

Establishment Effects Of Health And Wellness Tourism In The Diversification Of Hospitality Products In Mombasa City Kenya.

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Abstract

This research aimed to examine the advantages of the development of health and wellness tourism along the Kenyan coast, with a specific focus on Mombasa County. In recent years, there has been a notable surge in the commercialization of health and wellness, driven by the increasing demand for wellness-oriented tourism. Consequently, the health and wellness industry has flourished, utilizing various destinations as hubs for health and wellness tourism, with Mombasa being a prominent example in Kenya. Health and wellness tourism have the capacity to foster the growth of the hospitality industry, leading to increased revenue and job opportunities. This positive economic impact is expected to benefit the broader Kenyan society. Despite its potential, health and wellness tourism have received insufficient attention. This study sought to analyze the factors influencing tourist participation in health and wellness tourism and how this, in turn, contributes to the development of the hospitality industry. The research investigated the effects of diversification, economic development, infrastructural development, and technological advancement resulting from health and wellness attractions on the hospitality industry in Kenya, specifically in Mombasa City. Employing a mixed research design involving quantitative and qualitative methods, the study targeted health and wellness hotels in Mombasa City, encompassing tourists, staff, and hotel managers. The sample size comprised 568 individuals, with 34 hotel managers from 34 hotels, 261 staff, and 277 tourists. Both primary and secondary data sources were subjected to qualitative and descriptive analysis. Quantitative findings indicated that health and wellness tourism significantly contributed to diversifying the hospitality industry. Increased health and wellness tourism correlated with enhanced infrastructural development through medical tourism and private sector investments. Furthermore, health and wellness tourism translated into substantial economic development, generating revenue for the region. The application of technology in tourism, particularly in medical tourism, contributed to technological development in the hospitality industry. Qualitative findings underscored the role of health tourism in developing the hospitality industry by attracting more clients and fostering industry competitiveness. The sector's revenue generation prompted governmental recognition and support for the tourism industry. Health and wellness tourism emerged as a catalyst for economic development, generating foreign revenues for both the county and national government. Additionally, advancements in health and wellness tourism technologies were found to improve the hospitality industry by connecting clients with suitable destinations. The study recommends that the government aligns infrastructural development with the needs of health and wellness tourism. Targeted efforts should be made to enhance health and wellness tourism awareness through increased advertising. Companies are encouraged to make strategic investments in health and wellness tourism, recognizing its potential to provide a competitive advantage and contribute to industry development.

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I. Introduction

Background of the Study

Health and wellness tourism are traveling which is usually undertaken by tourists with the main aim being to enrich their health and general well-being. Health and wellness tourism attractions include; fitness

programs, spa visits, beauty treatment, therapies, medical treatment, food and health farms acquired from various cultures, accommodation among other activities. (Onecaribbean, 2019).

The Global Wellness Institute states that travel for health and wellness tourism is connected to the aim of enabling and further improve one's wellness. Due to so much unhealthiness and imperfection embedded in today's travel, wellness tourism now commits to reduce or prevent those negative qualities of health and thus turning travel into an opportunity for taking care of and improving our holistic health. (Reisman,2010).

Wellness tourism concentration is greatly in different countries across North America, Asia-Pacific and Europe. These being five nations on the top, the US, Germany, France, China, and Japan who produce 59% of the global market, and more than one-third of world revenues is driven by the US alone. Although rankings have shot up by China and India since 2013, China ranking 3rd from 11th while India ranking 7th from 16th today. (GWTE) states that Health and Wellness Tourism Global Potential 2019 has been forecast that Health and Wellness tourism will grow through to 2022 at an average annual rate of 7.5%, which is notably estimated to be faster growth of 6.4% for overall tourism plus a 1.2 billion annual wellness trips to be taken by 2022, and the spending will hit \$919billion (Global-Wellness-Institute, 2019).

Kenya is an important destination for tourism, with it receiving a total of over 6% tourist arrivals to Africa until recently since the late 1980s. Kenya has welcomed over 800,000 international tourists, where it has been forecasted that the country can receive over 1 million tourists if similar trends continued by the beginning of a new century. (Akama, 2009).

Problem Statement

Health and wellness tourism is an old experience, because travelling began since the 1800s to towns with spas and eventually it has grown significantly worldwide. A new interest in remedies of “new age” and remedial traditional therapies, spas and health retreats have rapidly grown and thus leading to the growth of this sector. However, health and wellness tourism is fairly a new idea of tourism in Kenya, which has led to the beginning of spa resorts, saunas and various gyms, food therapies among others which shows that health tourism is starting to grow by the day. Also, the obtainable information for health and wellness tourism is quite limited in Kenya, and as a result, reliable data is currently not accessible for tourists who come for health and wellness tourism and the industry.

The central problem of this study, therefore, was that wellness and health tourism presented a number of opportunities that have the potential to grow the tourism industry in the country. However, the country has not capitalized on this available opportunity. There has been a rising number of treatments seeking visitors in various destinations and at local hospitals, and also the high need to sample various types of cuisines and thus stimulating the Kenya Tourism Board in 2019 to make plans on how to market Kenya as a health and wellness tourism destination. Kenya Tourism Board, however also, acknowledged that much still needs to be done for Kenya to be globally competitive in Health and Wellness Tourism (Trade-Mark-East-Africa, 2019). Moreover, published research in Kenya about health and wellness tourism is very distinct. Hence, this study identified the potential of health and wellness tourism both for the local and international travelers to Kenya, Mombasa City as a tourism destination point. The current study was informed by the fact that researchers have scarcely studied health and wellness tourism in Kenya where the number of people interested in health and wellness tourism is growing. To address the gap, the study gave a profile of available health and wellness hotels in tourism which was based on a deep analysis of the hotels in the population and conversations with managers, tourists and staff of the health and wellness hotels.

II. Literature Review

Contribution of health and wellness tourism on diversification to wellness and health tourism

Romao et al. (2018) noted that in recent year's health and wellness tourism has experienced major global growth. This has led to a new tendency in healthcare tourism that is aimed at enhancing the physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being of various tourists. Wellness tourism is turning to good use the advantage of thermal water which is backed by a number of healthy practices. Health and wellness tourism has a variety of options like physical exercise and relaxation, nature enjoyment, a variety of food, landscape views, and interaction with locals and various cultures. This new tourism sector offers relevant opportunities for various countries to grow their tourism industry.

Yayin (2019) elaborates that competition within the tourism sector has forced various tour operators to diversify their products in order to create product value. Diversification is an important aspect of the modern tourism. This is because tourism is rapidly changing as the competition increases. A number of people are now looking for alternative tourism ideas. This is where wellness tourism comes in. Unlike traditional tourism, wellness tourism provides a number of options for tourism, making it an ideal kind of tourism. It has the potential to develop in the future, making it worthy of investing.

The Global Wellness Institute (2017), states that the health and wellness industry is a distinctly growing market globally. The value of health and wellness tourism was at (US) \$3.4trillion in 2017. Health and wellness tourism has accounted for close to (US) 500 billion for domestic and international tourism expenditure. Further, the institute opines that health and wellness tourism has the potential to increase up to 50% of the total global tourism. Wellness tourism has also created many jobs in recent years. The demand for wellness tourism is born out of the hectic work and lifestyle of many middle-income citizens. This necessitates the need to take a health and wellness vacation. The research gap in this review was the potential that health and wellness tourism present in the tourism industry.

Malindi Kenya (2017), in their analysis of health and wellness tourism, noted that it is quickly growing and Kenya is among the first destination places in African for wellness tourism. The private healthcare and spa service industry was taking the lead in driving Kenya as the preferred medical and wellness tourism center.

An article by Standard media (Mwaki, 2017) wrote on wellness products is a lucrative opportunity for Kenyan hoteliers. The article further discussed that despite the fact health and wellness was a new segment with the tourism sector, a list of domestic as well as middle-class tourist demand or prefers it. Many tourists are keen on their health and wellness hence making healthy habits and activities part and parcel of their lifestyle. Investors and hotels are now following in on the trends of setting up facilities that will attract both the locals as well as in terms of tourism. The opportunity, as highlighted in this review, is what the Kenya tourism industry should partake.

The Spa and wellness association of Africa noted that in 2017 the health and wellness sector made a profit of Ksh.5 billion. The health and wellness tourism sector steading growth in Kenya at 10% year on year is regarded to the increase of the middle-class earnings. Health and wellness are necessitated by the new reality of the long and unprecedented working hours. This has necessitated the need for health and wellness vacation as a solution leading to the demand for the skilled workforce needed to raise the health and wellness industry to another level. The article then argued that there was a need to regulate the health and wellness sector to drive its growth and protect it from rogue workers who could hurt its consumers, thereby inhibiting its growth. The article highlighted the need for regulation of the health and wellness tourism sector to protect and move the industry forward. This was something that this study analyzed.

Romanova et al (2015) discussed health tourism as a factor of product diversification in the hospitality industry has various economic and social impacts. Generally, tourism has contributed to a country's Gross Domestic Product, creates jobs in the hospitality service industry directly and indirectly, attracts investments, and improves the balance of trade. The direct effects of diversification into the health and wellness tourism industry have various effects on the earnings of the hospitality industry. This attracted tourists by meeting their expectations and demands, and also improved the economic condition of businesses offering such services such as spa hotels. Socially, health and wellness tourism encouraged people to travel; thus, the number of domestic tourists increased as this diversification offered a product that was new to the domestic population. The development of health and wellness tourism may additionally liberalize access to wellness services, which could not have been received at home, either because of a high cost. Consequently, improving the health standard of the local population of the host countries and regions.

III. Research Methodology

This research used qualitative and quantitative methods of research design. This design analyzed health and wellness tourism for the development of the hospitality industry. Descriptive research design was suitable as it ensured the full description of the study variables. This study was done in Mombasa City, Kenya. According to the Ministry of Tourism in Kenya, Mombasa is the biggest tourist attraction destination. Target population included all staffs and guests that worked in hotels. The guests and the staff were randomly selected by simple random sampling method, each participant was chosen at random, giving each person in the study population the same equal chance to be selected. Construct validity ensured that each question in the questionnaire was aligned to the theoretical framework to eliminate discrepancies. This study depended on interviews and questionnaire to collect data from the target population. The primary data analysis was done using qualitative and quantitative data analysis. To tabulate and to summarize behavioral data content analysis was used, and narrative analysis analyzed primary qualitative data. Hypothesis testing was done using chi square where the p value was used to establish the relationship between dependent and independent variable of the study research.

IV. Results and Findings

Establish effects of health and wellness tourism in the diversification of hospitality products in Kenya.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on the established effects of health and wellness tourism in the diversification of hospitality products in Kenya (N=.237) for hotel staffs.

Test Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Hospitality industry and localities are now dependent to health and wellness tourism for revival and diversification	32	13.5%	43	18.1%	35	14.8%	86	36.3%	41	17.3%
Tourism diversification with competitiveness of other sectors depends on health and wellness tourism growth.	20	8.4%	27	11.4%	20	8.4%	87	36.7%	83	35.0%
Strategies of diversification lead to more sustainable tourism development in H &W tourism through the protection of natural resources and value-added products.	34	14.3%	36	15.2%	50	21.1%	50	21.1%	67	28.3%
The processes of diversification are very important in an era of continuous growth in competitiveness in the health and wellness tourism sector.	10	4.2%	20	8.4%	43	18.1%	98	41.4%	66	27.8%
Market diversification creates more businesses which include new sub-sectors in hospitality industry.	5	2.1%	9	3.8%	55	23.2%	89	37.6%	79	33.3%
Combining existing and new products from various health and wellness packages results in to new or enhanced tourism products.	3	1.3%	9	3.8%	88	37.1%	57	24.1%	80	33.8%

Source Field Data (2022)

Majority of the hotel staff agreed that the hospitality industry and localities are now dependent to health and wellness tourism for revival and diversification with a response rate of 86(36.3%) followed by those who disagree with a response rate of 43(18.1%), thirdly are those who indicated strongly agree with a response rate of 41(17.3%) while strongly disagree and neutral had a response rate of 32(13.5%) and 35(14.8%) respondents respectively. Most of the hotel staff agreed that tourism diversification with competitiveness of other sectors depends on health and wellness tourism with a response rate of 87(36.7%) of total respondents followed by those who indicated strongly agree with a response rate of 83(35.0%) respondents' low response was indicated by those who disagree, strongly disagree and neutral with a response rate of 27(11.4%) and 20(8.4%) response rate for strongly disagree and neutral idea. From the response rate of hotel workers there was a clear indication that the strategies of diversification lead to more sustainable tourism development in H &W tourism through the protection of natural resources and value-added products was very essential since majority of the respondents strongly agreed with a response rate of 67(28.3%) response while those who had neutral idea and agree response had a response rate of 50 (21.1%) respondents each while low response to the respondents who indicated disagree and strongly disagree with a response rate of 36(15.2%) and 34(14.3%) respondents respectively.

Majority of the respondents agreed that the process of diversification is very important in an era of continuous growth in competitiveness in the health and wellness tourism sector with a response rate of 98(41.4%) followed by those who strongly agree with a response rate of 66(27.8%) respondents this counted for over 60% of total respondents to indicate how important in an era of continuous growth in competitiveness in the health and wellness tourism sector. Those who had neutral, disagree and strongly disagree response were indicated by a response rate of 43(18.1%), 20(8.4%) and 10(4.2%) respondents each respectively. Market diversification creates more businesses which include new sub-sectors in hospitality industry where majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed with it with a response rate of 89(37.6%) and 79(33.3%) respondents respectively, while low response to those who disagreed and strongly disagree with a response representation of 2.1% and 3.8% response rate respectively. Majority of the hotel staff indicated that total of the existing and new products from various health and wellness packages results in to new or enhanced tourism products where those who agreed were represented by a response rate of 88(37.1%) followed by those who strongly agreed with a response rate of 80(33.8%) respondents. Low response was observed among the members who indicated strongly disagree and disagree response with a response rate of 3(1.3%) and 9(3.8%) respondents.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on the established effects of health and wellness tourism in the diversification of hospitality products in Kenya (N= 224) for the Tourists.

Statement	SD	D	N	Ag	SA	Mean	Std. Dev
Hospitality industry and localities are now dependent to health and wellness tourism for revival and diversification	1%	6%	36%	37%	20%	3.69	1.220
Tourism diversification with competitiveness of other sectors depends on health and wellness tourism growth.	5%	13%	11%	30%	41%	3.82	1.57
Strategies of diversification lead to more sustainable tourism development in H & W tourism through the protection of natural resources and value-added products.	4%	19%	28%	23%	26%	3.48	1.185
The processes of diversification are very important in an era of continuous growth in competitiveness in the health and wellness tourism sector.	0%	3%	30%	26%	41%	4.05	.914
Market diversification creates more businesses which include new sub-sectors in hospitality industry.	32%	26%	22%	16%	14%	2.34	1.99
Combining existing and new products from various health and wellness packages results in to new or enhanced tourism products.	1%	11%	16%	36%	30%	3.74	1.183
Average						3.75	1.21

Source Field Data (2022)

"Hospitality industry and localities are now dependent on health and wellness tourism for revival and diversification": The majority of respondents (37%) chose the response option "Agree" (Ag), indicating that they perceive health and wellness tourism as essential for the revival and diversification of the hospitality industry. The mean value of 3.69 suggests a moderate level of agreement among respondents. "Tourism diversification with the competitiveness of other sectors depends on health and wellness tourism growth": The response distribution shows that 41% of respondents selected "Strongly Agree" (SA), indicating a strong belief in the statement. The mean value of 3.82 suggests a relatively high level of agreement that the growth of health and wellness tourism contributes to tourism diversification and competitiveness across sectors. "Strategies of diversification lead to more sustainable tourism development in H&W tourism through the protection of natural resources and value-added products": The response distribution shows that 28% of respondents chose the response option "Agree" (Ag). The mean value of 3.48 suggests a moderate level of agreement that diversification strategies can contribute to sustainable tourism development through the protection of natural resources and the creation of value-added products. "The processes of diversification are very important in an era of continuous growth in competitiveness in the health and wellness tourism sector": The majority of respondents (41%) selected "Strongly Agree" (SA), indicating a strong belief in the importance of diversification processes in a competitive health and wellness tourism sector. The mean value of 4.05 indicates a high level of agreement among respondents.

"Market diversification creates more businesses which include new sub-sectors in the hospitality industry": The response distribution shows that the largest percentage of respondents (32%) chose "Strongly Disagree" (SD), suggesting a disagreement with the statement. The mean value of 2.34 indicates a relatively low level of agreement that market diversification leads to the creation of new businesses and sub-sectors in the hospitality industry. "Combining existing and new products from various health and wellness packages results in new or enhanced tourism products": The response distribution shows that 36% of respondents selected "Agree" (Ag), indicating an agreement with the statement. The mean value of 3.74 suggests a moderate level of agreement that combining existing and new products from health and wellness packages can lead to the development of new or enhanced tourism products. The average mean value across all statements is 3.75, indicating a general agreement or tendency toward agreement with the statements related to the role of health and wellness tourism in the revival, diversification, and competitiveness of the hospitality industry. The standard deviation values reflect the degree of variability in the responses, with lower values indicating less variability and higher values indicating greater variability.

Inferential analysis of the established effects of health and wellness tourism in the diversification of hospitality products in Kenya.

Hypothesis testing was done by use of chi square and the results were presented as per the table 3 below;

Table 3: Pearson chi square on the established effects of health and wellness tourism in the diversification of hospitality products in Kenya.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.025 ^a	5	.137
Likelihood Ratio	0.014	5	.144
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.034	1	.127
N of Valid Cases	237		

Source Field Data (2022)

According to table 3 the Pearson Chi-Square ($p = 0.025$) since $p < 0.05$, this indicated that there existed a statistical significance on the established effects of health and wellness tourism in the diversification of hospitality products in Kenya. This is similar to according to study by Baidal (2013) it indicated that the new theme park and other recreational amenities, for instance, in Benidorm, Spain, illustrate a failed attempt at market diversification, in contrast to the hospitality industry's partial success in attracting more affluent event tourists, health-conscious consumers, and families. Diversification among modest hotels in Antalya also fell short and produced imitation of opulent hotels rather than innovation.

Thematic analysis on the establish effects of health and wellness tourism in the diversification of hospitality products in Kenya.

Some of the major aspects indicated by the managers on the establish effects of health and wellness tourism in the diversification of hospitality products in Kenya were as summarized as below:

Manager 1: *“There is need to establish strong partnerships with health professionals, such as nutritionists, fitness trainers, and spa therapists, allows hotels and resorts to enhance their wellness offerings. These collaborations can lead to the development of customized wellness programs, specialized treatments, and expert guidance, further diversifying the hospitality products.”*

Manager 2: *“There is need for health and wellness tourism often emphasizes sustainability and eco-friendly practices. The integration of environmentally conscious initiatives, such as organic food options, renewable energy sources, and nature conservation programs, can further enhance the diversification of hospitality products and appeal to eco-conscious travelers.”*

Manager 3: *“As health and wellness tourism involves aspects of medical and wellness treatments, maintaining high health and safety standards is crucial. Establishing proper protocols, certifications, and trained staff ensures that guests can trust the services provided, which contributes to the positive reputation and growth of health and wellness hospitality products.”*

V. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary

The growth of health and wellness tourism contributes to the overall competitiveness of the hospitality industry and stimulates market growth by attracting a new segment of health-conscious travelers. The expansion of health and wellness tourism has created new opportunities and sub-sectors within the hospitality industry, leading to market diversification and increased business prospects this is because according to table 4.6 the Pearson Chi-Square ($p = 0.025$) since $p < 0.05$, this indicated that there existed a statistical significance on the established effects of health and wellness tourism in the diversification of hospitality products in Kenya.

The growth of health and wellness tourism has proven to be a vital factor in the revival and diversification of the hospitality industry. The strategies and processes involved in diversifying the industry have led to sustainable tourism development, enhanced competitiveness, and the creation of new business opportunities. By leveraging the potential of health and wellness tourism, the hospitality industry and local communities can continue to thrive and adapt to the evolving demands of travelers seeking well-being and rejuvenation experiences.

Conclusion

The study's results indicate that hotel staff in Kenya recognize the crucial role of health and wellness tourism in the revival and diversification of the hospitality industry. They believe that this form of tourism contributes significantly to localities and supports tourism diversification, ultimately leading to a more competitive sector. The positive perception of diversification strategies and processes highlights the potential for sustainable tourism development in the health and wellness tourism sector.

The statistical analysis, with a Pearson Chi-Square value indicating significance, further strengthens the conclusion that there is a meaningful relationship between health and wellness tourism and the diversification of

hospitality products in Kenya. This finding aligns with previous research, such as the study by Baidal (2013), which emphasized the importance of innovation and partnerships in diversifying hospitality offerings.

The insights provided by the hotel managers underscore the importance of collaboration with health professionals, sustainability practices, and maintaining high health and safety standards in enhancing the diversification of hospitality products within the health and wellness tourism sector. These strategies can contribute to the continued growth and success of health and wellness tourism in Kenya.

Recommendation

The recommendations derived from the study;

- i. There is need to acknowledge the importance of healthcare infrastructure in attracting health and wellness tourists. Invest in modern medical facilities, wellness centers, and specialized clinics to provide high-quality services to tourists.
- ii. There is greater need to encourage collaboration between the public and private sectors to develop healthcare infrastructure and services. Private sector involvement can lead to innovation and increased competitiveness.

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