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Sports Tourism Events and Socio-economic Well-being of the Host Communities: Motivations and Benefits from an Emerging Destination



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Abstract

Travel and tourism industry has been considered as a major catalyst for local community development. As an alternative way of involving the host community in tourism activities directly, sports tourism aims to enable the hosts to earn income. Host community is an important stakeholder in tourism, their wellbeing is directly proportional to sustainable tourism. Nairobi city has hosted several sports tourism events for decades, but little has been documented on how such events promote the socio-economic wellbeing of the host community. This research sought to put sports tourism events into limelight by looking at the perceived motivational factors behind hosting of sports tourism events and to assess the socio-economic benefits of hosting sports tourism events. A cross-sectional research design was used in the study with a total of 404 respondents. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from informants in three stadia. Descriptive, thematic analysis and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. The major motivating factors for hosting sports tourism event were good infrastructure, expected benefits and availability of accommodation facilities. The main benefits of hosting sports tourism events were identified as employment opportunities and increased trade for local businesses. A number of recommendations were made.

Keywords: Sports Tourism Events, Community, Sustainable Development

Introduction

The travel and tourism industry is among the highly developing sectors in the world experiencing a growth in tourists' numbers, huge employment opportunities and huge investments. WTTC (2018) established that, the travel and tourism industry brought US$8.8 trillion to the economy worldwide this equating to 10.4% of global GDP. It contributes to more than 319 million jobs annually, representing 10.0% of all employment worldwide. In most developing nations, it has turned out to be a major driver of social and economic progress. Kenya receives the largest number of international tourists each year followed by Uganda and Tanzania. Tourism contributes about 10% of the Gross Domestic Product in the country each year (KIPPRA Report, 2018). Tourism arrivals in 2018 were recorded at 2,029,206 and ksh 157 billion tourism receipts (KTB report, 2018) thus making the tourism industry a major backbone of the economy. However, the increased poverty levels are still evident in different parts of the country which has been associated with unequal distribution of tourism benefits (Kieti & Akama, 2007). In Kenya, 36.1% of the population still live below the poverty line compared to other African countries like Ghana and South Africa (World Bank Report, 2018).

In its Vision 2030 blueprint, tourism in Kenya is a major pillar that the government has prioritized as a way of alleviating the poverty index and providing economic growth. The country aims to focus on niche tourism products and to be among the leading destinations globally providing quality, diversified and unique tourists' experiences than her competitors GOK, (2008).To achieve this, the country has come up with different development projects among them the launching of Kenya National Tourism Blueprint 2030 that has strategies on product diversification to boost its tourism profile globally and the initiative to build state of the art stadia across the country that will boost Kenya's ability to bid and host regional and international sports

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tourism events. This will be a focal point in improving the quality of lives local people's lives (GoK, 2013).

Sport and tourism has become a vital element of tourism in Kenya. The country has actively participated in local, regional and international sporting tourism events that has given it popularity. For instance, Kenyan sports men and women have often performed exceptionally globally during events. The country has also attracted renowned world sport stars who have helped to promote and boost sports talents in the country. Kenya has frequently hosted numerous spectacular sports tourism events like the annual Standard chartered Marathon, Lewa Marathon, the IAAF championships, KCB Safari rally, the cricket Championships, Rugby Safari Sevens Series, Confederation of Eastern and Central Africa Football Association (CECAFA) Championships and Open golf championships which have attracted both local and international participants (Ng'oriarita, 2013).

Nairobi County is a hub of tourism in Africa. The county is enriched with both cultural and natural tourism attractions such as Mamba Village, Karen Blixen Museum, Nairobi National Park, Giraffe Centre and Bomas of Kenya. Since the inception of devolution, the county has bid and hosted some spectacular sporting events which include the annual Rugby Safari Sevens Series, IAAF World under 18 Championships, AFCON qualifiers championships, African Volleyball Championships, Ice Stock Sports Africa, WRC Safari Rally, East Africa military games and African Deaf Athletics Championships. The city has several stadia that host different events which have made the city ideal for sports enthusiasts.

Despite hosting these events, it is unclear whether the host community in Nairobi gains from the events. Hosting of sports tourism is regarded as part of community development but there exists dearth of studies basing on this within the Kenyan Context. The link between sports tourism and counties is still under researched (Njoroge et al, 2017). Furthermore, Peric (2018), Herbold, Thees and Philipp (2020), and Boonsiritomachai and Phonthanukitithaworn (2019) opine that the host community is important in any tourism process and no form of tourism should be held at the expense of the locals. To sum up, Wise 2016, argues that most research have put focus on events while the focus on the host community is missing. From this basis, the study will endeavor to fill this knowledge gap by addressing key concern in Kenyan perspective.

Devolution and growth of sports events tourism in Kenya

Devolution refers to a decentralization of political powers and economic resources to the local divisions. The Kenyan Constitution in 2010 enshrined devolution. The constitution enabled the formation of forty-seven counties that are governed independently (Khaunya, Wawire & Chepng'eno, 2015). County governments have continued to strive towards promoting economic welfare to improve the GDP of the country. According to World Bank report (2019), county governments contribute 5.7% of the overall GDP in the country. Tourism is among the sectors that have attracted the attention of these devolved units as they have realized the benefits of its promotion. Devolution has opened up remote places through equitable allocation of resources to the counties. These counties have embarked on mapping of tourism resources, tourism product development and marketing. As a way of developing tourism products, some counties have been at the forefront of developing sports facilities that have made them host spectacular sports events.

Njoroge, Atieno and Nascimento (2017) pointed out that, with a centralized system of governance, tourism developments in some parts of Kenya were disregarded, a priority was given to the coastal region because of the serene beaches and wildlife. However, these led to a lack of diversification in tourism products offered by the country. They further explained that the counties have led to the development of new destinations with diverse tourism products which have enabled

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the country to curb seasonality which was majorly caused by overreliance on beach and wildlife tourism.

Motivation for Hosting Sports Tourism Events

Many published pieces of literatures have concentrated on marketing, managing and evaluating of political, cultural and environmental effects of sports tourism (Kasimati, 2003; Zhou & AP, 2009; Gelan, 2003; Waitt, 2003). There is scanty of research attention on motivations for governments, cities or states to involve in these sports events. Studies on motivations and reasons for hosting sports events are very limited. (Ap, Bauer & Zhou, 2012).
The bidding process has become a common aspect of destinations that rely on events as the main tourism product. Destination Management Organizations, governments and businesses have taken a lead to bidding for the rights to host events in their areas as an initiative to rip the expected benefits (Berridge, 2010). Different cities in the world are embracing MICE by improving their facilities, infrastructures and spaces to enhance their ability for bidding for different types of events. (Getz, 2012).

Socio-economic Benefits of Hosting Events on the Host Community

Developing nations considers tourism as a means of alleviating poverty by boosting sustainable developments for the locals. (Paul, 2012). Sports tourism events have effects on the host communities. In relation to sustainability, sports tourism events have economic, social and environmental impacts on the receiving communities (Weaver, 2006). The popularity of hosting sports events has been associated with the fact that they contribute huge impacts to the livelihood of the host community (Wanyonyi, Njoroge &Juma,2021). This relies on the size of the event being hosted, (Peric, 2018). Ntloko and Swart (2008) state that, sports tourism events provide direct and indirect linkages with other industries whenever they are hosted. New opportunities are created for improving the standards of living for the locals.

Several studies have based on the economic impacts to the host destinations. Examples of economic impacts include the provision of employment, boosting the local economy, diversification in tourism products and rise in investments (Kayat, 2010; Njoroge *et al* 2017; Herbold, Thees & Philipp, 2020), improvement in revenues, supplementary income, and enhanced quality of life (Dimitriadis *et al.*, 2013). Conversely, on the negative side of effects there are economic challenges like a rise in the cost of living through an increase in prices of commodities and unequal allocation of accrued benefits (Andriotis, 2005)

Though much has been done on the impacts of hosting events, Camacho, Duclos and Don Santos (2018) opine that assessment of social impacts in sports tourism events is important to ascertain if they pose any effect to the host residents. This is to curb the adverse effects and maximize on the benefits received. Majority of the past studies comprised of impact-based studies that sought to investigate the impacts of sport tourism events on specific destinations. Therefore, there is scarcity of studies looking on socio-economic returns derived from hosting sport tourism events and how local economies benefit from the hosting of events in their proximity (Nyikana & Tichaawa, 2018).

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Methodology

The objective of this paper was to identify the motivational factors behind hosting of sports tourism events and the benefits of sport tourism events to host community. Purposive sampling was used to identify the three stadia namely Moi International Sports Complex, Nyayo stadium and Nairobi City Stadium that frequently host events in the city. A cross-sectional research design was used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from the host community and sports tourists in the stadia. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the Likert Scale type questions from the questionnaire. To measure the socio - economic benefits derived from events, the variables that were deemed to contribute to the socio-economic well -being of the hosts from the literature review were put on a Likert scale and the host community were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements. The scale used ranged from 1=strongly agree to 5=strongly disagree. To this end, the ordinal scale of measurement was used where a value of "1" was considered the highest while "5" was the lowest.

The perceived motivational factors for hosting sports tourism events from literature, were also put on the Likert scale and respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements. Ordinal scale of measurement was used, and means were calculated for the variables. A factor analysis was used to categorize the motivational factors for hosting events into three groups "facilities", "support factors" and "favorable factors". Correlation analysis was used to establish the relationship between variables of the study. Interviews were also administered to host community and sports stakeholders (sport associations, Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and Ministry of Sport). Descriptive, thematic analysis and inferential statistics were used to analyze data.

Results and Discussions

Quantitative Data Analyses

Four hundred and four questionnaires were issued to the sampled respondents. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents at the three stadia during Ice Stock Sports Africa, World Rally Championships, East Africa military games and African Deaf Athletics Championships events that were hosted in Nairobi City in 2019. Three hundred and seventy-three questionnaires were returned. The response rate was 92.33%. The questionnaire yielded over 60% of the response rate which is satisfactorily according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008).

Table 1. Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotational of Motivational Factors

	F1	F2	F3	Mean	Communality
Factor 1— ***Facilities***					
Good infrastructure	0.81			4.201	0.689

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Well-developed sporting facilities	0.738			4.472	0.554
Availability of accommodation facilities	0.513			4.134	0.518
Availability of social amenities	0.607			4.1314	0.636
Factor 2: ***Support Factors***					
Support of sponsors		0.698		4.5952	0.537
Support from the government		0.689		4.3619	0.635
The hospitality of the host community		0.594		4.378	0.577
Factor 3: ***Favorable Factors***					
Conducive weather			0.588	3.82	0.522
Security			0.919	4.005	0.895
Eigenvalue	2.124	1.844	1.194		
Variance explained (%)	23.599	20.494	13.269		Total:57.361
Cronbach's alpha (α)	0.869	0.771	0.7		
Number of items	4	3	2		

From Table 1, Factor 1 contained four items with the highest eigenvalue (2.124) and the greatest individual variance (23.599% and 23.563% of the variance before and after rotation, respectively). The motivational factors items included in this factor were "good infrastructure"; "Well-developed sporting facilities"; "Availability of accommodation facilities"; and "Availability of social amenities." These four motivational factors items were related to infrastructure that is needed during the hosting of sports tourism events. Absence of facilities in a destination may hinder a city from bidding process.

Factor 2 was named "Support Factors." It explained approximately 20.494% of the variance and had an eigenvalue of 1.844. Three items were also included in this factor, namely, "Support of sponsors"; "Support from the government"; and "hospitality of the host community." The items in

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this factor play a key role in enhancing the success of hosting an event.

The third and final factor generated was "Favorable factors," which comprised 2 items "Conducive weather" and "Security." This factor accounted for 13.269% of the variance, with an eigenvalue of 1.194.

Scholarly studies related to this finding point out that availability of facilities, security and hospitality of the host are the highest ranked motivators identified amongst sport tourists and sports participants during an event (Motlagh, 2013).

Table 2. Correlations of the study variables

Variables		SEW	PMF	CandO	SEB	DH
Correlation	SEW-Socio-economic wellbeing	1.000				
	PMF -Perceived Motivation	.624	1.000			
	SEB-Socio-economic Benefits	.543	.348	.411	1.000	
	DH -Determinants of Hosting	.614	.455	.485	.472	1.000

From Table 2, the combined correlation of two independent variables namely perceived motivation and socio-economic benefits and the dependent variable were computed to determine the strength and direction of the associations between variables. The findings in this table showed that all independent variables had a positive relationship with the dependent variable. Perceived motivation r = 0.624, Socio-economic Benefits r = 0.543. In the performed test of significance, each independent variable yielded p-value of 0.000 at the level of significance 0.05 two tailed. Therefore, there is a strong positive correlation between the dependent variable and the independent variables. The study concluded that, from the independent variables investigated in the study, perceived motivation has the highest correlation to socio-economic well- being followed by socio-economic benefits.

The study conducted a multiple linear regression involving the two independent variables against Socio-Economic Wellbeing. The results are as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Multiple Regression for Hosting of Sports Tourism Events Variables

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.744[a]	.553	.550	.25974	.553	152.300	3	369	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), SocioEcon_Benefits, Perceived Motivation

The multiple regression analysis in Table 3 above showed that R value measures the goodness of prediction of the variances. In this case R value of 0.744 is a good predictor of the socio-economic wellbeing by the independent variables: perceived motivation for hosting sports tourism events and socio-economic benefits of hosting sports tourism events. On the other hand, the R^2 is the coefficient of determination which is the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. In this case the R^2 value of 0.553 means that 55.3% of the corresponding variation in the socio-economic wellbeing can be explained by the independent variables perceived

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motivation for hosting sports tourism events and socio-economic benefits of hosting sports tourism events. However, there are other variables not covered by the study which account for 44.7% of socio-economic wellbeing. This outcome shows that socio-economic wellbeing can be enhanced by the predictors, perceived motivation factors and socio-economic benefits, the more the value of the predictors, the more effective and efficient socio-economic wellbeing. This is in line with Mc Comie (2016) and Ntloko and Swart (2008).

Perceived Motivation for hosting sports tourism events and Socio-Economic Wellbeing

The study conducted a multiple regression analysis involving perceived motivation for hosting sports tourism events against socio-economic wellbeing. The purpose was to establish the contribution of perceived motivation for hosting sports tourism events on socio-economic wellbeing. The results are as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Multiple Regression for Hosting of Sports Tourism Events Variable

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.624[a]	.390	.388	.30272	.390	237.031	1	371	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Motivation

The simple regression analysis in Table 4 shows that the R^2 value equals to 0.390 means that 39.0% of the corresponding variation in the socio-economic wellbeing can be explained by the independent variable perceived motivation for hosting sports tourism events. This implies that by improving perceived motivation for hosting sports tourism events on its own; there will be an improvement in socio-economic wellbeing. Improvement in facilities such as good infrastructure, sporting facilities, accommodation facilities and social amenities would result into increase in the number of sport tourism events hence socio-economic wellbeing. Further, increase of support from the government and sponsors would improve socio-economic wellbeing as a result of hosting sports tourism events. Besides, favorable factors such as security and conducive weather would increase the number of sports tourism events hence socio-economic wellbeing.

Thematic Analysis

An interview with various stakeholders showed a general agreement on motivations of sports tourism events as noted by a local hotelier:

> *"The hosting of sports events in Nairobi has made impressive strides due to increased marketing of Kenya as a sports destination by KTB, Good performance of Kenyans participating in international events, increased number of sports tourism facilities in the country and improved infrastructure for example the Thika Superhighway, direct flight to USA from Kenya and the completion of Standard Gauged Railway has made movements within the country efficient." HOT1*

This is an indication that these factors have facilitated the growth and popularity of sports tourism in the country as a potential niche product for the enabling socio-economic returns to the hosts.

With regard to the effect of these motivation factors on the socioeconomic wellbeing of the

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host community, the respondent felt that,

> "*the motivational factors increase the image of the country both locally and abroad for instance the recent performance of Kenya at the international stage has put the country on the global map i.e. The INEOS 1:59 Challenge has served many valuable lessons on tapping the benefits accruing from sports tourism, sports tourism enthusiasts across the world have now started flocking the country to seek the answers on why the country is such a dominant force in the middle and long-distance running. Besides, the conducive weather and availability of world class accommodation facilities have made Kenya be an ideal host of many events thus accruing benefits to the hoteliers, local businesses, tour firms and the government at large this would mean higher economic returns to boost the socioeconomic wellbeing of the hosts whenever they are hosted. Therefore, motivational supports like sports leadership, organizational support and level of security should be highly put into consideration to enhance more economic returns to host destination."CG3*

As a suggestion on how to improve motivation for hosting sports tourism events, the participant had this to say:

> "*We need to encourage a high level of security in this wake of terrorism, sports facilities on the other hand need to be increased and elevated to international standards to boost their competitiveness when bidding to host major and mega sports tourism events, the government should enhance their marketing visibility to enhance their recognition locally and abroad*". *MOT2*

In addition to this, infrastructure, organization support, the good will of the sponsors should be encouraged and supported to boost the successful hosting of sports tourism events in the county.

This finding concurs with the findings by Yusuf (2016), Njoroge et al. (2017) and Gitari (2016) but differ with the findings of Nezakati, Chin and Akhoundi (2013), that showed interest in sport, age, ethnicity, structural constraint and interpersonal constraint were influential factors for hosting sports tourism events.

Assessment of the Benefits of Hosting Sports Tourism Events in the Host Community in Nairobi County

For this objective, the sports stakeholders affirmed that the increased hosting of sports tourism events in Nairobi has contributed to the social, economic and environmental benefits to the locals.

> *"The increasing number of domestic and international tourists participating in sports events in Nairobi has stimulated the local economy. Participants contribute to the local economy through spending on accommodation, retail outlets, and restaurants, while increasing the demand for local labor*." *TO 4*

In addition to that, sports tourism events have led to that.

> *"Development of infrastructure for instance, Thika Superhighway has made Moi International Sports Complex more accessible during events. These events have led to employment of people before, during and after the events. There has also been increased media attention during events for example, IAAF Championships that placed Nairobi on a Global Map. Further, community pride has been enhanced as local people's identity during hosting is increased, Hosting of events has also led to development of sports facilities in Nairobi and other counties*. "MOS 1

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Based on the economic benefits of hosting sports tourism events, the respondents stated that,

> *"Hosting has led to increased employment opportunities among the hosts, boosting of local business, attracting of investors in sports sector and improved infrastructure. Therefore, the government should put more efforts in sports development in order to continuously host events that spur economic development to the country but also play economies of scale to the local community. COG 1*

Based on the social impacts of hosting sports tourism events, the respondents stated that.

> *"Events contributes to socio-cultural exchange, community consolidation, boosting of the image of the country, great media attention, external exposure of host country, urban renewal and development, knowledge and entertainment. Though these effects are intangible, the legacies they have during events change the perception and acceptability of hosting events among the locals". SA7*

On the contrary, despite these positive social and economic impacts, the sporting events have been on the focus due to negative social impacts associated with hosting events. The events are associated with immoral behaviors among the attendees. Few instances were reported especially during the IAAF Championships and East Africa Military Games. One respondent stated that,

> "*One of the negative sides of these events hosting is traffic congestion, traffic diversion, too much and underage alcoholism, parking issues, crime and immorality especially during the night events organized in the sidelines of the main sports events".*

Another respondent stated that,

> "*Noise and* a *large amount of litter have posed a great environmental concern in areas around the stadia." TO3*

Other concerns raised were hooliganism, vandalism and fear of terrorists' attacks that target sports events with a huge number of attendees and wide media coverage.

It is evident that hosting of sports tourism events has both benefits and costs associated with them. County and national governments need to give a consideration in promoting sports tourism events as a niche product to enable a sustainable sports tourism development.

The findings on this variable concur with the findings by Njoroge *et al*. (2017**),** Peric (2018), Ntloko and Swart (2008) and Yusuf (2016). This finding however differs with the findings of Oshimi, Yamaguchi, Fukuhara and Taks (2021) only based their findings on social impacts as benefits that the host community gets from hosting of sports tourism events.

This thematic analysis agrees with the quantitative results that challenges and opportunities positively affect the socioeconomic wellbeing of the host community.

Socio-economic Wellbeing of the Host Community

The stakeholders gave their opinion regarding to the dependent variable and the hosting of events and said that,

> "To *enhance sustainable tourism development all stakeholders must actively participate to enhance long term benefits to the locals. Events can help alleviate poverty among the locals through allowing them to actively participate in planning before and during events". Tourism has improved the livelihood of the local community hence sports tourism may not be an exception. The growing number of both inbound and outbound sport tourists participating in sports events stimulates the local economy. Event participants contribute to the local economy by spending on accommodation facilities,*

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transport, retail outlets and restaurants while also increasing the demand for local labor." MOT 2

This in turn leads to improved socioeconomic wellbeing.

Besides the economic benefits, sports tourism events are catalysts for other forms of development, for instance urban regeneration, local community capacity building and promotion of marketing thus leading to a long-term legacies for the host cities. This creates a unique city brand that could attract many tourists in the future.

However, for sports tourism events to serve as a means of strengthening economic development, the size and duration of hosting should be put into considerations to be able to leverage more benefits for the locals. In addition, it very necessary to develop the host community support and participation for events.

In summary, this finding supports the prevalent view that sports tourism events can be a viable approach to the economic development of local communities (Getz & Page, 2016; Nyikaana 2018; Boonsiritomachai & Phonthanukitithaworn, 2019).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Sports tourism events is one of the dynamic sub-sectors in sports tourism known for creating socio-economic changes across the local communities. Its role in diversifying the tourism products, provision of employment and establishment of sports facilities, cultural exchanges and environmental protection contributes to sustainable development. It's beyond doubt that sports tourism events present lots of benefits and opportunities for host cities. Therefore, to enhance this segment of travel, the findings will be useful to the government (policy makers) in crafting policies and relevant legislation to create an enabling environment to encourage the growth and development of the sports tourism. This will ensure that sports tourism develops within specified guidelines and is well regulated for the benefit of both the host community, sports tourists, and planners who coordinate these events. Further, creating an enabling environment for the growth of the sports tourism sub-sector will greatly contribute to the government's initiative to reduce poverty from the counties.

These findings also have vital implications for the need of proper financing of counties in order to facilitate sports and recreational infrastructures throughout the country under the leadership of county governments. This will make counties to be active in bidding and hosting of sports tourism events. Additionally, public and private sectors participation in sports should be enhanced. The collaboration among stakeholders of sports will eventually improve the sporting activities in the country. Furthermore, there is need for a holistic plan which takes into consideration sport tourism development issues at the same time incorporates all role players in events to promote success of future events. This will be key in strengthening a sustainable sport tourism industry in the country by limiting the challenges and maximizing on the benefits.

The study also identified opportunities that come as a result of hosting sports tourism events. These include a chance to offer more experiences and satisfaction with regard to the complementary nature of sport tourism events to other tourism attractions, promotion of domestic tourism and counteracting tourism seasonality. Through sport tourism, events can be organized at different times of the year to curb overreliance on safari and beach tourism. This aspect has an implication on the destination marketers in this case Kenya Tourism Board (the state corporation charged with the mandate of marketing Kenya as a tourist destination both locally and internationally) in developing

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branding strategies to create a distinct image of sports tourism to make Nairobi an ideal destination for sports tourism.

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