

Abstract

This paper examines the current situation of Kenya's tourism based on analysis of various secondary sources including government records, news articles, a corpus of academic papers and discussions with industry players both face-to-face and through the internet and telephone conversation (providing valuable primary in-put). A brief historical context is presented and a modified version of the generic political, environmental, socio-cultural, economic and legal (PESTEL) using the symbolism of centripetal force is used to discuss the key challenges and opportunities facing Kenya's tourism. In this symbolic framework, tourism sector is depicted as being surrounded by various external constraining forces. The paper argues that the unstable state of the tourism sector under the influence of these forces must be the focus of a concerted strategic initiative to leverage Kenya as a competitive destination, particularly given its comparative advantage in form of tourism resource endowment. This assertion is based on the fact that various fragmented attempts to ameliorate the situation have yielded limited success.