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**Assessment of Socio-Economic Gender Issues Affecting Women  
Participation in Alpine Tourism: A Case Study of Mt.Kenya National Park**

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**Abstracts**

Tourism plays a vital role in the realization of the UN Sustainable Development goals especially promoting gender equality and empowerment of women. This is echoed in the Africa agenda 2063 under Goal 17 that underscores gender equality and inclusivity in employment. The Kenya constitution and Kenya Vision 2030 recognizes the role of gender equality and equity in promoting a wealthy and cohesive Kenya. Tourism is among the social and economic activities enhancing wealth creation in Kenya. This study sought to investigate the socio-economic gender issues affecting women participation in alpine tourism in Mt. Kenya national park. The study was guided by the following objectives: to assess the social gender issues affecting women participation in alpine tourism and to analyze the economic gender issues affecting women participation in alpine tourism. The study used descriptive research design, and data was collected through structured closed ended questionnaires distributed to 122 women participating in alpine tourism activities. 107 questionnaires were duly filled and returned. Structured interviews were conducted to the officials of KWS and the leaders of Mt. Kenya Guides and Porters Association. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study established that marital status of female mountain crew was the dominant social gender issue affecting women participation in alpine tourism as most guides, porters and cooks were single and for those who were married, majority of them experienced challenges relating to balancing work and family responsibilities. The study also established that there is wage disparity between men and women working as guides, porters and cooks. The study concludes that the nature of the work in alpine tourism favours women who are single which should not be the case and with appropriate mechanisms in place this can change. The study recommends that female mountain crew who have not joined any association can join so that the issue of wage gap can be addressed.

**Keywords:** Alpine Tourism, Mountain Crew, Equality.