

**ASSESSING THE DETERMINANTS OF CONFERENCE TOURISM  
PERFORMANCE IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY.**

**BY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The tourism sector in Kenya is among the industries that largely depend on development of infrastructure because it is widely influenced by the international standards that are set by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO). These standards require a lot of infrastructural development and innovation in order to compete with other world destinations. Despite the fact that tourism has led to the development of infrastructure in most remote areas, the development scale is not yet enough. This study aimed at assessing the determinants of performance of conference tourism in Kenya, a case of Kakamega county. The study was conducted in Kakamega County in the month of April 2016, as a representative sample of other regions. The objectives of this study were; to establish the effect of technology on performance of conference tourism in Kakamega county, to determine the effects of the changing demographics on conference tourism performance in Kakamega county, to establish the effects of management skills on performance of conference tourism in the county, to investigate how the standards of hotels influence the performance of conference tourism in Kakamega County and to determine the extent to which the state of the roads and other modes of transport influence the performance of conference tourism in Kakamega County. The study used survey research design to solicit information. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used as tools for collecting primary data. Secondary data was collected from the internet as well as books, magazines and journals. The researcher employed census to select the respondents. The target population for this study was both male and female respondents and consisted of at least 60 respondents. This was generated from 5 institutional administrators within the county, 25 hotel managers from hotels in Kakamega County and 30 hotel employees from Kakamega. The sample size therefore was 60 respondents. The above samples represented the total population. The collected data was analyzed qualitatively in order to achieve the desired aim of the study. Data analysis was done using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) computer software and descriptive statistics was done. Data was presented in tables and shown in percentages. The study established after analysis of the tested variables, the determinants of performance of conference tourism, that technology, demographic change, lack management skill, standard rating of hotels, the state of the roads and other modes of transport in the Kakamega County were impeding factors to the performance of conference tourism. The study makes specific recommendations on the area of transportation, hotel facilities and management skills. It also makes recommendations cutting across the areas. Among the recommendations, include:

Upgrading the public address systems to the modern ones; Development of a proper government assessment of transportation within Kakamega County; Strengthening of the existing transportation networks, for instance through protecting tunnels against flooding; Acceleration of the modernization of the hotel facilities and services in the area; Involve and train the local community in tourist development initiatives in the region; Establish a new infrastructure fund for financing the construction, rehabilitation and the expansion of the road and airport infrastructure by the county government; Constructing and expanding the airport to facilitate the movement of visitors and link it with other tourist circuits in Kenya and finally Provision of education to sharpen management skills of the inhabitants of Kakamega county.