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Promotion of National Parks for Domestic Tourism in Tanzania

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Abstract:

This paper aims to analyze promotion of national parks for domestic tourism in Tanzania. The specific objective was to analyze how TV programs on national parks can be improved for domestic tourists. Study area is in Southern National Parks of Tanzania namely Mikumi, Udzungwa, Ruaha and Kitulo. Qualitative method using open ended questionnaires was used to collect data from domestic tourists in February 2015. Content analysis with a thematic approach was deployed. Findings indicate that TV programs on national parks do well on information related to wildlife. However, there were opinions that there is inadequate information on accommodation, equipment and experiences shared by other domestic tourists who visited the national parks. Further results showed that TV programs should be aired more frequently to benefit domestic tourists. The outcome of this paper can assist policy and decision makers in the tourism sector to improve information on TV programs about national parks in order to boost domestic tourism and advance promotion of southern national parks. Establishing TV channels dedicated to tourism including for purposes of promoting national parks was one of the recommendations of this paper. Future research can explore the influence of celebrities on visits to national parks.

Keywords: promotion, national parks, domestic tourism, Tanzania

1. Introduction

Tourism is growing in many countries and recently the international tourist arrivals were over 1.2 billion while people that travelled domestically reached 6 billion (UNWTO, 2017). Despite this growth, domestic tourism faces many challenges including promotion of national parks. Stone and Nyaupane (2017) stated that there are low visits to nature based attractions by domestic tourists. On the other hand, countries like Nigeria received more domestic tourists in national parks than international tourists (Ngoka, 2013). Mariki, Hassan, Maganga, Modest & Salehi (2011) and Stone and Nyaupane (2017) cite promotion as one of the constraining factors for domestic tourism resulting in low volumes of domestic tourists to protected areas. In promoting national parks, various media channels are used from radio, social media to television. Domestic tourism plays an important role when the number of international tourists' arrivals are low due to reasons such as seasonality. In addition, Callixte (2013) stated that domestic tourism is an alternative engine for economic development. In Tanzania promotion of national parks is the responsibility of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) along with its agencies namely Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) and Tanzania Tourist Board (TTB). Various efforts have been made to promote domestic tourism in Tanzania including the use of trade fairs (Lwoga, 2011). For example, trade fairs like the Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair (DITF) called SABA SABA which offer affordable trips to visit Mikumi National Park. However, there are studies which mentioned that promotion is still one of the barriers in the development of domestic tourism in Tanzania (Mariki et al., 2011; Macha, 2017; Batinoluho, 2017). There is scant literature on TV programs on national parks for domestic tourists. Tanzania uses TV programs which show national parks for promotion purposes through TV channels such as Independent Television (ITV), Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC1), and Channel Ten. Therefore, this study will contribute knowledge on promotion of national parks for domestic tourism in Tanzania with a specific objective of analyzing how TV programs on national parks can be improved for domestic tourists.

2 Literature Review

2.1. Relevant Theory

This study analyzes TV programs which show national parks to domestic tourists by looking at information. Hence there is an element of information to consumers which is what the informative view emphasizes from economics of information theory by Stigler in 1961, Telser in 1964, and Nelson in 1974 (Bagwell, 2005). Therefore, this study adopts the information view in order to analyze promotion of national parks for domestic tourism and specifically on how TV programs on national parks can be improved for domestic tourists. The proposition for this study is

- *Proposition:* How TV programs on national parks can be improved for domestic tourists.

2.2. Empirical Literature Review

Numerous studies have researched on domestic tourism (Chinyele & Lwoga, 2017; Kalulu, Tushabe & Sebuhero, 2017; Hagwet, Agapit, Shango, Sinare & William, 2017; Stone & Nyaupane, 2017; Mkwizu, 2017a; Mkwizu, 2017b). Chinyele and Lwoga (2017)

examined the influence of local residents' participation in decision making on attitudes towards conservation. Step-wise multiple linear regression was used and findings showed that there a significant positive relationship between participation and attitudes towards conservation (Chinyele & Lwoga, 2017). Kalulu et al (2017) explored the contribution of air transport in tourism development through quantitative and qualitative approaches and findings showed that airport transport is important for tourism development. Hagwet et al (2017) were interested in factors influencing career choice in the hospitality industry using descriptive analysis and recommended that advertising is necessary for students to make informed decisions. Stone and Nyaupane (2017) investigated tourists gaze by looking at local tourists versus international tourists. Photograph analysis approach was utilized and results revealed that domestic tourists were influenced by culture, livelihood and crowded spaces. Although these studies cover different issues in domestic tourism, there is limited literature from the perspective of domestic tourists on how TV programs on national parks can be improved. Other recent studies have contributed research relating to television (Ansari & Joloudar, 2011; Hossain & Ahmed, 2012; Spencer, 2013; Ghosh, 2016; Mkwizu, 2016a; Mkwizu, 2016c; Mkwizu, 2017a; Mkwizu, 2017b). However more literature is needed to fill in the gap on improvement of TV programs on national parks from the perspective of domestic tourists. Therefore, this study analyzes how TV programs on national parks can be improved for domestic tourists.

3. Methodology

Qualitative approach was used in this study for purposes of understanding promotion of national parks for domestic tourism particularly on how TV programs on national parks can be improved for domestic tourists. Tanzania has 16 national parks and this study was limited to four national parks (See Figure 1). The study area was southern national parks of Tanzania which are Mikumi, Udzungwa, Ruaha and Kitulo. These southern national parks also have tourism potential in terms of scenery, fauna and flora as per Figure 2, Figure 3, Figure 4, Figure 5 and Figure 6. As protected areas, these national parks are for current and future generations (Mkwizu, 2016b). Open ended questionnaires were used to collect data from domestic tourists through interviews. Domestic tourists were asked on their opinions for suggestions to improve TV programs on national parks. Qualitative data collection was conducted in February 2015. Convenience sampling was used and saturation level of 20 domestic tourists for interview purposes was reached hence data was subjected to content and thematic analyses.



Figure 1: Map showing location of Mikumi, Udzungwa, Ruaha and Kitulo National Parks in Tanzania
Source: Adopted and Customized from TANAPA (2015)



Figure 2: The Greater Kudus at Ruaha National Park in Tanzania
Source: Photo by Mkwizu (2016e)



Figure 3: Orchids – the wildflowers in the ‘Garden of God’ at Kitulo National Park in Tanzania
Source: Photo by Mkwizu (2016f)



Figure 4: Wildflowers in Kitulo National Park in Tanzania
Source: Photo by Researcher (2017)

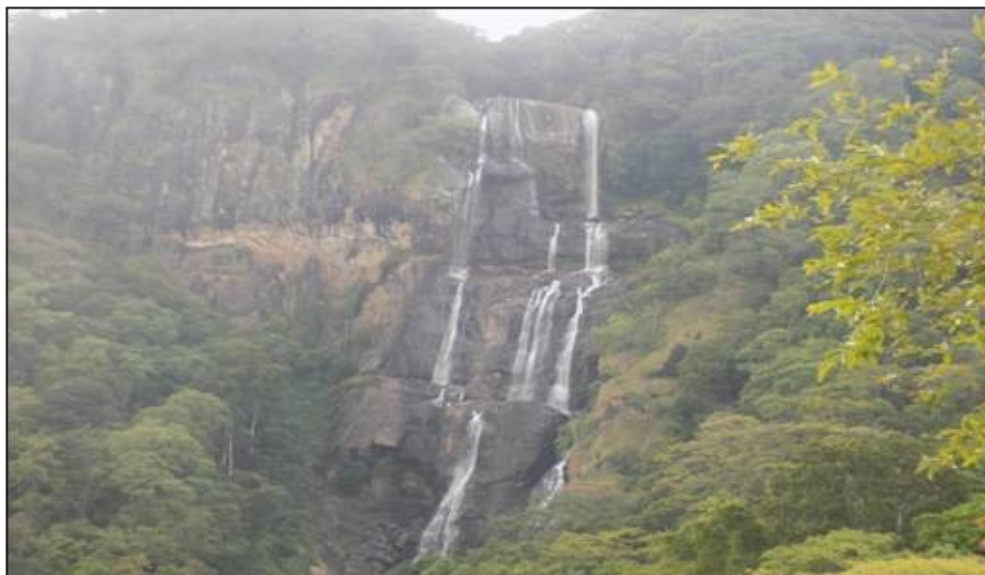


Figure 5: Sanje Waterfalls in Udzungwa National Park in Tanzania
Source: Photo by Researcher (2017)



Figure 6: Antelopes, Giraffes and Zebras in Mikumi National Park in Tanzania
Source: Photo by Researcher (2017)

4. Findings

The content analysis and thematic analysis provided results of the interviewed domestic tourists. The findings showed that domestic tourists were of the opinion that information on TV programs on national parks show “wildlife”. More results revealed that domestic tourists noted that there was inadequate information on accommodation; where to get equipment at entry points of the national parks such as walking sticks particularly for those hiking in mountains; experiences shared by other domestic tourists who visited national parks; and availability of tourist information centres. This suggests that although there is information on TV programs on national parks, this information is not adequate. These findings complement studies by Mariki et al. (2011) and Macha (2017) that promotion is still a challenge. Domestic tourists also stated that information on national parks through TV programs should be shown more frequently. This implies that in order to improve TV programs on national parks for domestic tourists, there should be more information on “accommodation”, “equipment”, “experiences by other domestic tourists” and “tourist information centres”. In general, the findings support the informative view theory since domestic tourists do get information. However, to improve the information on TV programs, there is a need to incorporate the opinions of domestic tourists.

5. Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to analyze promotion of national parks for domestic tourism. The specific objective was to analyze how TV programs on national parks can be improved for domestic tourists. Findings indicated that domestic tourists do get information particularly for wildlife but less information on accommodation, equipment, experiences by other domestic tourists and tourist information centres. Therefore, in order to improve TV programs on national parks for domestic tourism, there should be more information on “accommodation”, “equipment”, “experiences by other domestic tourists” and “tourist information centres”. The outcome of this paper can assist policy and decision makers in the tourism sector to improve information on TV programs about national parks in order to boost domestic tourism and advance promotion of southern national parks. The recommendations of this study are i) establishment of TV channels dedicated to tourism including for purposes of promoting national parks, which is in line with the opinions of the interviewed domestic tourists regarding information frequency, and ii) encourage domestic tourists to share their experiences of visits to national parks. Future research can explore the influence of celebrities on visits to national parks.

6. References

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