DETERMINANTS OF SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY BASED ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN KENYA. A CASE OF NORTHERN RANGELAND TRUST CONSERVANCY, MERU COUNTY

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A Research ProjectSubmitted in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for The Award of Degree of Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management, Of the University of Nairobi

2020

DECLARATION

This project is my own original work and has not been presented for any award in any other university.

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This research project is presented for examination with our approval as the university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family for their moral support during my studies. Their support has had immeasurable contribution towards my success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My heartfelt regards goes to my supervisors Dr. John Mbugua and Mr. Amos Gitonga who were not only patient and understanding but also guided me and offered assistance and consultant support throughout. I am greatly thankful that they took time to listen and respond to my enquiries. I would not have gone far without their support and constructive criticism.

I express my indebtedness to my lecturers especially Dr. Reuben Kikwatha who took me through the course. I most sincerely appreciate the librarians, and support staff at Meru Learning Centre for the support and training I have received and for their selfless dedication in ensuring I accessed the available services without much struggle.

I also wish to pass my gratitude to my classmates their academic and moral support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBET	Community Based Ecotourism
CBPs	Community Based Projects
CBT	Community Based Tourism
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOK	Government of Kenya
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
LWC	Lewa Wildlife Conservancy
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRT	Northern Rangelands Trust
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RBV	Resource-Based View
SCBT	Sustainable Community Based Tourism
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of the study was to determine the factors influencing sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya. Specifically, the study focused on Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County. The study specifically focused on the influence of community participation, stakeholders' collaborations, project management practices and financial viability on sustainability of Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy Projects in Meru County. The reviewed theories included agency theory, stakeholder theory and resource based theory. The research used descriptive research design in the collection of data on the factors influencing sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya. The target population for this study was 144 respondents comprising of project staff in Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County. Krejcie and Morgan approach was used to determine the sample size of 105 respondents. This study adopted a stratified and simple random sampling technique. Data was acquired both from primary and secondary sources. Structured questionnaires were distributed to the targeted population. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25.0). All the questionnaires received were referenced and items in the questionnaire were coded to facilitate data entry. After data cleaning which entailed checking for errors in entry, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean score and standard deviation were estimated for all the quantitative variables. The qualitative data from the open ended questions was analyzed using conceptual content analysis and presented in prose. Inferential data analysis was done using multiple regression analysis. Information was presented inform of tables. The study found that community participation influences the sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County very greatly. The study also found that networking with tourism expertise; and facilitating links to market influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. Local innovations were found to influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent.. The study also found that transparent management of financial resources affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a very great extent. The study concluded that community participation had the greatest influence on sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru County, followed by financial viability, then stakeholders' collaborations while project management practices had the least influence on the sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county. The study there is need for the government and NGO's to encourage the local community to diversify their income generating activities and venture into bee keeping and supply of goods and services among others. The Community Based Ecotourism Projects' stakeholders or partners in Meru should also promote information flow, awareness and communication amongst themselves so as to ensure transparency and accountability which are key to the success of community-based enterprises. County government should adopt a more collaborative approach when dealing with community based county projects.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The Community based tourism (CBT) concept is a recent one in Kenya having been born through the promotion of Eco-tourism and community driven conservation efforts. The CBT concept ensures that tourism activities in a given area seek to empower the resident locals of such an area enabling them to participate in decisions that shape tourism in their area. As such assertion holds that CBT efforts aim at allowing the locals to have stake in the tourism resources in their area with an intention of promoting sustainable use of the same. This then brings us to the concept of sustainable CBT thus developing Sustainable Community Based Tourism (SCBT) (Zhang & Lei, 2012).

Ecotourism has emerged as a form of sustainable tourism as one solution to help protect the ecological and cultural resources of tourism sites, provide local economic opportunity and give travelers greater environmental awareness. Ecotourism is noted to incorporate elements of nature based, adventure, alternative or green tourism (Lepper & Schroenn, 2010). The World Ecotourism Summit in Quebec City in 2002 noted that ecotourism if carried out responsibly can be a valuable means of promoting the social economic development of host communities while generating resources for the preservation of natural and cultural assets (García, Gómez & Molina, 2012). In this way, ecologically fragile areas can be protected with the financial returns of ecotourism activities.

Community-based ecotourism (CBE) has been advocated by many as one of the potential solutions to the economic development of rural impoverished communities which have natural resource assets which could be sustainably utilised for the economic development of these peripheral communities. Ecotourism is defined as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment andimproves the well-being of local people (Das & Chatterjee, 2015). CBE therefore implies that communities have substantialcontrol over and involvement in the tourism project and that the largest portionof the benefits remain within the community (DePuy, 2011). Tourism isseen as an important mechanism for local communities to benefit fromprotected areas, however these ventures need to manage their environmentalimpacts, their economic viability and social partnerships and environment verycarefully to ensure that tourism does not become a self-destructive process thatdestroys the resources it is based upon. Major concerns have been raisedregarding the ineffectiveness, potential unsustainability and the failure ofcommunity-based ecotourism ventures (Claiborne, 2010).

In global perspective, tourism involves multinational corporations, geo-politics, changes in economic forces and interactions with the locals i.e. workers, residents, visitors, entrepreneurs and governments. CBT for over 30 years has been promoted to meet the social, environmental and economic needs of local communities through the offering of a tourism product. However, in third world countries, most of CBE programs refinanced by internationally affiliated NGOs. There are strong arguments in support of ecotourism playing a central role in conservation and rural development in sub-Saharan Africa.

In United States, Community-based ecotourism (CBE) has become a popular tool for biodiversity conservation; based on the principle that biodiversity must pay for itself by generating economic benefits, particularly for local people. There are many examples of projects that produce revenues for local communities and improve local attitudes towards conservation, but the contribution of CBET to conservation and local economic development is limited by factors such as the small areas and few people involved, limited earnings, weak linkages between biodiversity gains and commercial success, and the competitive and specialized nature of the tourism industry. In United Kingdom, many CBET projects cited as success stories actually involve little change in existing local land and resource-use practices, provide only a modest supplement to local livelihoods, and remain dependent on external support for long periods, if not indefinitely.

In Africa, the growth of tourism has been among the strongest in theglobal market during the past ten years, making it an increasingly importantindustry in many countries in East and Southern Africa. Most tourism enterprises in the region arebased on natural resources – wildlife, forests, deserts, and coral reefs –creating important economic incentives for local and national investmentsin conserving biodiversity (Osman, Ahmad, Ahmad, Khin, Abu Bakar, Husin&Tanwir, 2010). Tourism activities using natural attractionsin remote rural areas can be an important source of economicdiversification and livelihood opportunity. Thus tourism is increasingly a component ofboth economic development and biodiversity conservation strategies insub-Saharan African countries (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013).

The rapid growth of tourism in northern Tanzania over the last 10 yearshas been accompanied by a proliferation of commercial ventures on community lands located outside the traditional national park destinations.This has occurred primarily as a result of the industry's expansion and need to diversify its products beyond the core circuit of national parks. But government authorities have also supported the growth of community-based

tourism, recognising its potential to both reduce rural poverty and conserve biodiversity. A number of themes emerge which are relevant not only to development and conservation in northern Tanzania, but also more generally to natural resourcesgovernance and rural livelihoods in East Africa. First, an increasingnumber of rural communities in northern Tanzania are signing commercialagreements with private operators to develop ecotourism ventures on their land. These agreements offer important new economic opportunities. But the ability of local people to benefit from them is being compromised by other parties also wishing to develop and benefit from alternative forms of wildlife-based tourism on community lands. The struggles and conflicts that arise from this competition illustrate some of the fundamental governance challenges to community-based natural resource management and ecotourism in Tanzania (Kahle & Gurel-Atay, 2013).

In Kenya, tourism is considered an important sector in the development process (GOK, 2016). It accounts for 12 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), making it the third largest contributor of wealth after agriculture and manufacturing, and the third largest foreign exchange earner after tea and horticulture. In 2007, the sector had about a million arrivals, an increase of 12.5 percent from the previous year, earning Kshs. 65.4 billion, an increase of 11.6 percent. In 2010, the sector realised Kshs. 73.6 billion in revenue from an approximately 1.1million arrivals. The sector accounts for nine percent of total wage employment in the country and is a major source of government revenue. Further, tourism is identified as one of the key drivers for achieving the goals of Kenya's development blueprint, the Vision 2030 (GOK, 2013).

Tourism in Kenya has witnessed the emergence of CBET activities, mainly in the rangelands of the country. These are the drier regions of the country that are traditionally inhabited by indigenous pastoral communities and are habitat for variety of wildlife making them preferred destinations for nature based tourism. Paradoxically, despite Kenya being among world leaders in this sector, poverty and marginalization still dominate major tourist destinations in the rangelands (Mwambeo & Maitho, 2015). These areas face a myriad of socio-economic and environmental problems such as degradation, inequality, human-wildlife conflicts, food insecurity, drought, famine, poor infrastructure, water shortage, poverty, illiteracy and diseases, among others (Morelli, 2011). In Meru County, CBET activities have been introduced as a viable way of improving livelihoods and conserving the environment.

1.1.1 Northern Rangelands Trust Conservancy

The Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) is a community-based conservation initiative in the arid and semiarid rangelands of northern Kenya which aims to improve the livelihoods of communities throughwildlife conservation. Established in 2004, it has facilitated the formation ofcommunity-led institutions which link rangeland management and conservation of large mammalspecies with poverty alleviation for their constituent communities. Since 2004, the network ofconservancies assisted by NRT has expanded rapidly and by 2009 had brought more than 8,300 km2 ofland outside of Kenya's formal protected area system under conservation management (NRT, 2013).

NRT has its origins in a partnership between local communities and Lewa Wildlife Conservancy (LWC), aprivately owned ranch managed for biodiversity conservation since the 1980s. Initially an outreachprogramme from LWC which helped neighbouring communities establish Il Ng'wesi and NamunyakWildlife Conservation Trust, the conservancies were developed as tool to mitigate human-wildlifeconflict and enhance landscape-scale conservation in the region. With the rapid expansion of theconservancy network, it became apparent that an independent organisation was required to provideeffective technical assistance and meet the knowledge demands of the increasing number ofparticipating communities (Vågen & Winowiecki, 2014).

NRT is comprised of community, institutional and private-sector members. Community membersreceive one of four levels of technical support ranging from technical advice and capacity building toenterprise development. Receipt of this support depends on conservancies undertaking a pro-activeprogramme of improving the ecology within their respective areas and undergoingindependent financial audits. Where these conditions are not met, community members may havesupport suspended (NRT, 2013).

While the majority of NRT staff is Kenyan nationals resident in the conservancy communities, fundingfor the initiative is primarily derived from international donors, including USAID, Fauna and FloraInternational, St. Louis Zoo, and Zoos Victoria. Typically, NRT seeks to establish long-term partnershipsbetween a donor and individual conservancies to provide sustained funding for community enterprisesand conservation management (NRT, 2013).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Community based ecotourism is regarded as a means to enterprise development at the same time a pathway to sustainability of social, economic and environmental aspects. CBET is important in helping diversify tourism thus reducing congestion and over reaching of the mainstream tourism products. CBET is also important in influencing the immediate community's socio-economic status for the better. Notwithstanding these, the success or lack of it of CBET in the world exhibits numerously varying results, suggesting that there are areas in which CBET has been regarded successful while in other areas it has been regarded unsuccessful (Zhang & Lei, 2012).

CBET faces numerous challenges that limit the utmost utilisation of tourism resources. For Kenya, this has come at a great price where communities among whom the tourism resources are located languish in poverty while other investors benefit from the resources. In some cases, the exploitation of tourism resources has been done unsustainably thus leaving the surrounding communities suffering from negative effects. Such has been witnessed in Kenya especially on the coastal strip where tourism resources are utilised unsustainably thus leaving communities suffering from negative effects (GOK, 2013).

In Kenya,Very few of CBETs which have been phased-out, have had major impacts on the community members' overall living standards. This is attributed to them not becoming self-reliant. This may be due to poor management and not achieving sustainability by the community members as noted by. The new CBET being initiated now are likely to join the graveyard path of other community based projects (CBPs) in failing to impact community beyond the planned intervention phase. Those that plan these CBETs may systematically fail to work out their sustainability as evidenced by many stalled projects in Meru County. This is a worrying trend in a county riddled with high levels of poverty, unemployment and poor infrastructure leading to underdevelopment. Literature reviews on related issues showed that ecotourism has not been beneficial to local communities. Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County is comprised of community, institutional and private-sector members. Support depends on conservancies undertaking a pro-active programme of improving the ecology within their respective areas and undergoing independent financial audits. Where these conditions are not met, community members may have support suspended. NRT does not have sustained funding for community enterprises and conservation management. The implementation and actualisation of adopted strategies has failed owing to lack of funding terming the sector as un-governed thus limiting significant engagements with

stakeholders. Therefore NRT seeks to establish long-term partnerships in order to sustain its projects so as to improve the living standards of the communities.

Studies such as Githinji (2009) studied the factors that affect the sustainability of CBPs in Mutomo District of Kitui County; Wilder (2016) did a study on an assessment of ecotourism as an effective tool for sustainable forest management: The case of Adaba-Dodola, Ethiopia; Ekwale (2014) studied theAssessment of Local Community Involvement in Community Based Ecotourism Planning and Development: The Case of Takamanda National Park. South West Region, Cameroon; Jepchirchir (2016) assessed theattitude and perception of local community towards ecotourismin Laikipia County and Gaitho (2014) focused on the impact of CBET on households‟ livelihoods and environmental management in Il Ngwesi and Lekurruki Group Ranches in Laikipia County. These studies however did not elaborate on the factors that influence sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects and hence presented a gap that this current seeks to fill. The study therefore sought to establish thedeterminants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya. Specifically, the study focused on Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to establish the determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya. Specifically, the study focused on Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives included;

i. To establish influence of community participationonsustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya.
ii. To determine how stakeholders collaborationsinfluencesustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya.
iii. To assess howproject management practicesinfluencesustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya.
iv. To evaluate howfinancial viabilityinfluencesustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions;

i. To what extent does community participation influencesustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya?
ii. To what extent does stakeholders' collaborations influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya?
iii. How do project management practices influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya?
iv. To what extent does financial viability influence sustainability of sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The research study would be significant to project managers and staff of Community Based Ecotourism Projects as they would be able to understand the sustainability of project development and how they would be able to strengthen the project so as to achieve its sustainability.

The findings of the study might be significant to project beneficiaries as it would enhance their understanding of the importance of project sustainability and the need for participation of local communities in project design, implementation and management so as to advance the project sustainability.

The study might be of importance to project donors and sponsors who mght appreciate the importance of community work to enhance these factors among others. The findings of the study provided a basis for decision making for the investors thus allowing them to know in detail the dos and don'ts of engagement

The findings of this research provided a basis for policy formulation for numerous stakeholders in relation to CBE. Also, it informed policy regulation decisions made by government in regards to CBE. This would help empower such communities in understanding the benefits and demerits of CBE thus help in creating the rules of engagement.

The findings of this paper sought to bridge a gap between theory and practice. In completing this inquiry, the researcher successfully created a basis of academic knowledge that would guide not only other researchers in filling the gaps that might have been inadequately covered but also act as a basis for future inquiry. The newly created knowledge would significantly guide research in the fields of Community Based Ecotourism Projects as well as sustainability.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

In the collection of data, the researcher encountered some participants failing to give full information due to fear of backlash from senior officials of Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy. The researcher assured the respondents of the non-disclosure of the information given to avoid victimization. Some respondents did not provide legitimate information but instead provided general or anonymous data which was unreliable. This issue was dealt with where the researcher alternated open ended and closed questions.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The study determined the factors influencing sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya. Specifically, the study focused on Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County. The study focused on the influence of community participation, stakeholders' collaborations, project management practices and financial viability on sustainability of Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy Projects in Meru County. The target population for this study comprised of project staff in Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County. The study took four months.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that all the Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy staff and management would be available during the period of the study. The study also assumed that the respondents would be cooperative. The study further assumed that the respondents would give accurate and reliable responses to the best of their knowledge since the questionnaire relied on self-report responses to collect data for the study. Lastly, the study assumed that the factors used in the study were the main factors that influence sustainability of Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy projects in Meru County.

1.10 Definition of Significant Terms Used in the Study

Community-Based Ecotourism: A variant of ecotourism based on community participation in decision making, ownership and management of tourism projects and where a major proportion of benefits remain in the local community

Ecotourism: -Form of tourism based on travel to natural and undisturbed areas, with a focus on environmental and cultural conservation and with benefits to the local community

Financial viability: is the ability to generate sufficient income to meet operating payments, debt commitments and, where applicable, to allow growth while maintaining service levels.

Project Management practices: Refers to using expertise in coordinating the efforts of people to accomplish desired goals and objectives for a project using available resources efficiently and effectively. It comprises planning, organizing, staffing, leading or directing, and controlling an organization or effort for the purpose of accomplishing a goal.

Project Sustainability: The ability of the venture to run with minimum interference throghout the lifecyle and deliver successfully on the set target.

Stakeholders: All the people or organizations with an interest or concern in ecotourism within the study area.

Sustainability of projects: The continuing ability of a project which have received funding from a donor to meet the needs of its community and embraces the concept of doing this beyond the time of donor agency involvement.

1.11 Organisation of the Study

Chapter one comprises of the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, and significance of the study, basic assumptions, limitations, delimitations and definition of significant terms used in the study. Chapter two covers the introduction and the body of the study where specific themes were discussed, theoretical framework, related empirical literature as well as the conceptual framework. Chapter three contains the following: research design, target population, sampling procedure, research instruments, pilot testing, validity and reliability of the instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations and operationalization of the study. In chapter four, the areas of focus are: data analysis and interpretation and presentation while chapter five presents the study summary, conclusions, recommendations and areas for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the available literature on sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Kenya and how relevant that literature is important to the current study. It also presents the gaps to be filled by the study and the conceptual framework.

2.2 Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

Over the years, the definition of sustainability in development literature has varied widely and broadened in scope. The concept arose in response to economic growth models that characterized development approaches over the last half century. It was eventually recognized that such models did not adequately address social inequalities and led to environmental degradation. The concept gained wider use after the World Commission on Environment and Development published our common future (Hennink, Kiiti, Pillinger & Jayakaran, 2012). According to IFAD, sustainability is defined as ensuring that the institutions supported through projectsand the benefits realized are maintained and continue after the end of the project (IFAD, 2013). IFAD's Office of Evaluation adds to this definition by considering resource flows. Itacknowledges that assessment of sustainability entails determining "whether the results of theproject will be sustained in the medium or even longer term without continued externalassistance". It further expands on the concept of programme sustainability by distinguishingamong several factors that either contribute to or detract from the long-term impact of IFADinterventions (IFAD, 2013).

An operational definition which permits some degree of ordinal ranking by sustainability will have to be narrow and specific. For instance, in a study of three African countries, Hart (2015) defined sustainability in terms of outcomes persisting at least two years after projecttermination; and in a comparative study of five countries in Africa and Central America, he defined it as outcomes at least three years after project termination. Morelli(2011) in a study of sustainability of integrated rural development projects, definedit in terms of "the percentage of project-initiated goods and services that is still delivered andmaintained five years past the termination of donor resources." This latter definition appearsempirically verifiable but in practice will be complicated by multiple outputs and lack ofagreement about the verification of 'delivery" and "maintenance." Based on the knowledge of sustainability, the concept of sustainable community based tourism1therefore identifies with tourism practices that not only seek to engage and benefit the communities, but also

ensure that the available resources are utilized with consideration of the future users and effect on surrounding

Development of tourism and livestock markets is providingconservancies with revenue streams, a portion of which areused to fund local schools, health care facilities, and conservancy operationalcosts, including ranger salaries and vehicle maintenance.Improvements in rangeland conditions are allowing pastoralists toexpand the sizes of their herds and the numbers of livestock sold toNRT, further increasing annual income for communities. Restoredrangelands in turn attract more wildlife, broadening eco-tourismdevelopment options for communities. Payment for ecosystem services(PES) schemes have the potential to provide an additional revenuestream for conservancies in the future (Kangiri, 2015).

The sustainability of a project is pointed out by its continuous operation and maintenance of the system (O&M). The O&M embraces project diversity and inclusivity of all the sectors required to sustain the project. According to Besel, Charlotte and Klak (2011), sustainability of Projects is usually constrained by the inadequacy of financial resources that are needed to implement the same. Due to the imperatives of budgetary policies it is difficult to establish and resource project structures and associated institutions essential for effective implementation and the achievement of goals, except over the long haul. However, the situation can be mitigated by strong and effective capacities at the national level to manage and coordinate project financing which adequately project implementation and management

According to Bowman (2011), studies have shown that inclusiveness and active involvemt of all stakeholders nurtures a deep sense of pride and ownership of the joint venture rather than the one-man-syndrome. The active participation ensures that the venture can outlive its existence to future generations (Okorley & Nkrumah, 2012). The one- man- show approach robs the venture of its momentum as individuals are weighed down by the heaviness of responsibilities.

The resource support provided by the local community groups particularly with respect to the technical efficiency and financial support is essential to community venture continuity. In addition, the involvement of community groups in supporting project in areas of customer preference, effectiveness in design construction and maintenance of project facilities and equipment is equally important in project sustainability. Moreover, the participation of diverse community groups and training of staff on efficient use and management of project

assets, improved skills and increased incomes of the beneficiaries and the local community will be reasons enough to sustain their interest in the project (Okorley & Nkrumah, 2012).

2.3 Community Participation and Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

According to a report by Armstrong (2012), Community participation is a matter of global concern and the international community has been persuading the developing countries to engage the people in addressing issues that affect their own lives. Community participation approaches have become a major demand by the development agencies the world over; the United Nation, World Bank and other donors. The bottom-up approach has gained currency for its gains in project performance and sustainable development, it makes implementation better than the top-bottom approach. In the global scene, it is acknowledged that the bottom-up approach makes people close to the development activities and entrenches ownership.

The need for community participation has been found to be increasingly important in the successful performance of a project. Indeed, Hausler (2010) found that the degree to which stakeholders are personally involved in the implementation process will cause great variation in their support for that project. Therefore, ecotourism represented a paradigm shift in tourism by focusing more directly on raising local income, sustainable development, community participation and empowerment (Ebrahimi &Khalifah, 2014). It is seen as a means of empowering the local community through incentives for conserving the biological resources in their environment subject to benefits for individual families or households; thereby making ecotourism a means for rural development.

Local communities' participation in tourism in Kenya has been low and mainly confined to the supply of goods and services, sale of handicrafts and entertainment by traditional dancers; where the local people must contend with competition by entrepreneurs from other parts of the country who are better prepared to do business and have access to credit. The local community decried the status quo and expressed the need for their involvement in tourism activities in their regions (Claiborne, 2010).

Galaski (2015) observed that community participation in resource management for tourism has the potential capacity of increasing income and employment, and of developing skills and institutions for empowering local people. Ecotourism is therefore perceived as a factor for economic growth, equitable distribution of resources and a process of alleviating poverty. Hausler (2010) observes that the greater priority of ecotourism should be on socio-economic

objectives generally and to poverty reduction in particular. Morelli (2011) argued that community participation therefore is an integral part of tourism in order to help increase community's carrying capacity by reducing negative impacts while enhancing positive effects.

The emphasis on community participation in tourism has hence introduced a new horizon in the scope and practice of ecotourism leading to the concept of Community Based Ecotourism (CBET). Arguably, CBET represents the social dimension in the definition of ecotourism (Duffy, 2013). It makes tourism harmonious with the social climate where residents benefit from tourism and not become its victims. For instance, in Namibia community-based ecotourism enterprise development has played a central role in the generation of community revenues, employment and additional benefits (Chaiyatorn, Kaoses & Titphat, 2010). It is the aspect of community involvement underscored in CBET that formed a basis for this study. As the principal stakeholders, the local people are considered as the main bearers of CBET outputs. It was this niche that this study sought to examine while focusing on effects of households livelihoods and environmental management.

In any community development there is need for cooperation between the organization and the community. Most of the communities which community based projects operates in are characterized by social problems, which include poverty, unemployment and other social evils. In view of the prevalence of the socio-economic problems and geo-physical characteristics, the people in these communities have limited options for their development needs. Consequently these people remain backward and the mass living in these backward pockets are affected socially and physically. This has resulted in the shaping of their behavior in tune to the prevailing conditions (Armstrong, 2012).

2.4 Stakeholders Collaborations and Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

Stakeholder collaboration is a process that will go through many iterations. Full collaboration or partnership is not always going to be the outcome. Instead, the process that stakeholders go through may reveal that other forms of action campaigns, education, policy development, or advocacy are more appropriate given the conservation goals and objectives identified, and the roles, positions, and interests of the various parties involved, A well-managed stakeholder engagement process helps the project stakeholder to work together to increase comfort and quality of life, while decreasing negative environmental impacts and increasing the economic

sustainability of the project. Stakeholder engagement should therefore be taken as a core element of any "sustainable development" plan (Zhang & Lei, 2012). The issue of sustainability relating to development activities started to become important to government, donors and development theorists from the 1980s.

Report by Gunderson (2011) emphasized that such stakeholder participation should be gender sensitive and include women throughout the project cycle. Women should be a special target group as they critically contribute to economic development. Having stakeholders set vision and prioritize results will they have the best ideas during planning in the best way and how the results would continue to remain relevant to them. They must therefore be involved in identifying the information that is needed during implementation. Inadequate stakeholder involvement hinders beneficiaries' participation and weakens their capacity to influence project outcomes hence poor performance. The involvement of stakeholders in project initiation, project planning, project implementation and monitoring and evaluation is critical for better project performance (Bray, 2010).

In the Philippines, an evaluation of a World Bank project, found out that during a ten year period, the National Irrigation Administration shifted from a top down government approach to heavy reliance on the local farmers in the design, operation and maintenance of local irrigation systems. It was discovered that the canals and structures worked better, rice yields were 20% higher and the irrigated area 35% greater than in control groups without participation. Brass (2010) stated that major public private partnership (PPP) initiatives in the United States has reportedly failed due to stakeholder opposition. As a result, it reveals that stakeholder s' participation in project is the key to project success and without their input the outcome may not be favorable. In essence, different stakeholders have different levels and types of investments and interests in the project which sometimes results to conflicts among the stakeholders (Ndegwa, 2015).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, a report by Nalubiri (2010) cite a case where in 1968, a community of 2000 people in Malawi started work on a novel water supply system. Community members began the panning, construction and operation of their own water supply and distribution. Field staff for the project was recruited locally, traditional community groups formed the basis for water communities, and government support was limited. Virtually, all of the more than 6000 standpipes installed nationwide are still in working order. An analysis of rural and

urban development over thirty years found high correlation between project performance and level of participation

Maina (2013) did a study in Nakuru and established a positive relationship between stakeholder participation in project identification and selection, participation in project planning, participation in project implementation and participation in project monitoring and evaluation and success of the Economic Stimulus Programs, participation was looked at wholly without paying attention to the levels. Golicha (2010) conducted a study in Garissa and found out that the level of participation of the stakeholders was not adequate in the most important stages of project formulation, design and implementation, the study did not assess the outcome of the low levels of stakeholder participation on the project. Kituu (2015) conducted a study in Turkana and established that stakeholders' participated actively in project risk management oriented activities which are tagged to a monetary value. The study demonstrate a link between the level of participation and civic responsibility which ensures project stability. Nonetheless, the study did not bring out clearly the different levels of participation and how it would influence project sustainability. M'ikiugu (2014) did a study in Meru and established that participation of the head teachers, teachers, parents and children proves to be of great importance to the success of academic performance in the public primary schools. The levels of participation and the sustainability of the school performance did not come out. An evaluation by Plan international in 2014 revealed that community projects are hardly sustainable beyond six months when funding ceases, the study attributes the poor sustainability to weak stakeholder participation. The evaluation used a qualitative approach and did not establish the relationship between the various levels of participation and sustainability of community development projects. The researcher did come across any other study on stakeholder participation and sustainability of community development projects in Homa Bay Town Sub-county.

2.5 Project Management Practices and Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

Management of projects involves increasing the alignment of development projects with host communities priorities and coordinating aid efforts at all levels (local, national, and international) to increase ownership and efficient delivery of services. It is therefore basicallyoffering leadership to achieve certain laid objectives. According to Karanja (2014), good management ensures that sufficient local resources and capacity exist to sustain the project in the absence of outside resources. Community based projects are complexand

require multifaceted management skills. A project manager team has to manifest not only project management related skills but also technical and expertise as required by the project (Nalubiri, 2010). Project management activities include but are not limited to defining project scope and requirements gathering, managing resources and relevant training issues within a project, advising about technical architecture, identifying specific and general project management practices and escalation procedures, estimating project schedule and budget, ascertaining and managing risks within a project and preparing risk mitigation.

The matching or fit between a Project Manager and project extends not only to the technicalskills as enumerated above, but also to other general project. Aproject manager is likely the most senior person within a project and is often perceived as a sounding board for technical and architectural decisions made for the project. In addition, the project manager is also expected to demonstrate a deep knowledge of the business objectives of the project being undertaken. Prior literature has shown that task familiarity helps in improving performance and increasing sustainability of a project. Prior exposure to the project characteristics such as technology, or methodology would make the current task more familiar to the Project Manager, and hence improve sustainability. Karanja (2014) indicated that individuals with good management skill are considered to be good leaders and therefore, through their leadership organizations are steered to prosperity. Precise nature of leadership and its relationship to key criterion variables such as subordinate satisfaction, commitment, and performance is still uncertain, leadership does remain pretty much of a 'black box' or unexplainable concept." However, not all leaders are good managers. Therefore, in the quest to establish effect of management skills on sustainability of community projects, leadership should be distinguished from management (Yang, Lee & Chang, 2011).

Project management teams have to influence all that they interact with so that project sustainability can be achieved; therefore they need not only to possess good management skill but leadership skills as well. The Project management teams have to interact with many stakeholders, they have to not only manage internal project activities, their peers and superiors, but also interact with clients, using skills that are essentially non-technical in nature, and which may not be easily imitable. These include but are not limited to organizational knowledge, implied knowledge in handling people within the organizational structure, leadership and management skills, and customer handling skills (Kerine, 2015).

Within project teams, as individuals' progress from technical roles to more managerial roles, these skills come into play, and help in effective project management. Karanja and Karuti (2014) focus on skills that are tacit, and gained through experience rather than being taught in a classroom. They classify these skills as related to managing self, others, and career. They find that differences in these skills between a novice and an expert are consequential for career performance in professional and managerial career pursuits. Kerine (2015) has highlighted that successful project management requires both hard and soft skills. Hard skills comprise technological skills, domain expertise, experience as well as project managementexperience, and project management skills such as planning, monitoring, risk management and scheduling.

2.6 Financial Viability and Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

One of the key rudiments in project sustainability is the availability resources that are required for community-based projects. This means, selecting resources that should be available for the projected future, minimizing the possibility of project failure once it is up and running, due to inadequate essential materials. In many cases, this will mean identifying secondary sources of those materials that can be pressed into action. Inadequate funding detracts from a project's ability to be sustained (Mmuriungi, Ngugi & Muturi, 2015). However, there are many ways that funding can be linked to a project's ability to be sustained. Waiganjo, Ng'ethe and Mugambi (2012) support developing local resources for enhanced sustainability emphasizing the importance of adequate local capacities to generate funds after external funding ceases.

Waiganjo et al. (2012) asserts that planning for future funding needs to be in place early and needs to be continually developed during the life of the project; while Tomno (2013) discusses the need for longer initial funding periods to allow time for sustainability to be nurtured. As a result, projects have constantly to re-invent themselves so that they qualify again for set-up funding. Some projects are trapped in this cycle; this is not only time-consuming but hinders the natural development of the project. This is where generating increasing levels of income through trading may help some community projects break from this cycle of funding dependency.

The challenge facing NGOs in Kenya and most developing countries is for them to emerge as valuable forces to effect development so as to improve the living conditions of the people in the communities. The search for funding is therefore necessary for the survival and the

development of NGOs. This is because NGOs require a substantial amount of funds and other resources to successfully carry out their programs and activities. Availability of funds to NGOs is without doubt one of the factors that determined and led to the growth of the sector (Tomno, 2013). However, most NGOs fail worldwide, even after promising initial periods, owing to problems with financing. The impact of global financial and economic crisis on developing countries was a clear signal of the danger associated with their dependence on foreign resources. The impact of financial dependence on foreign donor funding is that once donors withdraws their financial support, NGOs wind up while projects developed during their period of operation eventually collapse.

Okorley and Nkrumah (2012) agreed that the most sustainable financing strategy is to diversify income sources. A sustainable approach to NGO financing is one that avoids dependency on any single source of revenue, external or internal. There is difficulty in determining a formula for the percentages that need to be derived from various sources in order to come up with the optimum mix. However, maintaining a balance between externally and internally generated resources is necessary to allow an organization to meet its operating and administrative expenses while maintaining the freedom to determine its program priorities and projects, irrespective of donor preferences (Yang, Lee & Chang, 2011)

Zhang and Lei (2012) argue that building a truly "sustainable" NGO is a multidimensional challenge entailing both internal factors of strengthening organizational capacity, as well as external factors of establishing a more supportive regulatory environment and secure resources for NGO initiative. In fact, Lepper and Schroenn (2010) stressed that an NGO must achieve organizational, self-governing capacity before it can attempt to achieve financial sustainability, and that a good legal framework for the NGO sector is a perquisite condition for both. However, while ensuring organizational sustainability requires for more than simple ensuring financial sustainability, the question of how to generate a stable source of financing is indeed one of the most universally recurrent and confounding obstacles for NGO professionals, fund-raisers, and policy analyst in almost all regions of the world.

Generally, NGOs can obtain funds to run their programs through three channels: - Interest third parties, who give to the NGOs in return, primarily for the personal satisfaction from doing good (grants and donations); Beneficiaries of the NGOs programs, who value their participation more than the cost (cost recovery); and Unrelated third parties, who will pay the NGO in return for objects of value that can make or do for them (commercial ventures). All

forms of grants and donations are categorized as “External” funding sources, while cost recovery methods and commercial ventures are categorized as “internal” funding sources. Similarly, evidence was also given by García et al.(2012) that feasibility analysis of potential funding sources using these critical factors varies from one NGO to another depending on NGO’s legal, organizational and operational characteristics. Yet, Das and Chatterjee(2015) said that experiences of NGOs in many countries around the world suggest that international funding is in decline and therefore cannot be relied upon for long-term financial sustainability. On the other hand, levels of domestic resources and self-financing appear to be increasing and are therefore more reliable components in long-term sustainability strategy.

A promising method for nonprofit organizations to overcome reliance on limited external funding sources is to think more creatively about their fundraising strategies and consider the role of nontraditional philanthropic organizations or individuals. One such approach is the role of giving circles in the financial viability of nonprofit organizations: Giving circles involve groups of individuals pooling their resources and then deciding together where to give them away. They also frequently include social, educational, and volunteer engagement components that seem to increase members' awareness about community issues and philanthropic processes (DePuy, 2011). Giving circles can also be identity-based (for example, an African American or women's giving circle). Data suggest that giving circles have been successful at engaging younger and female participants in philanthropic roles and that they are growing in popularity among various racial, ethnic tribal, and other identity groups.

Claiborne (2010) puts it that, NGOs often operate within the communities that they serve, creating a unique challenge of promoting ownership and collaboration among community members while maintaining programmatic and mission integrity. Establishing and engaging community board leadership and a system of community volunteers provides NGOs a resource of varied experiences and expertise while bringing a sense of ownership to the communities that they serve. Sustainability is a challenge that most NGOs must address; managing financial viability in an evolving funding landscape, contending with "competing" NGOs while establishing collaborative partnerships, demonstrating value and accountability to funders and supporters, and maximizing the contribution of leadership within the community.

However, Mtapuri and Giampiccoli(2013) argues that, these challenges become exacerbated, if not overshadowed by other factors for nonprofits serving those communities that are most in need. NGOs serving high-need or low-income, and sometimes minority, populations are faced with balancing multiple community challenges that reach far beyond the mission of the organization (that is economic challenges, poor education, poor health, crime or safety issues, housing concerns, lack of business or community development). Kahle and Gurel-Atay(2013) stressed that, understanding the interaction between the economic and cultural contexts of low-income communities and the sustainability challenges that NGOs face is necessary to maximize strategies to address financial sustainability challenges and ultimately improve nonprofit services for communities of the greatest need. Most nonprofits receive funds from multiple sources (that is government, foundations, private donors) and streams (that is grants, contracts, membership fees). Substantial cutbacks in both government and foundational funds suggest that NGOs should develop or revisit their fundraising plans to support financial sustainability.

Developing a coherent fundraising plan to address the challenges and best promote the mission of the organization is imperative. A strategic fundraising plan provides an opportunity to examine what is working well and where there are opportunities for improvement, encourages nonprofits to set specific goals, and motivates nonprofits to make a commitment to focus on the big picture. Developing the fundraising plan should be integrated into other planning efforts, such as strategic planning, program planning, and budgeting. Bray (2010) suggest the following tasks in developing a fundraising plan: “Determine a reasonable dollar goal to work toward, Evaluate your organization's greatest fundraising assets, Create a strategy that uses these assets to most effectively reach potential funding sources and Write down your strategy in a short, easy-to-understand document to keep everyone on plan. “In some cases, nonprofit organizations have found success in starting small, particularly in communities where residents may be less familiar with the mission of the organization or where residents may have less to give on a consistent basis. In these cases, the notion of "all donations count" is important (Bray, 2010).

2.7 Theoretical Review

The study was based on various theoretical foundations. The reviewed theories included agency theory, stakeholder theory and resource based theory.

2.7.1 The Agency Theory

Agency theory was posited by Mitnick (1991). It extends the analysis of the firm to include separation of ownership and control and managerial motivation. In the field of participation in projects, management agency issues have been shown to influence managerial attitudes toward participation (Bray, 2010). The theory explains how best to organize relationships in which one party determines the work and the other party do the work. It also explains a possible mismatch of interest between shareholders, management and debt holders due to asymmetries in earning distribution, which can result in the firm taking too much risk or not engaging in positive net value projects (Armstrong, 2012).

Consequently, agency theory implies that defined hedging policies can have important influence on firm value (Bray, 2010).The Assumption of agency theory is a pragmatic contribution to the social sciences, incorporating central ideas about how human–machine interaction. Agency theory assumes both the principal and the agent are motivated by self-interest. This assumption of self-interest dooms agency theory to inevitable inherent conflicts

It becomes necessary to carefully identify the challenges that may occur over the life of the project, from conception to operation, and allocate those tasks to the participants who are best able to manage them (Maina, 2013). This study examines the support of management in project success. Therefore, this theory was relevant in understanding the influence of project management team on performance of wildlife conservation projects.

2.7.2 Resource Based View Theory

This theory was developed by Wernerfelt(1982). The resource-based view (RBV) provides valuable insights into why firms with valuable, rare, inimitable, and well organized resources at their disposal may have a competitive edge over the others and enjoy superior performance. Resources are either tangible or intangible in nature. Barney (1995) observes that the RBV formulates the firm to be a bundle of resources, in other words, it is these resources and the way that they are combined that distinguishes firms from each other. It is essentially an inside-out approach of analyzing the firm implying that the starting point of the analysis is the internal environment of the organization.

The RBV theory relies on the firms' internal attributes to explain firms' heterogeneity in strategy and performance. Based on this view, a firm can be taken as an organized, unique set of factors known as resources and capabilities which are related sources of advantages to the firm. Resources are a firm's accumulated assets, including anything the firm can use to create,

produce, and/or offer its products to a market. As pointed out by Amit and Schoemaker, (1993), resources are eligible for legal protection (as such, firms can exercise property rights over them); can operate independently of firm members; and can intervene as factors in the production process to convert input into output that satisfies needs (Grant, 1991). As Barney (1995) contends, resources such as capital, equipment, and the skills of individual employees, patents, finance, and talented managers form the necessary inputs into a firm's production process.

The two critical assumptions of RBV are that resources must also be heterogeneous and immobile. The first assumption is that skills, capabilities and other resources that organizations possess differ from one company to another. Moreover, the resource-based view is grounded in the perspective that a firm's internal environment, in terms of its resources and capabilities, is more critical to the determination of strategic action than is the external environment (Camisón, 2005). Instead of focusing on the accumulation of resources necessary to implement the strategy dictated by conditions and constraints in the external environment the resource-based view suggests that a firm's unique resources and capabilities provide the basis for a strategy. The business strategy chosen should allow the firms to best exploit its core competencies relative to opportunities in the external environment (Robert, 2008).

This theory is suitable for examining the financial sustainability of the NGOs and will, therefore, be adopted in this research since it focuses on the firms' internal environment. The environment in this case is the ability of NGOs to have diverse sources of funds, have competent staff and prepare financial strategic plans.Non-Governmental Organizations are considered as economic institutions in spite of the fact that they are nominally non-profit making institutions. In many NGOs, the revenue structure has been unilateral in a traditional aspect; however, there is a growing need to diversify the revenue base to sustain their operations (Barney, 1991). Presently, the concept of economic rent and the view of the company as a collection of capabilities dominate the business strategy resource-based theory or resource- based view (RBV) of firms. Kay (2005) points out that this approach to competitive strategy has a coherence and integrative role that places it well ahead of other mechanisms of strategic decision making.

2.7.3 Social Capital Theory

This theory was established by (Putnam, 1995; Coleman, 1988; Portes 1998; Portes and Landolt, 1996) Social capital was considered as a medium through which local communities invested their asset base of material, human, cultural and financial resources in ecotourism activities (Putnam, 1995; Coleman, 1988; Portes 1998; Portes and Landolt, 1996, 2000). In this context, social capital represents the connections within (bonding) and between (bridging) social networks (Aldridge, Halpern, and Fitzpatrick, 2002). It entails social contacts that affect productivity of an individual and/or a group. It underscores the importance of community participation for common success and describes the tangible substances that account for the daily lives of people in terms of goodwill, fellowship, sympathy and social intercourse among individuals and families who make up a social unit (Putnam, 2000). Social capital is seen as a public good that consists of social structures that facilitate certain actions by actors within a given setup.

The core assumption guiding social capital research is that the good- will of others toward us is a valuable resource to be harnessed. Adler and Kwon (2002) define goodwill as the sympathy, trust, and forgiveness that friends and acquaintances offer us; thus they see it as the substance of social capital. According to Putnam (1995), social capital is a producer of civic engagement and a factor for resource possession by a group based on norms and trust. On the other hand, Arefi (2003) argues that social capital leads to consensus building hence shared interests and agreement among various actors and shareholders in order to induce collective action.

Therefore, collective actions are indicators of increased social capital. However, Portes and Landolt (2000) caution that social capital may lead to negative consequences such as exclusion of outsiders, excess claim on group members, restriction on individual freedom and downward levelling norms. Figure 2.1 depicts the conceptual framework where various variables interact in the context of CBET to generate outputs on households livelihoods and environmental management.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

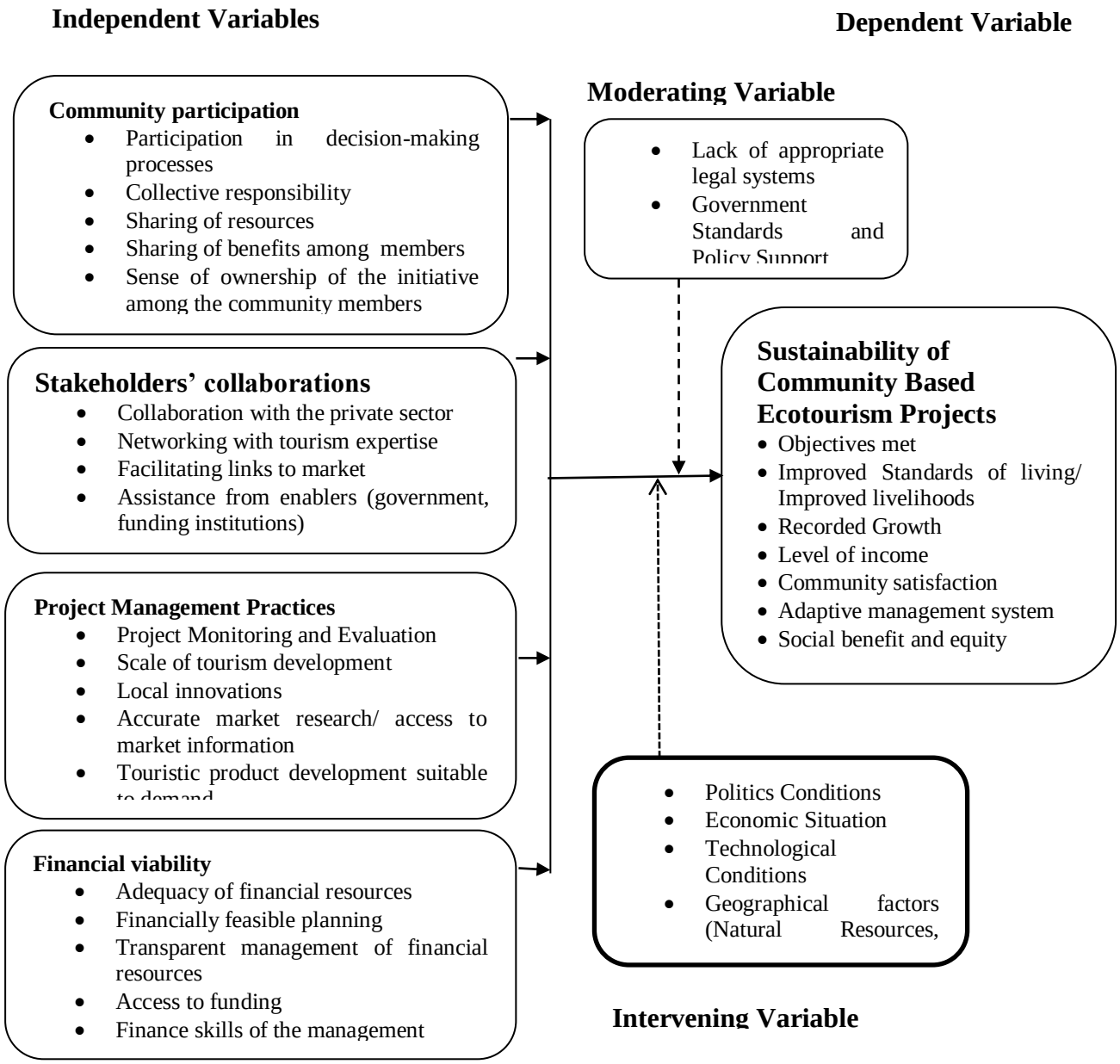

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.9 Summary

Sustainability is defined as ensuring that the institutions supported through projects and the benefits realized are maintained and continue after the end of the project

An operational definition which permits some degree of ordinal ranking by sustainability will have to be narrow and specific. Development of tourism and livestock markets is providing conservancies with revenue streams, a portion of which are used to fund local schools, health care facilities, and conservancy operational costs, including ranger salaries and vehicle

maintenance. Improvements in rangeland conditions are allowing pastoralists to expand the sizes of their herds and the numbers of livestock sold to NRT, further increasing annual income for communities.

Community participation is a matter of global concern and the international community has been persuading the developing countries to engage the people in addressing issues that affect their own lives. Community participation approaches have become a major demand by the development agencies the world over; the United Nation, World Bank and other donors. Stakeholder collaboration is a process that will go through much iteration. Full collaboration or partnership is not always going to be the outcome. Instead, the process that stakeholders go through may reveal that other forms of action campaigns, education, policy development, or advocacy are more appropriate given the conservation goals and objectives identified, and the roles, positions, and interests of the various parties involved. Management of projects involves increasing the alignment of development projects with host communities priorities and coordinating aid efforts at all levels (local, national, and international) to increase ownership and efficient delivery of services. It is therefore basically offering leadership to achieve certain laid objectives.

2.10 Research Gaps

Various studies were conducted on the sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2. 1: Summary of Empirical Literature Review and Research Gap

Author(s)/Year	Focus of study	Findings	Research Gaps	Focus of current study
Ekwale, A. E. (2014)	Assessment of Local Community Involvement in Community Based Ecotourism Planning and Development: The Case of Takamanda National Park. South West Region, Cameroon	The study revealed that, despite the level of awareness of the concept of CBET, the community dwellers are willing to participate and involve in its planning and development on conditions of an approach that will not jeopardize the quality of the resources as the sources of their livelihood.	The study failed to show various determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya.	To establish the determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects by foucing on focus on Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County
Wilder, M. (2016)	An assessment of ecotourism as an effective tool for sustainable forest management: The case of Adaba-Dodola, Ethiopia;	The alternate source of income that was directly related to the quality of the surrounding forests, increased sustainable forest use and positive attitudes towards the forests as a non-consumptive service	The study failed to show various determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya.	To establish the determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects by foucing on focus on Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County**.**

Githinji, C. M. (2009)	Factors that affect the sustainability of CBPs in Mutomo District of Kitui County	The study found that the greatest factor affecting the sustainability of the community based projects lies with the controllers and implementers.	The study focused on CBPs which is different from community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya.	To establish the determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects by foucing on focus on Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County.
Gaitho, V. G. (2014)	Impact of CBET on households livelihoods and environmental management in Il Ngwesi and Lekurruki Group Ranches in Laikipia County.	The study found out that local communities participating in forums where decisions to introduce CBET were made	The study failed to show various determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya.	To establish the determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects by foucing on focus on Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County.
Jaldesa, H. A. (2017)	Sustainable management of community based tourism: the case of	The study found out that the roles of sustainable management of community based tourism were realized through local	The study failed to show various determinants of sustainability of	To establish the determinants of sustainability of

	community based tourism projects in Isiolo County in Kenya.	community involvement in tourism activities, as an economic contributor, a mechanism to curb community disputes on tourism resources and enhancement of preservation and conservation of tourism resources.	community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya.	community based ecotourism development projects by foucing on focus on Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology which the researcher used to find answers to the research questions. It provides the roadmap in the determination of the research design, target population, sampling technique and sample size, data collection techniques, instruments of data collection that aided the study. Also, it provides guidelines to the methods that the researcher used in data analysis and presentation, and discussion of the findings of the study.

3.2 Research Design

The research used descriptive research design in the collection of data on the factors influencing sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya. Descriptive research is defined as the process of gathering data in order to test hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the current status of the element of the study (Lewis,2015).Descriptive research design was chosen because a descriptive study ensures complete description of the situation, making sure that there is minimum bias in the collection and interpretation of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Descriptive studies help to demonstrate associations or relationships between things around the world.

3.3 Target Population

A target population is classified as all the members of a given group to which the investigation is related, whereas the accessible population is looked at in terms of those elements in the target population within the reach of the researcher. Based on the recommendations of Gorard(2013) in defining the unit of analysis for a study, the target population for this study was 144 respondents comprising of project staff in Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy in Meru County, Project committee members and project beneficiaries.

Table 3.1: Target Population

Category	Population size	Percentage
Project Managers	9	6.3
Project committee	44	30.6
Project beneficiaries (Meru County residents)	91	63.2
Total	**144**	**100.0**

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The sampling plan describes the sampling unit, sampling frame, sampling procedures and the sample size for the study. The sampling outline depicts the list of all populace units from which the specimen were chosen (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). As indicated by Wang(2015), sampling includes selecting a given number of subjects from a characterized population in order to represent to the whole population.

3.4.1 Sample Size

Sampling frame is a list of all the units of the population of interest. It is a complete list of everyone or everything to be studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). For any research, the sample size of the study must be determined during its designing stage. However, before determining the size of the sample that is needed to be drawn from the population, a few factors must be taken into consideration namely, how much sampling error can be tolerated, population size, how varied the population is with respect to the characteristics of interest, and the smallest subgroup within the sample for which estimates are needed (Lewis, 2015). Using the above methods as a guideline, Krejcie and Morgan approach was used to determine the sample size of a population.

$n = (X^2NP (1-P)) / (d^2 (N-1) + X^2P (1-P))$

Where:

n = Required Sample size

X = Z value (1.96 for 95% confidence level yield maximum)

N = Population Size

P = Population proportion (expressed as decimal), assumed to be 0.5 (50%) as magnitude yielding maximum.

d = Degree of accuracy (5%), expressed as a proportion (0.05); It is the margin of error.

Hence the sample size of the study was

$S = (1.96^2 * 144* 0.5 (1-0.5)) / (0.05^2 * (144-1) + 1.96^2 * 0.5 (1-0.5)) = 105$

The sample size was hence 105 respondents.

The sampling ration was = 105/144=0.73 and was used for establishing the distribution of the respondents under various categories.

Table 3. 2: Sampling Frame

Category	Population size	Ratio	Sample Size
Project Managers	9	0.73	7
Project committee	44	0.73	32
Project beneficiaries (Meru County residents)	91	0.73	66
Total	**144**		**105**

3.4.2 Sampling Procedures

This study adopted a stratified and simple random sampling technique. Stratified random sampling waschosen because it'sunbiased sampling method of grouping heterogeneous population into homogenous subsets then selecting within the individual subset to ensure representativeness. In the determination of the sample size in this study, Wang(2015) criterion on selection of sample size was considered by taking 73% of the total population in each case.

3.5 Research Instruments

Data was acquired both from primary and secondary sources. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), primary data refers to data that the researcher collects from respondents while secondary data refers to data from other sources like records and documents, thus primary data would be considered more reliable and up to date. Primary data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire containing open and close-ended questions. Secondary data was obtained from the organization's published reports.

3.5.1 Pilot Testing

Pilot testing is a smaller version of a larger study which is conducted in order to prepare for the study or to field test the survey in order to provide a rationale for thedesign. It involves pre-testing of the instruments to determine their validityand reliability. Pilot-testing of the instruments was carried out using a different but a similargroup in MeruCounty. The aim of the pilot survey was to test whether thedesign of questions is logical, if questions were clear and easily understood and whetherthe stated responses was exhaustive and how long it took to complete the questionnaire. Thepre-test also allowed the researcher to check on whether the variables collected could beprocessed and analyzed easily. The pre-testing was carried out on a sample consistingof 10% of the respondents. Questions that werefound to be interpreted

differently during the pretestingwere rephrased so that they had same meaning to all respondents. Views given by therespondents during pre-testing were analyzed and used to improve the questionnaires beforeactual collection of data.

3.5.2 Validity of Research Instruments

According to Dwork et al. (2015), validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, based on the research results. One of the main reasons for conducting the pilot study was to ascertain the validity of the questionnaire. The study used both face and content validity to ascertain the validity of the questionnaires. Content validity draws an inference from test scores to a large domain of items similar to those on the test. Expert opinion was requested to comment on the representativeness and suitability of questions and give suggestions of corrections to be made to the structure of the research tools. This helped to improve the content validity of the data that was collected. Content validity was obtained by asking for the opinion of the supervisor, lecturers and other professionals on whether the questionnaire was adequate and to improve representation or sampling.

3.5.3 Reliability of Research Instruments

Instrument reliability is the extent to which a research instrument produces similar results on different occasions under similar conditions. It is the degree of consistency with which it measures whatever it is meant to measure. Reliability is concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are repeatable. A construct composite reliability co-efficient (Cronbach's alpha (α)) of 0.7 or above is generally acceptable (Song et al., 2014). A co-efficient of 0.7 or above for all the constructs was considered adequate in this study.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection instrument that was used for this study was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher and observations. Structured questionnaires were distributed to the targeted population. The researcher bookedappointment with respondent organizations at least two days before visiting to administer questionnaires. The questionnaires were personally administered to the respondents so as to have an in-depth understanding of how each respondent articulates issues relating to the projects. Each respondentreceived the same set of questions in exactly the same way and were completed and collected after a period of two weeks.

Secondary data was collected from published and non-published materials, from internet, journals, past research papers, and books this enhanced theoretical aspects of this research.

3.10 Data Analysis Techniques

After the data collection, the researcher pre-processed the data to eliminate unwanted and unusable data which was contradictory or ambiguous, develop a coding scheme by creating codes and scales from the responses which was then be summarized and analyzed. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25.0). All the questionnaires received were referenced and items in the questionnaire were coded to facilitate data entry. After data cleaning which entailed checking for errors in entry, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean score and standard deviation was estimated for all the quantitative variables and information waspresented inform of tables. The qualitative data from the open ended questions was analyzed using conceptual content analysis and presented in prose

Inferential data analysis was done using multiple regression analysis. Multiple regression analysis was used to establish the relations between the independent and dependent variables. The multiple regression model was chosen because it is useful in establishing the relative importance of independent variables to the dependent variable (Creswell &Creswell, 2017). Multiple regressions were used because it is the procedure that uses two or more independent variables to predict a dependent variable. Since there are four independent variables in this study the multiple regression model generally assumed the following equation;

$$\mathbf{Y= \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon}$$

$$\mathbf{Y= \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon}$$

$$\mathbf{Y= \beta_0 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon}$$

$$\mathbf{Y= \beta_0 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon}$$

Where:-

Y= Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

β_0=constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ andβ_4 = regression coefficients

X_1= Community participation

X_2= Stakeholders collaborations

X_3= Project management practices

X_4= Financial viability

ε=Error Term

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Before the actual administration of the instruments, an explanation on the aim and the purpose of the study was done to the respondents in the language they understood better. Theresearcher endeavoured to obtain an informed consent from the respondents beforeundertaking to collect data from the field. Informed consent wasobtained by participant'spermission to participate in the study before administering the questionnaire to him or her. Inorder to obtain unbiased data the researcher exercised utmost caution whileadministering the data collection instruments to the respondents to ensure their rightsand privacy were respected. The researcher also ensuredthat respondents were given the questionnaires at a time and place most convenient to them.The researcher also obtained a letter from University allowing undertaking of the study and a research permit from NACOSTIexplaining the purpose of the study and high level of confidentiality on the information provided by respondents through the questionnaires was maintained.

3.12 Operationalization of Variables

The operationalization of variables was shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Operationalization of Variables

Objectives	Type of Variable	Indicator	Measuring of Indicators	Tools of analysis	Type of analysis
To establish the influence of community participation on sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya	Independent	Community participation	Participation in decision-making processes Collective responsibility Sharing of resources Sharing of benefits among members Sense of ownership of the initiative among the community members Empowerment of community members Land management/governance	Percentages Mean score	Descriptive statistics Regression analysis
To determine the influence of stakeholders collaborations on sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya	Independent	Stakeholders collaborations	Collaboration with the private sector Networking with tourism expertise Facilitating links to market Assistance from enablers (government, funding institutions)	Percentages Mean score	Descriptive statistics Regression analysis
To assess the influence of project management practices on sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya County	Independent	Project management practices	Project Monitoring and Evaluation Scale of tourism development Local innovations Accurate market research/ access to market information Touristic product development suitable to demand	Percentages Mean score	Descriptive statistics Regression analysis

			Capacity building		
To evaluate the influence of financial viability on sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya	Independent	Financial viability	Adequacy of financial resources Financially feasible planning Transparent management of financial resources Access to funding Finance skills of the management	Percentages Mean score	Descriptive statistics Regression analysis
	Dependent	Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya	Objectives met Improved Standards of living/ Improved livelihoods Recorded Growth Level of income Community satisfaction Adaptive management system Social benefit and equity	Mean score	Descriptive statistics Regression analysis

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the findings obtained regarding the determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya. The chapter consists of response rate, reliability analysis, background information of the respondents and their opinions on the determinants of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya. To simplify the discussions, the researcher provided tables that summarized the collective reactions of the respondents.

4.1.1 Response Rate

The researcher targeted 105 respondents to fill the questionnaires. However, a total of 77 respondents were able to fill and return the questionnaires. This gave a response rate of 73.2% which was within Gorard (2013) who prescribed that a significant response rate for statistical analysis must be 50% or more.

Table 4. 1: Response Rate

	Number of respondents	**Percent**
Response	77	73.2
Non- Response	28	26.8
Total	**105**	**100.0**

4.1.2 Reliability Analysis

The researcher conducted a reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha which measures the internal consistency by establishing if certain items within a scale measure the same construct. The results of the reliability analysis are presented in the Table 4.2 below.

Table 4. 2: Reliability Results

Variable	**Cronbach's alpha**
Community participation	.811
Stakeholders collaborations	.771
Project management practices	.843
Financial viability	.766
Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects	.729

From the findings, project management practices was more reliable as shown by a coefficient of 0.843, followed by community participation as expressed by a coefficient of 0.811, then stakeholders collaborations as illustrated by a coefficient of 0.771, thenfinancial viability as illustrated by a coefficient of 0.766 while sustainability of community based ecotourism projects was the least reliable as indicated by a coefficient of 0.729. All the variables were considered reliable since the results showed that their Cronbach Alpha associated were above 0.70 threshold as recommended by Alreck and Settle (2003) who noted that Cronbach Alpha's should be in excess of 0.70 for the measurement intervals.

4.2 Background Information

The researcher sought to enquire about the background information of the respondents. This included gender, age bracket and highest level of education. The background information of the respondents was presented in tables.

4.2.1 Respondents' Gender

The researcher was requested to indicate their gender. Their responses were as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4. 3: Respondents' Gender

	Frequency	**Percent**
Female	38	38.4
Male	39	61.6
Total	**77**	**100.0**

The findings reveal that most of the respondents were male as represented by 61.6% while the rest were female as shown by 38.4%. This implied that the researcher considered all the respondents irrespective of their gender to obtain reliable and accurate information concerning the subject under study.

4.2.2 Respondents' Age Bracket

The researcher requested the respondents to indicate their age brackets. The results were displayed on Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Respondents' Age Bracket

	Frequency	Percent
20-30 yrs	11	14.3
31-40 yrs	29	37.7
41-50 yrs	24	31.2
51 – 60 yrs	13	16.9
Total	**77**	**100.0**

From the results, 37.7% of the respondents were aged between 31-40 yrs., 31.2% were aged between 41-50 yrs., 16.9% were aged between 51 – 60 yrs and 14.3% were aged between 20-30 yrs. This implies that most of the respondents who filled questionnaires were mature enough to give reliable data on the subject matter.

4.2.3 Respondents' Highest Level of Education

The respondents were further required to indicate their highest level of education. The findings were as shown on Table 4.5.

Table 4. 5: Respondents' Highest Level of Education

	Frequency	Percent
Post Graduate	3	3.9
Undergraduate	8	10.4
Diploma	36	46.8
Certificate	30	39.0
Total	**77**	**100.0**

The results show that 46.8% of the respondents had acquired a diploma, 39.4% had acquird the certificate, and 10.4% had reached the undergraduate level while 3.9%had reached a post graduate level. This shows that most of the respondents had enough basic education to be able to respond to the questionnaires effectively and hence the information they gave could be relied upon.

4.3 Community Participation

The study sought to establish influence of community participation on sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents were asked to

specify the extent that community participation influences the sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya. Table 4.6 shows the results.

Table 4.6 Influence of Community Participation on the Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

	Frequency	Percent
Very low extent	5	6.5
Low extent	8	10.4
Moderate extent	6	7.8
Great extent	22	28.6
Very great extent	36	46.8
Total	**77**	**100.0**

The outcome shows that 46.8% of the respondents indicated that community participation influences the sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a very great extent, 28.6% of the respondents indicated to a great extent, 10.4% indicated to a low extent, 7.8% indicated to a moderate extent while 6.5% indicated to a very low extent. This implies that community participation influences the sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County very greatly.

The study also sought the opinions of the respondents on how the aspects of community participation influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents indicated that mobilization of local resources for localcommunity projects is a means of enhancing empowerment, enhancing responsiveness topeople's real needs, instilling a sense of ownership of projects by the local people andpromoting project sustainability.

The researcher also asked the respondents to indicate the extent that the aspects of community participation influencesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya. Table 4.7 shows the outcomes.

Table 4.7: Influence of Community Participation Aspects onSustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Participation in decision-making processes	4.169	0.831
Collective responsibility	3.818	0.911
Sharing of resources	2.974	0.691
Sharing of benefits among members	4.013	0.766
Sense of ownership of the initiative among the community members	3.974	0.801
Empowerment of community members	3.935	0.980
Land management/governance	1.623	0.520

As per the findings, participation in decision-making processes as shown by a mean of 4.169; sharing of benefits among members as shown by a mean of 4.013;sense of ownership of the initiative among the community members as shown by a mean of 3.974; empowerment of community members as shown by a mean of 3.935; and collective responsibility as shown by a mean of 3.818influencesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent.The respondents also indicated that sharing of resources as shown by a mean of 2.974 influencesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent while land management/governance as shown by a mean of 1.623 influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent.

4.4 Stakeholders Collaborations

The research aimed at determining how stakeholders collaborations influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents were required to indicate the extent of stakeholders collaborations influence on sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County. The results were as shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Influence of Stakeholders Collaborations on the Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

	Frequency	Percent
Very low extent	7	9.1
Low extent	2	2.6
Moderate extent	15	19.5
Great extent	32	41.6
Very great extent	21	27.3
Total	**77**	**100.0**

The respondents indicated that 41.6% of the respondents had indicated that stakeholders collaborations influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya to a great extent; 27.3% indicated to a very great extent; 19.5% indicated to a moderate extent; 9.1% indicated to a very low extent while 2.6% indicated to a low extent. This implies that stakeholders collaborations influences sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County greatly.

Further, the respondents gave their opinions on how the aspects of stakeholders collaborations influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents indicated that effective collaboration to achieve community outcomes relatedto community based ecotourism projectsdoes require identification of common problems by stakeholders so thattheir efforts are directed toward common goals. Also, communication channelswithin stakeholder groups should be tightly bound together.

The researcher asked the respondents to indicate the extent to which aspects of project management practices influence on sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya. The findings are as shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Influence of Stakeholders Collaborations Aspects on Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Collaboration with the private sector	2.831	0.875
Networking with tourism expertise	4.104	0.787
Facilitating links to market	3.883	0.938
Assistance from enablers (government, funding institutions)	1.727	0.954

The findings reveal that networking with tourism expertise as illustrated by an average score of 4.104; and facilitating links to market as illustrated by an average score of 3.883influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent.The results also show that collaboration with the private sector as illustrated by an average score of 2.831 influences sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent and assistance from enablers (government, funding institutions) as illustrated by an average score of 1.727 influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent.

4.5 Project Management Practices

The study sought to assess how project management practices influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent that project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya. The replies were as shown on Table 4.10.

Table 4. 10: Influence of Project Management Practices on the Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

	Frequency	Percent
Very low extent	8	10.4
Low extent	6	7.8
Moderate extent	3	3.9
Great extent	31	40.3
Very great extent	29	37.7
Total	**77**	**100.0**

The findings show that 40.3% of the respondents had indicated that project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya to a great extent; 37.7% indicated to a very great extent; 10.4% indicated to a very low extent; 7.8% indicated to a low extent; while 3.9% indicated to a moderate extent . This implies that project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent.

Regarding the respondents' opinions on how project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya, the respondents indicated that task familiarity helps in improving performance and increasing sustainability of a project. individuals with good management skill are considered to be goodleaders and therefore, through their leadership organizations are steered to prosperity.Regular project monitoring ensures project sustainability though helping theproject in future planning. This indicates regulated project monitoring enables the projectmanagement teams in planning those guiding the project in the right direction.

The respondents were required to indicate the extent to which aspects of project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County. The responses were displayed on Table 4.11.

Table 4. 11: Influence of Project Management Practices Aspects on Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

	Mean	**Std. Dev.**
Project Monitoring and Evaluation	3.740	0.963
Scale of tourism development	4.208	0.780
Local innovations	1.922	0.886
Accurate market research/ access to market information	3.766	0.645
Touristic product development suitable to demand	3.351	0.924
Capacity building	3.870	0.802

The findings reveal that scale of tourism development as shown by a mean score of 4.208; capacity building as shown by a mean score of 3.870; accurate market research/ access to market information as shown by a mean score of 3.766; and project monitoring and evaluation as shown

by a mean score of 3.740 influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. The respondents further indicated that touristic product development suitable to demand as shown by a mean score of 3.351 influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. Local innovations as shown by a mean score of 1.922 were indicated to influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent.

4.6 Financial Viability

The study sought to evaluate how financial viability influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent that financial viability influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya. Table 4.12 shows the findings.

Table 4. 12: Influence of Financial Viability on the Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

	Frequency	Percent
Very low extent	5	6.5
Low extent	6	7.8
Moderate extent	4	5.2
Great extent	39	50.6
Very great extent	23	29.9
Total	**77**	**100.0**

From the findings, 50.6% of the respondents indicated that financial viability influences sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County to a great extent; 29.9% indicated to very great extent; 7.8% indicated to a low extent; 6.5% indicated to a very low extent; and 5.2% indicated to a moderate extent. This implied that financial viability influences sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County to a great extent.

The opinions of respondents on how the aspects of financial viabilityaffect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya were also sought. The respondents indicated that funding is linked to a project's ability to be sustained and it entails selecting

resources that should be available for the projected future and minimizing the possibility of project failure once it is up and running.

The respondents were also required to indicate the extent to which the aspects of financial viabilityaffect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya. The results were as shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4. 13: Influence of Financial Viability Aspects on Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Adequacy of financial resources	3.623	0.619
Financially feasible planning	3.844	0.664
Transparent management of financial resources	4.675	0.976
Access to funding	2.922	0.987
Finance skills of the management	3.792	0.773

The results revealed that transparent management of financial resources as presented by a mean of 4.675 affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a very great extent. The respondents also indicated that financially feasible planning as presented by a mean of 3.844; finance skills of the management as presented by a mean of 3.792; and adequacy of financial resources as presented by a mean of 3.623 affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. The respondents also indicated that access to funding as presented by a mean of 2.922 affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent.

4.7 Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

The research also sought the trend of the aspects of sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya for the last five years. Table 4.14 shows the outcomes.

Table 4.14: Trend of Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Objectives met	3.584	0.533
Improved Standards of living/ Improved livelihoods	4.104	0.752
Recorded Growth	3.779	0.873
Level of income	3.078	0.806
Community satisfaction	3.805	0.951
Adaptive management system	3.766	0.885
Social benefit and equity	3.883	0.808

The results reveal that standards of living/ livelihoods as shown by a mean score of 4.104;; social benefit and equity as shown by a mean score of 3.883; community satisfaction as shown by a mean score of 3.805; recorded growth as shown by a mean score of 3.779; adaptive management system as shown by a mean score of 3.766; and objectives met as shown by a mean score of 3.584 had improved over the last five years. The results also reveal that level of income as shown by a mean score of 3.078 was constant for the last five years.

4.7 Multiple Regression Analysis

The researcher conducted a multiple regression analysis so as to test relationship among variables that is independent and dependent variables. The independent variables included community participation, stakeholders' collaborations, project management practices and financial viability while the dependent variable was the sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county. The findings were presented in Table 4.15, 4.16 and 4.17.

Table 4. 15: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.857	0.735	0.720	1.200

From the findings, the independent variables were statistically significant predicting the dependent variable since adjusted R square was 0.720. This implied that 72.0% variations in

sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru County are explained by community participation, stakeholders' collaborations, project management practices and financial viability. Other factors influencing sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county that were not covered in this study accounted for 28.0% which form the basis for further studies.

Table 4. 16: ANOVA Test

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	299.121	4	74.780	49.846	.000
Residual	108.017	72	1.500		
Total	**407.138**	**76**			

From the ANOVA Table, p-value was 0.000 and F-calculated was 49.846. Since p-value was less than 0.05 and the F-calculated was greater than F-critical (2.4989), then the regression relationship was significant in determining how community participation, stakeholders' collaborations, project management practices and financial viability influenced sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county.

Table 4. 17: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.267	0.582		2.177	0.031
Community participation	0.823	0.269	0.714	3.059	0.003
Stakeholders' collaborations	0.724	0.288	0.611	2.514	0.013
Project management practices	0.681	0.242	0.462	2.814	0.005
Financial viability	0.796	0.312	0.672	2.551	0.012

The established model for the study was:

$$Y= 1.267 + 0.823X_1 + 0.724X_2 + 0.681X_3 + 0.796X_4$$

Where: Y= Sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects.

X_1= Community participation

X_2= stakeholders' collaborations

X_3=project management practices

X_4=financial viability

The regression equation above has established that taking (community participation, stakeholders' collaborations, project management practices and financial viability) at constant, sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county will be 1.267. The findings presented also show that increase in the community participation leads to 0.823 increase in the score of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county if all other variables are held constant. This variable was significant since the p-value 0.003<0.05.

Further, it was found that if stakeholders' collaborations increases, there is a 0.724 increase in sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county. This variable was significant since its p-value 0.013 was less than 0.05. Further, the findings show that a unit increases in the scores of project management practices would lead to 0.681 increase in the scores of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county. The variable was also significant as its p-value 0.005<0.05. The study also found that a unit increase in the score of financial viability would lead to a 0.796 increase in the scores of sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county . The variable was significant as its p-value 0.015< 0.05.

Overall, community participation had the greatest influence on sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru County, followed by financial viability, then stakeholders' collaborations while project management practices had the least influence on the sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county. All the variables were significant since their p-values were less than 0.05.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the summary of the findings, the discussions as per the literature review, conclusion and recommendations. The chapter summarises with further recommendations.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study sought to establish influence of community participation on sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya. The study found that community participation influences the sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County very greatly. The study also found that participation in decision-making processes; sharing of benefits among members; sense of ownership of the initiative among the community members; empowerment of community members; and collective responsibility influencesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. The study also established that sharing of resources influencesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent while land management/governance as influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent.

The research aimed at determining how stakeholders collaborations influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya. The study found that stakeholders collaborations influences sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County greatly. The study also found that networking with tourism expertise; and facilitating links to market influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. The study also found that collaboration with the private sector influences sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent and assistance from enablers (government, funding institutions) influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent.

The study sought to assess how project management practices influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya. Further, it was found that project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. The study also found that scale of tourism development;

capacity building; accurate market research/ access to market information; and project monitoring and evaluation influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. The study further found that touristic product development suitable to demand influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. Local innovations were found to influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent.

The study sought to evaluate how financial viability influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County, Kenya. The study also found that financial viability influences sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County to a great extent. The study also found that transparent management of financial resources affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a very great extent. The research also found that financially feasible planning; finance skills of the management; and adequacy of financial resources affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. The study also indicated that access to funding affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent.

The research also sought the trend of the aspects of sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya for the last five years. The study found that standards of living/ livelihoods; social benefit and equity; community satisfaction; recorded growth; adaptive management system; and objectives met had improved over the last five years. The research also found that the level of income was constant for the last five years.

5.3 Discussion of the Findings

This section entails further literature discussions on the findings of each variable

5.3.1 Community Participation and Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

The study found that community participation influences the sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County very greatly. The findings conform to Hausler (2010) who found that the degree to which stakeholders are personally involved in the implementation process causes great variation in their support for that project. The study also found that participation in decision-making processes; sharing of benefits among members; sense of

ownership of the initiative among the community members; empowerment of community members; and collective responsibility influencesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. Ebrahimi and Khalifah(2014) stated in relation to the findings thatcommunity participation is seen as a means of empowering the local community through incentives for conserving the biological resources in their environment subject to benefits for individual families or households; thereby making ecotourism a means for rural development. The study also established that sharing of resources influencesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. In addition, Morelli (2011) argued that community participation therefore is an integral part of tourism in order to help increase community's carrying capacity by reducing negative impacts while enhancing positive effects.The research also found that land management/governance as influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent. Similarly, Galaski (2015) observed that community participation in resource management for tourism has the potential capacity of increasing income and employment, and of developing skills and institutions for empowering local people.

5.3.2 Stakeholders Collaborations and Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

The study found that stakeholders' collaborations influences sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County greatly. This is in consonance with Garcia (2012) who stated that stakeholder participation is increasingly becoming a part of project practice in order to deliver excellent project outcomes.The study also found that networking with tourism expertise; and facilitating links to market influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. Bray (2010) added that the involvement of stakeholders in project initiation, project planning, project implementation and monitoring and evaluation is critical for better project performance. The study also found that collaboration with the private sector influences sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent and assistance from enablers (government, funding institutions) influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent. In relation to the results, Brass (2010) stated that major public private partnership (PPP) initiatives in the United States have reportedly failed due to stakeholder opposition. As a result, it reveals that stakeholder s' participation in project is the key to project success and without their input the

outcome may not be favorable. Inadequate stakeholder involvement hinders beneficiaries' participation and weakens their capacity to influence project outcomes hence poor performance.

5.3.3 Project Management Practices and Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

Further, it was found that project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent. This is in accordance with Karanja (2014) who noted that good management ensures that sufficient local resources and capacity exist to sustain the project in the absence of outside resources. The study also found that scale of tourism development; capacity building; accurate market research/ access to market information; and project monitoring and evaluation influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a great extent.This correlates to Kerine (2015) who found that the project management teams have to interact with many stakeholders, they have to not only manage internal project activities, their peers and superiors, but also interact with clients, using skills that are essentially non-technical in nature, and which may not be easily imitable. These include but are not limited to organizational knowledge, implied knowledge in handling people within the organizational structure, leadership and management skills, and customer handling skills.The study further found that touristic product development suitable to demand influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. Local innovations were found to influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a low extent. Karanja (2014) asserts that individuals with good management skill are considered to be good leaders and therefore, through their leadership organizations are steered to prosperity.

5.3.4 Financial Viability and Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

The study also found that financial viability influences sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County to a great extent. These findings agree with Mmuriungi, Ngugi and Muturi (2015) who noted that inadequate funding detracts from a project's ability to be sustained. The study also found that transparent management of financial resources affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a very great extent. The research also found that financially feasible planning; finance skills of the management; and adequacy of financial resources affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in

Meru County to a great extent. This was as per Claiborne (2010) who stated that sustainability is a challenge that most NGOs must address; managing financial viability in an evolving funding landscape, contending with competing NGOs while establishing collaborative partnerships, demonstrating value and accountability to funders and supporters, and maximizing the contribution of leadership within the community. The study also indicated that access to funding affect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County to a moderate extent. The findings relate to Waiganjo et al. (2012) who assert that planning for future funding needs to be in place early and needs to be continually developed during the life of the project.

5.4 Conclusions

The study concluded that community participation influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County significantly. The study concluded that inequitable participationin benefit sharing and decision-making processes has engendered powerstruggles and social conflicts which threaten not only to tear the communityapart but also to compromise the chances of the Meru communitymembers prospering from theresources in their area and their involvement in ecotourism.

Further, in conclusion, stakeholders' collaborations were found to positively and significantly influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County. The study concluded that ecotourism, if cautiously designed and managed, canprovide a sustainable return, much of which can be retained within thelocal community and thus contribute to development.

The study also deduced that project management practices significantly influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County. The study concluded that adequate project management skillsboth at the project management and staff level contributes to the sustainability of theCommunity Based Ecotourism Projects.

The research concluded that financial viability influence sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects in Meru County significantly. This study concluded that proper financialmanagement enhances accountability. Community Based Ecotourism Projects ought tolook at how they get their funding and establish whether they can avail local resources fortheir projects. This is critical for sustainability of the project even after donor exit as thecommunity is responsible for financing the projects.

5.5 Recommendations

Further the study recommends that a better option might be collaboration with development-oriented NGOssuch as OXFAM or SNV that have gained experience in the field of tourism over thelast decade. These organisations will preferably have an established link with a localnetwork as developed in, for example, Botswana, Namibia and recently also in Kenya.The Kenya Community Based Tourism Network (KCBTNet) has brought togetherover fifty grass-roots organisations. Its objective is to create a forum for localcommunities involved in tourism, to mobilise their capacities, learn from each other,and make informed decisions about how to control activities that affect their lives andtheir own environment. In so doing, the communities should become actors rather thanjust passive subjects in the tourism industry.

There is also need for the government and NGO's to encourage the local community to diversify theirincome generating activities and venture into bee keeping and supply of goods andservices among others. This will ensure that the community is not entirely dependent ontourism and that they will not suffer the consequences of fluctuations in tourist arrivalsas well as other eventualities.The study recommended that communities should preferably finance and build basic facilities and infrastructure themselves. Starting small with one's own resources and slowly building up is preferable. Setting aside nicely located, safe camping areas and the development of ecotourism facilities would be a good starting point

The government and NGOs should educate and encourage the Meru community totake their children to school so as to improve the literacy levels in the area. Improvededucation levels are a sure way of driving the community to economic/ developmentbenefits and conservation of their environment.

The Community Based Ecotourism Projects' stakeholders or partners in Meru should also promote information flow,awareness and communication amongst themselves so as to ensure transparency andaccountability which are key to the success of community-based enterprises.

County government should adopt a more collaborative approach when dealing withcommunity based county projects. The county governments should sensitize the communitiesand engage them before projects are conducted to gauge relevance of the projects and alsoform steering committees that can well run the projects even after exits of its funds.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Studies

The study sought to determine the factors influencing sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Meru county. Similar study should be done in other counties for comparison purposes and to allow for generalization of findings. Other studies should be conducted on the challenges facing the sustainability of community based ecotourism development projects in Kenya. Other determinants that have not been studied here should also be considered for a future study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Transmittal

Dear Respondent,

Re: Request Questionnaire Responses

I am a Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management student at University of Nairobi, I am carrying out a research study on Factors Influencing Sustainability Of Community Based Ecotourism Development Projects In Kenya. A Case of Northern Rangeland Trust Conservancy, Meru County.

You have been identified as one of the people that could be of assistance with the research and I thus request your participation in the research. Essentially, you would be required to complete a questionnaire. You will be treated anonymously and your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality. The information you provide will be used only for academic purposes.

The questionnaire is strictly for academic purposes and any information given shall be treated with strict confidentiality; please give the information as accurately as possible. Thank you very much.

Yours faithfully,

Appendix II: Research Questionnaire

Kindly answer the following questions by writing a brief answer or ticking in the boxes provided.

PART A: Background Information

1. Please indicate your gender: Female [ ] Male [ ]
2. Please Indicate your age bracket

   20-30 yrs [ ] 31-40 yrs [ ]

   41-50 yrs [ ] 51 – 60 yrs [ ]
3. Which is your highest level of education?

   Post Graduate [ ] Undergraduate [ ]

   Diploma [ ] Certificate [ ]

   Any other (specify)……

PART B: Community Participation

4. To what extent does community participationinfluence thesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

   Very great extent [5] Moderate extent [3] Very low extent [1]

   Great extent [4] Low extent [2]

5. In your own opinion, how do the aspects of community participationinfluencesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

……
……
……

6. To what extent do the following aspects of community participation influencesustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Low extent	Very low extent
Participation in decision-making					

processes					
Collective responsibility					
Sharing of resources					
Sharing of benefits among members					
Sense of ownership of the initiative among the community members					
Empowerment of community members					
Land management/governance					

PART C: Stakeholders Collaborations

7. To what extent do you think stakeholders collaborationsinfluence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

Very great extent [5] Great extent [4]

Moderate extent [3] Low extent [2]

Very low extent [1]

8. In your opinion, how do the aspects of stakeholders collaborationsinfluence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

……

……

9. To what extent do the following aspects of stakeholders collaborationsinfluence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Low extent	Very low extent
Collaboration with the private sector					
Networking with tourism expertise					

Facilitating links to market					
Assistance from enablers (government, funding institutions)					

PART D:Project Management Practices

10. To what extent do project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

Very great extent [5] Moderate extent [3] Very low extent [1]

Great extent [4] Low extent [2]

11. In your own opinion, how do project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

……

……

……

12. To what extent do the following aspects of project management practices influence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Low extent	Very low extent
Project Monitoring and Evaluation					
Scale of tourism development					
Local innovations					
Accurate market research/ access to market information					
Touristic product development suitable to demand					
Capacity building					

PART E: Financial viability

13. To what extent does financial viabilityinfluence sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

Very great extent [5] Moderate extent [3] Very low extent [1]

Great extent [4] Low extent [2]

14. In your own opinion, how do the aspects of financial viabilityaffect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

……

……

15. To what extent do the following aspects of financial viabilityaffect sustainability of community based ecotourism projects in Meru County, Kenya?

	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Low extent	Very low extent
Adequacy of financial resources					
Financially feasible planning					
Transparent management of financial resources					
Access to funding					
Finance skills of the management					

PART F: Sustainability of Community Based Ecotourism Projects

16. What is the trend of the following aspects of sustainability of community based ecotourism projectsin Meru County, Kenyafor the last five years?

Objectives met					
Improved Standards of living/ Improved livelihoods					

Recorded Growth					
Level of income					
Community satisfaction					
Adaptive management system					
Social benefit and equity					

Thank You for Your Participation

Appendix III: Work Plan

Activity	**Month 1**				**Month 2**				**Month 3**				**Month 4**			
	Week				**Week**				**Week**				**Week**			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Topic selection & approval																
Supervisor appointment																
Produce draft proposal																
Incorporate supervisors reviews																
Proposal ready for presentation																
Incorporation of panel comments																
Pilot testing of questionnaire																
Data collection																
Data processing and analysis																
Review of draft by supervisor																
Incorporate supervisor comments																
Submit project to board of postgraduate studies																

Appendix IV: Budget

	Units	**Cost (Ksh)**	**Total Cost (Ksh.)**
Proposal Writing			
Stationery			
i. Foolscaps	2 Reams	300.00	600.00
ii. Biro Pens	1 Doz	240.00	240.00
iii. Staple Pins	1 Pkt	100.00	100.00
iv. Photocopy Papers	2 Reams	400.00	800.00
v. Spring Files	2 Pcs	100.00	200.00
vi. Typesetting	50 Pages	30.00	1,500.00
vii. Binding	3	50.00	150.00
viii. Transport	10 Days	500.00	5,000.00
ix. Subsistence	10 Days	500.00	5,000.00
Sub-Total			13,490.00
Pilot Testing			
i. Questionnaire			
ii. Typesetting	3 Pages	100.00	300.00
iii. Photocopying	48 Pages	15.00	720.00
iv. Transport	2 Days	600.00	1,200.00
v. Subsistence	2 Days	600.00	1,200.00
Sub-Total			3,420.00
Data Collection			
i. Questionnaires	2	5,000.00	10,000.00
• Typesetting	3 Pages	100.00	300.00
• Photocopying	263copies x 3pages	10.00	2,630.00
ii. Transport	6 Days	600.00	3,600.00
iii. Subsistence	6 Days	600.00	3,600.00
iv. Data Analysis			10,000.00
Sub-Total			30,130.00
Report Writing			
i. Typesetting	70	30.00	2,110.00
ii. Photocopying	490	3.00	1,470.00
iii. Binding	7	300.00	2,100.00
Sub-Total			5,680.00
Contingency (10%)			6,566.00
Grand Total			**59,286.00**