>Tourism Organisation</b>	<b>Senior Managers</b>	<b>Operation Staff</b>	<b>Total</b>
Brand Kenya (Public)	1	32	33
County Tourism office (Public)	1	32	33
Hotels 1 (Private)	1	32	33
Hotels 2 (Private)	1	32	33
Hotels 3 (Private)	1	32	33
Kenya Tourism Board	1	32	33
KICC (Public)	1	32	33
Ministry Of Tourism (Public)	1	32	33
Tour Operator (Private)	1	32	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>297</b>

**Source:** Respective organisation human resource office and the TRA (2017)

### 3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

#### 3.5.1 Operations Staff Sample Size

The operations staff sample size was determined using Slovin's formula;  $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$

where “*n*” is the desired sample size, “*N*” is the population size, and “*e*” is the margin of error (Sari & Iskandar, 2012). The study used 0.05 as margin of error.

Sample sizes of operations staff were determined from the total target population of 288 subjects all selected organisations. A computation using Slovin's formula  $n =$

$\frac{288}{1+288(e)^2}$  give a sample size of = 167 for operations staff. The sampled population

(167) was equally allocated (18 subjects) to all nine selected organisations. Simple random sampling was used to identify respondents.

#### 3.5.2 Senior Managers Sample Size

Census was employed to select nine (9) senior managers representing the nine private and public tourism organisations. According to Kothari (2014), it is advisable when conducting a study to collect actual and reliable data and this information should be obtained from an expert opinion or from a person who is in charge of an area or

department in an organisation. Kothari (2014) further explains that such respondents should be purposively sampled in order to get reliable and relevant data to provide information on the variables study.

Based on the above assertion by Kothari (2014), the study selected nine senior managers from the targeted nine (9) in charge of ICT, marketing, customer service, hospitality, business development, transport and logistics, planning and policy development and safety and security, to provide expert opinion. This was important since they had direct and first-hand information relevant for expert explanation. Purposive sampling techniques were preferred since it helped in selecting respondents with relevant expertise on areas of tourism destination promotion and also provided in-depth information on issues in the study on a broader perspective.

### **3.6 Data Collection Instruments**

This study used a mixed method of research data collection, where qualitative and quantitative data was collected using these two types of instruments. According to Creswell (2013) mixed method of research approach ensures the study collect a rich data both qualitative and quantitative. This study used two types of data collections instruments; questionnaires and interview schedule to gather qualitative and quantitative primary data as discussed below.

#### **3.6.1 Questionnaire**

According to Creswell (2013), data collection refers to the gathering of information to give or prove some facts. The study used questionnaires to collect data from the operations staff, the method of collecting data was preferred because it collects a lot of information within a short period of time and offers confidentiality, easy and is less

costly to administer and offer an effective way of collecting information from a large sample in a short span of time (Creswell, 2013).

The questionnaire consisted of structured closed and open ended items. The questionnaires were administered to the operational staffs of the selected departments or divisions. The open ended questions provided options where the respondents or the research assistant filled while open ended questions had spaces to be filled briefly. The questionnaire was sectioned into two parts, part “A” comprised of background information (variables) of the respondents while part “B” captured variables for each specific objective.

### **3.6.2 Interview Schedule**

The study used an interview schedule to collect primary data from the senior managers of the selected organisations. According to Kothari (2014), interview schedule instruments are suitable for collecting qualitative data from small number of respondents with wide knowledge (experts) of an area or phenomenon (Kothari, 2014). The choice of this instrument is informed by the fact it provided an avenue of asking questions and making clarification on the responses from the senior management. It also provided an avenue of a follow-up in case lack of sufficient data. This instrument has the advantage of seeking more information by probing further unlike the questionnaires. This instrument was structured to guide the interviewer and the interviewee.

## **3.7 Instruments Reliability and Validity**

### **3.7.1 Validity**

Validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data collected in a study actually represents the phenomenon under study and also validity is the

extent to which information collected by the researcher truly reflects the phenomenon being studied (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2014). Content validity of the instruments was assessed by ensuring that the questionnaires collected the right data according to the purpose of study and research objectives. This was achieved by theory triangulation by having a professional perspective to make sure there was emphasis on the truth. To ensure validity of the instruments, simple language was used to avoid ambiguity in an effort to promote accurate responses by the respondents.

### **3.7.2 Instruments Reliability and Pre-Testing**

Reliability is the extent to which results of the research are consistent over time using the same measuring instruments and can be reproduced under a similar methodology. Test-retest reliability method involves administering research instrument twice to the same respondents to test the internal consistency of the instruments. The reliability of the research instruments (questionnaires) was determined by conducting pre-testing in a hotel that was not included in the sample using test-retest method. Reliability of interview schedule data collection instruments was tested by conducting out a mock interview. The pre-tested questionnaires were subjected to Cronbach's Alpha coefficient test to determine their internal consistency. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient test findings are discussed in section below.

### **3.7.3 Test of Internal Consistency**

Pre-testing of data collection tools was carried out at the Sport View Hotel a four-star hospitality institution in Nairobi, on a sample of 5% of the total sample size. The pre-test sample was calculated as  $5\% \times 167 = 8.35$ , estimated to eight (8) respondents. Pre-testing was done to determine the reliability of the instruments. Pre-testing was also done to help identify and correct any errors, ambiguities and biases in the data collection tools. During the pre-testing the respondents were encouraged to make

comments and suggestions concerning research instructions, relevance and clarity of questions. This was done to ensure instruments validity and reliability in order to make the necessary adjustments before the actual data collection.

The test of internal consistency of the instrument is critical in determining the reliability of data collection instruments. The piloted questionnaires were subjected to Cronbach Alpha analysis to determine the reliability of the instruments used in the collection of primary data. Cronbach's alpha coefficient results were interpreted using George and Mallery (2014) rules of thumb where  $\alpha \geq 0.9$  Excellent (High-Stakes testing)  $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$  Good (Low-Stakes testing),  $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$  Acceptable,  $0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$  Poor  $\alpha < 0.5$  Unacceptable. According to Gliem and Gliem (2003), the closer Cronbach alpha coefficient is to 1.0 the greater the internal consistency of the items piloted. A Cronbach alpha coefficient value is equal or greater than 0.6; it is an indicator that the instruments are reliable. On the other hand, if Cronbach's alpha coefficient value is less than 0.6, it indicates that the instruments are not reliable. The Cronbach alpha coefficient value results are presented in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Reliability statistics**

	<b>Number of items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Standardized Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Conference tourism elements	14	0.775	0.777
Emerging issues	7	0.714	0.717
Promotional Strategies	10	0.668	0.669

**Source:** Field data (2017)

The Cronbach alpha coefficient value results are presented in Table 3.3 show that the piloted questionnaires had a favourable internal consistency of above 0.7. The reliability test results for independent variable (tourism elements) had a reliability

coefficient score of  $0.777 \approx 0.8$  which indicated that items within this variable have a high internal consistency.

Items in emerging issues variable also returned a high internal consistency of  $0.717 \approx 0.7$  while promotional strategies ones had  $0.669 \approx 0.7$  score. The above findings based on Gliem and Gliem (2003) rules of thumb the internal consistency of the pre-tested instruments were reliable. The reliability of the instruments ensured that data collected during the actual study was credible and valid.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Techniques**

#### **3.8.1 Quantitative and Qualitative Data**

The collected primary data was subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques. Collected data was coded and entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20 computer software for ease of analysis. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics like mean, frequencies, variances, standard error among others was used to describe the variables under study.

Finally, data collected using interview schedule formed the qualitative information, the qualitative data was analysed using three methods namely data reduction, data content analysis and drawing conclusions. Data reduction involved data mining of collected through oral interview by transcription to reveal the key issues that helped to separate the relevant issues from irrelevant ones. Data content analysis involved the compilation of the reduced data into an organised and compressed logical context. Finally, data discussion offered interpretation of data and logical explanations on the relationship of the findings. Qualitative research findings were presented as phrases and key voices and quotation as per the interview responses and verbatim reporting were used to present qualitative findings.



Data collected using Likert scale was analysed using mean and standard deviation. Upper and lower limits were set based on mean analysis of Likert scale data. The analysis was then interpreted using the extent of deviation from the mean in relation to the upper and lower limits set. A mean score of 4.05 and above indicate a positive influence with the Likert scale statement while a mean score of 2.70 and below signifies a negative influence. The upper and lower limits set categorised are presented in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3: Response categories and interpretation**

Response	Weighting	Cut point limit	Interpretation
Strongly Agree	5	=>4.90	Agree
Agree	4	=>4.05	Agree
Not at all	3	=>3.40	Neutral
Disagree	2	=>2.70	Disagree
Strongly Disagree	1	=>1.90	Disagree

### 3.8.2 Inferential Analysis

Parametric data analysis using multiple linear regression model was used to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Multiple linear regression was preferred because it was used to predict the value of variables based on the value of two or more other variables. Data analysis was done based on the following assumptions that:

- i) Collected data had a normal distribution (Normality or symmetrical).
- ii) Collected data from multiple groups have the same variance (Homogeneity of variances).
- iii) Collected data exhibited a linear relationship (Linearity).
- iv) Multi-collinearity of data did not significantly affect the relationship between the variables concerned.

- v) Relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable is the same across all values of the independent variables (Homoscedasticity).

The study used multiple linear regression models to predict the influence of independent variables on competitiveness of Nairobi County as a tourism destination.

The model was set as:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \beta_3x_3 + e$$

Where

$y$  = Dependent variable (Competitiveness of Nairobi City as tourism destination)

$\beta_0$  = Constant term

$\beta_i$  = coefficients to be estimated

$x_i$  = independent variables (Influence of certification)

Where  $x_1$  – Conference tourism elements

$x_2$  – Emerging issues

$x_3$  – Strategies adopted

Simple linear regression analysis p-value output was used to test the hypotheses to determine the influence of independent on dependent variables. The interpretation was that if p-value was less than the critical value 0.05, then it was concluded that the null hypothesis was significant. The significance testing on the relation of independent variable to the independent variable was based on the interpretation of the calculated significant p-value.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

It is important to adhere to the ethics during and after data collection. Permission was sought from Moi University School of Tourism, Hospitality and Events Management, National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and

sampled organisations. Confidentiality of the respondents was maintained where no names or employment numbers was recorded on the research instruments. This final study does not capture the names of senior management when presenting qualitative findings in form of key voices and verbatim report. Instead it has identified respondents using pseudo names like Manager XX to ensure their views and opinions are treated with utmost confidentiality.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Overview

This chapter begins by providing the response rate of the operations staff who participated in the study by providing information on the questionnaire. The background information of the respondents is given by identifying their age, gender and departments of work. The findings of descriptive statistics are then presented as per the study objectives; the qualitative analysis is also presented in this chapter by giving coded interview answers of the senior managers. Inferential statistics is presented by use of multiple regression analysis and finally hypothesis results and summary are presented.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

The study earmarked to collect primary data using questionnaires from 167 operations staff. A total of 167 questionnaires were administered out of which 145 (86.8%) were returned and found valid for analysis (Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1: Response rate**

Target respondents	Targeted sample size	No. of questionnaires issued	No. of questionnaires Returned	% Response rate
Operations staff	167	167	145	86.8%

**Source:** Field data (2017)

The response rate was 86.8%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2014) a 50% response rate is adequate, 60% good while above 70% is rated very well. Based on this assertion, this response rate was a very good response which made the analysed data reliable and valid. Due to unknown reasons 13% of the respondents did not

return the questionnaires. This number was negligible which did not affect the study outcomes.

### 4.3 Background Information

The study sought to document the participants' background information. This was necessary in order to have a better understanding of the respondents to assist in discussing the study findings. Background information explored included type of organisation, gender, age, work experience; the data was collected using questionnaires. The study findings are presented and discussed in sections below.

#### 4.3.1 Types of Organisation

The respondents were asked to indicate the type of organisation they work for (Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2: Types of organisation involved in the study**

<b>Types of organisation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Hotel-1	18	12
KICC	18	12
Hotel-2	17	12
Hotel-3	17	12
KTB	16	11
County tourism office	16	11
Tour Operator	15	10
Ministry of Tourism	14	10
Brand Kenya	14	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100</b>

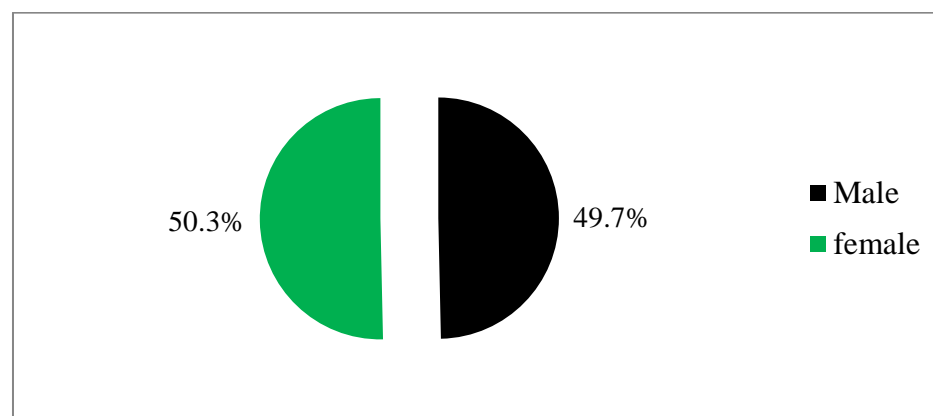
**Source:** Field data (2017)

The findings showed that primary data was collected from different types of tourism stakeholders that comprised of public and private sector. The choice of the stakeholders was very important as the respondents are involved in various conference activities and tourism decision making plans. Having a range of tourism

sector stakeholders was crucial for this study as the respondents have in-depth understanding of the operations of the tourism industry and influenced the study by providing information on the specific variables in the study. From the findings, Hotels and KICC had the highest number of respondents and this can be attributed to the fact that one of the key determinants of a conference destination is the one that has best accommodation and conferencing facilities.

#### 4.3.2 Gender Distribution of Operations Staff

The study sought to find out the gender distribution of the operations staff working in the conference tourism industry (Figure 4.1).



**Figure 4.1: Gender distribution of operations staff in the selected tourism organisations**

**Source:** Data Analysis (2017)

These findings show a near balanced picture of both genders so there is no large gender disparity, though it shows that females contribute more workers in the tourism industry. The result is consistent with the findings of (Hagan, 2015) who stated that service industry is a female oriented industry. Further, the travel and tourism industry has significant higher proportion of female workers than other sectors. The apparent high rate of females in the sector is usually related to cultural issues especially for

employment in housekeeping, laundry, food preparation and guest services (WTTC, 2014).

This was important for the study as Srivastava (2015) has revealed that there are differences in males and females in regards to thinking, valuing of phenomenon, management, feelings and acting.

#### 4.3.3 Respondent Age Distribution

The study found it prudent to establish the age distribution of operations staff working in the conference tourism industry. Having information on the age distribution helps provide different views and validates the study owing to the fact that the different age groups present diverse opinions (Table 4.3).

**Table 4.3: Operation staff age distribution among the selected organisations**

<b>Respondent Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
18-22	6	4.1
23-25	10	6.9
26-30	32	22.1
31-35	55	37.9
36-45	40	27.6
Above 45 Years	2	1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field data (2017)

Majority, 37.9% of the respondents were between the ages of 31-35 years, followed by age 36-45 at 27.6%. The respondents who were aged 26-30 and 23-25 years accounted for 22.1% and 6.9%. Finally, a 4.1% of the respondents were between ages 18-22 and 1.4% were above 45 years. The findings reveal that majority, (71.0%) of the operation staff were between the ages of 18-35 years which are mostly the youth. A report by World Travel and Tourism Council revealed that the tourism and hospitality industries rely heavily on youth employment than any other labour market and this relationship is forecast to remain relatively consistent over the next 10 years

(WTTC, 2014).The big number of youth working in the tourism industry has highly been attributed to their adaptability, willingness to continuously learn, communication ,technology and numeracy skills and the ability to work with others in the tourism sector (WTTC, 2014).

#### 4.3.4 Sections within Departments

The study found it prudent to establish the sections within departments where the respondents work. This was necessary in order to probe the role of different departments within the selected stakeholders in enhancing conference tourism and also identify the department's capacity in handling matters tourism (Table 4.4).

**Table 4.4: Sections in the selected organisations**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Marketing	23	15.9
Customer Care	22	15.2
Logistics	19	13.1
Business Development	14	9.7
Policy and Planning	11	7.6
Reservations	7	4.8
Finance	7	4.8
Human Resources and Administration	6	4.1
ICT	6	4.1
Public Relations/Communications	5	3.4
Housekeeping	5	3.4
Transport	4	2.8
Auditing	3	2.1
Supply Chain	3	2.1
Exhibition and Promotion	2	1.4
Front office	2	1.4
Security and Safety	2	1.4
Information Services	2	1.4
Media Centre	2	1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field data (2017)

From the findings above 15.9% and 15.2% of the respondents work in the marketing and customer service departments respectively (Table 4.4). This can be attributed to



the crucial role that those departments play in the overall success of the conference sector. This implies that the marketing and customer service departments are given priority in the tourism industry. This is crucial for the sector because tourism industry needs adequate personnel to promote and market the Kenyan tourism destination. Likewise, the customer service is a crucial department in any organisation for they are the image of an organisation. It also communicates and provides first-hand information about an organisation. Having different views from all these respondents was paramount in order to obtain reliable data on the basic conference aspects since they also provide significant and valuable information for the study. These sentiments are echoed by (Hagan, 2015) who recognised that having a variety of expertise to share information brings out a genuine interest in the outcome. Though other departments are identified in the study as important, it can be strongly concluded that the marketing department as a key department in the conference sector as they play a key role of ensuring conference clientele come to the country and also bid for conferences.

An oral interview conducted with one of the managers of the sampled organisations revealed that marketing and customer service are key areas in a successful conference sector. The following was established from the response of the manager.

*“...The marketing department plays a major role of formulating marketing strategies and programmes which aim at positioning the country/city as a centre of conference excellence and also ensure that it aggressively sells and markets all the conference components to its varied clients while the customer service department is responsible in ensuring that whatever is promised to clients is equally delivered in the most satisfying manner ...”* (Oral interview O.I), Senior Mgr 1, November, 2017).

#### 4.4 Relationship between Elements of Conference Tourism and Nairobi County as a Competitive Conference Tourism Destination

The first objective sought to determine relationship between elements of conference tourism and Nairobi County as a competitive conference tourism destination.

##### 4.4.1 Elements that Make Nairobi a Preferred Destination

The respondents were asked to identify tourism elements that make Nairobi city the most preferred conference destination. This was necessary in order to determine relationship between elements of conference tourism and Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination. Respondents were allowed to choose more than one option (Table 4.5).

**Table 4.5: Elements that make Nairobi a preferred destination**

<b>Elements that make Nairobi a preferred destination</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Availability of conference venues	83	57.2
Previous conferences held	83	57.2
Regional Hub	67	46.2
Accessibility	46	31.7
Security	44	30.3
Strategic Location	40	27.6
Image of The Destination	40	27.6
Variety of Accommodation	34	23.4
Destination attractiveness	27	18.6
Cosmopolitan Nature of Travel Destination	13	9.0
Availability of Extra Conference Activities	13	9.0
Networking	10	6.9
English Language	4	2.8
Conducive climate	4	2.8
Ease of visa processing	4	2.8

**Source:** Field data (2017)

*NB: Data was analysed from multiple responses*

Availability of conference venues and previous conferences held were the most common identified elements that influence the choice of Nairobi as a conference

destination at a 57.2% respectively (Table 4.5) this findings are consistent with Vengesayi (2017) and Deery (2010) observations that conference venues as the most important factor in site selection as it is the most visible supply side element of the conference sector and that is why there is a large boom in the large number of investment's in construction, refurbishment and expansion of conference venues around the world.

A study by McCabe (2010) and Baloglu & Love (2015) confirmed that previous conference held at a destination as an important factor in site selection, they argued that a previous positive experience with a destination tend to mean that conference organisers have a more positive perception of the destination and that a destination that has previously held a major conference is more likely to be selected. From the findings destination elements like accessibility, security, strategic location, image of destination, and variety of accommodation and destination attractiveness had a high score of above 5% which is an indication that they are a very important tourism influencing elements in destination.

Other elements like cosmopolitan nature of the conference destination, extra-conference activities and networking were seen as elements influencing the choice of a conference destination but not highly influencing, the findings coincides with the findings by Burns & Gentry (2013) and Yoo & Chon (2008) who found these elements as part of the conference experience but of low impact in their list of priorities host cities look for in destination site selection. The elements are certainly useful in this study as this in turn allows for strategic improvement in both the way Nairobi is promoted and which elements can be improved.

#### 4.4.2 Relationship between Conference Tourism Elements and Competitiveness of Nairobi County as a Tourism Destination

The study found it worthy to find out the relationship between conference tourism elements and Nairobi as a tourism competitive destination. Likert scale data collection instrument was employed to collect information for determining the influence of tourism elements on the choice of Nairobi as a competitive conference destination. A five (5) Likert scale (1- Very low influence, 2- Low influence, 3- Neither low nor high, 4- High influence, 5- Very High influence) was used to collect the responses.

According to Boone and Boone (2012), descriptive statistics like Mean, mode and Standard Deviation (SD) are appropriate for analysing Likert scale data. This study settled on mean and SE statistics to analyse collected primary data. Mean statistics was used as the primary focal point for discussing the results based on the Likert scale key below (Table 4.6).

**Table 4.6: Elements of conference tourism that increase the competitiveness of Nairobi as a tourism destination**

	Mean	SE
Availability of variety of accommodation facilities and venues	4.57	0.064
Nairobi being a regional hub	4.28	0.049
Availability of world class state of the art conference centre's	4.23	0.088
Previous conference events held at the destination	4.11	0.086
Nairobi's strategic location	4.10	0.052
Accessibility (air, road, airport to hotel transfers)	4.07	0.065
Safety and security of destination	4.05	0.107
Image of the Destination	4.01	0.082
Destination attractiveness	2.96	0.093
Conducive climate	2.83	0.071
Networking/entertainment and business opportunities	2.77	0.071
Visa processing	2.70	0.129
Availability of extra tourism activities	2.59	0.101
Common language or cosmopolitan nature of the travel destination	2.43	0.097

**Source:** Field data (2017)

The findings were interpreted where a mean closer to 1 meant very low influence while a mean of 5 indicated a very highly influence of contribution of tourism elements on the influence of Nairobi as a tourism destination. The respondents gave the highest value ( $M=4.57$ ,  $SE=0.064$ ) to availability of accommodation facilities as highly influencing elements in the competitiveness of Nairobi as a tourism destination (Table 4.6).

This implies that availability of accommodation facilities and venues, plus previous conferences held and accessibility in destination constitutes the primary element for a competitive tourism destination. The results concur with findings by Vengesayi (2017) who noted that tourism elements like accommodation, availability of conference venues, and accessibility enhances the popularity of a tourism destination. Omerzel (2006) is also in agreement that destination elements like accommodation and venues play an important role in determining tourism destination competitiveness. Therefore, for a tourist destination to have a competitive edge, it must ensure that its overall tourism such as a destination's infrastructure, facilitating resources, conference venues and accessibility (Dwyer and Forsyth, 2012). Additionally, Claudio and Constanza (2017) argued that a destination must have an appropriate level of development in terms of services and destination offer.

With the above assertions it can be concluded that conference tourism elements are a critical factor in enhancing the competitiveness of a tourism destination and that the foundation for building a successful destination lies with the destination's infrastructure, facilitating resources and accessibility. The very low rating given to extra conference activities ( $M=2.59$ ) was not expected and this expresses the need for more action to be done on incorporating these elements into the conference tourism package as they are core elements in tourism destinations. Though Crouch and

Louviere (2004) identified elements like shopping, entertainment, recreation and networking as part of the extra conference opportunities but not likely to impact on the destination and thus found them as less important priorities to cities and less influential elements in site selection process. An Oral interview response by senior manager on the influencing conference tourism elements on the competitiveness of Nairobi County as tourism destination revealed thus;

*“...When planning those conferences, we concentrate on the conference venues, accommodation, accessibility and safety of the delegates as key aspects the delegates will look in a destination. The extra conference elements are important but not a main priority to a business traveller, he further went to explain that conference centres are not dependent on climate in order to operate as most conference activities are indoors, however those conference centres that offer outdoor activities as part of the conference package may likely consider climate as an important factor, the manager further, noted that Extra conference activities should be given a key priority by destinations that have tourism inclination as it is these activities that make the delegates want to explore the tourist attractions that a particular destination has to offer. I would say that quantity and quality of accommodation facilities and road transport are not adequate and will improvement to meet minimum international standards. The number of quality accommodation facilities is not enough to attract high numbers of tourist....”* (Mgr, 1, November, 2017).

On the factor of common language and cosmopolitan nature of travel destination another manager stated that

*“... conferences take place in any part of the world and with globalization taking place language barriers are no longer an issue and also most convention destinations have invested in translation equipment's and also language translators so this has never been an issue for many visitors....”* (O.I, Mgr, 2, November, 2016).

#### **4.4.3 Other elements that Influence Tourists to Choose Kenya as a Conference Destination**

The study sought to further probe on other elements that may influence decision making to choose Kenya as conference destination. The findings are represented in Table 4:7.

**Table 4.7: Other general factors that influence the success of a conference tourism in Nairobi County**

	Count	Percentages
Kenya increased/ Foreign Relations	26	17.9
Cost/Price	20	13.8
Hospitality/Friendliness Nature of Kenyan People	16	11.0
Able Human Resources	14	9.7
New Innovations and Technological Advancements	12	8.3
Kenya Being East African Biggest Economy	9	6.2
Head Quarters of Major organisations/multinationals	7	4.8
Bed Capacity	7	4.8
Availability of Mice Suppliers and Organisers	6	4.1
Multi-nationals and Corporates	6	4.1
Marketing of Kenya as Key Conference Destination	5	3.4
Quality, Consistency and Reliability of Services	5	3.4
Proximity of Convention Venues to Key Facilities	4	2.8
Bidding Power of Kenya	4	2.8
Diversity in Fauna and Flora	2	1.4
International Rankings	2	1.4

**Source:** Field data (2017)

Kenyans increased foreign relations has led to an increase in the number of business visitors coming to Kenya, more so Nairobi city, and this has positioned Nairobi as a leading conference destination, these sentiments were also echoed by a senior manager in the ministry of tourism in charge of marketing, who noted that;

*“... The increase in international arrivals and increase in international high profile conferences such as UNCTAD and TICAD in 2016 and the visit by high profile global opinion and political leaders can be attributed to Kenyans increased good foreign relations. ...” (Mgr, 1, November, 2017).*

#### **4.4.4 Key Tourist Activities Preferred by Conference Visitors**

The study sought to identify the preferred extra conference activities that are sought by the conference visitors in Nairobi. The findings are presented in table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Key extra conference activities preferred by conference tourists**

	Count	Percentages
Visiting National Park	36	24.8
Cultural Activities	34	23.4
Sports Events	30	20.7
Night live	26	17.9
Buying African Souvenir	19	13.1
Recreational Activities	18	12.4
Sight-Seeing	17	11.7
Sample Kenyan Cuisine	16	11.0
Museums visit	6	4.1
Visiting Malls	4	2.8
Casinos	3	2.1

**Source:** Field data (2017)

*NB: Data was analysed from multiple responses*

Majority of the conference visitors 24.8% and 23.4% preferred visiting National parks and cultural activities respectively (Table 4.8). These can be attributed to the fact that Kenya is internationally recognized as a safari and wildlife destination and so many conference travellers are also eager to explore the various wildlife tourist attractions. The findings of this study are consistent with the study by Davidson and Rogers (2006) identifies extra conference activities as entertainment, recreation, shopping, sporting activities, nightlife and sightseeing.

Secondly, Davidson and Cope (2003) suggested that entertainment activities like restaurant, night life, theatre and cultural performances as extra conference activities that can be incorporated in the conference package. Kalleab (2016) further found out that sightseeing activities which may include local tours, city architecture, museums, monuments, parks and historical site visits as extra conference activities most preferred by the conference traveller. Oral interview on the preferred tourism activities by conference travellers revealed thus;



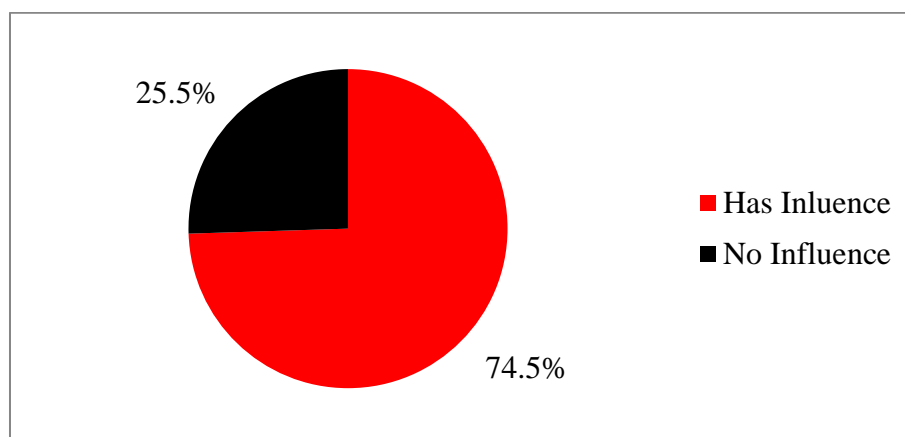
*“...most conference attendees usually like to combine business with leisure and also availability of these extra conference activities in the conference package makes the delegates to extend their stay in the country, he stated that most of the delegates like exploring the local culture and visiting of the Nairobi National park and this has brought about repeat visits and referrals...” (Mgr, 1, November 2016).*

*“...conference travellers like taking night strolls, city adventure, visiting art exhibitions and also a tour of the Maasai market...” (Mgr, 2, November 2017).*

The manager further added that the giraffe centre and the Karen Blixen museum are frequent tourism attractions for the conference travellers

#### **4.4.5 Overall Influence of Conference Tourism Elements on the Competitiveness of Nairobi County as Tourism Destination**

Respondents were asked to indicate overall, whether conference tourism elements have effect on the competitiveness of Nairobi City as tourism destination. Figure 4.2 present the findings.



**Figure 4.2: Overall influence of conference tourism elements on the competitiveness of Nairobi City as a tourism destination**

The findings in Figure 4.2 indicate that overall 108(74.5%) of the respondents agreed that explored conference tourism elements has a positive effect on making Nairobi City County as competitive tourism destination. This could be attributed to the availability of a wide range of tourism elements.

#### 4.5 The effect of Emerging Issues in the Conference Industry in Enhancing Nairobi County as a Competitive Tourism Destination

The second study objective was to assess the effect of emerging issues in conference industry on enhancing Nairobi County as competitive tourism destination. Information on the effects of the current trends and issues in the conference industry in promoting Nairobi city as a conference destination was solicited from the operational staff of the selected tourism organisations. A five (5) Likert scale (1- Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3- Neither Agree/Disagree, 4- Agree, and 5- Strongly Agree) was used to collect the responses. Mean statistics was used as the primary focal point for discussing the results based on the Likert scale key below (Table 4.9).

**Table 4.9: Emerging issues in the conference industry in Nairobi County**

Emerging issues in the conference industry	Mean	SE
The advancements in ICT have changed the way people investigate and book travel and this has impacted on the conference sector, especially regarding accommodation bookings and delivery of services at conferences	4.35	0.072
Emergence of conference tourism has led to increase no of airlines, hotels and tourism firms having packages tailored for the conference delegate	4.32	0.046
The competitive conference market globally has influenced the growth of the industry	4.12	0.057
Safety and security is one of the main areas of concern for the conference industry	4.07	0.360
Nairobi city is has improved in terms of provision information and communication technology in the conference sector	4.03	0.092
The economic climate has led to new business opportunities in markets that would not have previously come to Nairobi for international conferences	4.00	0.072
Kenya has adopted environmentally friendly practices in the conference sector e.g. recycling.	1.87	0.084

**Source:** Field data (2017)

Based on the findings, (Table 4.9) the respondents tended to agree that most of the emerging issues in the conference industry have an effect in the competitiveness of tourism destinations most scoring a mean of 4:00 and above. These results concur

with Cizmar and Weber (2000) findings that, a tourist's choice for a specific destination is to a larger extent determined by external factors such as technology, emerging new markets, safety and security, and global economic environment. The same views were held by Wilde and Cox (2008); Ahmed *et al.* (2010); Zhou *et al.* (2015) and Lui and Pratt (2017) who pointed out record of technology, safety, quality of the environment, prevalence of outbreak of disease, quality/unreliability of medical services and medication as being critical issues determining the competitiveness destination. However, with numerous studies pointing out several insecurity factors as being reasons for decline in tourism travel, Isabel (2018) held a contrary opinion, that negative environmental changes lead to changes in tourism activities such as decline.

However, environmental practices had the lowest ratings among the seven trend and issues of destination competitiveness (Table, 4.9). The respondents strongly disagreed that Nairobi has adopted environment friendly conference practices (Mean=1.87; SE=0.084). These can be attributed to the fact that the conference industry in Kenya still young. These findings imply the need for better environmental management plans to be adopted. The findings further suggest that trend and issues belonging to the present and future will bring change, vibrancy and growth in the sector as these trends and issues are affecting and will affect the development of the conference industry and so they cannot be ignored hence the study wanted to identify these trends and issues (Table 4.9).

The findings further show that technology is a major driving force in the conference industry that cannot be ignored. Ladkin (2006) and Ryan (2007) concurred with these sentiments and acknowledged that advancement's in information technology is a major trend driving the drastic growth of the sector. The oral interview below on technology as an emerging issue reveals as much.

“... Technology has become a huge element of the conference budget in a very short period of time, previously we never included technology cost in the conventions budget but it now accounts for 18% of the total conference budget second after food & beverage 19%, she further stated that Kenya had made some major strides in ICT innovations and in fact it’s a leader in the region and this is one on the main elements that can be attributed to Kenya being a preferred conference destination, she noted some of the innovations as use of automated customer care service, facial recognition and fingerprints verification and mobile phone based application, she however, noted that a challenge still exist in having to upgrade the WIFI system to all guest rooms as well as meeting rooms, lack of high speed broadband capability and having suppliers keep up with the ever changing ICT world ...” (Mgr., 1, November, 2017).

#### 4.5.1 Other Emerging Issues that Promote Nairobi as a Competitive Tourism

##### Destination

The study sought to further probe on the other emerging issues that are affecting the promotion of conference tourism in Nairobi. This factor was necessary for the study as various current emerging issues have contributed to the growth of the industry globally and also more future trends are expected to influence the conference market in the coming years (Table 4.10).

**Table 4.10: Other Emerging issues in the conference industry in Nairobi County**

	Count	Percentages
Competition	32	22.2
Social Media	21	14.6
Faster and Affordable Internet Solutions	18	12.5
E-Commerce	15	10.4
Health Issues	15	10.4
Economic Growth	13	9.0
Political Stability	10	6.9
Climate Change	10	6.9
Rise of Sustainable Tourism Practices	7	4.9
Eco-Tourism	4	2.8
Geo-political Arrangements	3	2.1
Personalized Conference Services	3	2.1
Recession	2	1.4
Creativity	2	1.4

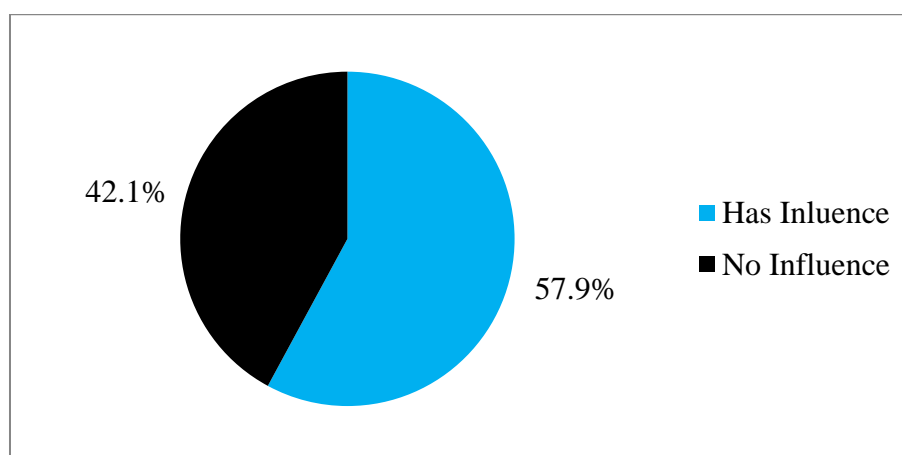
**Source:** Field data (2017)

*NB: Data was analysed from multiple responses*

The study established that 22.2% of the respondents cited competition as an issue that is highly affecting the conference industry (Table 4.10). This is consistent with (Fenich, 2015) who acknowledged that competition to host conference events has increased dramatically and that the trend is likely to continue. The other trends that were identified in the findings were ICT related trends like social media 14.6%, faster and affordable internet solutions 12.5% and E-commerce at 10.4%. Braley (2008) and Hinkins & Tracey (2003) in their studies found that information is critical promotional tool for conference tourism destinations and providing it to travellers most effectively provides a strategic advantage. Braley (2008) identified e-commerce tools like webcast, podcast, virtual meetings, teleconferencing, video conferencing, blogs and interactive media as becoming increasingly common tools in conference development.

#### **4.5.2 Overall Influence of Emerging Issues on Enhancing Nairobi City as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

Respondents were asked to indicate whether overall emerging issues have influence on the competitiveness of Nairobi City as conference tourism destination. Figure 4.3 present the findings.



**Figure 4.3: Overall influence of emerging issues on competitiveness of Nairobi City as conference tourism destination**

The findings in Figure 4.3 indicate that overall 84(57.9%) of the respondents agreed that examined emerging issues has a positive effect on making Nairobi City as competitive conference tourism destination.

#### **4.6 Relationship of Conference Tourism Promotional Strategies and Enhancement of Nairobi County as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

The third study objective sought to explore the relationship of conference tourism promotional strategies and enhancement of Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination. While using a five point Likert scale, respondents were asked to agree or disagree on whether the promotional strategies provided help enhance Nairobi city as a competitive tourism destination (Table 4.11).

**Table 4.11: Promotional strategies adopted to enhance Nairobi city as competitive tourism destination**

<b>Promotional strategies adopted to promote Nairobi city as conference tourism destination</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SE</b>
The recent upgrade and refurbishing of KICC presented a great opportunity for Nairobi to host large events and international conferences	4.56	0.041
Construction of top notch luxury hotels has positioned Nairobi as premier conference destination of choice	4.48	0.077
The ranking of Nairobi city as among the leading best city destination for conferences is a big avenue to compete with overseas destinations.	4.25	0.067
The expansion of JKIA has helped to enhance passenger movement thus injecting additional conference numbers	4.15	0.047
Improved ICT and innovations have influenced the delivery of service in the industry	4.10	0.083
Formation of tourism marketing brands like Brand Kenya, Make it Kenya and MICE Kenya have helped to enhance Nairobi as a conference destination through positioning, branding, promotion, product development and pricing.	4.06	0.067
Increase in investments in the conference sector has influence the growth of the industry	4.01	0.071
Improved security in Nairobi has helped the city regain its lost glory	2.87	0.077
Training of a competent human capital in the conference sector in Kenya has enhanced the delivery of quality services.	2.82	0.057
Traffic de-congestion, adequate parking space and has been improved in the city centre	1.94	0.076

**Source:** Field data (2017)

The Majority of respondents agreed with the statements that the recent upgrade and refurbishment of KICC presented a great opportunity for Nairobi to host international conferences (Mean=4.56; SE=0.041). The results concurred with Loureiro and Ferreira (2015), who argued that destination promotional strategies should focus on activities which enhance the appeal of the tourism elements like attractions, accommodation and strengthen the quality and effectiveness of all the supporting elements. Mulec and Wise (2014), is also in agreement with these sentiments as they stress on the need to market and strategically manage destinations to attract visitors' in order to improve the destinations competitiveness.

The findings revealed that strategies to do with new developments really enhanced the competitiveness of Nairobi as a competitive tourism destination. This confirms findings by Claudio and Constanza (2017) findings that a destination must have appropriate level of development in terms of services and destination. Without infrastructure developments, destination cannot compete against similar alternative destinations. The results also concur with Wang, Hsu and Swanson (2012), findings that the foundation for building a successful destination lies with the destination's infrastructure, facilitating resources and accessibility. Results also revealed that destination management positively and significantly correlated with destination attractors. This is an indication that proper promotional activities of destination lead to successful growth and development of a destination. Similar results were echoed by Loureiro and Ferreira (2015) that destination management should focus on those activities which enhance the appeal of core resources and attractors. Perna, Custodio and & Oliveira (2014) and Bornhorst, *et al.* (2017) also held the opinion that management should have the ability to balance the multidimensional components of

the tourism system in order to achieve a competitive advantage. These sentiments were also supported by the senior managers who stated that;

*“...the City has in recent years had numerous development of infrastructure in the country like opening up of new hotels and especially major international hotel chains, expansion of road networks and also the expansion of the region’s leading airport, the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport... the upgrading and refurbishment of the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC) has seen it been re-admitted to the prestigious International Congress and Convention Centre (ICCA) stating that this boost is an opportunity for Nairobi to raise the number of international conferences...” (Mgr, 1, November 2017).*

*“...another strategy on infrastructure is the on-going construction of Africa’s largest convention Centre the Bomas International Conference and Exhibition Centre...this facility upon completion, will be a major game changer in the conference industry not only in Kenya but also in the whole continent. ... with the upgrade of the United Nation (UN) headquarters in Nairobi to befit the status of other UN bases in the World will lead to an increase in international conferences held in Kenya...” (Mgr, 2, November 2016).*

*“...Through the intervention of the Kenya Tourist Board, the Kenya’s national carrier Kenya Airways will offer discounted airfares to conference delegates, the airline will be official carrier for major conference delegates and also the airline will provide advertising opportunities for conference business in their in-flight travel magazine KQ Msafiri. This critical business strategy will drive growth in the sector and also will be a good platform to promote Nairobi as a tourism destination...” (Mgr, 3, November 2017).*

However, a relatively low rating was given to promotional strategy related to security, human resource development and traffic and parking issues (Table, 4.11) scoring a mean of 2.87 and below. When asked if traffic de-congestion and adequate parking space has been improved in the city, (Mean=1.94; SE=0.076) of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. These findings are similar to Eugene (2012) who identified infrastructural challenges like lack of parking space for majority of hotels within the Central Business District and also lack of a specialized public transport for visitors and tourist (Jamieson, 2016). He further points on the challenge



of accessibility to the city centre due to paralysing traffic jams and overlapping of vehicles. This implies that traffic decongestion and inadequate parking slots as a major challenge in Nairobi. An oral interview with one of the senior managers regarding traffic and parking situation in Nairobi had this to say;

*“...The issue of traffic congestion, lack of parking slots and inadequate transport is a major turnoff for tourism in the County hence reducing the attractiveness and appeal of the City, plans are on-going to build well designed parking slots for tourist vans and also hotels in CBD have been encouraged to allocate few parking slots for tourists. Collaborative efforts with the County traffic office to ensure easy flow of traffic within the CBD especially around KICC and major hotels...” (Mgr, 1, November, 2017).*

#### **4.6.1 Other Promotional Strategies that have been Adopted to Enhance Nairobi**

##### **City as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

To further find out more about other promotional strategies that have been adopted to promote Nairobi city as a tourism destination, the study included some open ended questions in the questionnaire (Table 4.12).

**Table 4.12: Other Promotional Strategies that have been Adopted to Enhance Nairobi City Competitive Tourism Destination**

	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Online Marketing	43	30.3
Lifting of Travel Advisories by source Markets	35	24.6
Improved Security	27	19.0
More Funds	22	15.5
Construction of Modern Infrastructure	21	14.8
International Marketing	18	12.7
Partnerships	17	12.0
MICE Training and Education	17	12.0
Discounted Rates for Delegates	17	12.0
Increased Foreign Relations	6	4.2
Re-admission of KICC	5	3.5
Upgrading of UN Headquarters in Gigiri	5	3.5
Government Support	2	1.4

**Source:** Field Data (2017)

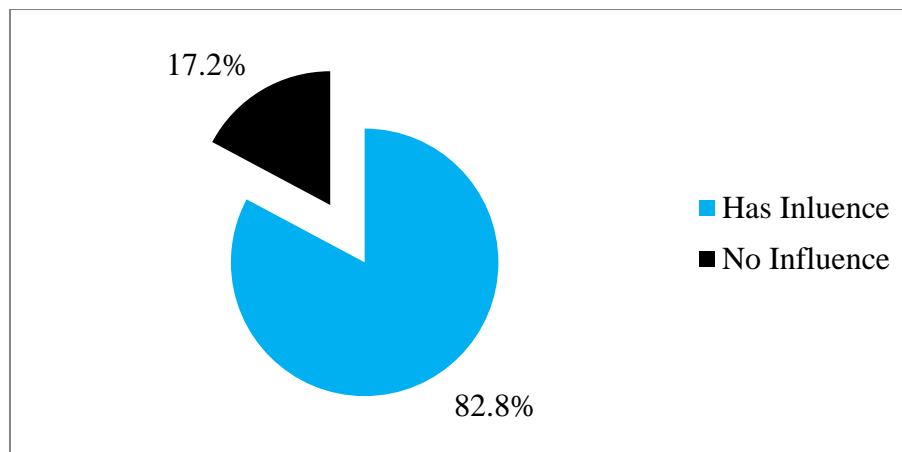
*NB: Data was analysed from multiple responses*

The findings show that online marketing (30.3%) is one strategy that the players in the sector have adopted to enhance conference tourism (Table 4.12). These findings are in accordance with Crott (2008) who noted that the use of online platforms as a marketing tool has greatly impacted on the conference industry. Crott (2008) further noted that conference marketers have adopted online marketing platforms like the social media as a competitive marketing tool to enhance their respective destinations. Additionally, 24.6% of respondents acknowledged that lifting of travel advisories is a great intervention that has helped create a positive image for the country. These revelations were supported by one of the senior managers who confided the following;

*“... travel bans which have previously been imposed to Kenya not only negatively impact on the image of a destination but also hinder freedom of travel and the immense benefits the business travel sector brings to the country, ... the recent interventions by the Kenyan government to improve its security has seen the lifting and clarification of travel advisories from key markets has seen the business travel segment performing better in the recent years...”*  
(Mgr, 1, November 2017).

#### **4.6.2 Overall Influence of Promotional Strategies in Enhancing Nairobi City as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

Respondents were asked to indicate whether overall adopted strategies have influence on the competitiveness of Nairobi City as conference tourism destination. Figure 4.4 present the findings.



**Figure 4.4: Overall influence of promotional strategies on competitiveness of Nairobi City as a tourism destination**

Results in Figure 4.4 indicate that overall 120(82.8%) of the respondents confirmed that explored promotional strategies adopted positively influences Nairobi City as competitive tourism destination. This could be attributed to the interventions done by the government and its agencies like KTB, Brand Kenya, Kenya Wildlife Service among others.

#### **4.7 Inferential Statistics**

The study used multiple linear regression analysis inferential techniques to determine the relationship between independent variables on the dependent variable. The findings are discussed in the sections below.

##### **4.7.1 Regression Analysis**

A regression analysis was generated to determine the extent to which changes in the dependent variable (Competitive tourism destination) can be explained by the change in the independent variables (conference tourism elements, emerging issues and promotional strategies). Regression model (adjusted R squared) and regression coefficients results were used to explain the influence of independent variables on the

dependent variable. Table 4.13 and 4.14 indicates the fitness of regression model and ANOVA results respectively.

**Table 4.13: Model summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	0.672 <sup>a</sup>	0.652	0.610	10.60658	.362	11.158	3	59	0.001	1.984

a. Dependent Variable: Competitive tourism destination

b. Predictors: (Constant), conference tourism elements, emerging issues and promotional strategies adopted

**Source:** Field data (2017)

**Table 4.14: Analysis of variance**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3765.796	3	1255.265	11.158	0.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	6637.473	59	112.500		
	Total	10403.270	62			

a. Dependent Variable: Competitive tourism destination

b. Predictors: (Constant), conference tourism elements, , emerging issues and promotional adopted

**Source:** Field data (2017)

The ANOVA result (Table 4.14),  $F = 11.158$ ,  $df = 3, 59$   $p = 0.001$  shows that model is significant. This indicates independent values are good and significant predictors of the competitiveness. The regression model (4.13) explains the extent of variation of dependent variable can be explained by the change in the independent variables. This model explains that 61.0% of competitive tourism destination is as a result of influence of independent variables explored. These findings imply that conference tourism elements, emerging issues and promotional strategies adopted play a critical role in influencing competitiveness of Nairobi city as a tourism destination. However, other elements that were not examined in this study accounted for 39.0% change of variation on the competitive of Nairobi City as a tourism destination. These elements that were not explored could be market prices, competition, security and health and hygiene among others.

#### 4.7.2 Regression Coefficients

The regression coefficients analysis was conducted to determine the extent of contribution of each independent variable (conference tourism elements, emerging

issues and interventions) explored on the competitiveness of Nairobi City tourism destination. The results are presented in table 4.15.

**Table 4.15: Beta Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-14.993	21.156		-.709	.001
	Tourism elements	1.748	.386	.575	4.531	.001
	Emerging issues	.074	.216	.037	.343	.001
	Promotional Strategies	.218	.470	.058	.465	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Competitive tourism destination

b. Predictors: (Constant), conference tourism elements, ,emerging issues and promotional strategies

**Source:** Field data (2017)

The Beta coefficients results presented shows that conference tourism elements (Beta=0.575) contributed the most on influencing competitiveness of the destination. It was followed by strategies adopted (Beta=0.058) while emerging issues effects (Beta=0.037) contributed the least. Therefore, regression equation is;  $Y = -14.993 + 1.748X_1 + 0.218X_2 + 0.074X_3$ . The regression model shows that the three independent variables have a positive coefficient, which means that they were directly proportional to destination competitiveness. These positive coefficient results imply that an increase of independent variables increases the variance of dependent variable. This means that conference tourism influencing elements, strategies and emerging issues have a positive influence of making Nairobi City a competitive tourism destination.

The above results imply that a unit increases in conference tourism influencing elements effect increase competitiveness of destination by 1.748 units while promotional strategies will influence change by 0.218 units. Finally, a change in emerging issues variable will affect competitiveness of the destination by 0.074 units. The above findings show that conference tourism elements have a higher influence (1.748 units) on competitiveness of Nairobi County as a tourism destination.

## 4.8 Hypothesis Testing

The study tested three hypotheses to determine the influence of independent variables on dependent variable. Table 4.16 summarises the hypothesis testing results.

**Table 4.16: Hypothesis testing results**

Hypothesis	Testing	Results
<b>HO<sub>1</sub></b> Available conference tourism elements do not significantly influence Nairobi City as a competitive tourism destination	Multiple linear regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F statistic (11.158), <math>p=0.001</math></li> <li>• Alternative hypothesis is accepted</li> </ul>
<b>HO<sub>2</sub></b> Emerging issues in conference industry do not significantly enhance Nairobi City as a competitive tourism destination	Multiple linear regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F statistic (11.158), <math>p=0.001</math></li> <li>• Alternative hypothesis is accepted</li> </ul>
<b>HO<sub>3</sub></b> Promotional strategies adopted for conference tourism do not significantly enhance Nairobi City a competitive tourism destination in Kenya	Multiple linear regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F statistic (11.158), <math>p=0.001</math></li> <li>• Alternative hypothesis is accepted</li> </ul>

**Source:** Field data (2017)

The three hypotheses were tested and interpreted from the regression model outputs presented in 4.13, 4.14 and 4.15. The hypothesis (HO<sub>1</sub>) was interpreted using F statistic (11.158) for the model at significant  $P=0.001$  which indicates that available tourism elements influence conference tourism. Further, the standardized coefficient beta ( $\beta$ ) for tourism influencing elements is 0.575 ( $P=0.001$ ). The significance test ( $P=0.001$ ) is less than 0.05 significance level set. These results indicate the  $p<0.001$  was significant and therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative

hypothesis is accepted. These results imply that available conference tourism elements influence highly in making Nairobi City competitive tourism destination.

The second hypothesis ( $H_{O2}$ ) was interpreted using F statistic (11.158) for the model at significant  $P=0.001$  which indicates that emerging issues influence conference tourism. Further, the standardized coefficient beta ( $\beta$ ) for emerging issues is 0.037 ( $P=0.001$ ). The significant test ( $P=0.001$ ) is less than 0.05 significance level set. These results indicate the  $p<0.001$  was significant and therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. These results imply that emerging issues influence conference tourism thus making Nairobi City a competitive tourism destination.

Lastly, the study tested the third hypothesis ( $H_{O3}$ ) was interpreted using F statistic (11.158) at significant  $P=0.0001$  which indicates that promotional strategies adopted influence conference tourism. Further, the standardized coefficient beta ( $\beta$ ) for trends and issues is 0.058 ( $P=0.001$ ). The T-test ( $P=0.001$ ) is less than 0.05 significance level set. These results indicate the  $p<0.001$  was significant and therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. These results imply that promotional strategies adopted influence conference tourism thus making Nairobi City competitive tourism destination.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Overview

This chapter presents the summary of the study findings, conclusions drawn from the study, recommendations emanating from the study and finally offers suggestions on areas for further study.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Study Findings

The summary of the study findings are discussed in three sections as per each study objective.

##### **5.2.1 Objective One: Relationship between Elements of Conference Tourism and Nairobi County as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

It emerged from the findings (Table, 4.6) that there was a strong relationship on elements related to accommodation and venue factors, location, accessibility and general infrastructure on enhancing of Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination. This finding imply a competitive destination comprise of a strong accommodation sector and hospitality facilities, accessible location and transport system, and a strong infrastructure system.

The most critical finding for this study objective was that availability of accommodation facilities and venues is the most influencing elements of destination competitiveness. More specific implication in this study was that accommodation and venues is a vital contributor to overall tourism destination competitiveness. Further practically, it implies that if Nairobi County was to remain competitive in the long run, all aspects of tourism accommodation should not only be limited to the hotel and venues but should create a unique combination of quality of accommodation, quantity of accommodation, adequate tourist accommodation, food service quality, tourist



oriented services and environmental friendliness to tourists, room rates, human resources and technologies, hence developing a strong competitive destination.

A major key finding for the study is that elements related to networking, entertainment, visa processing and availability of tourism activities and attractions received a relatively low rating on their level of influence in tourism destination competitiveness compared to the other elements (Table, 4.6). This was quite surprising given the fact that tourist attractions are the core resources and the fundamental reasons why visitors choose one destination over the other and these attractions which range from natural, cultural and events provide the foundations for memorable tourism experiences.

The reason for these factors receiving low ratings can be attributed to the fact that the respondents assumed that the conference traveller is the one who is not looking for entertainment and adventure but mainly travelling for business related purposes. This revelation reveals major marketing and management gaps in the promotion of tourist attractions to the conference tourist. More specific implications for this study is that conference tourists play an important role in the competitiveness of tourism destinations. Further, practical implications of these findings are that there is need for an understanding of how Nairobi County and its vast natural, cultural, events and entertainment attractions can be enhanced to the conference tourist so that the County remains a competitive tourist destination.

### **5.2.2 Objective Two: Effect of Emerging Issues in the Conference Industry on Enhancing Nairobi County as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

An important finding for tourism destination competitiveness this study revealed, was that the emergence of ICT infrastructures has positively impacted on the delivery of

tourism service in the industry. Further, the emergence of conference tourism has led to the increase of tourism services like airlines, growth of the hospitality sector and tour firms specialising in conference services. Lastly, the study revealed that the emergence of conference tourism has increased the competitiveness level of tourism destinations. These findings demonstrate that tourism trends and issues not only bring change, vibrancy and growth in the industry but also are of great importance in the promotion of a competitive tourism destination.

The main key finding from this study (Table, 4.9) concerned the issue of advancement in the ICT sector with a high mean of (M=4.35) implying that ICT has played a great role in improving the competitiveness of tourism destinations. This can be attributed to the fact that the service industry today is heavily reliant on technology. The number of internet users in the world has grown and it's still growing rapidly. ICCA has identified advances in information communication technology (ICT) as a general trend in the conference industry and its possible impact on the social changes in the provision of tourism services. Further, the continual advances in ICT poses a further challenge in the Kenyan tourism industry. The challenge lies in ensuring the country keeps up with the technological advancements and incorporating new technologies in delivery of tourism services. This implies that the most competitive conference tourism destinations are also the leaders in investing part of their GDP to technology.

However, when it comes to environment friendly practices, the study revealed that the County lags behind in adopting environment friendly initiatives (Table, 4.9) as these issues received a relatively low rating of (M=1.87). It was quite troubling that the trend received a relatively low rating given the fact that the value of the environment is vital to the successful promotion of a competitive tourism destination. These findings indicate that the tourism industry in Kenya has not clearly provided avenues

for tourism environmental best practices, demonstrating that this has resulted in negative environmental effects. This implies that tourism destinations need to be proactive regarding environmental issues and to manage their business in an environmentally friendly manner and to mitigate the negative environmental impacts in a tourism destination.

### **5.2.3 Objective Three: Relationship between Conference Tourism Promotional Strategies and Nairobi County as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

The factors in this objective were related to destination management and policy practices adopted by various private and public institutions in the promotion of Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination.

In terms of destination management strategies adopted in enhancing Nairobi County as a tourism destination (Table 4.11), particular attention was paid to issues of major infrastructure investments. Majority of the respondents identified refurbishment of KICC as a major promotional strategy. Secondly; respondents revealed that construction of top notch world luxury hotels as an intervention geared towards promotion of Nairobi County. Thirdly the study revealed that expansion of JKIA has helped enhance passenger movement, thus enhancing visitor numbers. Finally, improved ICT innovations has enabled the flow of tourism services and also formation of destination marketing brands as promotional strategies geared towards enhancing the county as a competitive tourism destination.

The most critical management strategy adopted as revealed by the respondents was that of the refurbishment and upgrading of KICC to international standards. This implies more opportunities for Kenya to host major international conferences, thus translating to increased visitor numbers, further leading to a competitive tourist destination. The high response to this particular statement can be attributed to the fact

that KICC is Kenya's premier conference centre and has been mandated to spearhead conference tourism in the country through the ministry of tourism. The recent upgrade and refurbishment saw it being re-admitted into the prestigious International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) a worldwide body for international conferences and conventions in the year 2012.

These findings implies that the modernisation and refurbishment of KICC has given it a competitive edge when it comes to hosting convention events in Africa, However, benchmarking with South Africa; the market leader in Africa; which has 8 convention centres spread in 8 cities shows that many conference activities can run concurrently at the same time, South Africa's success in the convention industry has also been attributed to conference facilities of international standards and back up services as well as a strong visitor convention bureau to aggressively market the convention cities. These findings imply that conference centres are critical and that a destination must have a multipurpose conference in order to succeed in an ever more competitive environment. Further it implies that the recent upgrade of KICC has presented a great opportunity for Nairobi to host large events including international conferences.

However, from the findings (Table,4.11) it was revealed that the tourism stakeholders have lagged behind when it comes to matters of security, human resource development, traffic and parking issues in the City as these factors had a low rating of (M=2.87) and below. This low rating on security by the respondents is an implication that there is still perceived concerns of issues regarding the safety and security situation of the county and also an indicator that more security management interventions still needs to be implemented on the security situation in the county. The low rating on the security factor can be attributed to the fact that the city has suffered from incidences of terrorist attacks and threats, political unrest, civil servants

unrest and incidents of organised crime, gangs and muggings mostly in the CBD over the last decade. As Yoo and Chon (2008) asserts that, supposed risks on safety and security concerns in a destination is a strong predictor of tourists not choosing it as a tourism destination. The more specific implication in this study is that safety and security issues inevitably play a key role in facilitating destination competitiveness and so it is an important management strategy that destination organisation managers cannot afford to ignore.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

From the findings it can be concluded that the ability of Nairobi County to leverage the gains of conference tourism is dependent on its available tourism elements like accommodation, venues, attractions, accessibility and supporting resources. This shows that the capacity of Nairobi to enhance its competitiveness is pegged on available tourism elements.

Conference tourism has led to the rise of technological advancements, creativity and innovations. Such new technologies have led to the positioning of the county to explore the potential of conference tourism which further enhances destination competitiveness. However, a notable emerging issue is the occasional insecurity and negative publicity about the county in foreign media which has led the county to be less competitive. Security is a big hindrance to conference tourism. The findings reveal that when the security of the County is enhanced the County enjoys more conference tourists.

The findings revealed that promotional activities enhance conference tourism and by extension improve destination competitiveness. It was evident that numerous promotional strategies like upgrade, expansion and refurbishment of tourism

infrastructure, formation of marketing brands like brand Kenya, KNCB, MakeitKenya and Magical Kenya have enhanced the competitiveness of Nairobi County.

However, if the destination managers neglect to effectively use conference tourism to differentiate it from other destinations, will find it struggling to remain competitive. Nairobi as a destination must begin to use its abundant tourism resources to promote it to the growing conference tourist.

#### **5.4 Recommendation for Policy and Practice**

Based on the findings of this research study, a number of recommendations can be made regarding the influence of conference tourism in promoting Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination in Kenya. The recommendations of these findings are relevant to destination management organisations in Kenya such as KTB, Ministry of tourism, Brand Kenya, KNCB and KICC, it is also relevant to hospitality institutions, travel agencies and policy makes both in the private and public sector.

##### **5.4.1 Objective One: Relationship between Elements of Conference Tourism and Nairobi County as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

The study revealed that one of the main elements influencing the competitiveness of Nairobi County is availability of accommodation facilities and venues these elements received the highest rating amongst all other tourism influencing elements. However, for the destination Nairobi to experience an optimum competitive edge in its hospitality sector, the study recommends for more emphasis to be put on all aspects of accommodation features by having a unique combination of quality of accommodation, quantity accommodation, adequate tourist accommodation, food service quality, tourist oriented services and environmental friendliness of tourist, room rates, right human resources and technologies hence developing a strong competitive destination.

The study revealed that despite some improvements in the state of infrastructure, there is need for further investments particularly in roads to improve transport and internet speed. The study recommends for the improvement in the transport system especially public transport, decongesting the city centre and creating ample parking slots in the central business units especially near the major city hotels.

The main objective of the study was to identify how conference tourism influences the enhancement of a competitive tourism destination but from the findings, the issue of tourist attractions (extra conference activities) has lagged behind, conference tourism creates an avenue for the delegates to explore the tourism attractions that the host destination has to offer but from the findings the promotion of post conference activities has not been pro-active and most delegates end up not exploring the available attraction, the study recommends that destination management strategy which could be employed by destination marketing organisations is to engage the conference tourist in exploring the diverse attractions that the county has to offer from the natural, cultural and historical attractions of the City to the pulsating night life, high end shopping malls and markets.

#### **5.4.2 Objective Two: Emerging Issues in the Conference Industry on Enhancing Nairobi County as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

The study revealed that the safety and security is an obstacle to the Kenyan tourism industry. More security measures need to be put in place in order to improve the security situation of the destination. The study therefore recommends that the security be given first priority by the government in-order to safeguard the sector and also be incorporated as an integral component in their marketing messages.

### **5.4.3 Objective Three: Relationship between Conference Tourism Promotional Strategies and Nairobi County as a Competitive Tourism Destination**

The conference industry has grown exponentially in size and this requires destination management strategies by the KNCB to ensure that the city bid for conferences, KTB promotes and markets the available tourist attractions to the conference clientele augmented by the best facilities and attractions.

A strong spirit of partnership and collaboration among all stakeholders is needed especially the Kenya Tourism Board and Kenya National Conventions Bureau in order to realize the potential of the destination and maximize available resources. When KNCB bids for the conference to come to Kenya, KTB should ensure that the right marketing is done in order to appeal to the conference tourism clientele. Marketing should be strengthened to counter competition from other alternative destinations.

The study also revealed that the marketing and promotion of the conference sector is still disparate as more efforts have been focused on traditional tourism products like wildlife and recreational tourism. As more countries join in the lucrative conference market, it has become important for conference destinations to identify its niche and create a strong marketing and promotional strategies. The study recommends developing of a unique conference tourism brand; this can include a slogan, logo, and website or have a conference bidding team involving stakeholders from the sector hence fostering promotion. The study further recommends promotional activities road shows, trade shows; familiarization tours press releases and internet marketing.



### **5.5 Suggestion for Further Research**

The study has revealed a number of opportunities for further research as it has shown to be a varied and complex subject involving many related significant factors, therefore the subject can contribute to various research areas

1. Carry out a study to determine the factors influencing the decision to attend a conference event from the delegate or attendee's perspective. This is necessary because the study focused mainly on event organisers and suppliers and as established during the literature review, most of the studies done have mainly concentrated on the supply side and this was one of the gaps identified in the study. It would be important for a study to establish the role delegates play in conference decision making process.
2. A study need to be carried to determine the capacity of selected hospitality facilities to host conference events in Kenya. From the study it was established that one of the key success factors influencing destination competitiveness as availability of conference venues and accommodation facilities and that is why it is important to carry out a study on the availability and capacity of these facilities in Kenya.
3. A study also needs to be done on the role of extra conference tourism activities and attraction in the promotion of tourism destinations. In the study, extra conference activities came out as a factor influencing tourism destination competitiveness Research therefore need to be carried out on the impact of those factors to a destination.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Questionnaire for Operations Staff

My name is Rose Nzisa Munyao a Masters of tourism student at Moi University. I am currently embarking on a research titled “**influence of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination in Kenya**”. You have been selected as one of the respondents to participate in the study by filling questionnaire to collect data for this research. Kindly provide your honest responses on all the items in this questionnaire. This exercise is purely an academic exercise and your views will be treated confidential.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- i) This questionnaire consists of **6 pages printed one side**
- ii) **Respond by Ticking [√] or circling** your answer choice from options provided.
- iii) Where **applicable explain or make your suggestions** on the spaces provided.

#### SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

By use of a **tick [√]** or **circling** please indicate the following (**Tick one option only**)

1. Please select to indicate your organisation -----
2. Kindly select your gender [ 1 ] Female [ 2 ] Male
3. Please indicate your age
  - [ ] 18-22 years
  - [ ] 22-25years
  - [ ] 25-30 years
  - [ ] 31-35 years
  - [ ] 36-45 years
  - [ ] Above 45 years
4. How long have you worked in the tourism sector?
  - [ ] Less than 1 year
  - [ ] 1-3years
  - [ ] 4-6 years
  - [ ] 7-10 years
  - [ ] 11-15 years
  - [ ] Above 15 years
5. Please select one to describe your organisation
  - [ ] Ministry of Tourism
  - [ ] Tourism Parastatals
  - [ ] Private Organisation

Hospitality institution

Others please indicate \_\_\_\_\_

6. Kindly indicate your section in the department you work for
- \_\_\_\_\_
7. Please identify the elements that make Nairobi County a preferred conference destination (**More than one option allowed**)
- Destination attractiveness
- Kenya's strategic location
- Accessibility (Air, road, airport to hotel transfers)
- Kenya being a regional hub
- Availability of a variety of accommodation facilities
- Safety and security of Kenya
- Availability of world class state of the art conference venues
- Common language or cosmopolitan nature of the Nairobi county
- Previous conference events held at the destination
- Image of the destination
- Conducive climate
- Ease of Visa processing
- Networking and entertainment opportunities
- Availability of tourism activities

## **SECTION B: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ELEMENTS OF CONFERENCE TOURISM AND NAIROBI COUNTY AS A COMPETITIVENESS AS A TOURISM DESTINATION**

Using the Likert scale table below please indicate your responses on the relationship between elements of conference tourism and Nairobi county as a competitiveness as a tourism destination

	<b>Statements</b>	Very low influence <b>[1]</b>	Low influence <b>[2]</b>	Neither low nor high <b>[3]</b>	High influence <b>[4]</b>	Very High influence <b>[5]</b>
a)	Destination Attractiveness					
b)	Kenya's strategic location					
c)	Accessibility (air, road, airport to hotel transfers)					
d)	Kenya being a regional hub					
e)	Availability of variety of accommodation facilities and venues					
f)	Safety and security of					

	<b>Statements</b>	Very low influence <b>[1]</b>	Low influence <b>[2]</b>	Neither low nor high <b>[3]</b>	High influence <b>[4]</b>	Very High influence <b>[5]</b>
	Destination					
g)	Availability of World class state of the art conference venues					
h)	Common language or cosmopolitan nature of the travel destination					
i)	Previous Conference event held at the destination					
j)	Image of the Destination					
k)	Conducive climate					
l)	Visa processing					
m)	Networking/entertainment opportunities					
n)	Availability of tourism activities					

8. What other elements do you think influence the competitiveness of Nairobi as a tourism destination? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What tourism activities are sought by the conference traveller when they visit Kenya for conferences? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What tourism activities do you recommend to be incorporated in the destination Nairobi for the conference traveller? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Overall, has conference tourism elements influenced the competitiveness of Nairobi County as a tourism destination

a) Have influence [    ]

b) Have no influence [    ]

**SECTION C: EFFECT OF EMERGING ISSUES IN THE CONFERENCE INDUSTRY IN ENHANCING NAIROBI CITY AS A COMPETITIVE TOURISM DESTINATION**

12. Using the Likert scale table below please indicate your responses on the following statements on the emerging and trends and issues in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination.

	Statements	Strongly agree [1]	Agree [2]	Neither agree or disagree [3]	Disagree [4]	Strongly disagree [5]
a)	Emergence of conference tourism has led to increase no of airlines, hotels and tourism firms having packages tailored for the conference delegate					
b)	The economic climate has led to new business opportunities in markets that would not have previously come to Nairobi for international conferences					
c)	The competitive conference market globally has influenced the growth of the industry					
d)	The advancements in ICT have changed the way people investigate and book travel and this has impacted on the conference sector, especially regarding accommodation bookings and delivery of services at conferences					
e)	Nairobi city is has improved in terms of provision information and communication technology in the conference sector					

	Statements	Strongly agree [1]	Agree [2]	Neither agree or disagree [3]	Disagree [4]	Strongly disagree [5]
f)	Kenya has adopted environmentally friendly practices in the conference sector e.g. recycling.					
g)	Safety and security is one of the main areas of concern for the conference industry					

13. What other emerging trends are affecting the conference sector or likely to affect in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

14. Overall, please indicate whether emerging issues in conference tourism have influenced enhancing of Nairobi city as a competitive tourism destination

- a) Have influence [    ]  
b) Have no influence [    ]

#### **SECTION D: RELATIONSHIP OF CONFERENCE TOURISM PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES AND NAIROBI COUNTY AS COMPETITIVENESS AS A TOURISM DESTINATION IN KENYA**

Using the Likert scale table below please indicate your responses on the statements below on relationship of conference tourism promotional strategies and Nairobi county as competitiveness as a tourism destination in Kenya

	Statements	Strongly agree [1]	Agree [2]	Neither agree or disagree [3]	Disagree [4]	Strongly disagree [5]
a)	The recent upgrade and refurbishing of KICC presented a great opportunity for Nairobi to host large events and international conferences					
b)	The expansion of JKIA has helped to enhance passenger movement thus injecting additional conference numbers					

	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Strongly agree [1]</b>	<b>Agree [2]</b>	<b>Neither agree or disagree [3]</b>	<b>Disagree [4]</b>	<b>Strongly disagree [5]</b>
c)	Traffic de-congestion, adequate parking space and has been improved in the city centre					
d)	Increase in investments in the conference sector has influence the growth of the industry					
e)	Improved security in Nairobi has helped the city regain its lost glory					
f)	Construction of top notch luxury hotels has positioned Nairobi as premier conference destination of choice					
g)	The ranking of Nairobi city as among the leading best city destination for conferences is a big avenue to compete with overseas destinations.					
h)	Availability of a competent human capital in the conference sector in Kenya has helped in the delivery of quality services.					
i)	Improved ICT and innovations have influenced the delivery of service in the industry					
j)	Formation of tourism marketing brands like Brand Kenya, Make it Kenya and MICE Kenya have helped to enhance Nairobi as a conference destination through positioning, branding, promotion, product development and pricing.					



15. Please provide other promotional strategies that have been adopted to enhance Nairobi city as tourism destination in Kenya

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16. Overall, please indicate whether promotional strategies adopted to enhance Nairobi County has influenced its competitiveness as tourism destination

a) Have influence [    ]

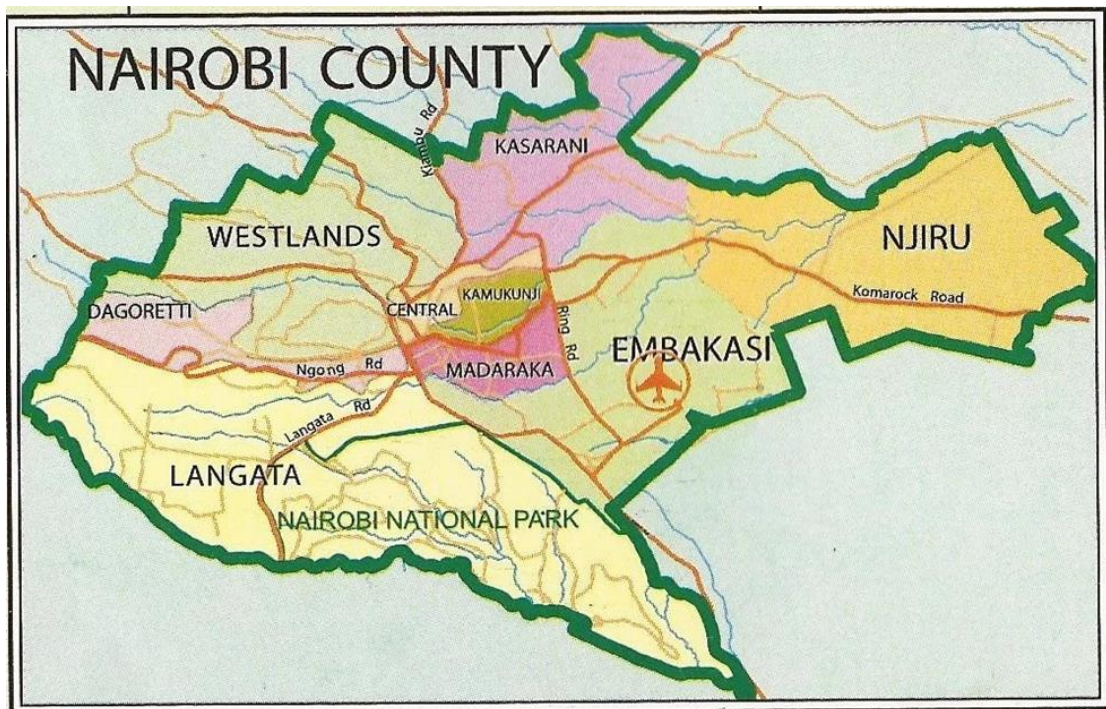
b) Have no influence [    ]

## **Appendix II: Interview Schedule for Senior Managers**

My name is Rose Nzisa Munyao, a Masters student at Moi University. I am now collecting data on my thesis titled “**influence of conference tourism in enhancing Nairobi County as a competitive tourism destination in Kenya**”. This interview is meant to collect data for this research and you have been selected as one of the respondents. Kindly provide information honestly on all the items in this interview. It is purely for academic pursuit and the views expressed will be treated confidentially.

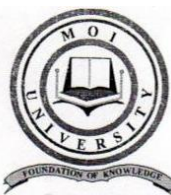
1. Which departments in your organisation are actively involved in the enhancing of conference and tourism services?
2. What are some of tourism influencing elements that are make destination Kenya a preferred destination? (Probe on accommodation and venues, strategic location, infrastructure, image, security, accessibility etc.)
3. What are some of the tourism activities that are sought by the conference travellers and what are the tourism attractions and activities do your organisation market or suggest to be promoted?
4. What are some of the strategies being put in place to promote Nairobi County as a tourism destination?
5. What are the emerging issues influencing the development of are conference tourism in Kenya?
6. What is your response on the influence of tourism elements, emerging issues and strategies adopted on making Nairobi City a competitive destination (probe how they have influenced, challenges)?
7. What strategies can Kenya harness to for it to achieve a greater potential in conference tourism?

**Thank you for your time and valuable contribution**

**Appendix III: Map of Nairobi County**

Source: [www.mapsoftworld.com](http://www.mapsoftworld.com)

## Appendix IV: Moi University Data Collection Authorisation Letter



### MOI UNIVERSITY

ISO 9001:2008 CERTIFIED

SCHOOL OF TOURISM, HOSPITALITY & EVENTS MANAGEMENT

Tel : (020) 2211206

Fax No : (020) 220247

Telex No: 35047 MOIVASITY

P. O. Box 63056-00200

Nairobi

KENYA

=====  
Ref: MU/NRB/STHE /RF/45

=====  
18<sup>th</sup> November, 2016

To Whom It May Concern.

Dear Sir/Madam,


**RE: ROSE NZISA MUNYAO - MTM/100/14**

In reference to the above mentioned, kindly note that she is a student of Moi University, Department of Tourism Management and is required to collect data on Influence of Conference Tourism in Promoting Nairobi City as a competitive Tourism Destination in Kenya as part of their academic requirements for the award of masters degree of Tourism Management.

We hereby request that you accord her the necessary assistance.

For more information do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully,

 **GODFREY ODINGA**  
PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR,  
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT,  
MOI UNIVERSITY, NAIROBI CAMPUS.

**MOI UNIVERSITY**  
SCHOOL OF TOURISM, HOSPITALITY  
& EVENTS MANAGEMENT  
NAIROBI CAMPUS



## Appendix V: Research Authorisation letter- NACOSTI



### NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,  
2241349, 3310571, 2219420  
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249  
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
when replying please quote

9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Utalii House  
Uhuru Highway  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/16/12292/14964**

Date:  
**25<sup>th</sup> November, 2016**

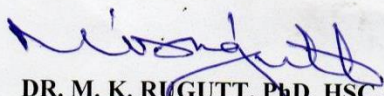
Rose Nzisa Munyao  
Moi University  
P.O. Box 3900-30100  
**ELDORET.**

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Influence of conference tourism in promoting Nairobi City as a competitive tourism destination in Kenya,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **25<sup>th</sup> November, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

  
**DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.**  
**DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**


Copy to:

The County Commissioner  
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education  
Nairobi County.

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**  
**MISS. ROSE NZISA MUNYAO**  
**of MOI UNIVERSITY, 277-90131 tala, has**  
**been permitted to conduct research in**  
**Nairobi County**  
**on the topic: INFLUENCE OF**  
**CONFERENCE TOURISM IN PROMOTING**  
**NAIROBI CITY AS A COMPETITIVE**  
**TOURISM DESTINATION IN KENYA**  
**for the period ending:**  
**25th November,2017**

**Permit No' : NACOSTI/P/16/12292/14964**  
**Date Of Issue : 25th November,2016**  
**Fee Received :Ksh 1000**



**Applicant's Signature**  
*(Signature)*

**Director General**  
*(Signature)*  
**National Commission for Science,  
Technology & Innovation**