

**ASSESSMENT OF DOMESTIC EVENTS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN
PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: A CASE OF 5 AND 3-STAR HOTELS'
CONFERENCE FACILITIES IN NAIROBI COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

Events sector is one of the segments under the umbrella of tourism. Events constitute meetings, conferences, incentive travel, exhibitions and corporate events. Events tourism is the fastest growing global sector of the tourism market at a rate of 8-10% per annum. Most developed countries have integrated the events sector into their economies. Likewise the Government of Kenya (GOK) has earmarked events as a potential sector that can increase the country's income. Polishing the Jewel document of the World Bank reveals that there is a low volume of domestic business / conference travelers in Kenya (World Bank, 2010). This is attributed to the low levels of promotion to the domestic tourists by the facilities, few complementing facilities in the events, highly priced services, and lack of sustainable practices. The purpose of this study was to assess the domestic events management strategies for promoting sustainable tourism in Kenya, a case of 5 and 3-star hotels' conference facilities in Nairobi County. The objectives of the study were: to assess how the domestic events management strategies have promoted sustainable tourism in the conference facilities in Nairobi County; to determine the frequency of domestic events in promoting sustainable tourism; to determine the effect of cost management strategy of domestic events in promoting sustainable tourism; to assess the contribution of promotional strategy in promoting sustainable tourism; to examine the effects of green standards applied in conference facilities in promoting sustainable tourism in Nairobi County. The study was conducted in the 5 and 3-star hotels' conference facilities in Nairobi County. The researcher reviewed scholarly articles on the domestic events management and its application in the events sector. The study used quantitative and qualitative research design. The respondents included the banquet and food and beverages managers obtained through a purposive sampling; and their domestic tourists/ guests obtained by simple random sampling technique. Bivariate and Multiple regression analysis were used to determine the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable. Further relationship among variables was established through T-tests. A paired samples t-test revealed that the length of the conference is not determined by its cost. Regression method through least square method confirms that there exists a very strong link between the increase in frequency of domestic events and the average expenditure per domestic delegate in the conference. It also confirmed that there exists a strong link between the application of the green practices and price reduction in green managed conferences. The Fisher test showed that there is strong correlation in management strategies for promoting sustainable tourism and the increase in domestic events for the hotels' facilities. In conclusion, the management of conference product has lacked in the areas of marketing, greening, and affordable conference packages. The researcher recommends that marketing using traditional media be stepped up; invest in technology and greening aspects to lower the cost of generating conference packages.