

**INCENTIVE TRAVELER EARNERS PREFERENCE AND
THEIR INFLUENCE ON DESTINATION CHOICE IN NAKURU
COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or any other award.

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DEDICATION

I am grateful to my loving parents, Mr. and Mrs. Njoroge whose words of encouragement ring in my ears; your unwavering support throughout my academic journey has been invaluable. To my wife, Phillis and kids, Jason and Justin, “thank you big” for you have been my support system. My special thanks go to my very large family of brother and sister, the family, and other relatives, who have stuck by my side and are very special

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DMOs	Destination Management Organizations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICAEW	Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
ICCA	International Convention and Congress Association
IRF	Incentive Research Foundation
KICC	Kenyatta International Conference Center
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KTB	Kenya Tourism Board
KTN	Kenya Television Network
MICE	Meetings, Conferences, Incentives, and Events
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists
UNWTO	United Nation World Tourism Organization
USA	United States of America

ABSTRACT

Incentive travel, mostly addressed under MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions) tourism, is widely considered a cornerstone of niche tourism, which combines both leisure and traveler's needs. Unlike other products under MICE, incentive travel decision-making process for choice of destination is unique. This is because incentive travel motivation is neither purely on leisure nor business. Founded on the UK Association Conference Attendance Decision Making Model that guides their decision-making process, this study was conducted with the aim of exploring incentive travelers' preferences with regard to Nakuru County in Kenya as their destination of choice. The objectives of this study were: To determine the relationship between tourism pre-set conditions and incentive travelers' destination preferences, and to analyze the differences in destination preference between incentive travel earners and their managers when choosing Nakuru as a tourism destination. The Cochran's formula was used in combination with purposive and convenience sampling to pick 360 incentive travelers, 60 managers of incentive travelers, and 40 managers of Destination Management Organizations (DMOs). Questionnaires were administered and Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS version 20.0) was used for data analysis. This study found a strong relationship between incentive travelers' choice of Nakuru as their destination of choice because of its preset conditions ($p = 0.002$), and their satisfaction level with the destination of choice ($p = 0.000$). The study also found no significant relationship in preference among incentive travelers' and their managers in selecting Nakuru County as their destination of choice ($p = 0.704$). Based on the research findings, this study concludes that diversified programs, activities, and quality amenities significantly influence destination choice for incentive travelers. Nakuru should enhance attractions, accessibility, and tailored packages to balance leisure and corporate needs. Additionally, structured engagement and strategic marketing will strengthen its competitiveness in incentive tourism.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter serves as the foundation of the research study, providing a structured introduction. It covers key subtopics, including the background of the study, problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions, hypothesis, significance, scope, limitations, assumptions, theoretical framework, conceptual framework, and definition of terms, all woven together to establish a strong basis for the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Globally, the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) sector has experienced significant growth, contributing notably to the world economy. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Tourism Satellite Accounts report of 2015, the tourism industry generates approximately USD 7 trillion annually, with the MICE segment accounting for about USD 650 billion to USD 700 billion (UNWTO, 2016; Altareri, 2016). Among MICE components, incentive travel remains under-researched despite its unique potential for high economic returns.

The United States leads the global MICE industry with annual investments exceeding USD 110 billion, followed by significant contributions from Western Europe (Carter, 2017). Asian countries, such as Thailand, have made deliberate efforts to promote MICE tourism despite facing stiff competition from economic giants like China and Japan, where larger investments and established infrastructure dominate the market (Waithira, 2014; Zhou & Ap, 2009). This scenario emphasizes the high capital investment nature of MICE tourism, which presents challenges for many developing economies in fully leveraging this lucrative sector. Africa captures only 2% of the global MICE market

(International Convention and Congress Association [ICCA], 2019), highlighting untapped opportunities for growth and the need for strategic investment.

Within Africa, South Africa dominates MICE tourism, hosting 10% of the continent's events, while Kenya ranks fifth (ICCA, 2019). Nairobi consistently features in MICE studies, yet emerging destinations like Naivasha in Nakuru County show significant potential for growth. In 2012, Naivasha ranked 34th among popular African MICE destinations (ICCA, 2019). This research focuses on Nakuru County, Kenya, to explore incentive travel earners' preferences and their influence on destination choice, addressing a critical but underdeveloped niche within MICE tourism.

Incentive travel, a distinct MICE segment, has existed for over a century. Unlike leisure tourism, it is primarily business-oriented, designed to motivate employees by offering travel rewards (Rogers, 2013). This tourism product plays a vital role in enhancing organizational performance and boosting employee morale. Research indicates that incentive travelers spend more per person than leisure tourists, adding significant value to local economies (Altareri, 2016). Despite its economic impact, incentive travel remains poorly documented, especially in developing countries (Jin, Min, & Yoo, 2016). In the United States, where annual MICE investments exceed USD 110 billion, incentive travel contributes approximately 5% of the sector's total economic impact, demonstrating its substantial influence.

The ambiguous classification of incentive travel, combining business and leisure elements, presents unique research challenges. Unlike conventional business tourism, which prioritizes structured objectives, incentive travel blends organizational goals with

fun and leisure activities, creating a hybrid tourism experience (Severt & Breiter, 2010). The dual nature of incentive travel complicates its market dynamics and consumer behavior, necessitating focused research on how decision-making processes influence destination choice.

Studies on MICE tourism have primarily focused on developed regions, leaving emerging markets underrepresented (Lee, Choi, & Breiter, 2010; Wu & Zhang, 2013). Research in Kenya has often treated MICE as a unified entity, neglecting the distinct dynamics of incentive travel. Waithira's (2014) dissertation on MICE product consumption at the Kenyatta International Conference Center (KICC) highlighted the need to prioritize emerging destinations but did not analyze incentive travelers' destination preferences as a separate segment.

This study bridges the gap by investigating how tourism pre-set conditions in Nakuru County influence destination choices among incentive travelers. It further examines potential differences in preferences between incentive travel earners and their managers. Nakuru County offers rich natural attractions, such as Lake Nakuru National Park and geothermal sites in Naivasha, which made it a promising but underutilized location for incentive travel. Strategic insights into traveler preferences can help optimize its appeal and enhance competitiveness within Kenya's broader MICE industry.

Destination choice plays a pivotal role in tourism studies, shaping both travel behavior and economic impacts. It hinges on multiple determinants, including accessibility, accommodation quality, attractions, infrastructure, and perceived safety (Chen & Chen, 2011). In incentive travel, these factors must align with both motivational goals and

leisure preferences. Tailoring destination attributes to meet target market needs can significantly influence consumer satisfaction and return visits. Tsai, Sakulsinlapakorn, and Council (2016) recommend localized studies to uncover context-specific insights, reinforcing the relevance of focusing on Nakuru County.

Decision-making processes for incentive travel differ markedly from those in leisure tourism. While leisure tourists prioritize personal satisfaction, incentive travelers are influenced by corporate policies, reward structures, and performance goals (Robbins & Judge, 2014). Understanding these unique drivers is essential for policymakers and tourism marketers aiming to develop tailored promotional strategies that position Nakuru as a competitive destination for corporate incentive programs.

Tourism is a cornerstone of Kenya's economy, ranking third in contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS], 2012). Expanding the tourism portfolio beyond traditional wildlife and coastal attractions is vital for sustained sectoral growth. The Tourism Act of 2012 encourages diversification, making incentive travel a strategic area for development. Nakuru County's scenic landscapes, geothermal wonders, and diverse ecosystems offer an ideal backdrop for innovative tourism products. However, unlocking its full potential requires empirical research to guide policy and investment.

This study contributes to existing literature by generating data specific to incentive travel in Kenya, addressing a significant research gap. Its findings will inform tourism development strategies and policy interventions to enhance Nakuru's MICE sector

competitiveness, ultimately boosting local economic growth and Kenya's global tourism profile.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Most components of MICE tourism are well understood, but incentive travel remains a less explored segment, particularly in terms of destination choice (Carter, 2017). Unlike other forms of MICE tourism, incentive travel programs are primarily conducted for entertainment rather than professional or educational purposes. This creates a unique decision-making process for destination choice, as travel motivation combines both leisure and business factors. Research in Kenya and Africa has largely overlooked the decision-making process for this dynamic tourism product, particularly from a destination choice perspective.

The gap in knowledge is evident in the limited focus on how destination-specific attributes influence incentive travelers' preferences in Nakuru County, Kenya. Past studies, such as Tsai et al. (2016), have examined MICE tourism broadly without isolating incentive travel or analyzing participants' destination decisions in detail. Additionally, decision-making models have traditionally centered on broader MICE tourism rather than addressing the unique blend of business and leisure in incentive travel. This has left gaps in understanding the destination-specific factors that drive demand for emerging locations like Nakuru County.

Nakuru County is a developing MICE destination with significant potential for growth. Despite its rich natural attractions, including Lake Nakuru and geothermal sites in Naivasha, the county remains underutilized for incentive travel. Ideally, Nakuru should

position itself as a competitive choice for incentive travel within Kenya's tourism sector, leveraging its unique offerings to attract corporate reward programs. However, the current state shows minimal market positioning and limited data on traveler preferences.

Previous literature addressing Nakuru as a tourism destination has primarily focused on leisure travel and wildlife tourism, with minimal emphasis on its potential for MICE tourism. Studies on destination choice within Kenya often concentrate on Nairobi or coastal regions, leaving emerging areas like Nakuru underrepresented. Waithira (2014) highlighted factors influencing MICE consumption in Kenya but did not specifically address destination choice for incentive travel.

This study sought to address these challenges by exploring how tourism pre-set conditions in Nakuru County influenced the destination choices of incentive travelers. It examined both the preferences of incentive travel earners and the perspectives of managers, bridging conceptual, theoretical, empirical, and methodological gaps. By focusing on destination-specific attributes such as accessibility, amenities, and attractions, the study provided insights into enhancing Nakuru's competitive positioning.

The purpose of the study was to identify the factors influencing incentive travelers' destination choices in Nakuru County. Justifying the study area, Nakuru's diverse and underutilized tourism resources made it an ideal context for understanding how emerging destinations can capture a share of Kenya's growing MICE market. This research contributed strategic recommendations for promoting incentive travel and enhancing Nakuru's status as a preferred destination.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify incentive travelers' preferences and their influence on destination choice in Nakuru County, Kenya, to provide a reference for the promotion and development of incentive travel.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

To achieve the study's purpose, this research pursued the following objectives:

- i. To determine the relationship between tourism pre-set conditions in Nakuru County, Kenya and incentive travelers' destination preferences.
- ii. To analyze the differences in destination preference between incentive travel earners and their managers when choosing Nakuru County, Kenya as a tourism destination.

1.6 Research Hypothesis

Ho: There is no association between tourism pre-set conditions and incentive traveler's preference for choice of destination in Nakuru County, Kenya.

H₀: There is no significant relationship in preference among incentive travelers' and their managers in choice of Nakuru County, Kenya destination.

1.7 Significance of the Study

MICE tourism, being a rapidly growing niche market, has led to intense competition among cities and countries. The strategic recommendations from this research can significantly benefit Kenya's tourism industry, including the Government of Kenya and relevant state departments, by enhancing planning, organization, development, and

marketing efforts. The County Government of Nakuru can also gain valuable marketing insights from the study's findings, helping to position the county as a competitive MICE tourism destination.

On the academic front, a critical literature review has identified existing gaps that future scholars can explore, ensuring the continuous expansion of knowledge on incentive travel program preferences. The study's findings can contribute to the development of a theoretical model on incentive travelers' decision-making processes, providing a foundation for future research.

From a business perspective, the research highlights new opportunities for hotels, event organizers, and travel agents seeking to capitalize on incentive travel. Moreover, global organizations such as UNWTO can use these insights to address challenges hindering the rapid recovery and growth of tourism, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study focused on incentive traveler decision-making, specifically examining how preference influences destination choice. By analyzing the preferences of incentive travelers, the research aimed to develop practical strategic recommendations for enhancing incentive tourism in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Geographically, the study was confined to Nakuru County, a region with significant tourism potential but limited research on its attractiveness to incentive travelers. Conceptually, the study narrowed its focus to incentive travel within the broader MICE

tourism segment, recognizing that incentive travel has distinct characteristics compared to other MICE components, as highlighted in the literature review.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

This study focused on incentive travelers' decision-making processes, specifically analyzing their preference for Nakuru County as a destination. However, a key limitation was that data collection targeted participants who were already attending incentive travel programs. This raises the concern that the decision to travel to Nakuru County had already been made, potentially introducing subjectivity into the analysis. Additionally, preference measurement could have been more comprehensive if the study had included incentive travelers before and after the travel experience. Such an approach could have helped determine whether other external factors influenced their preferences. To address this limitation, the researcher reviewed past literature on incentive travelers' preferences in various destinations worldwide to provide a broader context. The researcher also employed random sampling techniques to ensure that participant selection was not biased and to reduce the risk of predetermined results.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

This study was based on the academic assumption that incentive trips are purely rewards or gifts from employers to employees and that they are generally accepted as leisure-oriented travel experiences. However, a review of literature indicated that some incentive travel programs serve organizational interests beyond employee leisure. With global economic challenges, organizations have increasingly used incentive trips to enhance employee performance. For example, some team-building incentive trips are initiated to resolve workplace conflicts or address organizational management issues. In such cases,

employees may not always prefer to travel with co-workers, which challenges the assumption that incentive trips are mutually acceptable to all employees. The relevance of this assumption is that it highlighted the need to analyze both employees' and managers' preferences in destination selection. By incorporating the business interests of organizations alongside employee preferences, the study aimed to provide a more balanced perspective on incentive travel programs.

1.11 Theoretical Framework: Consumers Behavior Theoretical Framework

There are various theories of decision making in tourism. This study is based on UK Association Conference Attendance Decision Making Process as proposed by (Mair, 2015). The study has been used to study MICE tourism by characterizing the motivations influencing conference attendance. The model suggests that awareness of upcoming conference key contributor of attendance of the same. Prospective delegate to a conference access such information through various channels, which can influence the decision-making process. For the participant to attend any conference therefore have to be aware of the upcoming conference. If such information is not available, the participant in question will not be able to attend. Therefore, the theory, the awareness and availability of such information as key part of the decision-making process.

With available information, the study identifies cost, networking opportunities, professional development activities, and social aspects among the most important determinants in final travel decision making for potential conference tourist (Mair & Thompson, 2009; Mair et al., 2016). Intervening issues are also capture as factors that influence choice of preferred destination.

Alternative decision of not attending the event, can be measured using this as shown in Figure 1.1. This is useful and relevant in decision-making process as a result choice of choice of particular destination when presented with alternative. However, the current study is conducted on incentive travelers who had already visited Nakuru County Kenya. As such the decision had been made to visit the destination leading making the study non-predictive. A new research conceptual framework was by developed by the researcher with adoption of this existing theory.

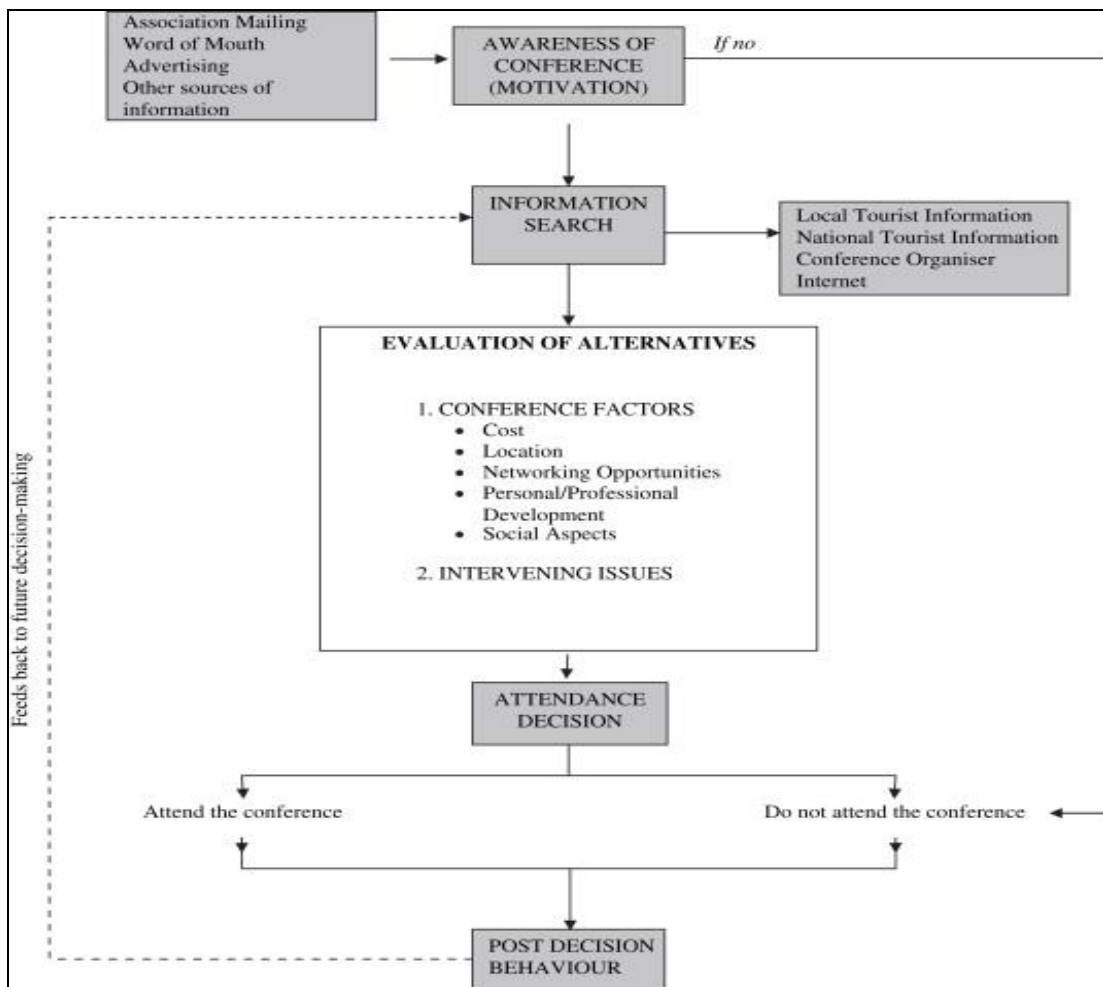


Figure 1.1: UK Association Conference Attendance Decision Making Process

1.12 The Conceptual Framework

This study's conceptual framework in Figure 1.2 was developed based on gaps identified in the literature review and limitations of existing models on incentive travel decision-making. Since the study is not predictive in nature, the framework focuses on examining the relationship between key decision-making factors influencing incentive travel destination selection in Nakuru County, Kenya.

The study identifies two independent variables: Incentive travelers' preferences, which refer to the factors that influence individual employees when selecting an incentive travel destination. Managers' preferences, which represent the criteria used by employers or organizations when making incentive travel decisions on behalf of employees. Both of these variables influence the dependent variable - destination choice, which is the final selection of a travel location for an incentive trip. However, the study also acknowledges the role of tourism pre-set conditions as an intervening variable that may modify or mediate the influence of preferences on destination choice.

Tourism pre-set conditions refer to the existing factors that affect the attractiveness of Nakuru County as an incentive travel destination. These conditions are typically analyzed using the PESTLE framework, which includes Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors. Recognizing their significance, this study adopts the perspective of Rostow's Modernization Theory, which identifies pre-set conditions as key determinants of economic sector growth and development, including tourism (Omolar, 2019).

In this framework, the interaction between the variables is as follows: Tourism pre-set conditions can enhance or limit the extent to which incentive travelers' and managers' preferences influence destination choice. Managers' preferences may sometimes take precedence over incentive travelers' preferences, leading to a unilateral decision on destination selection. The final choice of destination is influenced by a combination of travelers' preferences, managers' preferences, and the prevailing tourism pre-set conditions in Nakuru County.

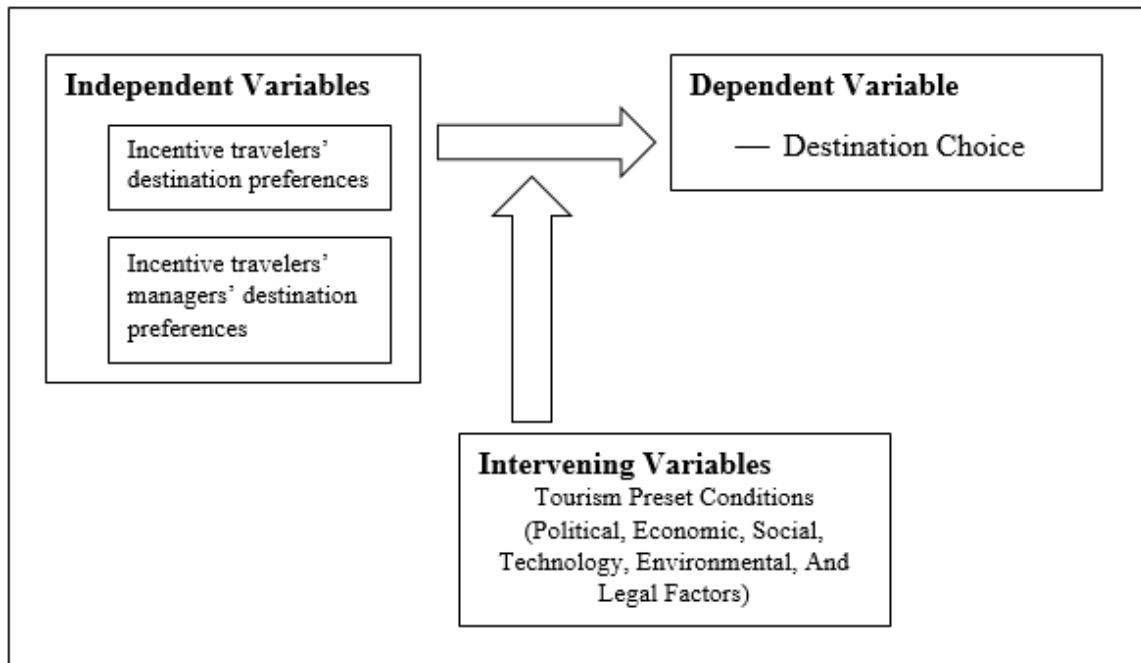


Figure 1.2: Conceptual Framework

1.13 Operational Definition of the Key Terms and Concepts

- i. **Destination Choice.** It is a decision-making process in consumer behavior which involves selecting a tourism geographical area consisting of the accommodation, attraction sites, amenities, activities and other infrastructures.

- ii. **Incentive Travelers Earners.** Tourists who visit a destination for leisure or business, whose trip is paid by their employers and can be found in across different corporate industries like manufacturing or service industries or government and multi-international agencies. Also referred as Incentive travel earners in this research.
- iii. **Preference.** This is a decision-making process which includes the ability to like in a complexity that include feelings, thoughts, and emotions for a particular tourism destination in comparison with available alternative destination.
- iv. **Pre-set Conditions.** These refers to tourism external environment that exist in a destination also known as PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, Technology, Environmental, and Legal factors).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature based on the study's objectives: the relationship between tourism pre-set conditions and incentive travelers' destination preferences, as well as differences in destination preferences between incentive travel earners and their managers. Given Nakuru's status as an emerging tourism destination, this review explores these relationships to build a deeper understanding. The key thematic areas include the concept of incentive travel, Nakuru as an emerging MICE destination, and the destination preferences of both incentive travelers and their managers. The chapter concludes with a summary of the reviewed literature and identified research gaps.

2.1 Concept of Incentive Travel

Business tourism has been there for centuries. The activities that drove travelling were trade and commerce. The businessmen and women would persevere with the constraints of bandits, pirates and poorly constructed roads in search of distant markets for buying and selling goods (Omolara, 2019).

Today's business tourism involves travel activities undertaken by organizations for commercial, professional and work-related purposes. Business travel encompasses meeting, incentive travel, convention events and exhibitions. Incentive travel which was tailored as a motivational tool can be traced way back in 1906 in USA. This was almost 100 years when Dayton, a National Cash Register Company introduced a reward program for best performing with a trip to the companies headquarter (Kononenko, 2014). Although other monetary awards were given, the trip was more converted and cherished

by the employees. Currently, the practice has evolved to more sophisticated incentive travel rewards (Kononenko, 2014). However, the net worth on demand and supply is still poorly measured and studied.

This study noted that past research on incentive travel struggle to classify the segment as either business or leisure tourism. This is part of the reasons for continued research in this field. Actually, a review of literature showed that scientists and field professionals have difficulties to answer the question of what exactly constitutes an incentive trip (Kononenko, 2014; Omolara, 2019). For instance, it is hard to classify all corporate events as incentive trips. A good case for example is where participants attend a conferences or meetings and later have a team building fun activity (Davidson & Cope 2003). It can be even more difficult to classify tourists who visits another country or destination for leisure and later join a business meeting as the trip involves a lot of incentive elements but may still be described as a seminar. The trip might as well be paid by the corporate organization (Davidson & Cope 2003). So, the question that lingers is, if such trip can constitute to business travel. The fact however is that there is little business alienation depending on how the sponsor organization. Thus, the subject is complex and requires further consideration.

There are many definitions of incentive travelers, for instance, The Society of Incentive and Travel, adopted this segment as management contrivance used by employees to appreciate and motivate exemplary performance of employees (SITE, 2013). Another definition of incentive travel is paid trip to an exciting destination that a company offers to top-performing employees in order to motivate and maintain them (Davidson & Cope, 2003). Incentive and Reward Foundation (IRF), described incentive travel as a modern

reward practice of ‘give and take’ by organizations to enhance productivity in line with their business objectives (IRF, 2010). In summary, incentive travel has been observed as a motivational tool by theorist (Mair, 2015). Participants are awarded travel award based on the preset targets. Incentive travel as a reward is important because the most productive employees are motivated and retained. In addition, organization culture is boosted, driving business goals achievement (IRF, 2010).

Incentive rewards can be categorized into close-ended and open-ended programs. Close-ended incentive programs have a distinct budget and a predetermined number of participants, whereas open-ended programs have no limits on the number of participants (IRF, 2010). Open-ended programs are more motivating but have the drawback of the budget correlating to the performance of the participants (IRF, 2010).

Incentive travel can also be categorized into work-related and leisure-based incentives. Work-related incentive travel combines work, usually meetings, and leisure after working hours (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). It is typically evaluated as part of the seminar or congress industry and is often linked to employee development through teambuilding or training activities. The primary goal of work-related incentive travel is to enhance company performance (IRF, 2010; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). Leisure-based incentive travel, on the other hand, is often held in exotic locations and is designed to offer pleasurable and memorable experiences. These incentives typically involve paid holidays, allowing employees to relax without thinking about office work (Hudson, 2008; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). An example of leisure-based incentive travel is when a top performer in an organization is sponsored for a cruise ship trip to any desirable location worldwide for a month or more (IRF, 2010)

The literature on incentive travel programs shows wide range of activities including team building, extreme sports adventure like sky diving, zip lining, paint ball, Zumba dance, and go-karting, among others, all being performed under achieving the goal of motivating employees (Severt & Breiter, 2010). Sandhya and Kumar (2011) further stated that the nature of incentive travel programs offered to corporate travelers depend on the purpose as outlined by sponsor organization. In recent developments, incentive travel programs have taken different forms to include customer loyalty programs, sales incentive, and employee recognition (Robbins & Judge, 2014). Descriptive empirical studies on incentive travel programs indicate that team building interventions is most popular form of incentive travel which involve indoor fun activities, outdoor fun activities, and socializing activities (Davidson & Cope 2003).

This researcher was keen to profile the nature of incentive travel programs offered in Kenya and specifically Nakuru County as a separate product in MICE which many researches have not, thus justifying the current study. This was important as it informed the study to propose strategic recommendations with the knowledge of what existed in relation to incentive tourism product.

2.2 Nakuru County as an Emerging MICE Destination

According to ICCA (2019), Nakuru County is among Kenya's top emerging MICE destinations, gaining recognition after Naivasha hosted its first international meeting in 2012. However, there is limited data on incentive tourism in Kenya and Africa. This study analyzes Nakuru's incentive tourism market from both supply and demand perspectives, given the county's competition from emerging African MICE destinations like Kigali, which ranked second among African cities (ICCA, 2019).

Nakuru County, one of Kenya's 47 administrative units (GOK, 2012), derives its name from the Maasai word meaning "a dusty place." While historically an agricultural hub due to early white settlement schemes, the county's 2018–2022 Strategic Plan prioritizes tourism as a key economic driver. Covering 7,498.8 square kilometers, Nakuru offers diverse flora and fauna, essential for wildlife and adventure tourism. The county's estimated population of 2.1 million provides both skilled and unskilled labor for the tourism sector. Administratively, it is divided into 11 sub-counties, with Naivasha standing out for its vibrant tourism activities (GOK, 2012).

Nakuru attracts both domestic and international tourists, leveraging its proximity to Nairobi. It offers a variety of accommodations, from five-star hotels to budget lodgings and tented campsites. Key attractions include wildlife in national parks, mountains, craters, and archaeological sites. The county recorded an average of 254,000 visitors annually, with domestic tourism contributing significantly (Ramsar, 2012; Kahendo, 2017). However, stagnating tourism data raises concerns about unfulfilled potential.

This study highlights Nakuru's strong "Tourism Pull Factors"—developed amenities, natural attractions, rich culture, and diverse activities (Macharia, 2015). Since 2012, Naivasha has hosted multiple high-end meetings, demonstrated MICE's potential if strategically developed. However, proper destination branding is essential to create a unique market identity. Incentive travelers seek destinations that offer memorable experiences and encourage repeat visits (Macharia, 2015).

Given the predominance of domestic incentive travelers, local interventions by DMOs or government agencies are necessary. Ongwae (2013) suggests that Nakuru County's marketing strategies could be more effective if they align with tourists' needs, as captured

by DMOs. County governments play a crucial role in tourism development, regulation, and marketing, contributing to local revenue growth.

Nakuru is a recognized tourism hub in Kenya, particularly for wildlife tourism (Boit, 2014). Lake Nakuru, part of the Ramsar-protected wetlands, exemplifies conservation-linked sustainable tourism (Ramsar, 2012). While conservation remains critical, the county government should also focus on diversifying tourism products to unlock Nakuru's full potential.

Like many other service industries, the tourism sector is highly susceptible to external challenges, including government policies and the complexities of a globally interconnected economy (Pablo & Molina, 2013). Key influences shaping the industry include legal, technological, economic, and social trends, which directly impact tourism demand and destination competitiveness.

A major determinant of tourism growth is the international economy. Increased disposable income among travelers typically leads to industry expansion, whereas economic downturns result in reduced travel spending and declining visitor numbers (Ivanov & Webster, 2013). These economic shifts, coupled with technological innovations, security concerns, and evolving consumer awareness, influence travelers' decision-making and destination preferences.

For Nakuru County, understanding these macroeconomic factors is crucial in positioning itself as a competitive MICE tourism destination. The county's tourism sector must remain adaptable to global economic trends, leveraging its strengths while mitigating risks associated with economic volatility. For instance, the rise of incentive tourism

presents an opportunity for Nakuru to attract corporate travelers seeking unique experiences. However, to maximize this potential, Nakuru must enhance destination branding, infrastructure, and security policies to meet international MICE standards.

To better analyze these factors, this study applies the PESTLE framework, examining how political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors influence Nakuru's ability to attract incentive travelers and sustain long-term tourism growth.

2.2.1 Influence of Political Factors on Choice of Destination

Politics and the general political environment is a manmade situation that directly influences growth within the tourism industry. Political environment is highly dependent on cost factors affecting outbound tourism. Inflation, exchange rates, and price hike affect the numbers of package tours to destinations. Political instability being one of the major points of focus. Uncertain political situation can make a destination less attractive. Potential tourists view such destination as less secure for visitation and vacations.

Kenya being in the first decade of 21st century is no exception to political influences ranging from government political policies to terrorism attacks. Kenya's tourism sector once suffered a terrorist attack against the U.S. embassy in Nairobi. This attack killed 213 people 12 of which were American citizens affecting the sector negatively, Countries with relatively stable, cordial and predictable political manifestations are more likely to get a boost in tourism. In a study by Kirimi and Njuguna (2014), Kenya was a politically stable country until 2007 elections when post-election violence erupted following the release of controversial presidential election results. Current studies and statistical projections within these periods showed a decline in tourism activity. This study hereby

shows that safety or security is definitely one of the key factors by which tourists rely on while choosing Kenya as a destination of choice.

It's true to affirm that political dynamics internationally presents diverse and shifting influences on the tourism industry. Terrorism threats and changing regime is a political situation observable nowadays that affects the industry directly (Chou, 2013). When a country is peaceful, such kind of environment helps to sustain tourism (Pablo & Molina, 2013). Violence on the other hand leads to deteriorating growth of the sector. A perfect example is the Egyptian's once robust tourism economy that went down to its feet as a result of the 2011 uprising. International tourists are more likely to visit countries which are politically friendly and tolerant to them. Global competitiveness entails a rather diverse system embedded with rules of engagement by governments all over the world. Business sectors abide by the rules and regulations formed by the government which plays an important role in enhancing competitiveness. It has now required participants within the tourism industry to be more strategic to fit within a specific politically influenced market space.

2.2.2 Influence on Economic Factors on Choice of Destination

The tourism sector has been a major contributor in the world economy. In 2015, the WTO declared that tourism provided almost the 10% of world GDP. The overall economic position of a country plays a vital role in growth of the tourism sector (Dupreyas & MacCallum, 2013). Worldwide, economic stability and continued growth in consumer spending power basically means the future of the industry is bright. It's important to keenly focus and monitor operational costs so as to maintain stability and gains already made (Chou, 2013).

The World's 2007-2008 financial crisis had an overall negative impact on tourism with a general reduction in arrivals. The number of tourists travelers later spiked increasing by 2010 to an estimated figure above 1 billion (UNWTO, 2014).

The recurring economic uncertainties has forced the major parties within the tourism industry to reevaluate their options with emerging trends just so to remain relevant. Before the global financial crisis, a concept of sharing economy began that meant access to goods and skills become more significant than ownership. This was referred to as collaborative consumption with Airbnb, Zip car, Uber, and Couch surfing as good examples. The tourism industry is also affected by the so called emerging economic giants. In 2001, in reference to the rising economies of Brazil, Russia, India, a novel acronym in the word economic was introduced as BRIC. The fast-rising economies were later joined by South Africa in 2010 to become known as the BRICS. With this growth came more income and travelers looking for destinations to visit. According to (Flannery, 2014), outbound tourism development from China increased from 58 million in 2010 to almost 100 million in 2013. In the case of emerging economies, the growth rate was not similar to the upward trend. Moreover, countries like Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey, and South Korea have since been active as emerging economies, creating another new acronym — MINTS. A number of global events focus on MICE travel, especially within the incentive niche.

The term MICE stand for Meetings, Incentive, Conferences and exhibitions in the tourism and hospitality industry. Additionally, persons of higher socio-economic status are likely to attend a MICE event even if they are held in foreign countries since they can easily afford the travel costs. On the contrary, the study notes that persons who lead

more sedentary lives and do not wish to travel very far may be able to do so under incentive tourism which is sponsored by the employee. The current significant opportunity ties for incentive tourism growth should be taken advantage by utilizing proper documentation in order to reap the benefits. Economic stability and diversification is uniquely specific in all product under MICE with the main focus towards Nakuru County Kenya.

2.2.3 Influence of Social Factors on Choice of Destination

The society and the general behavior of people's interaction with each other is a major factor influencing the tourism industry. The presence of social networks, historical ties between the countries of destination, the knowledge or beliefs of a certain country, where human rights and the rule of law are likely to be respected, are highly influential. The implication of such human social characters is evident and cannot be ignored (Pablo & Molina, 2013). These social factors influencing tourism vary globally and locally through culture and subculture, social class, reference groups, and family.

The current study noted that preference for leisure tourist has changed. Private accommodation has come to revolutionize the sector as a preference for many tourists. The study by (Chou, 2013) shows a trend against international brand hotels with the adoption of homestays as the new social perspective for travelers. There is need to invest more time for more research in order to fill the void of knowledge presented by the divergence social landscape.

Another trend with implications for the tourism industry is conscious consumerism, or socially conscious consumer behavior. There are strong indications that many consumers

are switching towards more socially and environmentally responsible products and services. The term was used to create rules concerning how consumers should behave and how manufacturers, sellers, and advertisers should produce consumer goods in constructing their social lives (Miles 2006). There is a change in consumer behavior around the globe, a new kind of socially and environmental kind of purchasing by consumers (Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008).

Destinations and businesses interested in pursuing this market have to be acutely aware of social and environmental issues, potentially ranging from organic produce and animal welfare to human rights (Shaw, Grehan, Shiu, Hassan, & Thomson, 2005). The major factors to be focused on by the tourism industry include an assumption that the traditional industrial model is ineffective and needs reviewing (Pollack, 2012). Cultural dynamics and profitability are greatly observable together (Nielsen, 2014b). Globalization highly impacts on our way of life and how we live as individuals thus our culture. It's through globalization that some believe a situation of cultural crisis comes into play, with values, beliefs, and identity all made part and parcel to economic interests and the pervasive and ever-growing nature of technological advancements within us.

There are three cultural trends and two societal trends. Extremes of the globally interconnected world motivates some people to travel as a way of relaxation. The art of unplugging, where a hotel or resort offers a form of escape from the time without technological access in the form of internet access, cable, or phones, is certainly one way to get people to take a break and reenergize. Activities like biking, walking, small sailboat cruises, rural tourism, as well as the slow food movement are examples of experiences that simplify life in order to better appreciate and enjoy it.

People are moving around the world a lot. This being one of the evolving trends around globalization has significant influence on incentive traveler's preference on destination. The main challenge is that, with multicultural system, tourism industry needs to deal with, including preconceptions related to customer service and management. Developing both interpersonal and intrapersonal skills is crucial for continued success.

2.2.4 Influence of Technological Factors of Choice of Destination

Tourism and technology have always gone hand in hand using it to its full advantage, opening destinations and providing new products and services. Technological factors are simply new practices and equipment that have come to aid smooth running of activities in the tourism industry. Thomas Cook is classic case example of how technological factors influences growth within the tourism industry. Trends like recognized tours, offering train rides to the seaside, to the adoption of mobile technology today, tourism and hospitality has incorporated technological advances into all aspects of the industry. Two key technology trends affecting tourism and hospitality today and into the foreseeable future are mobile technology and access. The gains that innovation and technology has contributed to the industry are numerous. Mobile technology allows people increased freedom to negotiate their day-to-day lives while staying connected. The internet has revolutionized everything creating a pool of online communities where information can be shared. Tourist can now get what they want with ease whether through social media content with the best deals. Travelers can book hotels virtually and instantly. This kind of wireless connectivity has led to the faster and immediate response and the ability to do advertising with location precision. In the recent past mobile or internet access has become a necessity for making bookings for accommodations and allowed access to such

recreational facilities within the tourism industry. Tourists have become more independent now and do not have to rely on other sources for customer service. Ancient methods of providing hospitality and tourism information have become obsolete and irrelevant. Technological advances in transportation are affecting not only how people travel to and within destinations, but also the impacts that those forms of transportation are having on the environment. Tourism highly utilizes transportation as an agency for sustainability. Transportation on the other hand heavily depends on fossil fuels prompting need for alternatives. Efforts are also being made to offer alternatives for tourism transportation (World Economic Forum, 2011), including increases in the number of electric cars available through rental agencies. The current emerging transportation developments are offering a more interconnected world for everybody. The article, (Thompson, 2013), outlines how the cost of flights per mile has fallen by about 50% in the past 30 years thus creating more and better chances for people to travel. There are now even new vehicles for outer space that have created opportunities for people to begin to explore all the way from the deep waters to the outer space. In order to travel with this vehicle, one has to spend at least \$20 million but continued innovation will definitely make it possible for more people to take such outer space trips. A study is done to get a clear picture of factors arising from the initial stages of destination selection. Aspects ranging from demographic data, purpose of visit, destination attributes must be measured in this study. Information technology popularly known as IT has proposed advanced methods of destination selection based on 21st century requirements. Online generated systems and soft wares has changed and influenced the customer psychology empowering them in the process (Constantinides, 2004). This led to the construction of

an elaborated Bayesian network and analytic hierarchy process techniques embedded with a geographic information system (GIS). It contained recommendations with user feedback. The internet technology has come a long way in availing relevant and immediate information tied to MICE related activities of choice.

The fact therefore remains that in the modern world technology greatly influences tourism demand and marketing (Dupreyas & MacCallum, 2013). IT or information technology has created a wide product awareness and a large scope of opportunities. Booking online for hotels and airline is increasingly becoming the norm (Chou, 2013). Indeed, technology is shaping the tourism industry at many other points which this research is keen in establishing specifically in Nakuru County, Kenya.

2.2.5 Influence of Environmental Factors on Choice of Destination

The tourism industry is facing an inclination of choice away from environment's naturally available elements such as sea, sand and sun to particular tourist commodities. Manmade related activities have become the new point of focus. A report from United Nations Intergovernmental Panel (UNIP) on Climate Change has made investigative conclusions that climate change is manmade. The steadfast effects the environment has on tourism is evident in the shifting weather and climate patterns. The increased frequency and impacts of tornadoes, drought and floods cannot be ignored. Yet dependence on a global economy fueled by population growth and ever-increasing demand for consumer goods has led to significant debate as to how to respond to climate change, although urgent action is clearly required. From a tourism and travel perspective, we have seen examples of how climate change is impacting tourism. In the transportation sector, drastic temperature changes from sudden ice thaws to heat wave conditions affect

highways and runways, landslides close road systems, and rising sea levels threaten infrastructure such as airports and cruise ship wharves. In the accommodations sector, coastal storms impact resorts, summer water shortages put pressure on resort communities, and unpredictable snowfalls close ski resorts. Food and beverage operators are facing increased food costs as drought conditions make growing certain crops more and more expensive. In the recreation and entertainment sector, both natural and built attractions are threatened by unpredictable weather patterns. And travel services providers struggle to stay abreast of the effects of super storms and polar vortexes. Resilient forms of economic growth should be adapted to mitigate on environmental variables of which tourism is a part. Does this mean less air travel? Possibly. The challenge for tourism is that our economic interdependence requires far-reaching transportation routes, be it by air, sea, or land. Like most other industrial sectors, tourism is affected by global economic trends. Poor countries may not have the required resources to deal with implication the environment has towards tourism.

Iceland, Mexico, Singapore, Canada, and Croatia are by far the most popular incentive travel destinations in the world (Carter, 2017). A study shows that these nations offer a blend of exciting features to corporate travelers compared to other countries (Soteriades, 2012). Iceland, a country in Europe, is popular for offering a wide spectrum of captivating physical features, archeological sightings and activities for adults and children (Gilsdorf, 2009). In our regional platform, countries such as South Africa, Egypt, Botswana, and Rwanda are among the popular incentive travel destinations in Africa according to World Tourism organization, (WTO, 2013). South Africa is preferred by travelers for offering superior hospitality services compared to her counterparts in

Africa which has a mix of captivating features (Kirimi and Njuguna, 2014). In a new observation, student's scholars and corporate tourists may prefer destinations such as Egypt (Soteriades, 2012). This is because Egypt presents captivating historical sites attracting such kind of interested groups. Kenya is arguably in constant competition with countries like Rwanda and Botswana. These are countries known for offering beautiful sceneries, serene environment, culture diversity and classy hospitality to inbound visitors (Mawioo and Kagiri 2015). In Kenya, Nakuru County is potential tourism hub that has not been fully exploited. It's therefore the reason why Kenya Big Four Tourism Strategy 2017-2030 seeks to intensify on niche tourism product with Nakuru being a suitable nature and scenic experiences' hub for locals and foreigners.

Sustainability is a key factor determining the levels of tourism growth and development (Seyidov & Adomaitienė, 2016). This implies that all forms of discussions should be based on this factor. Ecotourism is slowly becoming a tool for tactical advantage for resilience in the tourism industry. The environment being a major factor of influence to the industry should be conserved and maintained to reap its benefits. Debate on environment conservation as a natural resource has been going in the last decades. Managing ecological impact and waste management are concerns touching on sustainability of the tourism industry (Pablo & Molina, 2013). Seasonal weather patterns and climatic conditions are among the major factors influencing choice of destination for internationally tourism demand (Getz and Page, 2016). Tourists would choose to visit destinations closer to the equator in hot season. These factors are then compared against our study case for Naivasha Sub County as a suitable destination for international

tourists. Travelers on Incentive Travel Programs become our target group in relation to Nakuru County as a choice for tourists.

2.2.6 Influence of Legal Factors on Choice of Destination

The various stakeholders in the tourism industry make the regulatory space minimal. According to UNWTO (2005) there are several stakeholders who may influence directly or indirectly on tourism planning and development process, its therefore important to protect parties through civil and private interest (Dupreyas & MacCallum, 2013). The law governing the sector is a relevant point of study for Nakuru County in Kenya. The law governing the sector is broad both international and within various County jurisdictions (Chou, 2013). Such influence will be relevant to study in the case of Nakuru County, Kenya. There appears to be a gap in the subsequent exploitation of this sector. This is a trend that authorities need to look into in order to tap in fully exploit the market. The Kenyan tourism industry is looking in to options such as Incentive travel in order to tap more into the economy. Kenya has for long relied on international leisure market prompting the authorities to change strategies guided by Kenya's (Vision 2030). The scope and status of the incentive tourism market profile and product is derailed by inadequate information with regards to other availability.

2014 MICE tourism, which is business travel oriented, is growing in revenue and arrivals globally. This is according to International Convention and Congress Association (ICCA). Although tourism does offer the opportunity to teach people about how to respect other cultures, some argue that globalization has far its far reaching effect on cultures. Western values are spread through music, fashion, film, and food. Each and every culture should be distinguishable from the other. In an international scenario, some

beliefs and values, such as embracing equality and diversity, or the need to protect children from harm are identically shared. Just like companies need to ensure that their human resource practices are consistent and fair throughout the world so does the tourism sector. Exploiting children for sex is illegal, punishable in both the country visited and the home country of the tourist; some airlines and hotels are actively involved in supporting the prohibition of child sex tourism. Authorities involved should ensure and protect against defacing of heritage sites, taking care of endangered natural and cultural objects as gifts or souvenirs. As international citizens it's within our responsibility to live within set regulations that upholds certain beliefs and values. Crisis monitoring is an essential tool for development since every aspect of culture holds within itself monetary value. Buying a sculpture stolen from an ancient temple, buying endangered objects such as ivory and coral should be high prohibited and punishable in court of law. This helps to mitigate the impacts of the crisis.

The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) is a standard statistical framework and the main tool for the economic measurement of tourism, in particular, it acts as a litmus test for tourism performance and employment to speculate and forecast the future. It's derived from sources such as credit card records and tourism booking trends (airlines, hotels). This provides useful information to develop adequate and timely policy responses. short-term performance indicators of tourism's industries' turn-over and employment derived from administrative, fiscal or social security records; and c) business cycle indicators derived from business confidence survey reports and research articles. As a result, the study reveals that the system of tourism and employment statistics needs to be enhanced in order to achieve more effective crisis monitoring process. Tourism Satellite Accounts

(TSA) and a more comprehensive and credible System of Tourism Statistics (STS) are of great importance as we proceed to the future. Measures to improve the Electronic copy available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3559353> sustainability of the tourism sector and speedy rejuvenation from a drop in tourism demand. The entire process aims to reduce pressure on tourism related labor markets through robust policies as firm foundation to achieving efficiency and maximum return towards the economy recovery.

2.3 Destination Preferences

The selection of a destination is a crucial element in incentive travel, as it directly influences the overall success of the program. Both incentive travelers and their managers have distinct criteria when determining the most suitable location. While travelers often prioritize leisure, unique experiences, and relaxation, managers focus on strategic factors such as cost-effectiveness, logistical convenience, and alignment with corporate objectives. Understanding these varying perspectives is essential in designing incentive programs that balance employee motivation with organizational goals. The following sections explore the specific preferences of incentive travelers and their managers, highlighting key determinants that shape destination selection.

2.3.1 Incentive Travelers' Destination Preferences

The term “preference” in this study refers to the subjective taste of incentive travelers for Nakuru County as a tourism destination. Scholars have established that preference for a particular destination is influenced by several motivational factors such as cost, location, security, and available attractions (Dietrich & List, 2013). Potential incentive travelers often form a mental image of a destination prior to visiting, and the availability of

information such as photographs of the location and its facilities can positively impact their choice. Preferences serve as an intermediary step between consumer motives and behavior (Tran & Ralston, 2006). Thus, in this context, preferences are defined as the set of subjective choices made by travelers based on their motivations.

According to Kurežand and Prevolšek (2015), the predominant factors influencing incentive travelers' destination choices include safety and security, availability of captivating features such as wildlife and cultural attractions, and the quality of tourism infrastructure, including transportation and communication systems (Karakas, 2012). Meeting these preferences is crucial for enhancing the appeal of a destination (Gnanapala, 2015). A study by Gilsdorf (2009) on Iceland as an incentive travel destination demonstrated that travelers prefer locations with abundant natural attractions, quality hospitality services, and political, social, and economic stability. These factors contribute to a heightened sense of security and satisfaction among travelers, thereby increasing the desirability of a destination.

2.3.1.1 Safety and Security Considerations

Safety is a fundamental requirement for incentive travelers when selecting a destination. Security concerns, including political instability, crime rates, and terrorism threats, can significantly deter travelers from choosing a particular location (Kirimi & Njuguna, 2014). Destinations with a reputation for stability and strong law enforcement tend to attract more incentive travelers.

Nakuru County, as an emerging MICE destination, must prioritize security to enhance its appeal. Government measures to improve safety, such as increased surveillance,

enhanced emergency response systems, and collaborations with private security agencies, will play a crucial role in shaping travelers' perceptions of Nakuru as a secure destination. Additionally, investing in security training for tourism sector employees and strengthening coordination between local law enforcement and the hospitality industry can significantly improve tourist confidence in the region.

2.3.1.2 Cultural and Natural Attractions

Cultural heritage and natural attractions are key motivators for incentive travelers. A study by Hsu et al. (2010) found that destinations rich in cultural heritage attract more visitors than those lacking cultural tourism initiatives. Similarly, Mai and Pham (2017) concluded that cultural attractions, entertainment, historical sites, and natural environments significantly influence travel satisfaction and return intentions.

Nakuru County offers diverse cultural and natural attractions, including the Lake Nakuru National Park, Menengai Crater, and a variety of wildlife. To enhance its appeal, the county should invest in the promotion and preservation of cultural sites, ensuring that visitors experience authentic and immersive cultural interactions. Additionally, organizing annual cultural festivals and interactive heritage experiences can help showcase Nakuru's unique traditions and attract incentive travelers looking for meaningful cultural engagements.

2.3.1.3 Accessibility and Infrastructure

Ease of access is another critical factor influencing destination choice among incentive travelers. Well-developed transport infrastructure, including reliable air and road

networks, enhances the convenience of travel and contributes to a positive tourism experience (Jacobs et al., 2016). Additionally, the availability of quality accommodation, conference facilities, and hospitality services is essential in sustaining incentive travel demand.

Nakuru County benefits from its proximity to Nairobi and major highways, providing easy access for both domestic and international travelers. However, continued investment in infrastructure development, including modern accommodation facilities and efficient public transport systems, will be essential in positioning Nakuru as a competitive incentive travel destination. The expansion of Naivasha's railway network and ongoing improvements in road networks linking key tourist sites will further enhance accessibility for business and leisure travelers.

2.3.1.4 Accommodation and Hospitality Services

Quality accommodation is a major factor influencing travelers' decisions. A study by Potgieter et al. (2014) highlighted that accommodation standards significantly impact travelers' likelihood of returning to a destination. While travelers may seek comfortable lodging, they also prioritize unique and immersive hospitality experiences that align with their expectations.

Nakuru County hosts a range of accommodation facilities, from five-star hotels to budget lodgings and eco-lodges. To enhance its attractiveness, the county should focus on service quality improvements and personalized hospitality experiences tailored to incentive travelers' needs. Encouraging sustainable hospitality practices, such as eco-

friendly lodges and locally sourced cuisine, can also appeal to travelers seeking unique and responsible tourism experiences.

2.3.1.5 Environmental and Sustainability Factors

With the increasing emphasis on environmental conservation, incentive travelers are becoming more conscious of sustainability practices in their chosen destinations. Studies by Millar and Baloglu (2011) and Kucukusta (2017) indicate that travelers value eco-friendly practices such as recycling programs, energy-efficient accommodations, and conservation initiatives.

Nakuru County, home to protected wetlands and diverse ecosystems, is well-positioned to capitalize on sustainable tourism. Promoting eco-tourism initiatives and implementing green hospitality practices will appeal to environmentally conscious travelers, further solidifying the county's reputation as a responsible incentive travel destination. Encouraging partnerships between conservation organizations and the tourism sector can also enhance sustainability efforts while offering travelers opportunities to participate in conservation programs and responsible wildlife tourism.

Incentive travelers' preferences are shaped by multiple factors, including safety, cultural and natural attractions, accessibility, accommodation, and sustainability considerations. Nakuru County, as an emerging incentive travel destination, must strategically align its offerings with these preferences to enhance its appeal. By investing in security, infrastructure, cultural tourism, and sustainability initiatives, Nakuru can position itself as a top choice for incentive travelers seeking a rewarding and memorable experience.

Additionally, fostering collaboration between the government, private sector, and local communities will be essential in creating a competitive and sustainable incentive travel destination.

2.3.2 Managers of Incentive Travelers Destination Preferences

Managers responsible for organizing incentive trips consider factors such as cost, logistical convenience, and return on investment when selecting a destination (Kurežand & Prevolšek, 2015). Unlike employees who may prioritize leisure, managers often focus on the strategic benefits of incentive travel, including employee retention, corporate branding, and workforce motivation (Robbins & Judge, 2014). The ability of an incentive travel program to yield tangible business outcomes is a primary determinant in destination selection.

A study by Hsu et al. (2010) on destination preferences found that cultural heritage, security, and accessibility are primary considerations for corporate managers. Similar research by Mai and Pham (2017) supports the notion that destination attractiveness is linked to a combination of business-friendly infrastructure and leisure opportunities. This suggests that managers seek a balance between rewarding employees and ensuring organizational objectives are met through incentive travel.

2.3.2.1 Cost and Budget Considerations

Budget constraints significantly impact destination selection. Managers must ensure that incentive travel provides value while remaining cost-effective (Kurežand & Prevolšek, 2015). The cost factors include airfare, accommodation, event venues, local

transportation, and overall expenses associated with leisure activities. Affordable destinations with high perceived value are often preferred (Hudson, 2008).

Nakuru County's growing status as a MICE destination offers competitive pricing compared to other global incentive travel hubs. The region's affordability makes it attractive to firms looking to maximize the return on investment in their incentive programs.

2.3.2.2. Logistical Convenience and Infrastructure

Managers prioritize destinations with seamless accessibility, reliable transport networks, and modern conference facilities (Hsu et al., 2010). Proximity to international airports, ease of visa processing, and efficient local transport systems contribute to a destination's attractiveness.

Nakuru County benefits from its strategic location near Nairobi, Kenya's capital, with access to major highways and airports. Additionally, Naivasha's ongoing infrastructure improvements, including high-end conference centers and hotels, align well with incentive travel requirements.

2.3.2.3. Security and Political Stability

Safety remains a crucial consideration in destination selection. Managers are less likely to choose destinations perceived as politically unstable or prone to security threats (Kiriti & Njuguna, 2014). Terrorism risks, civil unrest, and crime rates directly affect corporate travel decisions.

Kenya has faced security concerns in the past, particularly due to terrorism threats. However, government-led initiatives to enhance security, particularly in key tourism hubs

like Nakuru, have improved perceptions of safety. The presence of well-secured hotels and event venues further reassures incentive planners.

2.3.2.4. Destination Attractiveness and Leisure Activities

A location's unique attractions contribute to its appeal for incentive travel. Managers seek destinations that offer a mix of cultural, historical, and natural experiences, enhancing the incentive program's impact (Mai & Pham, 2017).

Nakuru County boasts a wealth of attractions, including Lake Nakuru National Park, Menengai Crater, and numerous wildlife reserves. These features make it a compelling destination for managers looking to combine work and leisure elements in incentive programs.

2.3.2.1. Business-Friendly Environment and Support Services

Incentive travel planners prefer destinations with a strong business ecosystem, reliable event service providers, and government support for corporate tourism (Boit, 2014). The availability of professional conference organizers, event management companies, and incentive travel specialists plays a significant role in destination selection.

Nakuru County's inclusion in Kenya's Big Four Tourism Strategy (2017–2030) highlights its potential for business tourism growth. Ongoing investments in hotel expansions and service quality improvements further solidify its position as a preferred MICE destination.

2.3.2.1. Sustainable and Ethical Travel Considerations

With growing corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, managers increasingly consider sustainability when choosing incentive travel destinations. Companies prefer locations that align with their environmental and ethical policies (Seyidov & Adomaitienė, 2016).

Nakuru County offers eco-friendly travel options, including conservation tourism and community-based experiences. The emphasis on sustainable tourism aligns with global trends, making it an attractive choice for environmentally-conscious organizations.

Managers play a pivotal role in selecting incentive travel destinations by balancing cost efficiency, logistical convenience, security, and destination appeal. Nakuru County's positioning as an emerging MICE destination aligns with these priorities, making it a viable choice for corporate incentive planners. By addressing key concerns such as infrastructure, security, and sustainability, Nakuru can further enhance its competitiveness in the global incentive travel market.

2.4 Summary of Literature and Identified Gaps

Table 2.1 provides a summary of some of the pertinent sources reviewed and the identified gaps filled by this study.

Table 2.1: Summary of Literature and the Identified Gaps

Author	Study Objectives	Findings (Gaps Identified)	Current Study Focus
Omolara (2019)	Examine factors influencing tourism destination choices	Identifies economic and social factors but lacks focus on incentive travel	Investigates how Nakuru's pre-set conditions affect incentive travelers' preferences
Davidson & Cope (2003)	Define incentive travel and its role in business tourism	Highlights incentive travel's evolution but lacks empirical data on its impact	Explores incentive travel's effect on Nakuru's tourism market
ICCA (2014)	Assess MICE tourism trends in Kenya	Recognizes Nakuru's potential but lacks destination-specific strategies	Provides strategic recommendations for positioning Nakuru
Boit (2014)	Analyze tourism attributes in Nakuru	Focuses on wildlife tourism with limited discussion on incentive travel	Examines Nakuru's suitability for incentive travelers
Sandhya & Kumar (2011)	Investigate corporate preferences for incentive travel	Highlights team-building activities but does not link them to destination choice	Assesses how Nakuru's offerings align with corporate needs
Potgieter et al. (2014)	Examine factors influencing repeat travel	Prioritizes accommodation over experiential factors	Evaluates the role of activities in incentive travel decisions
Hsu et al. (2010)	Study tourist preferences in Melaka, Malaysia	Cultural attractions are dominant but lacks comparative analysis with other regions	Compares Nakuru's cultural and natural attractions with global trends
Mai & Pham (2017)	Identify factors affecting tourist satisfaction	Provides a broad perspective but lacks specificity on incentive travelers	Focuses on satisfaction factors unique to incentive travel
Kurežand & Prevolšek (2015)	Analyze corporate managers' travel preferences	Discusses cost and logistics but ignores employee perspectives	Examines the balance between corporate and employee preferences
Jacobs et al. (2016)	Study factors affecting return visits to destinations	Highlights economic influences but does not explore employer-driven travel decisions	Investigates employer vs. employee decision-making in Nakuru's incentive travel market

CHAPTER THREE: MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the methodology that was used to attain the study objectives and test the study's hypotheses. It describes in detail the research design and study area. The chapter also explains the target population, sampling techniques, sample size, and data collection instruments. The study also explains the validity and reliability, pre-testing, data collection techniques, analysis techniques and logistical and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This study, which aimed to determine whether tourism pre-set conditions influence incentive travelers' destination preferences and to assess the differences in preferences between incentive travelers and their managers, employed a combination of descriptive and correlational research designs.

A descriptive research design was used to explore and understand the characteristics of incentive travelers' preferences and managerial considerations in choosing Nakuru County as a destination (Creswell, 2014). This design was particularly relevant for addressing the first objective, as it allowed the researcher to examine the extent to which various pre-set tourism conditions influence destination choice.

Additionally, a correlational research design was employed to examine the associations between tourism pre-set conditions and incentive travelers' preferences. This approach was appropriate as it enabled the researcher to measure relationships between key variables without manipulating them (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, comparative statistical analyses were used to identify differences in destination

preferences between incentive travelers and their managers, addressing the second objective.

By combining these research designs, the study provided both a structured analysis of incentive travelers' decision-making and statistical insights into how pre-set tourism conditions and managerial perspectives influence destination selection.

3.2 Study Area

The study was based in Nakuru County, Kenya as a potential incentive travel destination. Appendix V contains the map showing the location of Nakuru. The County boasts of many attractions mainly in Naivasha Sub-County. Besides hosting major hotels, the various tourist attraction sites in the county include: Lake Naivasha, Lake Nakuru, Hell's gate Park, Mt Longonot National Park. The rationale of this scope is since Nakuru County has in the past years showed a significant growth in MICE tourism with Naivasha town making a debut in the continental rankings back in 2012 as it was listed the 34th popular destination in Africa by ICCA (ICCA, 2019).

3.3 Target Population

According to Creswell (2014), the target population refers to the entire group of individuals or entities that a researcher aims to study. In this study, the primary target population comprised incentive travelers who visited Nakuru County, Kenya, during the study period. Nakuru County receives approximately 4,000 incentive travelers from about 80 different organizations each month (KTB, 2019a; KTB, 2019b).

Additionally, the study population included managers from organizations that provide incentive travel to employees, as well as managers of DMOs. Given that around 80 companies facilitate incentive trips to Nakuru, the estimated population of

these managers was 400 given that a company can have about five managers working on employee welfare and incentive travel (ICAEW, 2014). Furthermore, Nakuru County hosts approximately 15 DMOs, each with about five managers, resulting in an estimated DMO manager population of at least 75 (Awuor, 2015; Hotels and More in Nakuru, 2019; Nakuru Hotels and Places to Stay, 2019; Luxury Hotels in Nakuru, 2019).

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The sampling technique used in this study was informed by the combined descriptive and correlational research designs. According to Van (2012), descriptive research design enables the researcher to explore both quantitative and qualitative data, while correlational research design allows for the examination of relationships between variables. Therefore, a combination of sampling techniques was employed to ensure comprehensive data collection aligned with the study objectives (Creswell, 2014).

3.4.1 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used in this study was guided by the need for efficient and time-conscious data collection. Since this research was conducted within a limited timeframe, purposive and convenience sampling were chosen as the most suitable methods. According to Creswell (2014), these techniques allow for quick data collection from a well-defined population, reducing research costs while ensuring access to relevant respondents with firsthand knowledge of the subject matter.

Purposive sampling was used to select specific participants who were directly involved in incentive travel decision-making, including managers of DMOs and managers of companies that offer incentive travel. This ensured that the study gathered insights from individuals with expertise in incentive tourism.

Convenience sampling was applied to incentive travelers, allowing data collection from readily available participants who had visited Nakuru County for incentive travel during the study period. This method ensured efficiency by targeting travelers who were willing and accessible, minimizing logistical challenges.

While these methods enhanced efficiency and participation, it is important to note that their generalizability is limited (Creswell, 2014). However, given the study's objectives, the selected sampling techniques were appropriate for obtaining relevant insights. The sampling framework is summarized in Table 3.1 below.

Table 0.1: Summary of Sampling Technique

Technique used	Application	Justification
Purposive Sampling	Selection of DMO managers and managers of incentive travelers	Ensures data is collected from key decision-makers with knowledge of incentive travel planning
Convenience Sampling	Selection of incentive travelers visiting Nakuru County	Allows for efficient data collection from readily available participants while minimizing time constraints

3.4.2 Sample Size

While the ideal approach would be to survey the entire population, this was impractical due to the large size of the target group. Instead, a scientific sampling method was used to determine a representative sample from the population. According to Taherdoost (2016), a properly calculated sample size ensures generalizability and validity of research findings.

This study targeted three key groups within the incentive travel industry in Nakuru County: incentive travelers, managers of organizations that award incentive travel,

and managers of DMOs. To determine the sample size, Cochran's formula (1977) for sample size estimation in large populations was used:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p)}{e^2} \dots\dots\dots (Eq. 1)$$

Where:

n = Sample size

Z = Z-score (1.96 for 95% confidence level, 1.645 for 90%)

p = Estimated proportion of the population with the characteristic of interest (assumed 0.5 for maximum variability)

e = Margin of error

With a population (N) of 4,000 incentive travelers, a 95% confidence level ($Z = 1.96$), and a 5% margin of error ($e = 0.05$):

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{0.9604}{0.0025} = 384.16 \approx 384$$

Since the population size is finite ($N = 4,000$), Cochran's correction formula is applied:

$$n_{adj} = \frac{n}{1 + \frac{n-1}{N}} \dots\dots\dots (Eq. 2)$$

$$n_{adj} = \frac{384}{1 + \frac{384 - 1}{4000}}$$

$$n_{adj} = \frac{384}{1.0958} = 350.5 \approx 360$$

Thus, the sample size for incentive travelers was 360.

For 400 managers, with a 90% confidence level ($Z = 1.645$) and 10% margin of error ($e = 0.10$):

$$n = \frac{(1.645)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}{0.10^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2.706 \times 0.25}{0.01}$$

$$n = \frac{0.6765}{0.01} = 67.65$$

Applying Cochran's correction for finite population ($N = 400$):

$$n_{adj} = \frac{67.65}{1 + \frac{67.65 - 1}{400}}$$

$$n_{adj} = \frac{67.65}{1.1691} = 57.87 \approx 60$$

Thus, the sample size for managers of incentive travelers was 60.

For 75 DMO managers, using the 90% confidence level ($Z = 1.645$) and 10% margin of error ($e = 0.10$):

$$n = \frac{(1.645)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}{0.10^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2.706 \times 0.25}{0.01}$$

$$n = \frac{0.6765}{0.01} = 67.65$$

Applying Cochran's correction for finite population ($N = 75$):

$$n_{adj} = \frac{67.65}{1 + \frac{67.65 - 1}{75}}$$

$$n_{adj} = \frac{67.65}{1.902} = 35.57 \approx 40$$

Thus, the sample size for DMO managers was 40.

The 95% confidence level & 5% margin of error were used for incentive travelers to ensure a high degree of accuracy in responses from a larger population. The 90% confidence level & 10% margin of error were used for managers due to their smaller population size, making it easier to obtain reliable data with a slightly lower confidence level. While a lower confidence level (90%) increases the chance of variability, it allows for a manageable sample size within time and resource

constraints, without significantly compromising the validity of results (Creswell, 2014). Table 3.2 presents the final sample distribution.

Table 0.2: Distribution of the Respondents

Category of participants	Population (N)	Confidence Level	Margin of Error	Sample Size (n)
Incentive travelers	4,000	95%	5%	360
Managers of incentive travelers	400	90%	10%	60
DMO managers	75	90%	10%	40
Total	4,475			460

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

This study relied on both primary and secondary data sources to ensure comprehensive data collection and enhance the triangulation of findings. The use of quantitative methods supplemented with qualitative data allowed for a more in-depth understanding of incentive travelers' preferences and their influence on destination choice in Nakuru County.

Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires designed for three respondent categories: incentive travelers, managers of organizations that offer incentive travel, and managers of DMOs. The questionnaires, contained in Appendices B, C, and D, were structured to capture both demographic information and key research variables.

The questionnaire for incentive travelers consisted of two main sections. The first section collected personal details perceptions and the second part focused on incentive program offered and pre-set conditions for incentive travel. Similarly, the questionnaire for managers of organizations awarding incentive travel gathered organizational and personal details before focusing on perceptions about the

incentive program they offer and pre-set conditions for incentive travel. For DMO managers, the questionnaire collected their personal details and aimed to assess incentive travel services they offered as influenced by tourism pre-set conditions in Nakuru.

In addition to primary data, the study incorporated secondary data sources to complement the findings and provide industry benchmarks. Key secondary sources included reports from the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB), Nakuru County Government tourism development plans, and industry reports from DMOs. Academic studies and peer-reviewed journal articles on tourism pre-set conditions and incentive travel trends were also reviewed. These sources provided historical data, industry trends, and best practices, strengthening the research with contextual insights.

To ensure alignment with the conceptual framework, specific indicators were established for both the independent and dependent variables. The independent variable, tourism pre-set conditions, was assessed using indicators such as safety and security (crime rates, emergency response), cultural and natural attractions (wildlife, heritage sites), infrastructure and accessibility (transport, accommodation), and service quality (hospitality and tourism professionalism).

The dependent variable, incentive travelers' destination preference, was measured through traveler satisfaction, perceived attractiveness of Nakuru, and comparative evaluations against other destinations. These indicators were integrated into the questionnaire using Likert-scale statements, allowing respondents to rate their experiences and perceptions on a five-point scale.

By utilizing both primary and secondary data and ensuring a well-structured questionnaire design, this study effectively captured the necessary data to address the research objectives. The combination of purposive and convenience sampling further

ensured that respondents with relevant insights were included, making data collection both efficient and targeted.

3.6 Pre-Testing

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012), a pre-test sample of 1% to 10% of the total sample size is acceptable for determining the reliability and validity of research instruments. In line with this, 5% of the total sample size (460) was used for pre-testing. A total of 23 questionnaires were administered: 18 to incentive travelers, three to managers of incentive travelers, and two to DMO managers. The pre-test was conducted between September 2 – September 13, 2019.

The pre-test was essential in evaluating the practicality of the research instruments in achieving the study objectives. The clarity, wording, and structure of the questions were reviewed to ensure they were easily understood by respondents and research assistants. Data collected during the pre-test was analyzed to identify ambiguous or unclear questions, which were then refined for the final survey. Additionally, the expected response rate was estimated based on participant engagement during the pre-test phase. Importantly, respondents involved in the pre-test were not included in the final study sample to prevent bias and ensure data integrity.

3.6.1 Validity and Reliability

Validity is the quality of proportion or the measures of degree, to which the variable under study conforms to truthfulness, the established truth or knowledge (Creswell, 2014; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). It refers to the extent the instruments measure, that which they intend to measure. The instruments must ask the right questions as accurately as possible. Reliability is the measures of degree, to which a research instrument gives results after repetition of subsequent trials. It is the quality of

proportion or measure of degrees, to which the research instruments yield consistent results after subsequent tests. The validity and reliability of an instrument used in a study may not undergo tests if prior related studies have successfully used it (Taherdoost, 2016). Therefore, for this study, the questionnaires which had been specifically developed for this study underwent tests during pretest or pilot study to establish their validity and reliability.

There are several types of validities for questionnaires. In the current study, content validity and face validity were established through the assistance of the supervisor in assessing the items (Taherdoost, 2016). Construct validity of the questionnaire was tested by administering the drafts of the instruments to selected samples then relevant changes were made with the assistance of the research project supervisor who also approved the instruments.

To establish reliability of the instruments, after the first questioner were administered. The study used same respondents for the second test five days later. The collected data during pre-testing was tested using SPSS' Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient. The recommend a minimum α coefficient for this reliability measure is between 0.65 and 0.8 (Taherdoost, 2016) and this research adopted the same coefficients. Table 3.3 presents the reliability test for all the three questionnaires of the study. The research assistants were also trained on data collection procedures during pretest.

Table 0.3: Reliability Test for Questionnaires

Test Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items (n)
Incentive travelers' preferences	0.78	12
Incentive travelers' organization management	0.75	12

preferences

Tourism pre-set conditions

0.76

10

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process followed a structured approach, ensuring compliance with all necessary research approvals and ethical guidelines. To enhance the study's validity and reliability, both quantitative data collection method, supplemented by qualitative data collected from secondary sources, was employed. Before commencing data collection, the necessary research authorizations were obtained from various regulatory bodies. Kenyatta University granted approval on 5th April 2019 (Appendix F), followed by research authorization from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) on 25th July 2019 (Appendix G). Additional approvals were secured from the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government on 21st August 2019 (Appendix H) and the Ministry of Education, State Department of Basic Education, also on 21st August 2019 (Appendix I).

With all approvals in place, the data collection process commenced on 2nd September 2019 and spanned a period of three months, concluding on 29th November 2019.

The study utilized structured questionnaires as the primary instrument for data collection. These were administered to three categories of respondents: incentive travelers, managers of organizations offering incentive travel, and managers of DMOs. To facilitate efficient data collection, questionnaires were distributed through both physical and electronic means. Research assistants assisted in administering the surveys, engaging respondents in hotels, travel agencies, and corporate offices. The

data collection process was conducted in three phases: Phase 1 (2nd – 13th September 2019): A pre-test of the research instruments was conducted to assess question clarity, ensure reliability, and refine the instruments before full-scale deployment. Phase 2 (16th September – 8th November 2019): The main data collection phase involved administering questionnaires through both in-person surveys and online distribution. This phase ensured broad participation across the identified respondent categories. Phase 3 (11th – 29th November 2019): A follow-up phase was undertaken to maximize response rates, clarify any ambiguous responses, and address missing data where necessary. Appendix J contains a table providing a summary of the data collection timeline.

3.8 Logistical and Ethical Consideration

3.8.1 Logistical Considerations

Before commencing data collection, the researcher obtained the necessary approvals and permits to ensure compliance with academic and regulatory requirements. Research authorization was granted by Kenyatta University Graduate School (Appendix F). Subsequently, a research permit was issued by the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) on 25th July 2019 (Appendix G), along with approvals from the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government (Appendix H) and the Ministry of Education, State Department of Basic Education (Appendix I).

To facilitate smooth data collection, selected participants were contacted in advance, and logistical arrangements were made to ensure accessibility to respondents in hotels, corporate offices, and travel agencies. The researcher and research assistants

coordinated visits and distributed questionnaires both physically and electronically to maximize response rates.

3.9.2 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines to protect participants' rights and ensure the integrity of the research process. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were fully informed of the study's objectives before completing the questionnaires. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants, and their identities remained anonymous to maintain confidentiality (Creswell, 2014).

Additionally, all data collected was handled with strict confidentiality and was used solely for academic purposes (Creswell, 2014). The researcher followed the ethical principles set by Kenyatta University and NACOSTI, ensuring that data collection, storage, and reporting were conducted in an ethical and responsible manner (Appendix F & G).

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis commenced immediately after data collection to ensure accuracy and completeness. The study employed both quantitative data analysis techniques, aligning with the research objectives. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Secondary data collected from published materials was analyzed and synthesized alongside primary data.

Data was collected through structured questionnaires (Appendices B, C, and D), which included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The levels of measurement used in the study were: Nominal: Categorical responses such as gender, organization type, and designation. Ordinal: Likert-scale responses assessing perceptions of pre-set conditions and destination attractiveness.

Closed-ended questions provided quantitative data, which was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (Creswell, 2014; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). The study used different analytical techniques based on the nature of data collected for each research objective. Table 3.4 provides a summary of the analyses performed for each objective.

Table 0.4: Data Analysis per Objective

Objective	Data Collected	Level of Measurement	Analysis Technique	Software Used
Objective 1: To determine whether tourism pre-set conditions in Nakuru County influence incentive travelers' preference for choice of destination.	Responses from incentive travelers on pre-set conditions and destination preference.	Ordinal (Likert scale responses), Nominal (categorical data).	Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, standard deviation), correlation analysis (Chi-square test).	SPSS v20.0
Objective 2: To determine the potential difference in preference among incentive travelers and their managers for choice of Nakuru County as a tourism destination.	Responses from incentive travelers and managers on destination preferences.	Ordinal (Likert scale responses), Nominal (categorical data).	Comparative analysis (independent t-test/ Chi-square test) to test for differences in preference.	SPSS v20.0

Cross-tabulation analysis was conducted to examine relationships between variables. This technique allowed for a comparative evaluation of incentive travelers' preferences across different demographic and organizational categories (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). The chi-square tests helped to determine the statistical significance of relationships between categorical variables (Creswell, 2014).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study based on the data collected. As previously stated, the overall purpose of the study was to explore and identify incentive travelers' preferences and their influence on destination choice in Nakuru County, Kenya to provide a reference for incentive travel promotion and development. The study involved a total of 460 participants, comprising 360 incentive travelers, 60 managers of incentive travelers, and 40 DMO managers, and their profiles have been presented in detail. The findings are organized according to the study's specific objectives to ensure a clear and structured presentation of results.

4.1 Response Rate

The study used three categories of participants and a questionnaire for each. The response rate obtained measured how well the targeted sample size was arrived at. The highest response rate was recorded by DMO managers (90%). Incentive travelers and their managers followed closely at 89% and 87% respectively. The average response rate was high, 89%. The response rates for various participants are outlined in Table 4.1

Table 0.1: Response Rate

Category	Expected Response	Actual Response	Percentage Response Rate
Incentive traveler earners	360	321	89%
Managers of incentive travelers	60	52	87%
DMO managers	40	36	90%
Total response/Average response rate	460	409	89%

Only fully completed questionnaires that underwent data cleaning were included in the response rate statistics. Incomplete questionnaires and those not returned by the closure of data collection were excluded. The majority of incomplete questionnaires came from incentive travelers, whereas most of the unreturned questionnaires were from managers of incentive travelers and DMO managers.

The study achieved a high response rate, primarily due to the proactive follow-up efforts by the researcher and research assistants. Frequent reminders and multiple contact attempts encouraged participation, reducing the number of unreturned questionnaires. Additionally, the respondents' interest in the study topic and its relevance to their field motivated higher engagement. The researcher also established rapport with key organizational contacts, which facilitated easier access to respondents and improved response rates. Furthermore, the use of both physical and electronic questionnaire distribution methods increased accessibility and convenience for participants, ensuring wider coverage and higher completion rates.

This study's response rate aligns with similar research, reinforcing its consistency with existing studies (IRF, 2017; Jacobs et al., 2016; Jönsson & Devonish, 2008; Kononenko, 2014; Mair et al., 2016). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012), a response rate of at least 70% is considered a good representation of the target population, while a response rate of 88% or higher indicates strong respondent preparedness. Furthermore, Brewer and Rojas (2012) suggest that any response rate above 50% is adequate for analysis. Given this, the high response rate in this study suggests that the data collection

procedures and instruments were both valid and reliable, minimizing the risk of biased statistics and ensuring that the study's findings are credible and generalizable.

4.2 Demographic Data of Participants

The questionnaires in Appendix B, C, and D were used to collect data from incentive travelers, managers of incentive travel earners, and DMO managers, respectively. The data was collected between September 16, 2019 and November 8, 2019. Part B of the questionnaires involved demographic information of the participants. The demographic information of the participants was summarized in form of frequencies and percentages then presented in Table 4.2.

Table 0.2: Demographic Information of Participants

Category	Bracket	Incentive Travel Earners		Incentive Travel Earners' Managers		DMO Managers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	183	57%	36	69%	26	73%
	Female	138	43%	16	31%	10	27%
	Total	321	100%	52	100%	36	100%
Nationality	Kenyan	101	31%	15	29%	33	91%
	International	220	69%	37	71%	3	9%
	Total	321	100%	321	100%	36	100%
Age	18-25yrs	55	17%	4	8%	4	10%
	26-30yrs	73	23%	9	17%	5	13%
	30-35yrs	76	24%	11	21%	8	23%
	36-40yrs	65	20%	13	25%	9	25%
	Above 40yrs	52	16%	15	29%	10	29%
	Total	321	100%	52	100%	36	100%
Level of education	Primary	3	1%	0	0%	0	0%
	Secondary	11	3%	0	0%	0	0%
	College	54	17%	8	15%	7	20%
	University	151	47%	27	52%	19	52%
	Post graduate	102	32%	17	33%	10	28%
	Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	321	100%	52	100%	36	100%	
Entity organization category	Corporate	95	30%	14	27%		
	NGO	88	27%	15	29%		
	Government	61	19%	10	19%		
	Private	77	24%	13	25%		
	Total	321	100%	52	100%		
Industry in which organization is in	Housing and construction	37	12%	6	12%		
	Banking	29	9%	3	6%		
	Processing and manufacturing	42	13%	7	13%		
	Medical	33	10%	6	11%		
	Tourism and hospitality	51	16%	7	14%		
	Governance	61	19%	11	21%		
	Academic	46	14%	8	15%		
	Other	22	7%	4	8%		
	Total	321	100%	52	100%		

4.2.1 Profile of Incentive Travel Earners

The study findings revealed that 57% of incentive travel earners were men, while 43% were women. This disparity may be attributed to the fact that many organizations employ a higher number of men than women. Similar findings have been reported in studies by Abdulkadir (2018), Amir et al. (2014), and Mwangi (2018). However, Jönsson and Devonish (2008) found slightly different results, indicating that women had stronger travel motivations than men, leading to a higher proportion of female travelers in their study.

A majority (69%) of the incentive travelers in this study were international visitors, while 31% were domestic travelers. This aligns with previous research findings, which suggest that Nakuru County attracts a higher number of international incentive travelers compared to local visitors. However, a study by Amir et al. (2014), which focused on tourism rather than incentive travel, found that domestic visitors (525) outnumbered international visitors (475) at a historical site, possibly because local sites hold greater cultural significance for domestic tourists.

Most incentive travel earners were between 30 and 35 years old (76 respondents), followed closely by those aged 26 to 30 years (73 respondents). The smallest age groups included respondents 40 years and above (52 respondents) and those between 18 and 25 years (55 respondents). These results indicate that middle-aged individuals are the primary beneficiaries of incentive travel, likely due to their active involvement in corporate activities and career development. Younger employees (18–25 years) may have fewer opportunities for incentive travel due to limited experience or lower employment rates in permanent positions. Similarly, older

individuals (40+ years) may travel less frequently as they have established their careers and organizations may prioritize younger employees for incentive trips.

These findings align with studies by Amir et al. (2014), which found that the 21–30 and 31–40 age brackets represented the largest share of travelers, and Jönsson and Devonish (2008), who noted that younger individuals are more likely to travel than older individuals, although their travel motivations may differ.

The majority of respondents (47%) were bachelor's degree holders, followed by postgraduate degree holders (32%). This supports the findings regarding age distribution, as bachelor's degree holders are typically in their early 20s to early 30s, actively engaging in career-building opportunities, including incentive travel.

In terms of organizational affiliation, most incentive travelers were from the corporate sector (30%), followed by NGOs (27%), private businesses (24%), and government organizations (19%). These findings suggest that incentive travel is widely utilized in the corporate sector, where companies invest in travel incentives to enhance employee engagement and competitiveness.

According to Lau (2016), corporations frequently use incentive travel as a tool for capacity-building and employee motivation. NGOs also leverage incentive travel for team-building, knowledge exchange, and strategic planning, which explains their significant representation in this study (TNS, 2004). However, the differences across organizational sectors were relatively small, with only an 11% gap between the highest (corporate) and lowest (government) user groups.

The data on organizational sectors closely correlates with the industries in which incentive travelers are employed. Findings indicate that 19% of incentive travelers

work in governance, while the banking sector accounts for only 9%. This suggests that governance-related industries contribute significantly to incentive travel, possibly due to the need for frequent policy engagements, networking, and leadership development programs. Meanwhile, lower participation from the banking sector implies that financial institutions may offer alternative incentives or have less emphasis on travel-based rewards.

4.2.2 Profile of Incentive Travelers Managers

The study findings showed that male managers (36 respondents, 69%) outnumbered female managers (16 respondents, 31%). This indicates that leadership positions in organizations that offer incentive travel are predominantly occupied by men, a trend that has been observed in similar studies (Abdulkadir, 2018; Mwangi, 2018).

A significant proportion (71%) of the managers of incentive travelers were international professionals, while 29% were local. This finding is consistent with the trend observed among incentive travelers, where international participants outnumbered local participants by a similar margin. This alignment reinforces the validity and reliability of the collected data.

The study found that most managers were above 40 years of age (29%), while the smallest group comprised those aged 18 to 25 years (8%). Managers aged 36 to 40 years (22%) and 30 to 35 years (18%) followed closely. These results align with real-world expectations, where higher management positions are typically held by individuals with more years of professional experience (Lau, 2016; TNS, 2004; Witt, Gammon, & White, 1992).

Most of the managers held a bachelor's degree (27 respondents, 45%), while a notable 28% (17 respondents) had postgraduate degrees. These findings suggest that higher academic qualifications may play a role in career advancement in organizations that offer incentive travel.

The distribution of managers across different sectors was relatively balanced, with NGOs having the highest number of participants (15 respondents), followed by corporate organizations (13 respondents), private businesses (12 respondents), and government organizations (10 respondents). The five-point difference between the highest and lowest sectoral representations indicates that incentive travel is utilized across various industries.

In terms of industry affiliation, most managers were from the governance sector (11 respondents, 18%), while the banking sector had the lowest representation (3 respondents, 5%). These findings mirror the trends observed among incentive travelers, reinforcing the industry-specific appeal of incentive travel. The dominance of governance-related industries suggests that organizations in this sector prioritize networking, leadership development, and capacity-building programs through incentive travel.

4.2.3 Profile of Destination Management Organizations Managers

The findings indicate that 73% of DMO managers were male, mirroring the trend observed among managers of incentive travelers, where men also constituted the majority. This finding aligns with a study by Mwangi (2018), which reported that male leaders are often preferred in DMOs due to their perceived flexibility in scheduling and capacity for labor-intensive tasks in tourism management.

Most of the DMO managers (33 respondents) were Kenyan nationals, while a small proportion (3 respondents) originated from other countries. This distribution highlights the dominance of local professionals in DMO leadership roles within Nakuru County.

The study found that the number of managers increased across the age brackets, with the 18 to 25 age group having the fewest managers (4 respondents), while those aged 40 and above represented the largest group (10 respondents). This pattern is expected, as managerial roles typically require extensive experience, leading to a higher concentration of older professionals in leadership positions. These findings are consistent with Mwangi (2018), who observed that years of experience are a key determinant in managerial appointments within DMOs.

In terms of academic qualifications, the majority of DMO managers held bachelor's degrees (19 respondents). This suggests that undergraduate education is the most common academic requirement for leadership roles in destination management organization.

4.3 Participants' Perspectives Regarding Incentive Travel

The study findings were consistent with the selected theoretical framework, UK Association Conference Attendance Decision Making Process, which underpins this research. A major strength of the study is that it employed a large sample size and structured questionnaires to collect data, ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings. These findings are consistent with previous research, reinforcing the study's robustness and applicability. Table 4.3 summarizes the perspectives of incentive travelers, their managers, and DMO managers regarding incentive travel and tourism pre-set conditions.

Table 0.3: Perspectives of Incentive Travelers, Managers of Incentive Travelers, and DMO Managers Regarding

Incentive Travelers				Incentive Travelers' Managers				DMO Managers						
Category	Bracket	Frequency	Percentage	Category	Bracket	Frequency	Percentage	Category	Bracket	Frequency	Percentage			
Have you participated in another incentive travel?	Yes	248	77%	Have you participated in arranging another incentive travel?	Yes	47	91%	On average, how many groups of incentive travelers do you receive in a year?	Below 10	0	0%			
	No	73	23%		No	5	9%		Between 10 and 30	4	11%			
	Total	321	100%		Total	52	100%		Between 30 and 60	24	66%			
Assign a number from 1 to 6 for each of the destination preferences to attraction sites below, rating how they influence your choice for an incentive travel destination (1 = least important and 6 = most important)	Destination Preferences	1	2	3	4	5	6	What is the average number of incentive travelers that you receive in a year?	Total	36	100%			
	Attractions	49	60	5	73	6	128		Below 400	0	0%			
	Accessibility to attraction sites	114	139	51	7	3			Between 400 and 1200	8	23%			
	Accommodation	73	51	76	65	52	4		Between 1200 and 2400	22	60%			
	Amenities	73	8	178	48	11	3		More than 2400	6	17%			
How is choice of destination done in your organization?	Activities	2	51	9	5	193	61	On a scale of 1 to 5, rate incentive travelers' destination preferences in your facility based on their feedback.	Total	36	100%			
	High per diem	10	12	2	123	52	122		Destination Preferences	1	2	3	4	5
	Total	321	321	321	321	321	321		Attractions	1	2	3	7	23
	Staffs' suggestions are considered by management	42	13%	Staffs' suggestions are considered by management	48	92%	Accessibility to attraction sites		21	4	7	2	2	
	Management makes choice solely	0	0	Management makes choice solely	6	9%	Accommodation		6	8	16	3	3	
Was this your destination of choice?	1 = least satisfied	0	0%	Was this your destination of choice?	1 = least satisfied	0	0%	On a scale of 1 to 5, which one area is in most need of improvement in your facility based on incentive travelers' feedback?	Amenities	6	19	6	1	4
	2 = satisfied	19	6%		2 = less satisfied	0	0%		Activities	2	3	4	23	4
	3 = satisfied	69	21%		3 = satisfied	6	9%		Total	36	36	36	36	36
	4 = more satisfied	151	47%		4 = more satisfied	30	57%		Destination Preferences	1	2	3	4	5
	5 = most satisfied	89	28%		5 = most satisfied	16	34%		Attractions	25	6	3	1	1
Pick one preference that you missed most in this destination?	Attraction	13	4%	Pick one preference that you missed most in this destination?	Attraction	52	100%	Which one area is in most need of improvement in your facility based on incentive travelers' managers' feedback?	Amenities	5	12	3	4	12
	Accessibility	19	6%		Attraction	13	25%		Accommodation	2	2	8	15	9
	Accommodation	71	22%		Accessibility	11	21%		Amenities	1	2	9	11	13
	Amenities	117	36%		Accommodation	8	15%		Total	36	36	36	36	36
	Activities	101	31%		Activities	9	17%		Category	Frequency	Percentage	Attraction	4	11%
Total	321	100%	Total	52	100%	Total	52	52	52	52	52			

4.3.1 Relationship Between Tourism Pre-set Conditions and Incentive

Travelers' Destination Preferences

This study's findings indicate that 77% of incentive travelers had participated in incentive travel. Most of these participants were aged 26 years and above and held college, bachelor's, or postgraduate degrees. The most highly rated motivating factors for choosing a destination were attractions, high per diem, and activities. Conversely, accessibility to attraction sites was rated as the least important factor, while amenities and accommodation were moderately considered (see Figure 4.1).

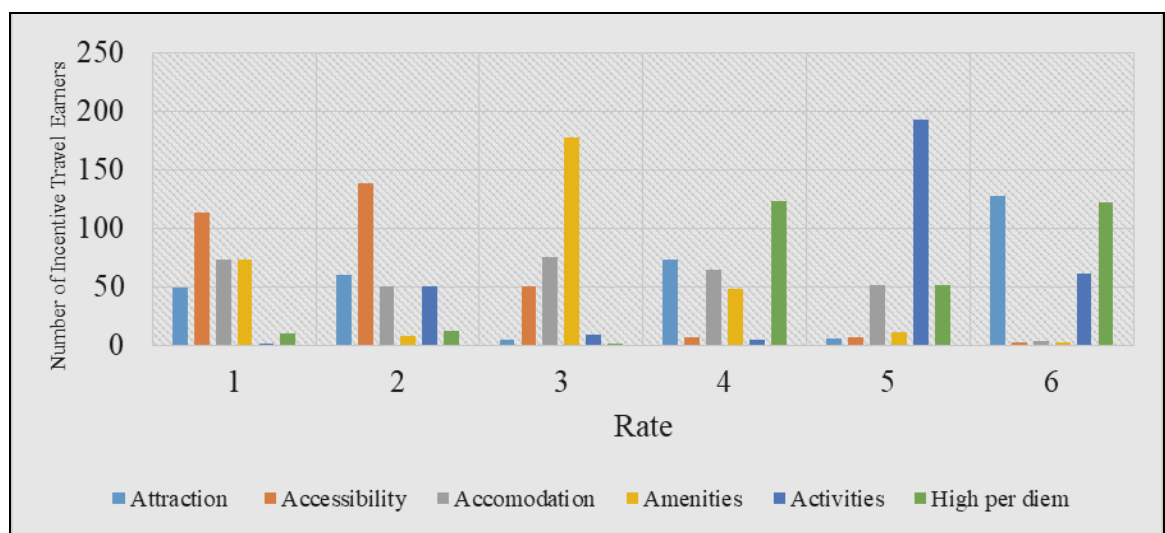


Figure 4.1: Incentive Travel Earners' Ratings for Destination Preferences

The responses of the incentive travel earners regarding their preferences are comparable with the perspectives of DMO managers. Figure 4.2 demonstrates that the DMO managers too confirmed that most managers of incentive travel earners mostly preferred attractions and activities to accommodation, amenities, and accessibility to attraction sites.

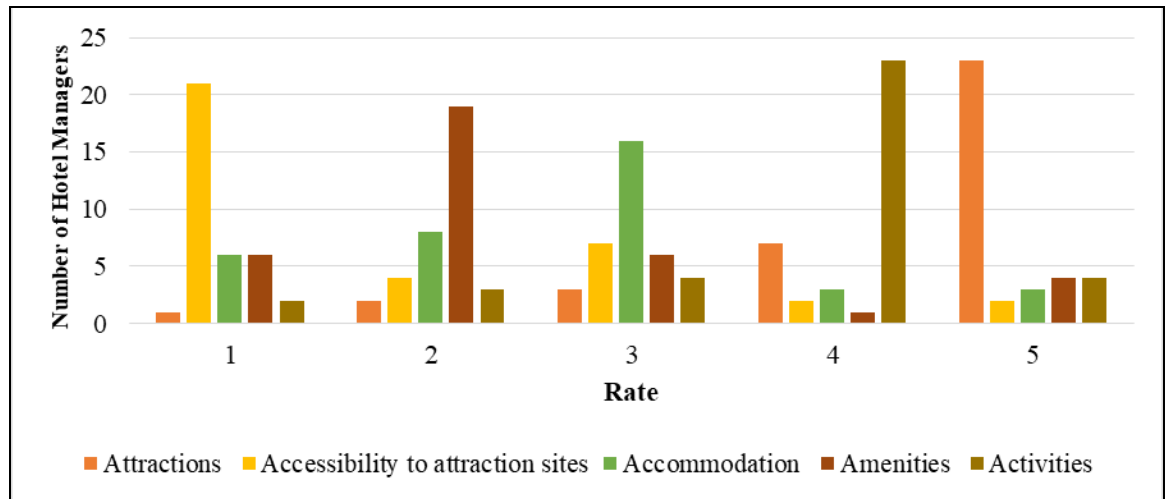


Figure 4. 2 Factors Attracting Incentive Travelers according to DMOs

Additionally, 87% of incentive travelers reported that they were consulted by their organizations when selecting a travel destination, and 59% indicated that they were in their destination of choice. Regarding satisfaction levels, 47% (151 respondents) expressed being highly satisfied with the destination, while 89 and 69 respondents were most satisfied or satisfied, respectively. However, 117 participants identified amenities and 101 cited activities as areas requiring improvement. Fewer respondents indicated a need for improvement in attractions (13 respondents) and accessibility to attraction sites (19 respondents).

Hotels reported receiving 30 to 60 groups of travelers annually, translating to 1,200 to 2,400 incentive travelers per year. On average, each group had 40 participants, consistent with prior research (TNS, 2004; Mair et al., 2016). Findings suggest that DMO managers perceive attractions and activities as the most desired elements by incentive travelers, while accessibility to attractions was the least valued factor. In contrast, managers of incentive travelers favored accommodation, amenities, and accessibility to attractions, while attraction sites were the least influential in their decision-making. DMO managers also reported that most incentive travelers wished

for improvements in accessibility to attractions (27%) and accommodation (23%), while activities and attractions were less regarded as areas requiring enhancement.

To test the relationship between tourism pre-set conditions and incentive travelers' destination preferences, a chi-square test was conducted, testing the null hypothesis: Ho: There is no association between tourism pre-set conditions and incentive traveler's preference for choice of destination in Nakuru County, Kenya (Appendix K). Chi-square test was appropriate in testing relationship between two variables that involve categorical data (both nominal and ordinal). In both cases, (i) incentive travelers' choice of Nakuru as their destination of choice (because of its preset conditions) ($p = 0.002$) and (ii) incentive travelers' rating satisfaction with destination ($p = 0.000$), the p -value was significantly less than 0.05, thus providing strong evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis. Therefore, this study found a strong relationship between incentive travelers' choice of Nakuru as their destination of choice because of its preset conditions, and their satisfaction level with the destination of choice.

4.3.2 Differences in Destination Preference Between Incentive Travelers and Their Managers

This section presents findings related to the second objective: To analyze the differences in destination preference between incentive travel earners and their managers when choosing Nakuru County, Kenya, as a tourism destination.

4.3.2.1 Incentive Travel Earners' Destination Preferences

Seventy-seven percent of incentive travelers had previously participated in incentive traveling. Based on demographic data, most travelers were aged 26 years and above or held college, bachelor's, or postgraduate degrees.

Among the various destination preferences, incentive travel earners highly rated attractions, high per diem, and activities. Conversely, accessibility to attraction sites was the least considered motivation factor for destination choice, and a significant portion of travelers disregarded amenities and accommodation.

A majority (87%) of incentive travelers stated that their organizations consulted them about preferred travel destinations. Additionally, 59% of respondents indicated that they were in their destination of choice. Of those surveyed, 47% (151 respondents) reported being highly satisfied with their destination, while a significant number (89 and 69 respondents, respectively) were either most satisfied or satisfied. However, most participants indicated that amenities (117 respondents) and activities (101 respondents) needed improvement. Attractions (13 respondents) and accessibility to attraction sites (19 respondents) were the least missed features at their destinations.

4.3.2.2 Managers of Incentive Travel Earners' Destination Preferences

Nearly all managers (91%) reported having experience in organizing incentive travels. While high per diem was an important factor, managers rated most destination preferences moderately, with accommodation and amenities receiving significantly high ratings. Consequently, managers considered amenities and accommodation as the most influential factors in selecting a destination. Accessibility to attraction sites, activities, and attractions were ranked moderately in order of influence. High per diem had the least impact on their decision-making process (see Figure 4.3).

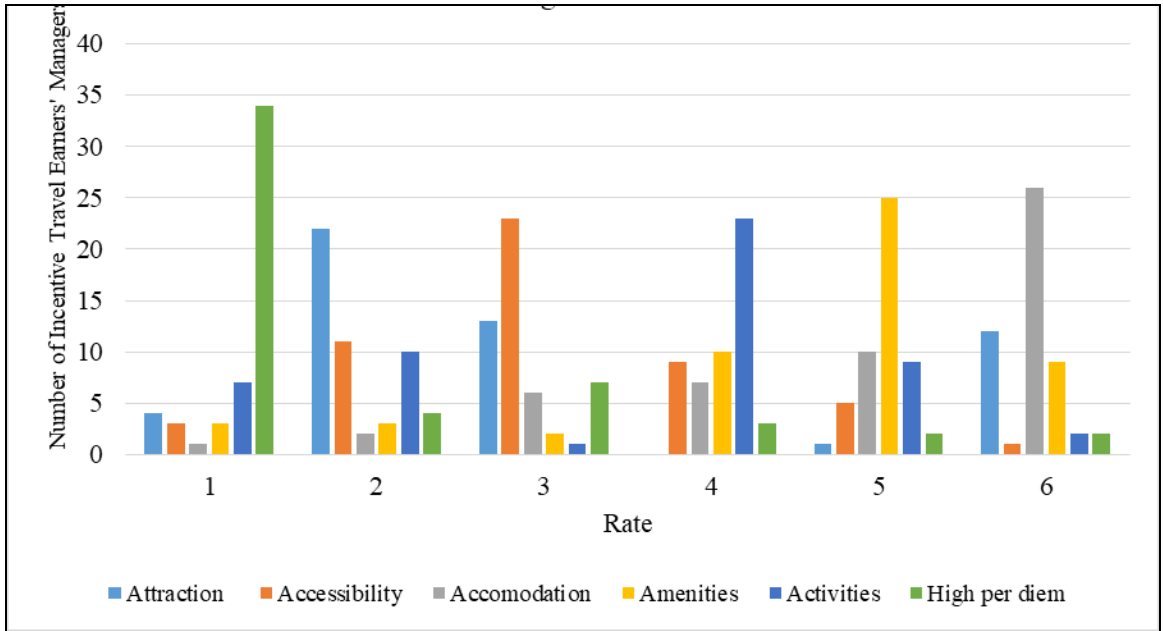


Figure 4.3: Destination Preferences According to Managers of Incentive Travel Earners

The responses of managers of incentive travel earners regarding their preferences are comparable with the perspectives of DMO managers. Figure 4.4 demonstrates that the DMO managers too confirmed that most managers of incentive travel earners preferred accommodation and amenities in their facilities. Activities and accessibility to attraction sites also got high counts.

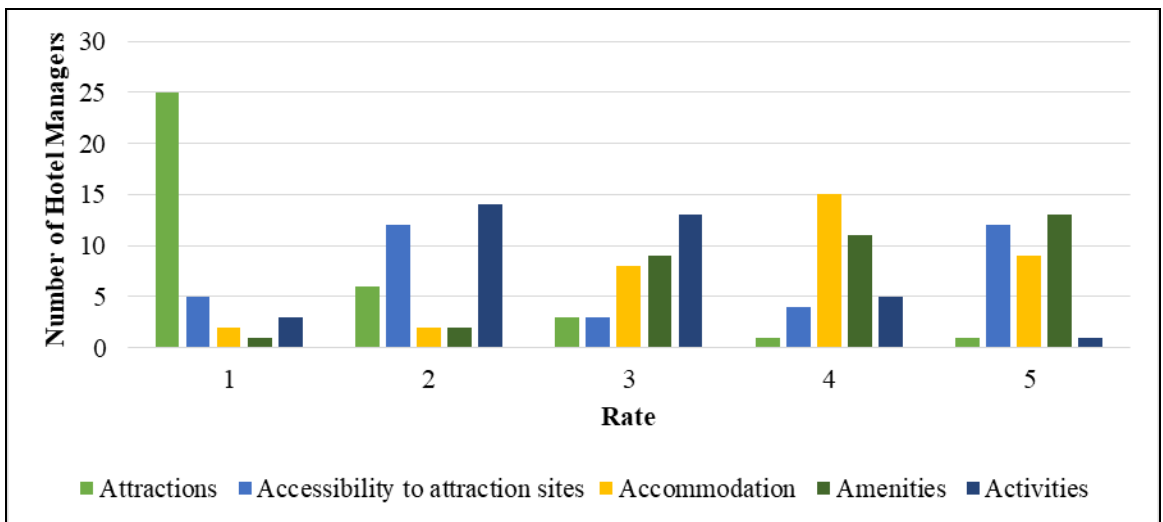


Figure 4.4: Destination Preferences of Incentive Travelers's Managers**According to DMO Managers**

Almost all managers (92%) stated that they consulted staff members before making destination decisions. More than half (56%) confirmed that the visited destination was their preferred choice, with 57% expressing satisfaction with the selected destination. When asked about missing features in their visited destinations, 25% of managers mentioned attractions, while activities and accessibility each accounted for 21%. Amenities and accommodation were the least missed aspects, with 17% and 15% of managers citing them, respectively.

A chi-square test was performed to examine the relationship between the preference of incentive travelers and their managers, testing the null hypothesis: H₀: There is no significant relationship in preference among incentive travelers' and their managers in choice of Nakuru County, Kenya destination. (Appendix K). Chi-square test was appropriate in testing relationship between two independent variables: incentive travelers' preference & incentive travel managers' preference. The *p*-value found (*p* = 0.704) is significantly greater than 0.05, thus providing strong evidence supporting the null hypothesis, that there is no significant relationship in preference among incentive travelers' and their managers in choice of Nakuru County as their destination of choice. Each group chooses a destination independently based on their particular motivations.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The researcher sought to explore and identify incentive travelers' preferences and how they influence choice of destination in Nakuru County, Kenya in order to provide reference for incentive travel promotion and development. This chapter discusses the findings, synthesizing the findings with reviewed literature. The discussion is done in the order of the order of the study's objectives.

5.1 Tourism Pre-set Conditions and Incentive Travelers' Preferences in Nakuru

Various factors influence tourists' choice of destination, necessitating the alignment of incentive programs with the specific attributes of the selected location to effectively meet travelers' expectations. Ensuring that travelers derive both tangible satisfaction and the fulfillment of their anticipated experiences is crucial for the success of such programs. According to Jacobs et al. (2016), establishing a strong and appealing destination image plays a fundamental role in fostering customer loyalty and enhancing the actualization of travel experiences.

Jacobs et al. (2016) conducted a study in which incentive travelers were asked whether they had previously participated in an incentive travel program. This question was designed to trigger their recollection of past experiences, providing a background perspective that would aid in responding to subsequent questions. The findings revealed that a majority (77%) of incentive travelers had prior participation in incentive travel, indicating that most respondents possessed firsthand experience. However, this does not imply that those without prior experience lacked expectations regarding their visit (Jacobs et al., 2016).

An incentive travel destination encompasses more than just a physical location offering products and services; it consists of multiple components that shape travelers' perceptions and experiences (Jönsson & Devonish, 2008). Feedback from incentive travelers is crucial in informing strategic decisions aimed at enhancing the appeal and competitiveness of destinations (Lau, 2013). When surveyed, travelers identified several key factors influencing their choice of destination, including high per diem allowances, engaging activities, and attractive sites (Mair et al., 2016).

Per diem, in this context, refers to financial allowances provided to travelers to cover daily expenses at their chosen destination (Florence et al., 2015). Perspectives on the significance of per diem vary among industry stakeholders, particularly between travelers and their corporate managers. While incentive travelers prioritize activities and attractions, corporate managers often emphasize cost-related aspects and logistical feasibility when selecting destinations. Studies comparing the views of incentive travelers and their managers suggest discrepancies in their preferences, particularly concerning the availability of amenities and accommodation, which travelers often rate lower in importance (Florence et al., 2015; Mawioo & Kagiri, 2015).

Addressing these discrepancies and improving the quality of amenities and accommodation can significantly enhance the incentive travel experience, leading to increased satisfaction and higher destination turnover (World Bank, 2010; UNWTO, 2016). In Kenya, and particularly in Nakuru County, such improvements could strengthen the region's position as a competitive incentive travel destination. Strategic investments in infrastructure and tailored tourism offerings are essential in

aligning the industry's growth with the evolving expectations of incentive travelers (World Bank, 2010; UNWTO, 2016).

Zhou (2005) examined the attributes that attract international tourists to Cape Town, South Africa, identifying key factors such as cultural richness, monetary stability, landscape, safety, availability of hospitality services, and recreational activities. These elements contribute to destination appeal and influence traveler decision-making. One of the primary attractions for tourists is the uniqueness and authenticity of a destination, as visitors often seek novel experiences that differ from their usual environment. Nakuru County offers a compelling tourism experience due to its diverse landscapes, historical sites, and vibrant cultural heritage (Florence et al., 2015; Mawioo & Kagiri, 2015).

Literature highlights the value of authenticity in tourism, emphasizing that travelers are increasingly drawn to destinations that offer distinctive and immersive experiences (Hudson, 2008). The demand for wildlife-based tourism has grown in recent years, with tourists showing a heightened interest in conservation areas and national parks. Nakuru County, home to Lake Nakuru National Park, is internationally recognized for its rich biodiversity, including endangered species such as the white and black rhino, as well as millions of flamingos and other bird species (Mair et al., 2016). Such attributes position Nakuru as a competitive tourism destination, requiring continued investment in infrastructure, marketing, and conservation to sustain its appeal.

Kenya's tourism sector possesses immense potential that remains underutilized, yet, if effectively managed, it could significantly stimulate economic growth and position the country as a leading international tourism destination. Nakuru County, in

particular, stands out as an ideal choice for visitors seeking diverse leisure experiences and natural attractions. The county is renowned for its rich wildlife resources, making it a prime destination for nature and conservation-based tourism (Florence et al., 2015; Mawioo & Kagiri, 2015).

Among Nakuru County's key attractions is Lake Nakuru National Park, which serves as a vital hub for wildlife enthusiasts. The park is home to an impressive variety of species, including the endangered white and black rhino, as well as one of the world's most remarkable ornithological spectacles. Millions of Greater and Lesser flamingos, alongside numerous other bird species, inhabit the lake, making it a globally recognized site for birdwatching (Mair et al., 2016). The park's unique biodiversity and scenic landscapes further enhance its appeal, positioning it as a strong competitor in global tourism.

To fully harness Nakuru County's tourism potential, strategic investments in infrastructure, marketing, and conservation efforts are essential. Strengthening tourism-related services and promoting the county's unique natural assets will ensure sustained growth, improve global competitiveness, and maximize economic benefits for the region (World Bank, 2010; UNWTO, 2016).

Kenya's tourism industry, like many others globally, faces significant security challenges that impact its growth and attractiveness. Incidents such as ethnic clashes, political instability, and terrorist attacks have historically disrupted the sector, deterring both domestic and international travelers. Notable security concerns include the post-election violence of 2017, the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombing, the 2013 Westgate Mall attack, and the bombing of the Paradise Hotel in Kikambala. Such events create negative perceptions about Kenya's safety, undermining efforts to

promote destinations like Nakuru County as secure and appealing for tourism (World Bank, 2010; UNWTO, 2016).

The findings of this study reinforce the importance of security in influencing tourists' decisions. Travelers prioritize destinations where their safety is guaranteed, and any perception of insecurity significantly reduces the appeal of a location. To sustain and enhance Nakuru County's competitiveness in the incentive tourism market, strategic investments in security infrastructure and crisis management are necessary. Implementing comprehensive security measures not only reassures tourists but also strengthens confidence among incentive travel sponsors and organizations, ultimately driving higher visitor numbers (Florence et al., 2015; Mawioo & Kagiri, 2015).

Additionally, insights from DMO managers highlight the role of pre-set conditions in shaping incentive travelers' experiences. Most DMO managers (60) reported hosting between 1,200 and 2,400 visitors annually, indicating that their destinations are perceived as favorable. Responses from Question 7 of the DMO managers' questionnaire revealed that managers prioritize attractions and activities when designing incentive travel packages. This aligns with incentive travelers' preferences, as the majority also emphasized attractions and activities as key factors in their destination choices.

Furthermore, Question 9 of the DMO managers' questionnaire explored areas requiring improvement from the perspective of incentive travelers. The findings indicate that travelers identified amenities, accessibility, and accommodation as the primary aspects in need of enhancement. These results suggest that while Nakuru County offers attractive incentive travel experiences, addressing infrastructural gaps

and improving service quality could further solidify its position as a leading tourism destination (Mair et al., 2016; UNWTO, 2016).

Findings from this study indicate that incentive travel earners expressed high levels of satisfaction with attractions and activities, which DMO managers have prioritized over other destination features. This aligns with responses from Question 9 of the incentive travelers' questionnaire, where the majority of respondents reported being either more satisfied (151), most satisfied (89), or satisfied (69) with their chosen destination.

These findings are consistent with prior research conducted by Mair et al. (2016), which highlights the significant role of leisure in incentive travel. According to their study, incentive travelers spend approximately 70% of their trip engaging in leisure activities. Meeting planners, comparable to DMO managers in this context, are responsible for ensuring that all elements of an incentive travel program are meticulously organized to enhance traveler satisfaction. Similarly, Jacobs et al. (2016) emphasized that incentive planners aim to structure all aspects of travel to encourage return visits, further reinforcing the importance of well-curated travel experiences.

Mair et al. (2016) identified key elements that contribute to high satisfaction rates among incentive travel earners, including accommodation, transfers, entertainment, contracting, site inspections, marketing design, and invoicing. Lau (2016) further emphasized that destinations should be equipped with essential facilities such as exhibition booths, high-quality accommodation, diverse food and beverage options, theaters, ballrooms, and well-designed messaging centers. These factors collectively contribute to a seamless and rewarding incentive travel experience, underscoring the

need for continuous investment in Nakuru County's tourism infrastructure to maintain its appeal as a leading incentive travel destination.

Therefore, incentive travel earners primarily prefer activities and attractions, which constitute the destination's preset conditions that DMO managers have strategically provided. However, it is important to note that a majority of the incentive travel earners in this study were male, international travelers, aged between 26 and 40 years, and holders of undergraduate or postgraduate degrees. Consequently, factors such as gender, nationality, age, and education level may have influenced their travel decisions.

The findings of Jönsson and Devonish (2008) support this assumption. Although their study focused on tourism in general, they found that nationality, gender, and age influence travel motivation. For instance, older individuals (56 years and above) exhibited significantly stronger cultural motivations to travel compared to younger individuals (18 to 35 years) (Jönsson & Devonish, 2008). While Jönsson and Devonish (2008) found that gender did not significantly influence tourism motivation, they acknowledged previous research indicating that males and females have different travel motivations. For example, males tend to prefer recreation and activity-based experiences, whereas female tourists have stronger relaxation and escape-driven motives.

Furthermore, the finding that DMO managers satisfactorily met the expectations of incentive travelers contradicts the study's hypothesis, which stated that there is no association between tourism pre-set conditions and incentive traveler's preference for choice of destination in Nakuru County, Kenya. The Chi-square test found *p*-value significantly less than 0.05 in both (i) incentive travelers' choice of Nakuru as their

destination of choice (because of its preset conditions) ($p = 0.002$) and (ii) incentive travelers' rating satisfaction with destination ($p = 0.000$), providing strong evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis. This study, therefore, confirms that a significant relationship exists between incentive travelers' preferences and the tourism preset conditions influencing their choice of Nakuru County, Kenya.

5.3 Differences in Destination Preferences Between Incentive Travel Earners and Their Managers

Most managers of incentive travel earners (91%) reported having prior experience in arranging incentive travel, indicating their familiarity with the industry (Jacobs et al., 2016). This suggests that their responses are reliable; however, the remaining 9% should not be assumed to lack awareness of industry operations.

As illustrated in Figure 4.3, the majority of incentive travel earners' managers prioritized amenities, activities, and accommodation, respectively. Attractions and accessibility to attractions were secondary considerations, while a high per diem ranked lowest in their preferences.

Similarly, Figure 4.4 demonstrates that DMO managers shared comparable perspectives. They confirmed that most incentive travel earners' managers prioritized accommodation and amenities when selecting destinations. Activities and accessibility to attraction sites were also key considerations. This alignment indicates that DMO managers have structured their offerings around these key factors, recognizing them as essential preset conditions for incentive travel services.

Responses to Question 10 in the DMO managers' questionnaire, which explored areas requiring improvement in preset conditions, revealed that DMO managers were generally satisfied with accommodation, amenities, and activities. However, they

identified attractions and accessibility as areas needing enhancement. Notably, 60% of hotels reported hosting between 1,200 and 2,400 visitors annually, suggesting that their well-established preset conditions contribute to their brand appeal. Furthermore, the findings indicate that most DMO managers perceived incentive travel earners' managers as satisfied with the existing accommodation and amenities.

The reviewed literature related to this study supports these findings. According to Jacobs et al. (2016), company policies play a significant role in guiding destination selection by managers. Organizations tend to focus more on the hospitality aspect of incentive travel programs, whereas incentive travel earners are more enthusiastic about the tourism experience. For instance, Mair et al. (2016) noted that American and Australian incentive planners are particularly cautious about tax regulations, which mandate the inclusion of business-related activities—such as half-day meetings or site inspections—in incentive travel programs. Consequently, companies prioritize superior accommodation, accessibility, and amenities (e.g., five-star hotels) over attractions and leisure activities (Jacobs et al., 2016; Mair et al., 2016).

Nevertheless, as incentive travel serves as both a reward and motivational tool, companies strive to select destinations and organize trips that offer memorable experiences for their employees. At the same time, hotels actively adapt their services to meet the expectations of both incentive travel earners and their managers, which explains the high satisfaction rates reported by managers in this study.

A significant contrast emerges between the destination preferences of incentive travel earners and their managers. As illustrated in Figure 5.1, incentive travel earners prioritize high per diem, activities, and attractions over accessibility, accommodation, and amenities. In contrast, Figure 4.8 demonstrates that managers

value accommodation, amenities, and accessibility to attractions more than activities, attractions, and high per diem.

These findings suggest that incentive travel earners are primarily drawn to elements that enhance the leisure and tourism aspects of the trip, as opposed to logistical conveniences (Jönsson & Devonish, 2008; Lau, 2013; Mair et al., 2016). This preference explains their emphasis on high per diem allowances, as they anticipate increased spending opportunities during their travels. Additionally, incentive planners often select high-cost destinations due to the perception that a prestigious location enhances the professional image of the travelers (Lau, 2016; Jacobs et al., 2016; Mair et al., 2016). Consequently, incentive travel earners tend to spend more in expensive destinations that align with this image.

Managers of incentive travel earners prioritize factors that ensure comfort and facilitate the achievement of the trip's objectives. According to Mair et al. (2014), incentive travel organizers aim to enhance corporate performance and employee morale by incorporating a business-leisure component into the trips. Their low prioritization of high per diem suggests that they either prefer cost-effective trips or operate within strict company budget constraints (Jacobs et al., 2016).

However, a minority of managers who prioritize high per diem allowances recognize that employees may desire to spend during their stay in premium destinations. Thus, higher per diem allocations contribute to a more enjoyable and memorable experience for incentive travel earners. DMO managers play a crucial role in confirming the alignment of preferences between incentive travel earners and their managers regarding destination preset conditions. Given the high satisfaction levels

reported by both groups, it is evident that DMO managers actively strive to meet the expectations of both incentive travel earners and their managers.

One of the key findings of this study is that a majority of incentive travel earners (279, 87%) acknowledged that their suggestions were considered by management when selecting a destination. Similarly, a significant proportion of managers (48, 92%) confirmed that employee input was factored into decision-making. Additionally, 59% of incentive travel earners and 56% of managers reported that the chosen destination aligned with their personal preference. These findings indicate that incentive travel earners have a notable influence on the selection of Nakuru County as a preferred destination.

Furthermore, the study finds that incentive travel earners tend to prioritize high per diem, attractions, and activities, while their managers place greater emphasis on accommodation, amenities, and accessibility—factors that travel earners generally rank as secondary considerations. This confirms the study's second hypothesis, which states there is no significant relationship in preference among incentive travelers' and their managers in choice of Nakuru County, Kenya destination. The Chi-square test on the relationship found a significantly great p -value ($p = 0.704$), establishing a clear distinction between the destination preferences of the two groups. Each group chooses a destination independently based on their particular motivations. This theory of perceptual contrast explains that this is as a result of each group seeking to maximize their benefits from the travel experience (Robbins & Judge, 2014).

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study's outcomes, presents the conclusions drawn from the results, and offers recommendations focused on policy formulation and areas for further research.

6.1 Objective 1

The first objective of the study was to determine the relationship between tourism pre-set conditions in Nakuru County, Kenya, and incentive travelers' destination preferences. Findings indicate that preset conditions such as accommodation, amenities, accessibility, attractions, and activities significantly influence the choice of Nakuru as a destination. Incentive travel earners prioritized attractions, activities, and high per diem, while their managers placed greater emphasis on accommodation, amenities, and accessibility, but both groups reported high satisfaction with the preset conditions, suggesting that Nakuru County meets key expectations for incentive travel. The study established that DMO managers in Nakuru County have strategically aligned preset tourism conditions with market demands, leading to the high satisfaction rates among both travel earners and their managers. The study further established that preset conditions play a crucial role in shaping the travel experience, aligning with existing literature that highlights the importance of well-developed tourism infrastructure in destination choice. Consequently, the findings confirm that there is a positive relationship between tourism preset conditions and incentive travelers' destination preferences, reinforcing the need for continued improvements in infrastructure, accessibility, and tourism offerings to sustain Nakuru's attractiveness as an incentive travel destination.

6.2 Objective 2

The second objective of the study was to determine the differences in destination preference between incentive travel earners and their managers when choosing Nakuru County, Kenya, as a tourism destination. Findings revealed a clear contrast in priorities between the two groups. Incentive travel earners prioritized attractions, activities, and high per diem, indicating a preference for leisure and tourism experiences. On the other hand, their managers emphasized accommodation, amenities, and accessibility, reflecting their focus on comfort, corporate policy, and budget constraints. Despite these differences, both groups expressed high satisfaction with the destination's preset conditions, suggesting that Nakuru County effectively caters to their diverse expectations. The study further established that incentive travel earners have a significant influence in destination selection, as their suggestions are often considered by management. These findings confirm that differences exist in destination preferences between incentive travel earners and their managers, supporting the theory of perpetual contrast. To enhance Nakuru's appeal as an incentive travel destination, tourism stakeholders should continue balancing corporate travel requirements with enriching tourism experiences that satisfy both groups.

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 Objective 1

Objective 1 examined the relationship between tourism preset conditions in Nakuru County, Kenya, and incentive travelers' destination preferences and the following three recommendations are proposed:

- i. While Nakuru County offers favorable preset conditions such as accommodation and amenities, the study found that incentive travelers highly prioritize attractions and activities. To increase its attractiveness as an incentive travel destination, stakeholders should invest in diversifying and improving tourism experiences such as adventure tourism, cultural experiences, and exclusive corporate retreats to align with incentive travelers' expectations.
- ii. Accessibility was identified as a key factor in destination choice, yet some areas in Nakuru still face challenges in transportation and ease of access. The county should work on enhancing road networks, air travel options, and transport services to make incentive travel more seamless. Additionally, streamlining travel logistics, such as airport transfers and guided tour arrangements, would improve the overall experience for both incentive travel earners and their managers.
- iii. Given the varying preferences between incentive travelers and their managers, DMOs and tourism stakeholders should create customized packages that cater to both leisure and corporate aspects of incentive travel. These packages should integrate high-quality accommodation, engaging activities, and business-friendly amenities, ensuring that Nakuru remains a preferred destination for both travelers and corporate decision-makers.

6.3.2 Objective 2

Objective 2 involved analyzing the differences in destination preferences between incentive travel earners and their managers when choosing Nakuru County, Kenya, as a tourism destination and the following three recommendations are proposed:

- i. The study revealed that incentive travel earners prioritize attractions, activities, and high per diem, while their managers focus more on accommodation, amenities, and accessibility. To address these differences, DMOs and tourism stakeholders should design balanced packages that integrate both exciting tourism experiences and essential corporate facilities. This ensures that destinations in Nakuru appeal to both groups, enhancing satisfaction and travel experiences.
- ii. The study found that employees' suggestions are often considered in the destination selection process; however, there is still a need for structured engagement between incentive travelers and decision-makers. To achieve this, organizations should establish feedback mechanisms, conduct surveys, or hold consultative forums. These initiatives will help ensure that both parties' preferences are incorporated, leading to more tailored and effective incentive travel experiences.
- iii. Since managers often focus on cost-effective travel within company policies, while incentive travelers seek high-end, memorable experiences, Nakuru's tourism marketers should develop strategic messaging that highlights both affordability and prestige. Promoting luxury experiences within budget-friendly corporate packages can make Nakuru more competitive as an incentive travel destination. Additionally, partnering with corporate event planners can help position Nakuru as an attractive option for incentive programs.

6.3.3 Recommendations for Further Research

Future research should explore the supply-demand dynamics of incentive tourism by incorporating diverse promotional elements such as public relations, direct

marketing, and personal selling. Since this study focused on participants who had already attended an incentive event, future studies should also gather insights from potential travelers who have not yet visited these destinations. Data collection methods such as surveys and interviews with this target group would provide a broader understanding of incentive travel preferences and decision-making factors.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Introductory Letter

Harrison,
P.O. Box 2030 – 60400,
Embu, Kenya.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Re: Request to Participate in Tourism Research

I am a final year master's student at Kenyatta University pursuing a Master's Degree in Tourism Management. In order to fulfill my degree, I am required to write a research paper and in accordance. I have decided to write a thesis on the role of incentive travel program preferences in influencing destination in Nakuru, County Kenya. The specific objective includes: to profile the dynamics of incentive travel product as offered in Nakuru County, Kenya, to explore the pre-set conditions that influence travel decision choice amongst the incentive travelers in Nakuru County, Kenya and to examine the difference in preference of the incentive travel earners and organization management Nakuru, Kenya.

For this research to be successful, I will need your assistance in answering the questions attached. The information you give will be used for academic purposes and will be treated with strict confidence.

Yours Sincerely

Harrison.

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Incentive Travel Earners

TOPIC: INCENTIVE TRAVELERS PREFERENCE AND THE INFLUENCE ON DESTINATION CHOICE IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA.

PART A: FOR ADMINSTRATIVE USE

- Date of receipt of questionnaire:
- Coded respondent's identifier:

PART B: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Entity Gender Category (Please tick)
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
2. Entity Nationality Category (Please tick)
 - a) Kenyan
 - b) International (Please specify).....
3. Age (Please tick)
 - a) 18-25yrs
 - b) 26-30yrs
 - c) 30-35yrs
 - d) 36-40yrs
 - e) Above 40yrs
4. Level of education
 - a) Primary
 - b) Secondary
 - c) College
 - d) University
 - e) Post graduate
 - f) Other (Please specify).....
5. Entity organization category (Please tick)
 - a) Corporate
 - b) NGO
 - c) Government
 - d) Private (Please Specify).....
6. Which industry is your organization in? (Please tick)
 - a) Housing and construction
 - b) Banking
 - c) Processing and manufacturing
 - d) Medical
 - e) Tourism and hospitality
 - f) Governance
 - g) Academic
 - h) Other (please Specify)

PART C: INCENTIVE PROGRAM VS PRESET CONDITIONS

7. Have you participated in another incentive travel?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
8. Assign a particular number from 1 to 6 for each of the destination preferences below, rating how they influence your choice for an incentive travel destination (1 = least important and 6 = most important)

	Destination Preferences	1	2	3	4	5	6
i.	Attractions (variety of tourist attractions: place, nature, lakes, culture, serenity, wildlife, nightlife, beach, monuments etc.)						
ii.	Accessibility to attraction sites						
iii.	Accommodation (high quality of place to stay during the event)						
iv.	Amenities (high quality of services required to make the event comfortable, such as, food, security, drinking water, sanitary, spa, etc.).						
v.	Activities (variety of activities which a destination holds such as nature walks, history & architecture, boating, views, health, etc.)						
vi.	High per diem						

9. How is choice of destination done in your organization?
- a) Staffs' suggestions are considered by management
 - b) Management makes choice solely
 - c) Others (please specify)
10. Was this your destination of choice?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
11. Rate your satisfaction with this destination on a scale of 1 to 5. (1 = least satisfied, 2 = less satisfied, 3 = satisfied, 4 = more satisfied, 5 = most satisfied).
- a) 1 = least satisfied
 - b) 2 = less satisfied
 - c) 3 = satisfied
 - d) 4 = more satisfied
 - e) 5 = most satisfied
12. Pick one preference that you missed most in this destination?
- a) Attraction
 - b) Accessibility
 - c) Accommodation
 - d) Amenities
 - e) Activities

Appendix C: Questionnaire for Incentive Travel Earners' Managers

TOPIC: INCENTIVE TRAVELERS PREFERENCE AND THE INFLUENCE ON DESTINATION CHOICE IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA.

PART A: FOR ADMINSTRATIVE USE

- Date of receipt of questionnaire:
- Coded respondent's identifier:

PART B: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Entity Gender Category (Please tick)
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
2. Entity Nationality Category (Please tick)
 - a) Kenyan
 - b) International (Please specify).....
3. Age (Please tick)
 - a) 18-25yrs
 - b) 26-30yrs
 - c) 30-35yrs
 - d) 36-40yrs
 - e) Above 40yrs
4. Level of education
 - a) College
 - b) University
 - c) Post graduate
 - a) Others (Please specify).....
5. Entity organization category (Please tick)
 - b) Corporate
 - c) NGO
 - d) Governance
 - e) Other (Please Specify).....
6. Which industry is your organization in? (Please tick)
 - a) Housing and construction
 - b) Banking
 - c) Processing and manufacturing
 - d) Medical
 - e) Tourism and hospitality
 - f) Governance
 - g) Academic
 - h) Other (please Specify)

PART C: INCENTIVE PROGRAM VS PRESET CONDITIONS

7. Have you participated in arranging another incentive travel?
 - c) Yes
 - d) No
8. Assign a particular number from 1 to 6 for each of the destination preferences below, rating how they influence your choice for an incentive travel destination (1 = least important and 6 = most important)

	Destination Preferences	1	2	3	4	5	6
vii.	Attractions (variety of tourist attractions: place, nature, lakes, culture, serenity, wildlife, nightlife, beach, monuments etc.)						
viii.	Accessibility to attraction sites						
ix.	Accommodation (high quality of place to stay during the event)						
x.	Amenities (high quality of services required to make the event comfortable, such as, food, security, drinking water, sanitary, spa, etc.).						
xi.	Activities (variety of activities which a destination holds such as nature walks, history & architecture, boating, views, health, etc.)						
xii.	High per diem						

9. How is choice of destination made in your organization?

- a) Staffs' suggestions are considered by management []
 - b) Management makes choice solely []
 - c) Others []
- (please specify)

10. Was this your destination of choice?

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

11. Rate your satisfaction with this destination on a scale of 1 to 5. (1 = least satisfied, 2 = less satisfied, 3 = satisfied, 4 = more satisfied, 5 = most satisfied).

- a) 1 = least satisfied []
- b) 2 = less satisfied []
- c) 3 = satisfied []
- d) 4 = more satisfied []
- e) 5 = most satisfied []

12. Pick one preference that you missed most in this destination?

- a) Attraction []
- b) Accessibility []
- c) Accommodation []
- d) Amenities []
- e) Activities []

Appendix D: Questionnaire for DMO Managers

TOPIC: INCENTIVE TRAVELERS PREFERENCE AND THE INFLUENCE ON DESTINATION CHOICE IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA.

PART A: FOR ADMINSTRATIVE USE

- Date of receipt of questionnaire:
- Coded respondent’s identifier:

PART B: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Entity Gender Category (Please tick)
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
2. Entity Nationality Category (Please tick)
 - a) Kenyan
 - b) International (Please specify).....
3. Age (Please tick)
 - a) 18-25yrs
 - b) 26-30yrs
 - c) 30-35yrs
 - d) 36-40yrs
 - e) Above 40yrs
4. Level of education
 - a) College
 - b) University
 - c) Post graduate
 - d) Others (Please specify).....

PART C: INCENTIVE PROGRAM OFFERED

5. On average, how many groups of incentive travelers do you receive in a year?
 - a) Below 10
 - b) Between 10 and 30
 - c) Between 30 and 60
 - d) More than 60
6. What is the average number of incentive travelers that you receive in a year?
 - a) Below 400
 - b) Between 400 and 1200
 - c) Between 1200 and 2400
 - d) More than 2400
7. On a scale of 1 to 5, rate incentive travelers’ destination preferences in your facility based on their feedback (1 = least important, 2 = less important, 3 = important 4 = more important, 5 = most important).

	Destination Preferences	1	2	3	4	5
i.	Attractions (variety of tourist attractions: place, nature, lakes, culture, serenity, wildlife, nightlife, beach, monuments etc.)					
ii.	Accessibility to attraction sites					
iii.	Accommodation (high quality of place to stay during the event)					

iv.	Amenities (high quality of services required to make the event comfortable, such as, food, security, drinking water, sanitary, spa, etc.).					
v.	Activities (variety of activities which a destination holds such as nature walks, history & architecture, boating, views, health, etc.)					

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, rate managers of incentive travelers' destination preferences in your facility based on their feedback (1 = least important, 2 = less important, 3 = important 4 = more important, 5 = most important).

Destination Preferences		1	2	3	4	5
i.	Attractions (variety of tourist attractions: place, nature, lakes, culture, serenity, wildlife, nightlife, beach, monuments etc.)					
ii.	Accessibility to attraction sites					
iii.	Accommodation (high quality of place to stay during the event)					
iv.	Amenities (high quality of services required to make the event comfortable, such as, food, security, drinking water, sanitary, spa, etc.).					
v.	Activities (variety of activities which a destination holds such as nature walks, history & architecture, boating, views, health, etc.)					

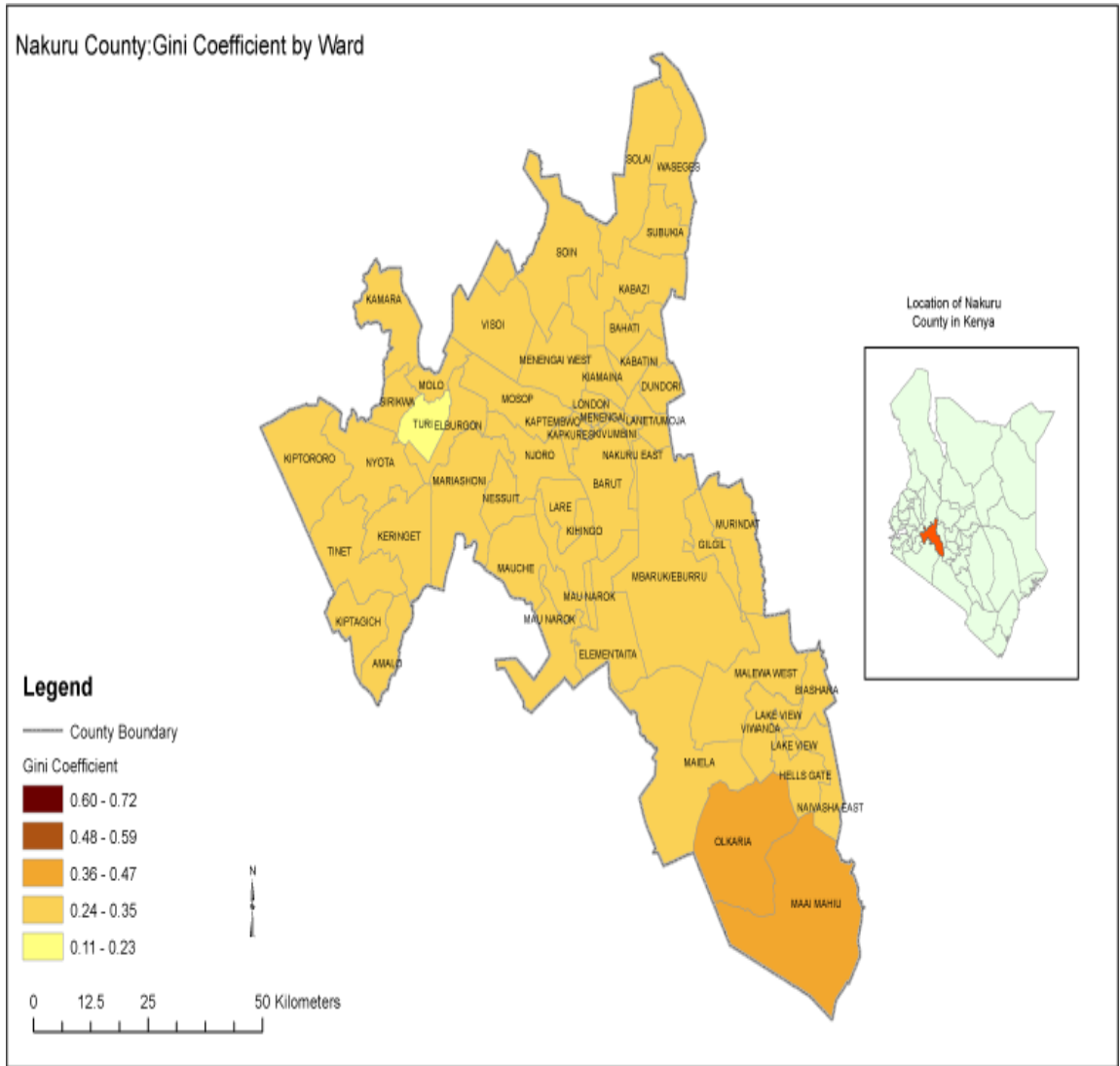
9. Which one area is in most need of improvement in your facility based on incentive travelers' feedback?

- a) Attraction []
- b) Accessibility []
- c) Accommodation []
- d) Amenities []
- e) Activities []

10. Which one area is in most need of improvement in your facility based on managers of incentive travelers' feedback?

- a) Attraction []
- b) Accessibility []
- c) Accommodation []
- d) Amenities []
- e) Activities []

Appendix E: Map of Nakuru County Kenya



Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, Nakuru County (KNBS 2016.)

Appendix F: Research Approval Letter from Dean Graduate School



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 020-8704150

Our Ref: T128/OL/CTY/26098/2015

DATE: 5th April, 2019

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,


RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MR. HARRISON KABUTHA NJOROGE
- REG. NO. T128/OL/CTY/26098/2015

I write to introduce Mr. Harrison Kabutha Njoroge who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. He is registered for M.Sc. degree programme in the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

Mr. Njoroge intends to conduct research for a M.Sc. thesis Proposal entitled, "Incentive Travelers Preference and the Influence on Destination Choice in Nakuru County, Kenya."

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,


PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI
DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

**Appendix G: Research Authorization Letter from National Commission for
Science, Technology and Innovation**



**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

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/19/23962/31727**

Date: **25th July, 2019**

Harrison Kabutha Njoroge
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Incentive travelers preference and the influence on destination choice in Nakuru County, Kenya*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nakuru County** for the period ending **23rd July, 2020**.

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

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a **copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.



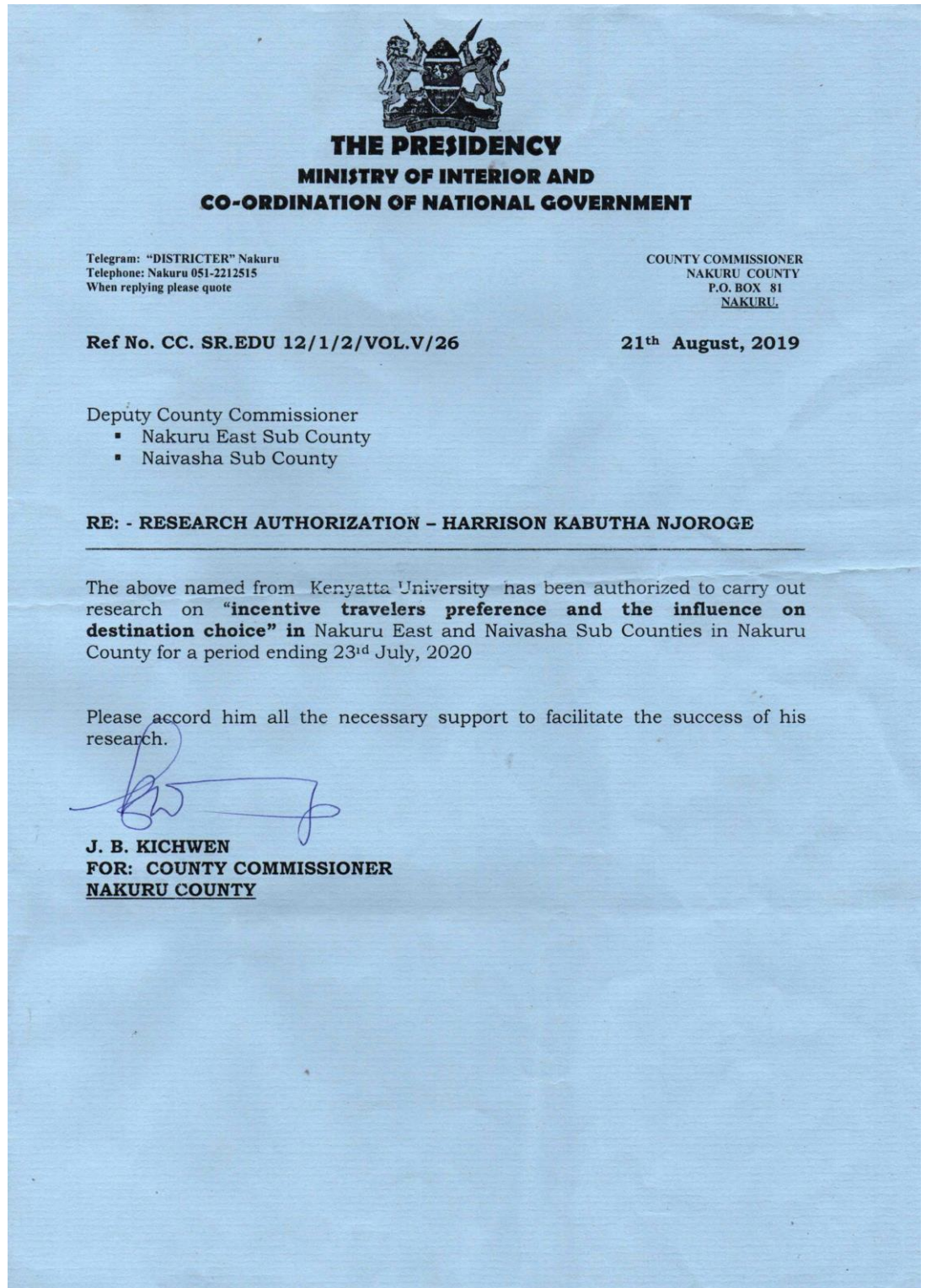
**GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nakuru County.

The County Directors of Education
Nakuru County.

**Appendix H: Research Authorization Letter from Ministry of Interior
and Co-ordination of National Government**



**Appendix I: Research Authorization Letter from Ministry of Education, State
Department of Basic Education**

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION**

Telegrams: "EDUCATION",
Telephone: 051-2216917
When replying please quote



COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NAKURU COUNTY
P. O. BOX 259,
NAKURU.

Ref.CDE/NKU/GEN/4/21/VOL.VI/40

21st August,2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION –HARRISON KABUTHA NJORGE –
PERMIT NO. NACOSTI/P/23962/31727**

Reference is made to letter NACOSTI/P/19/23962/31727
25th July, 2019.

Authority is hereby granted to the above named to carry out research on
*"Incentive travelers preference and influence on destination choice in
Nakuru County- Kenya"* for a period ending *23rd July, 2020*

Kindly accord him the necessary assistance.


G.N. KIMANI
FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NAKURU



Copy to:

- Kenyatta University
- ✓ P.O Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI

Appendix J: Data Collection Timeline (Gantt Chart)

Activity	Apr-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19
Approval from Kenyatta University	✓ (5th)					
Approval from NACOSTI		✓ (25th)				
Approval from Ministry of Interior			✓ (21st)			
Approval from Ministry of Education			✓ (21st)			
Pre-testing of instruments				✓ (2nd – 13th)		
Main data collection (questionnaire distribution & surveys)				✓ (16th – 30th)	✓ (Oct)	✓ (1st – 8th)
Follow-ups & data verification						✓ (11th – 29th)

Appendix K: Hypotheses Test Results

Ho: There is no association between tourism pre-set conditions and incentive traveler's preference for choice of destination in Nakuru County, Kenya.

(i) Incentive travelers' choice of Nakuru as their destination of choice

	Incentive travelers that Chose Nakuru as Destination
Yes	188
No	133
Total	321

Chi-square test

Choice	Incentive travelers	
Yes	188	160.5
No	133	160.5

$p = 0.002142017$ or $p = 0.002$

(ii) Incentive travelers' rating satisfaction with destination

Rate your satisfaction with destination on a scale of 1 to 5	
Least satisfied	0
Less satisfied	19
Neutral	69
More satisfied	152
Most satisfied	81
Total	321

Chi-square test:

Dissatisfied	88	160.5
Satisfied	233	160.5

$p = 5.816e-16$ or $p = 0.000$

Chi-square test was appropriate in testing relationship between two independent variables that involve categorical data (both nominal and ordinal). In both cases, (i) incentive travelers' choice of Nakuru as their destination of choice (because of its preset conditions) and (ii) incentive travelers' rating satisfaction with destination, the p-value was significantly less than 0.05, thus providing strong evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis. Therefore, this study found a strong relationship between incentive travelers' choice of Nakuru as their destination of choice because of its preset conditions, and their satisfaction level with the destination of choice.

H₀: There is no significant relationship in preference among incentive travelers' and their managers in choice of Nakuru County, Kenya destination.

Choice	Incentive travelers	Incentive travel managers
Yes	188	29
No	133	23
Total	321	52

Chi-square test

True value

Choice	Incentive travelers	Incentive travel managers	Total
Yes	188	29	217
No	133	23	156
Total	321	52	373

Expected value

Choice	Incentive travelers	Incentive travel managers	Total
Yes	186.7479893	30.25201072	217
No	134.2520107	21.74798928	156
Total	321	52	373

$$p = 0.704372938$$

Chi-square test was appropriate in testing relationship between two independent variables: incentive travelers' preference & incentive travel managers' preference. The p-value is significantly greater than 0.05, thus providing strong evidence supporting the null hypothesis, that there is no significant relationship in preference among incentive travelers' and their managers in choice of Nakuru County as their destination of choice. Each group chooses a destination independently based on their particular motivations.