

Factors Influencing Community Participation in Kilimanjaro National Parks' Tourism Activities in Marangu Ward, Tanzania

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The study examined the factors influencing community participation in Kilimanjaro National Parks' tourism activities in Marangu Ward. The objectives of the study were to identify factors contributing to community participation in tourism activities, to assess benefits derived out of community participation in tourism activities, to examine the level of community participation in tourism activities and to determine the relationship between community participation and tourism activities development. The study adopted a cross sectional research design and it involved 126 respondents from Marangu ward. Data collection methods involved the use of survey, interview and documentary review. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) through the use of binary logistic regression, descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient which were used to show the strength of the relationship. The findings revealed that member's awareness, availability of opportunities and environmental conservation were the factors that influenced community participation in tourism activities with the $p < 0.05$. Passive participation was revealed by 50% of respondents as their highest level of participation. However, the benefits obtained from community participation were observed to be opportunity for rural development, development of infrastructure, create employment opportunities, quality of life and environmental quality. The relationship between community participation and tourism activities development was significant at 0.674 with the $p < 0.05$. The study concludes that majority of the local people within the community participate in tourism activities since it's their main source of income. In order to improve community participation in tourism activities, the study recommends that the sector should establish benefit sharing schemes as well as involving the community in decision making and training programmes.