

**EXPLORING THE SOCIAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF COMMUNITY-BASED  
TOURISM INITIATIVES: A CASE OF LAKE MBURO NATIONAL PARK**

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## DECLARATION

I Ninyebaza Peninah hereby declare that this dissertation is my work, and it has not been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for fulfilment of any academic award

Signed.....

Date: 20<sup>TH</sup> September 2024

## APPROVAL

I hereby confirm that this Research Report authored by Ninyebaza Peninah, S21B63/018 was conducted under my supervision and is now ready for submission.

Signature:  ..... Date:  .....

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## DEDICATION

I hereby dedicate this work to my beloved sisters, brothers, and my parents for their incessant support, encouragement, and reminders for further studies. This has been my drive. Their determination and commitment have propelled me to this point. Above all, glory be to God.

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the socio-economic impacts brought about by community-based tourism development projects around Lake Mburo National Park, Uganda. A quantitative cross-sectional approach has been used wherein data were gathered from 36 household heads through structured questionnaires. Indeed, it has been established that there is an increase in economic benefits derived from tourism, including household income, job opportunities, and infrastructural development. In addition, the community as a result of tourism has increased integration in the community, culture, and development in the social facilities. The environmental component includes conservation, increased awareness, and the use of sustainable practices. Tourism has also culturally contributed much to the conservation of traditional culture, pride, and the enhancement of events in communities. The tourism industry is set up to incorporate sustainable practices characterized by responsible resource use and viability over time. Based on the above context, research concludes that community-based tourism contributes to the local economy, social dynamics, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation. This report further recommends an increase in skills training for locals, strengthening of supply chains, investment in infrastructure, call for all-inclusive participation, and reinforcement of community-led conservation and sustainability efforts.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an outline of the background of the study, the statement of a problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, justification of the study, and significance of the study conceptual framework.

### 1.1 Background

On the contrary, community-based tourism has emerged to be one of the possible alternatives to mass tourism in developing countries. It focuses on control and management by the community itself, with the conservation of culture and environment, empowerment, and community development. (Trejos & Chiang, 2009; Zielinski et al., 2020) CBT tries to benefit the local residents, also improving their livelihood by involving them in tourism management and adding facilities to receive guests. It befits especially the rural and regional areas, and the method is closely linked with sustainable tourism and eco-tourism initiatives. In CBT, the basic assumption is community involvement in tourism activities that enables them to govern destinations and profit directly from the activities of tourism.

Besides involvement in CBT contributing to biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction, it has an added advantage of improving sociocultural exchange between locals and visitors. CBT is meant to serve both the hosts and the guests through intimate contact and tourism experiences that are genuine while ensuring that the profits remain local. It is important that locals participate in tourism planning and development since such participation taps into the experiences of the local people, ensures community involvement, and thus increases market access and business enterprise growth, offering jobs that reduce poverty in rural settings.

Therefore, as Lo and Janta note, increased community involvement in tourism planning and development is very crucial for CBT. Other benefits accruable from CBT include economic diversification, the generation of revenue, the creation of employment, protection of biodiversity, and assurance of social sustainability. CBT also promotes social and environmental sustainability through the management of resources by locals themselves and the provision of proper job opportunities with the maintenance of culture. Boronyak et al. (2010), Dangi & Jamal (2016) state that CBT advances the economic element at the local level, reduces poverty, ensures equal participation, less environmental degradation, increases cultural and natural interpretation for tourists, and forms community groups. Bagus et al. (2019), Lee & Jan (2019). While the potential benefits of CBT have been quite appropriately established, more research is needed to actually achieve the impact of CBT on the community and come up with ways to maximize the benefits while minimizing the drawbacks.

CBT focuses on community development through tourism. These have their own merits other than economic prosperity:. Although the linkage of community development to tourism is deliberated, Han et al. (2019) pose that community-based tourism can realize positive impacts and long-term community development. CBT pays attention to long-term community empowerment. The locals play an active and cooperative role in planning and delivering the tourist product. The community reaps increased capacity and economic independence while preserving its culture and heritage as well as the local environment. The current travel patterns are for the most part in line with CBT.

These projects aim at involving locals in tourism activities, generate economic opportunities, preserve cultural heritage and contribute to nature conservation. An insight into the social and economic impacts of these kinds of activities on Lake Mbuoro National Park is vital for the framing of future development strategies and ensuring the long-term survival of both the park and the community around it.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Theoretically, Lake Mbuoro National Park and other protected areas have been major sources of goods and services to promote local livelihoods. Although benefit to the park through its establishment has been realised, this change in status to a protected area has also served to further restrict key resource availability for local populations, casting questions on actual benefit to livelihoods as a result of this transition Archabald & Naughton-Treves, 2001. Whereas communities have become integrated into revenue-sharing and conservation programs Wells & McShane, 2004, benefits flowing from these interactions have been limited and therefore question the utility of existing projects Wilkie et al., 2006. With this in mind, it becomes very important to analyze the contribution to Lake Mbuoro National Park with regard to the livelihood of local people, mainly economic opportunities, access to resources, and wellbeing in general.

Existing literature develops that Lake Mbuoro National Park has conventionally been an important source of fuelwood, medicinal herbs, forest fruits, and other subsistence products for the people around it. The changed status into a protected area has transformed the relationship between the park and the people who are supposed to be benefiting from it, with issues of benefit sharing now a major concern. Ignoring revenue-sharing agreements and direct funding measures, little

is known about the actual contribution of Lake Mbuoro National Park to local people's livelihoods. (Kazoora, 2002).

Furthermore, no meaningful research has been conducted so far on what multiplier effects the income sourced from park-related sources may have, therefore putting a question mark on the overall socio-economic benefits of living proximate to a national park (Adams & Infield, 2003).

The study, therefore, tried to find out the effect of the park distance on the livelihood of the people living around Lake Mbuoro National Park. The key focus of this study is to draw from a direct and indirect contribution assessment that the park provides in relation to the wellbeing of communities regarding economic opportunities, resource availability, and social relations to point out successful parts and areas for improvement within current approaches in conservation. The study, therefore, intends to assess the effect of revenue-sharing and funding programs implemented in this regard to try to influence livelihoods and inform future conservation policy and management practices.

### **1.3 General Objective**

To explore the social economic impacts of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park

Specific Objectives:

- i. To assess the economic benefits of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park
- ii. To identify the social impacts which the community-based tourism enterprises have had on local communities by Lake Mbuoro National Park
- iii. To establish the

environmental implications of community-based tourism enterprises by Lake Mbuoro National Park iv. To analyze the cultural impacts of the community-based tourism enterprises by Lake Mbuoro National Park on the local communities. v. To assess sustainability practices and the measures put in place within community-based tourism enterprises by Lake Mbuoro National Park 1.4 Research Questions

i. What different economic benefits are derived due to community-based tourism projects by Lake Mbuoro national park?

ii. How does the community-based tourism project by Lake Mbuoro National Park influence social dynamics in/within local communities?

iii. What environmental impacts are attributed to community-based tourism projects by Lake Mbuoro national park?

iv. What impact do community-based tourism projects have on the culture of the local community as influenced by Lake Mbuoro National Park?

v. What kind of sustainability practices and/or measures occur within community-based tourism ventures associated with Lake Mbuoro National Park to minimize environmental impacts and ensure the sustainability of a tourism operation?

## **1.5 Scope of the study**

### **1.5.1 Subject Scope**

The study identified the social and economic impacts of community-based tourism activities around Lake Mbuoro National Park. It entails an in-depth analysis of economic benefits, culture effects, social implications, and environmental ramifications accrued to the host community by such projects. This study focused

on learning how community-based tourism influences various aspects, including livelihoods, social dynamics, and environmental sustainability of the communities that live around the park. Through such a review, one hopes to establish useful remarks on general impacts and success of community-based tourism initiatives across the region.

### **1.5.2 Geographical Scope**

The research was undertaken in Lake Mburo National Park and its' surrounding communities. This park, that was originally described as a 'hidden pearl, is conveniently situated along the highway from Kampala to the western Ugandan parks. Being the smallest of all savannah national parks in Uganda, it is characterized by ancient Precambrian metamorphic rocks. These vary between Granite and Quartzite rocks that are over 500 million years old. It has an assorted ecosystem, which ranges from forest species to grassland and wetland varieties. Over 350 bird species and several antelope species are found within the park; these include zebras, impalas, elands, buffalos, oribi, Defassa waterbuck, leopards, hippos, hyenas, topis, and reedbucks. This national park, together with other 13 lakes in the area, forms part of a 50-kilometer-long wetland system interconnected by a marsh, with five lakes tucked within its borders. Previously dominated by open savanna, the park now has rich woods due to the disappearance of elephants that regulate vegetation development. Its western part, on the other hand, is interspersed with rocky peaks and forested gorges, fragile strands of papyrus swamp, and slivers of undisturbed riparian woodland lining many lakeshores. Lake Mburo National Park hosts over 315 different bird species, always considered an excellent destination to see acacia-associated birds. Particularly, Rwonyo area provides the possibilities for watching the following bird

species such as mosque swallow, black-bellied bustard, bare-faced go-away bird, and Ruppell's starling. Southern ground hornbill and black-throated barbet are among the bird species also recorded in the park.

#### **1.5.4 Time Scope**

This research was carried out for 4 months as requested by the university. The duration allowed the research to have the following activities: data collection, data analysis, and reporting. The results and conclusion of the study were the socio-economic impacts of community-based tourism initiatives around Lake Mburo National Park during the period under study. This was for the reason that the purpose of the study was to offer an encyclical presentation of the current status and trends related to community-based tourism initiatives and their impacts on the local communities with respect to the period that was targeted.

#### **1.6 Justification**

Such a basis for the study is cemented by the fact that it seeks to address critical knowledge gaps relating to the understanding of CBT programs in Uganda's Lake Mburo National Park. Being a renowned national park, it has close relations with its people in its neighborhood; hence, it forms a vital case study for examining effectiveness and limitations of CBT projects in real-world conservation settings so as to provide useful global insights.

Assessment of social and economic impacts of CBT initiatives in Lake Mburo National Park falls within an increasing emphasis that is laid on sustainable tourism development. Results provide a wide comparison of responsible tourism practices, which are most relevant in Uganda since this East African country has enormous economic reliance on tourism, which at the same time is hazardous to the local

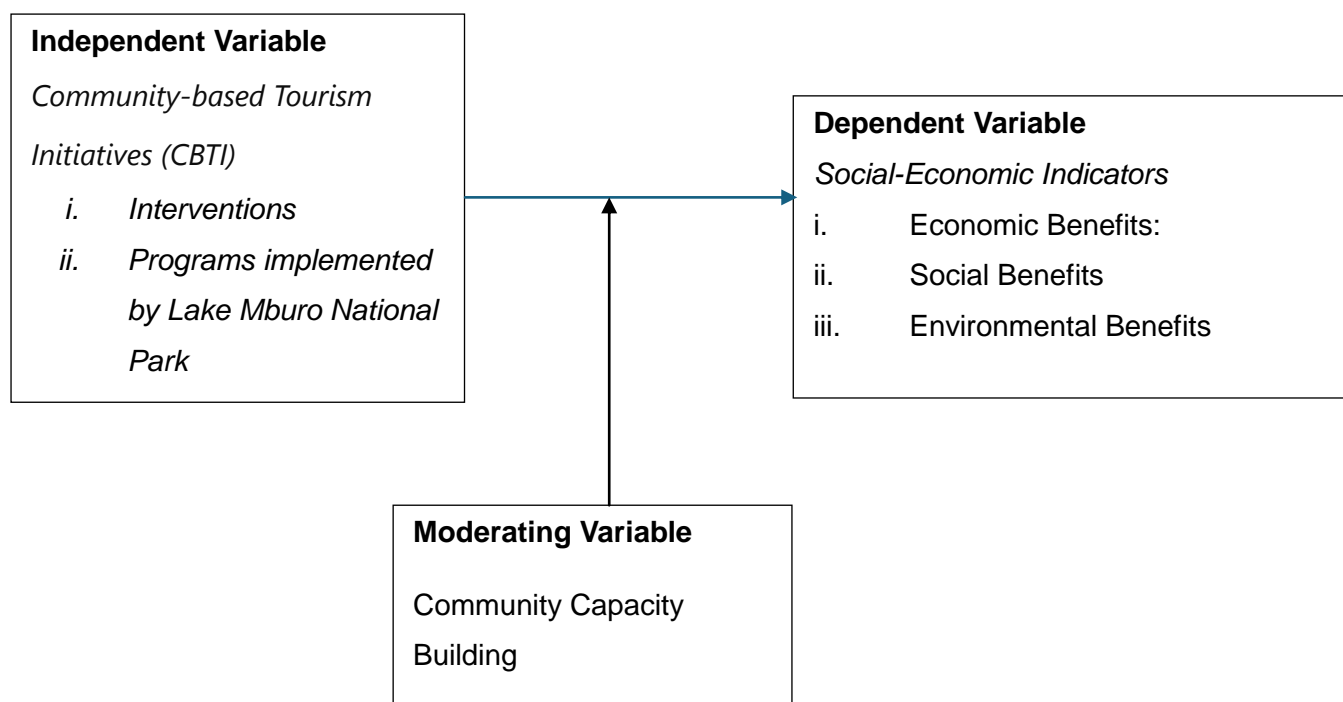
communities and ecosystems. This allows for critical insight into tourism growth benefits and addressing challenges in an inclusive manner, with sustainable practices at the forefront that put the needs and aspirations of the community first.

Finally, the research will try to explain the policy and practice in relation to the CBT programs in Lake Mbuoro National Park and other areas of conservation for purposes of biodiversity conservation, enhancement of livelihoods, and attaining sustainable development.

### **1.7 Significance**

The impact of this study involves its potential to inform policy and influence practice concerning community-based tourism programs in Lake Mbuoro National Park and other protected areas. It will contribute toward aiding policy-makers and other stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of more successful tourism development plans through empirical data concerning the social and economic impacts of these activities. In addition, the local community points of view on which the study focuses ensure that the voice of the most underrepresented are heard, the voices that play a key role in making the policies in tourism more inclusive and equitable. Implications of this study may impact biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, and livelihood improvement in Lake Mbuoro National Park and similar contexts.

## 1.8 Conceptual Framework



It was expected that this study would investigate the social economic impacts brought about by the community-based tourism initiatives near Lake Mburu National Park. The independent variable is implementation of community-based tourism initiatives, which refers to different forms of interventions meant to engage host local communities in the development and management of tourism. This independent variable in turn influences the dependent variables that in this context are economic, social, and environmental advantages associated with the tourism activities. Community capacity building might well be the intervening variable in this case since it does link the implementation of the CBC tourism programs to the expected results from their execution. Capacity building in this regard would mean the skill development in terms of training programs and seminars that impart local communities with the necessary knowledge, resources, and networking to be actively engaged in tourism activities. An improved ability on the part of the locals for managing the tourism resources and protecting the

cultural heritage instills the principles of sustainability that may have implications for economic, social, and environmental outcomes of community-based tourism around Lake Mbuoro National Park.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature put forward by different scholars, personalities and from the internet on social economic impacts of community-based tourism initiatives. The reviewed literature is discussed under subtitles basing on the study objectives and finally a summary of gaps in the literature is presented.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was guided by the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) theory.

This approach to livelihoods, first mooted in the early 1990s and by now applied across a wide range of work both in academia and practice, especially in rural areas of the world, is put forward, according to Elizondo et al. (2017), as a "framework" rather than a theory and as an "approach" rather than a method. It yet exceeds both in three ways:. It first of all represents an epistemic attitude of respect for both indigenous knowledge and contact with indigenous people. SLA is not a method per se, but- in its roots in Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and successive methodological developments -such as Participatory Learning and Action Natarajan et al. 2022.

One of the robust conceptual underpinning for the comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic impacts of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park has been SLF. The SLF emanating from sustainable development discourse offers a holistic approach in the analysis of livelihood through considering all the multiple dimensions of human well-being: economic, social,

environmental, and cultural. This study has therefore used SLF as the guiding framework in assessing the impacts of tourism initiatives on community-based local livelihoods. It allows for researching the economic benefits through analysis of the income generated and asset building arising out of tourism-related activities. The SLF further caters to assessing social impacts in analyzing change in social capital, community cohesiveness, and cultural dynamics. The following framework identifies environmental effects by assessing resource access, biodiversity conservation, and sustainability practices within the tourism context. Overall, the application of SLF in this study provides an opportunity for holistic comprehension of how complex issues of tourism development, livelihoods, and sustainability interact within the Lake Mbuho National Park region. According to Natarajan et al. (2022), the SLF can perhaps better explain the multidimensional nature of livelihoods and how various forms of capital interact with one another. In SLF, livelihood pertains to the interaction between five capital forms: human, social, natural, physical, and financial. An integrated outlook, indeed, makes more sense in framing such multidimensional impacts of CBIs in tourism. For instance, the human end the capital component involves education, skills, and health, which can be improved through jobs and training opportunities in tourism. Social capital concerns networks, relationships, and a sense of community-all that CBT initiatives often reinforce through community involvement and collaboration.

Natural capital is defined here as all natural resources upon which communities depend. SLF stresses the importance of sustainable practices to which CBT initiatives can contribute so as to protect such resources. As Natarajan et al. (2022) assert, physical capital includes basic infrastructure and technological resources, such as paved roads and communications systems, to which CBT

projects may contribute. Financial capital would therefore relate to financial resources and economic stability related to the income and investment created through tourism.

The roots of community-based tourism development go back to alternative development paradigms of the 1970s that emphasized empowerment and self-reliance over strict economic considerations. Community-based tourism thus epitomizes a paradigm shift away from mainstream mass tourism, which has conventionally developed along approaches that have often been burdened with adverse social and environmental effects. Although initially an ecotourism-driven initiative in rural areas, CBT initiatives have evolved into concepts representing multiple forms of tourism products with the inclusion of local culture in their promotions. He considers the development of CBT to emanate from the alternative development paradigms of the 1970s that focused on either empowerment or self-reliance above the strict criteria of economic considerations. Having its roots in participatory and empowerment models, CBT is a response to the conventional mass tourism development approaches that mostly contributed to adverse social and environmental impacts. Initially, CBT projects focused on rural communities and the protection of natural areas through ecotourism; now, many other tourism products and services that relate to residents' culture come under CBT projects, Afenyo-Agbe & Mensah state.

### **2.2.2 To Determine the Economic Benefits of Community-based Tourism Projects** Community-based tourism projects have indeed proved a source of invaluable economic benefits to the local communities.

Such benefits include increased household incomes, creation of jobs, investment in education and health, and paving of roads and construction of better amenities. Community-based tourism projects can also reduce poverty and contribute to economic development both at the local and national levels. Community-based tourism revenues are more often reinvested in local enterprise development and infrastructure, creating further economic benefits. Khartishvili, Mitrofanenko, Muhar, & Penker (2020) support this argument.

Sustainable tourism promotes conservation of traditional resources, enables participatory processes, and involves responsible management of natural and cultural resources to support economic returns without the loss of integrity. It is perceived that the leading intended outcomes of sustainable tourism development for the host communities are community well-being improvement and resource protection/preservation of the natural and cultural base, while visitors identify product quality and overall satisfaction as the leading benefits of sustainable tourism development. Tourism can make contributions to both national economies and in local community development ways, bringing sizable economic yields. Tourism at a national level has been indicated to enhance foreign exchange earnings, and increase government revenues through direct taxation on businesses and employment that relate to tourism. Revenues generated indirectly, through taxes on goods and services supplied to tourists occur.

The most fundamental positive economic benefit that takes place within the host communities is income generation. For example, Manyara & Jones, 2007, while conducting a study on six Community-Based Tourism Initiatives or CBTIs within Kenya, reported various economic benefits accruing to the host communities in terms of employment, lease money, dividends, as well as business investments, particularly within areas such as LUMO and the Wasini Women's group. This, in turn, results in increased economic activity through businesses like hotels, bars, restaurants, transport services, as well as those offering entertainment facilities .

Community-based tourism initiatives offer not only direct economic benefits but also a sense of ownership and, therefore, empowerment at the level of local communities. These experiences in community-based tourism initiatives involve members in decision-making and management roles, developing capacities and skills that are useful in other sectors of the economy. Such community members may be trained in aspects like hospitality, guiding, and business management that can substantially enhance their employability and entrepreneurship competencies. This will consequently have implications for a more resilient local economy where citizens are better equipped to diversify sources of income and adjust themselves to changed economic conditions.

Additionally, community-based tourism spreads the economic benefits not only at the individual household levels but also at the community level. Income from tourism may be used to finance community projects like schools, health clinics, and clean water systems that improve lives for the community members. Most of these projects require community involvement and participation in implementation, thus fostering a sense of cooperation and harmony. Secondly,

improved infrastructure and better services will, in turn, attract more investment and tourists in a positive spiral to perpetuate economic development and growth. In fact, Ruiz-Ballesteros & Brondizio, 2013 attest that enhanced infrastructure and better services attract more investment and tourism which in turn create a positive spiral.

Community-based tourism initiatives further spur sustainability of the environment through the promotion of natural resource and wildlife conservation. In fact, communities generate an income from the sustainable tourism practices and hence have every economic reason to protect their environment. Some of the other responses in the establishment of conservation areas, planting trees, and protection of wildlife increase the biodiversity of such areas, therefore adding to the appeal of the destination for ecotourists. The revenues generated from such activities give the communities the means to invest in long-term conservation efforts and as such help ensure that natural assets are preserved for future generations (Nyaupane & Poudel, 2011).

### **2.2.3 Social Impacts of Community-based Tourism Initiatives on the Local Communities**

A review of the literature on social impacts that community-based tourism initiatives may have on host communities shows a good likelihood of significant positive contributions along various dimensions of community well-being. It is observed that such initiatives provide a passage for social interaction and the sharing of culture between members from the host community and the guests with an increase in their levels of mutual understanding and empathy as well as dissolving stereotypes. Community-based initiatives bring in development to

communities where revenues generated through investments from tourism are targeted into key infrastructural projects and social events. It merely means that more facilities locally in the area with schools, health centers, etc., apart from an improved utility it will eventually raise the general social benefit and living standards of people living in the community (Afenyo-Agbe & Mensah, 2022).

Furthermore, the community-based tourism projects can maintain traditional cultural norms and heritage, hence leading to increased cultural identity and pride among members. The projects act as vehicles for the sustainability of the cultural heritage through avenues of economic benefit to artisans and performers by exposing the local culture, music, crafts, and food to the tourists. Participation in the businesses and activities developed through tourism also fosters social integration and pride within the community as members come together to present their culture and natural setting. The collective undertaking of these activities cements social networks, builds trust among community members, and develops the sense of ownership of community assets and resources; these translate into increased social resilience and social cohesion (Abreu, 2024).

The success of Community-Based Tourism initiatives to influence economic growth and sustainable tourism greatly relies on the scale of community participation they elicit. Tolkach and King, 2015 add that effective communication channels between managers and stakeholders, more so the local community, are an essential ingredient towards making CBT enterprises successful. A situation where only authoritative funding bodies exist but fail to engage and work with community members is entirely useless. For instance, it is observed that at Lake Mburo, where CBT enterprises have come to be a source of rural development, the

dominant strange economic, environmental, and socio-cultural context contributes to huge challenges toward the success of the said ventures. Afenyo-Agbe & Mensah, 2022

The case of Lake Mburo provides context to the challenges that exist in building successful CBT enterprises in economically and developmentally challenged areas. While these community-based CBT projects have been very successful, the feasibility of these programs rests on various variables of overcoming many challenges comprising economic dependencies, infrastructure limitations, socio-political, and more. Therefore, although CBT does present opportunities that relate to rural development and economic diversification, its practice at Lake Mburo, for instance, should be practiced with caution to avoid the local challenges as well as to ensure active stakeholder involvement in the pursuit of sustainability and meaningful community participation in tourism development activities (Manyara, 2007).

Community-based tourism initiatives promote social empowerment by creating avenues through which disadvantaged groups, such as women and youth, can effectively engage themselves in economic as well as social activities. Through CBT projects, skill-building opportunities, entrepreneurship, and leadership are fostered by engaging these groups in tourism ventures, hence fostering gender equality and youth empowerment. For example, in some areas, women have become very instrumental in managing tourism-related businesses and cultural tour guides, thus challenging traditional concepts of gender roles while increasing the visibility and authority of women in their communities. It engenders a fairer distribution of economic gains and empowers the social structures by allowing

myriad voices into the development story of the community. Afenyo-Agbe and Mensah, 2022. Community-based tourism initiatives have also proved to be very instrumental in encouraging environmental conservation within local communities. Through incomes accrued from eco-friendly tourism practices, such initiatives have provided the necessary financial incentives for conservation that can protect natural resources and wildlife habitats. For example, communities involved in CBT projects are more apt to carry out activities such as tree planting, patrols against poaching, and land use practices that are sustainable to promote a long-term viability of their natural environment. In addition, such care for the environment would ensure protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services that are vital for the well-being of the community living in that area, other than making the area more appealing to ecotourists.

These community-based tourism initiatives are not without their issues in terms of implementation and sustainability. It is, in fact, the level of genuine involvement of the host communities in the planning and decision-making processes that will basically determine the success or failure in these initiatives. There is a need for adequate communication and collaboration between management of tourism companies, local authorities, and members of the community to handle the socio-economic and environmental challenges that might arise. In situations where CBT enterprises have faced major obstacles in their development, such as that of Lake Mburo, bringing up a participatory approach among all the different stakeholders provides an opportunity to clear several obstacles and ensure the tourism development process is responsive towards the needs and aspirations of the host community. It would be effective in preventing certain negative impacts, such as cultural commodification and environmental degradation, besides helping further

an alternative model of tourism development that is more sustainable and truly inclusive of the needs and aspirations of the host communities.

#### **2.2.4 The Environmental Impacts of Community-based Tourism Ventures**

Poorly managed community-based tourism ventures have the potential to harm the environment. Activities related to tourism result in crowding and litter, causing disruption to natural processes and wild animal behavior. Over-consumption together with the invasion of alien species also leads to resource depletion. For instance, unmanaged trails and areas for viewing wildlife can lead to the destruction of habitat and affect animal behavioral activity. Moreover, increased vehicle traffic arising from tourism can cause air and noise pollution, further threatening the local ecosystems. On the contrary, community-based tourism projects also can theoretically support environmental concerns provided they are well and carefully implemented. For example, receiving visitors in a conservative number can bring a positive culture of environmental care into the society. Secondly, they can contribute to the sustainable level management of resources, for example, minimizing waste, reusing or recycling materials, and conserving water. Besides, community-based tourism can reduce negative impacts on local ecosystems through controls of carrying capacity, guidelines of responsible visitor behavior, and involvement with local organizations for nature conservation. Community-based tourism could contribute to having a minimal footprint environmentally and even make sure that natural habitats and biodiversity are preserved over the long term in this process.

Tourism development is associated with a number of environmental costs to the local community, mainly environmental degeneration and pollution that largely

lower the quality of the tourism product offered and thus negatively affect its sustainability . Amongst the main environmental impacts related to tourism development is the increase of hotels and tourist facilities in the area, which can result in the destruction of natural habitats. It involves, among others, loss of vegetation cover, habitat fragmentation, as well as improper solid, sludge, and liquid wastes disposal that cause deterioration in the environment. Besides, it is assumed that tourism development might affect the sustained availability of forest products for household use and the overall status of flora and fauna in the sanctuary. These environmental impacts, therefore, highlight the need for responsible tourism development processes with mechanisms that can reduce adverse impacts and ensure that tourism can co-exist for a long time with the environment in which it exists. This is according to Akama, 2011.

### **2.3 Summary of the Literature**

The literature review summarizes information on social-economic impacts of CBT initiatives based on the SLF. The SLF draws its roots from the discourse on sustainable development and offers an integrated view of the many ways in which CBT affects local livelihoods through economic, social, environmental, and cultural dimensions. Empirical reviews place the origin of CBT within alternative paradigms of development from the 1970s and highlight how different this was from conventional approaches towards mass tourism in that it promoted empowerment and self-reliance. Research has identified that CBT can provide some economic benefits to the residents in the form of higher incomes and a gainful employment opportunity alongside increased investment in infrastructures and services. Besides, sustainable tourism contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage and environmental conservation for the promotion of economic growth both at

local and national levels. The social impacts identified the role of CBT in fostering social interaction, cultural heritage preservation, and social cohesion. Success in the field of CBT requires community involvement and well-established, free-flowing channels of effective communication among stakeholders. Issues that would need to be addressed for optimum benefits from CBT include economic dependencies and infrastructural limitations. Environmental Effects: These show the negative impacts of tourism development, such as habitat degradation and pollution of the environment. In contrast, environmental conservation and sustainability can be augmented by CBT initiatives through measures like waste reduction and biodiversity conservation if managed well.

The literature review, therefore, emphasizes the multidimensional impacts of community-based tourism initiatives in such a way that a holistic approach is emphasized, one that considers economic, social, environmental, and cultural dimensions.

Though CBT has the potential for sustainable development and improvement in community welfare, challenges on economic dependencies, infrastructural deficiencies, and environmental degradation will have to be overcome. In consideration of all these challenges, effective community participation and stakeholder communication become very crucial for the success of CBT initiatives. If these challenges are overcome and responsible practices adopted, then CBT can indeed contribute positively to the livelihoods and environmental sustainability of local communities.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature put forward by different scholars, personalities and from the internet on social economic impacts of community-based tourism initiatives. The reviewed literature is discussed under subtitles basing on the study objectives and finally a summary of gaps in the literature is presented.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was guided by the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) theory.

This approach to livelihoods, first mooted in the early 1990s and by now applied across a wide range of work both in academia and practice, especially in rural areas of the world, is put forward, according to Elizondo et al. (2017), as a "framework" rather than a theory and as an "approach" rather than a method. It yet exceeds both in three ways:. It first of all represents an epistemic attitude of respect for both indigenous knowledge and contact with indigenous people. SLA is not a method per se, but- in its roots in Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and successive methodological developments -such as Participatory Learning and Action □ Natarajan et al. 2022.

One of the robust conceptual underpinning for the comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic impacts of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park has been SLF. The SLF emanating from sustainable development discourse offers a holistic approach in the analysis of livelihood through considering all the multiple dimensions of human well-being: economic, social,

environmental, and cultural. This study has therefore used SLF as the guiding framework in assessing the impacts of tourism initiatives on community-based local livelihoods. It allows for researching the economic benefits through analysis of the income generated and asset building arising out of tourism-related activities. The SLF further caters to assessing social impacts in analyzing change in social capital, community cohesiveness, and cultural dynamics. The following framework identifies environmental effects by assessing resource access, biodiversity conservation, and sustainability practices within the tourism context. Overall, the application of SLF in this study provides an opportunity for holistic comprehension of how complex issues of tourism development, livelihoods, and sustainability interact within the Lake Mbuho National Park region. According to Natarajan et al. (2022), the SLF can perhaps better explain the multidimensional nature of livelihoods and how various forms of capital interact with one another. In SLF, livelihood pertains to the interaction between five capital forms: human, social, natural, physical, and financial. An integrated outlook, indeed, makes more sense in framing such multidimensional impacts of CBIs in tourism. For instance, the human end the capital component involves education, skills, and health, which can be improved through jobs and training opportunities in tourism. Social capital concerns networks, relationships, and a sense of community-all that CBT initiatives often reinforce through community involvement and collaboration.

Natural capital is defined here as all natural resources upon which communities depend. SLF stresses the importance of sustainable practices to which CBT initiatives can contribute so as to protect such resources. As Natarajan et al. (2022) assert, physical capital includes basic infrastructure and technological resources, such as paved roads and communications systems, to which CBT

projects may contribute. Financial capital would therefore relate to financial resources and economic stability related to the income and investment created through tourism.

The roots of community-based tourism development go back to alternative development paradigms of the 1970s that emphasized empowerment and self-reliance over strict economic considerations. Community-based tourism thus epitomizes a paradigm shift away from mainstream mass tourism, which has conventionally developed along approaches that have often been burdened with adverse social and environmental effects. Although initially an ecotourism-driven initiative in rural areas, CBT initiatives have evolved into concepts representing multiple forms of tourism products with the inclusion of local culture in their promotions. He considers the development of CBT to emanate from the alternative development paradigms of the 1970s that focused on either empowerment or self-reliance above the strict criteria of economic considerations. Having its roots in participatory and empowerment models, CBT is a response to the conventional mass tourism development approaches that mostly contributed to adverse social and environmental impacts. Initially, CBT projects focused on rural communities and the protection of natural areas through ecotourism; now, many other tourism products and services that relate to residents' culture come under CBT projects, Afenyo-Agbe & Mensah state.

### **2.2.2 To Determine the Economic Benefits of Community-based Tourism Projects** Community-based tourism projects have indeed proved a source of invaluable economic benefits to the local communities.

Such benefits include increased household incomes, creation of jobs, investment in education and health, and paving of roads and construction of better amenities. Community-based tourism projects can also reduce poverty and contribute to economic development both at the local and national levels. Community-based tourism revenues are more often reinvested in local enterprise development and infrastructure, creating further economic benefits. Khartishvili, Mitrofanenko, Muhar, & Penker (2020) support this argument.

Sustainable tourism promotes conservation of traditional resources, enables participatory processes, and involves responsible management of natural and cultural resources to support economic returns without the loss of integrity. It is perceived that the leading intended outcomes of sustainable tourism development for the host communities are community well-being improvement and resource protection/preservation of the natural and cultural base, while visitors identify product quality and overall satisfaction as the leading benefits of sustainable tourism development. Tourism can make contributions to both national economies and in local community development ways, bringing sizable economic yields. Tourism at a national level has been indicated to enhance foreign exchange earnings, and increase government revenues through direct taxation on businesses and employment that relate to tourism. Revenues generated indirectly, through taxes on goods and services supplied to tourists occur.

The most fundamental positive economic benefit that takes place within the host communities is income generation. For example, Manyara & Jones, 2007, while conducting a study on six Community-Based Tourism Initiatives or CBTIs within Kenya, reported various economic benefits accruing to the host communities in terms of employment, lease money, dividends, as well as business investments, particularly within areas such as LUMO and the Wasini Women's group. This, in turn, results in increased economic activity through businesses like hotels, bars, restaurants, transport services, as well as those offering entertainment facilities .

Community-based tourism initiatives offer not only direct economic benefits but also a sense of ownership and, therefore, empowerment at the level of local communities. These experiences in community-based tourism initiatives involve members in decision-making and management roles, developing capacities and skills that are useful in other sectors of the economy. Such community members may be trained in aspects like hospitality, guiding, and business management that can substantially enhance their employability and entrepreneurship competencies. This will consequently have implications for a more resilient local economy where citizens are better equipped to diversify sources of income and adjust themselves to changed economic conditions.

Additionally, community-based tourism spreads the economic benefits not only at the individual household levels but also at the community level. Income from tourism may be used to finance community projects like schools, health clinics, and clean water systems that improve lives for the community members. Most of these projects require community involvement and participation in implementation, thus fostering a sense of cooperation and harmony. Secondly,

improved infrastructure and better services will, in turn, attract more investment and tourists in a positive spiral to perpetuate economic development and growth. In fact, Ruiz-Ballesteros & Brondizio, 2013 attest that enhanced infrastructure and better services attract more investment and tourism which in turn create a positive spiral.

Community-based tourism initiatives further spur sustainability of the environment through the promotion of natural resource and wildlife conservation. In fact, communities generate an income from the sustainable tourism practices and hence have every economic reason to protect their environment. Some of the other responses in the establishment of conservation areas, planting trees, and protection of wildlife increase the biodiversity of such areas, therefore adding to the appeal of the destination for ecotourists. The revenues generated from such activities give the communities the means to invest in long-term conservation efforts and as such help ensure that natural assets are preserved for future generations (Nyaupane & Poudel, 2011).

### **2.2.3 Social Impacts of Community-based Tourism Initiatives on the Local Communities**

A review of the literature on social impacts that community-based tourism initiatives may have on host communities shows a good likelihood of significant positive contributions along various dimensions of community well-being. It is observed that such initiatives provide a passage for social interaction and the sharing of culture between members from the host community and the guests with an increase in their levels of mutual understanding and empathy as well as dissolving stereotypes. Community-based initiatives bring in development to

communities where revenues generated through investments from tourism are targeted into key infrastructural projects and social events. It merely means that more facilities locally in the area with schools, health centers, etc., apart from an improved utility it will eventually raise the general social benefit and living standards of people living in the community (Afenyo-Agbe & Mensah, 2022).

Furthermore, the community-based tourism projects can maintain traditional cultural norms and heritage, hence leading to increased cultural identity and pride among members. The projects act as vehicles for the sustainability of the cultural heritage through avenues of economic benefit to artisans and performers by exposing the local culture, music, crafts, and food to the tourists. Participation in the businesses and activities developed through tourism also fosters social integration and pride within the community as members come together to present their culture and natural setting. The collective undertaking of these activities cements social networks, builds trust among community members, and develops the sense of ownership of community assets and resources; these translate into increased social resilience and social cohesion Abreu, 2024.

The success of Community-Based Tourism initiatives to influence economic growth and sustainable tourism greatly relies on the scale of community participation they elicit. Tolkach and King, 2015 add that effective communication channels between managers and stakeholders, more so the local community, are an essential ingredient towards making CBT enterprises successful. A situation where only authoritative funding bodies exist but fail to engage and work with community members is entirely useless. For instance, it is observed that at Lake Mburo, where CBT enterprises have come to be a source of rural development, the

dominant strange economic, environmental, and socio-cultural context contributes to huge challenges toward the success of the said ventures. Afenyo-Agbe & Mensah, 2022

The case of Lake Mburo provides context to the challenges that exist in building successful CBT enterprises in economically and developmentally challenged areas. While these community-based CBT projects have been very successful, the feasibility of these programs rests on various variables of overcoming many challenges comprising economic dependencies, infrastructure limitations, socio-political, and more. Therefore, although CBT does present opportunities that relate to rural development and economic diversification, its practice at Lake Mburo, for instance, should be practiced with caution to avoid the local challenges as well as to ensure active stakeholder involvement in the pursuit of sustainability and meaningful community participation in tourism development activities (Manyara, 2007).

Community-based tourism initiatives promote social empowerment by creating avenues through which disadvantaged groups, such as women and youth, can effectively engage themselves in economic as well as social activities. Through CBT projects, skill-building opportunities, entrepreneurship, and leadership are fostered by engaging these groups in tourism ventures, hence fostering gender equality and youth empowerment. For example, in some areas, women have become very instrumental in managing tourism-related businesses and cultural tour guides, thus challenging traditional concepts of gender roles while increasing the visibility and authority of women in their communities. It engenders a fairer distribution of economic gains and empowers the social structures by allowing

myriad voices into the development story of the community. Afenyo-Agbe and Mensah, 2022. Community-based tourism initiatives have also proved to be very instrumental in encouraging environmental conservation within local communities. Through incomes accrued from eco-friendly tourism practices, such initiatives have provided the necessary financial incentives for conservation that can protect natural resources and wildlife habitats. For example, communities involved in CBT projects are more apt to carry out activities such as tree planting, patrols against poaching, and land use practices that are sustainable to promote a long-term viability of their natural environment. In addition, such care for the environment would ensure protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services that are vital for the well-being of the community living in that area, other than making the area more appealing to ecotourists.

These community-based tourism initiatives are not without their issues in terms of implementation and sustainability. It is, in fact, the level of genuine involvement of the host communities in the planning and decision-making processes that will basically determine the success or failure in these initiatives. There is a need for adequate communication and collaboration between management of tourism companies, local authorities, and members of the community to handle the socio-economic and environmental challenges that might arise. In situations where CBT enterprises have faced major obstacles in their development, such as that of Lake Mburo, bringing up a participatory approach among all the different stakeholders provides an opportunity to clear several obstacles and ensure the tourism development process is responsive towards the needs and aspirations of the host community. It would be effective in preventing certain negative impacts, such as cultural commodification and environmental degradation, besides helping further

an alternative model of tourism development that is more sustainable and truly inclusive of the needs and aspirations of the host communities.

#### **2.2.4 The Environmental Impacts of Community-based Tourism Ventures**

Poorly managed community-based tourism ventures have the potential to harm the environment. Activities related to tourism result in crowding and litter, causing disruption to natural processes and wild animal behavior. Over-consumption together with the invasion of alien species also leads to resource depletion. For instance, unmanaged trails and areas for viewing wildlife can lead to the destruction of habitat and affect animal behavioral activity. Moreover, increased vehicle traffic arising from tourism can cause air and noise pollution, further threatening the local ecosystems. On the contrary, community-based tourism projects also can theoretically support environmental concerns provided they are well and carefully implemented. For example, receiving visitors in a conservative number can bring a positive culture of environmental care into the society. Secondly, they can contribute to the sustainable level management of resources, for example, minimizing waste, reusing or recycling materials, and conserving water. Besides, community-based tourism can reduce negative impacts on local ecosystems through controls of carrying capacity, guidelines of responsible visitor behavior, and involvement with local organizations for nature conservation. Community-based tourism could contribute to having a minimal footprint environmentally and even make sure that natural habitats and biodiversity are preserved over the long term in this process.

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lower the quality of the tourism product offered and thus negatively affect its sustainability . Amongst the main environmental impacts related to tourism development is the increase of hotels and tourist facilities in the area, which can result in the destruction of natural habitats. It involves, among others, loss of vegetation cover, habitat fragmentation, as well as improper solid, sludge, and liquid wastes disposal that cause deterioration in the environment. Besides, it is assumed that tourism development might affect the sustained availability of forest products for household use and the overall status of flora and fauna in the sanctuary. These environmental impacts, therefore, highlight the need for responsible tourism development processes with mechanisms that can reduce adverse impacts and ensure that tourism can co-exist for a long time with the environment in which it exists. This is according to Akama, 2011.

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and environmental conservation for the promotion of economic growth both at local and national levels. The social impacts identified the role of CBT in fostering social interaction, cultural heritage preservation, and social cohesion. Success in the field of CBT requires community involvement and well-established, free-flowing channels of effective communication among stakeholders. Issues that would need to be addressed for optimum benefits from CBT include economic dependencies and infrastructural limitations. Environmental Effects: These show the negative impacts of tourism development, such as habitat degradation and pollution of the environment. In contrast, environmental conservation and sustainability can be augmented by CBT initiatives through measures like waste reduction and biodiversity conservation if managed well.

The literature review, therefore, emphasizes the multidimensional impacts of community-based tourism initiatives in such a way that a holistic approach is emphasized, one that considers economic, social, environmental, and cultural dimensions.

Though CBT has the potential for sustainable development and improvement in community welfare, challenges on economic dependencies, infrastructural deficiencies, and environmental degradation will have to be overcome. In consideration of all these challenges, effective community participation and stakeholder communication become very crucial for the success of CBT initiatives. If these challenges are overcome and responsible practices adopted, then CBT can indeed contribute positively to the livelihoods and environmental sustainability of local communities.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that shall be undertaken in this research study on the evaluation of socio-economic impacts of community-based tourism initiatives around Lake Mbuho National Park. The coverage comprises the research approach, design, study area, population, sampling size, sampling strategy, methods of data collection, data processing and analysis, ethical considerations, and methodological limitations.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

In concurrence with Creswell, 2018, the study adopted a quantitative approach since it intensively studied the socio-economic impacts of community-based tourism initiatives. This nature of approach entailed identification and analysis of numerical data that allowed for objective measurement of the impacts, statistical analysis, and generalization of findings so as to provide a structured and empirical understanding of the topic. It also made use of structured questionnaires to capture data on selected socioeconomic indicators-income levels, employment opportunities, and community engagement-which would enable quantification of these impacts and identification of the relationships between the initiatives in tourism and its socioeconomic outcomes. In this regard, for instance, the descriptive and inferential analyses have allowed the study to follow patterns and relationships, such as how community involvement in tourism is related to the households' improved incomes, in a way that would test hypotheses and arrive at evidence-based conclusions. This approach also means that generalization into the

population of communities around Lake Mbuoro National Park was possible and, consequently, useful for policymakers and other users. By quantifying the perceptions at the community level and systematically gathering data, the study further improved reliability and credibility of the data which would support evidence-based policy formulation in ensuring that community-based tourism maximizes positive socio-economic impacts and minimizes challenges. This quantitative approach provided an explicit and objective framework for assessing the socio-economic effects of tourism, thereby contributing to informed decision-making and sustainable development of tourism initiatives in the region.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The design of the research was cross-sectional, whereas the most implemented cross-sectional studies have been used in social sciences, where data is gathered from a sample of participants at a specified time. In this context, the research design adopted a cross-sectional survey in which a sample of the community members living near Lake Mbuoro National Park would be selected and information gathered within a specific time. Whereas the design followed participants just once for data collection in order to take a snapshot of their perceptions and experiences regarding community-based tourism initiatives.

### **3.3 Study Area**

This study targeted the communities around Lake Mbuoro National Park in Uganda. Lake Mbuoro National Park is based in western Uganda and encompasses several aspects of wildlife and landscapes that vary in nature. In addition, the communities surrounding the park were direct players in the community-based

tourism initiatives and as such were relevant to the study of the socioeconomic impacts for such initiatives.

### **3.4 Study Population**

The target population included the community members who lived within proximity of Lake Mbuho National Park and were either directly or indirectly involved in community-based tourism initiatives. These respondents were targeted for research based on their proximity to the park and involvement in tourism-related activities like hosting tourists, offering services, or even being a member of community tourism organizations. There are 40 households living close to Lake Mbuho National Park.

### **3.5 Sample Size**

The sample size considered in this research, with the aid of the Krejcie and Morgan Table, was 36 household heads; this ensures statistical significance to represent the larger population where generalization would be made.

### **3.6 Sampling Techniques**

The study used simple random; that is, simple random sampling is a technique whereby every member of the population would have equal chance of being selected into the sample. This method ensured that every possible sample of given size had equal chances of getting selected; this minimized bias and gave out representative sample of the population.

### **3.7 Data Collection Methods**

Quantitative in nature, and therefore befitting of this study, was the in-depth investigation of the socioeconomic impacts that emanate from community-based tourism initiatives. Consequently, data collection for this study was done through the questionnaire method. The questionnaires were developed in a structured form in order to capture quantitative data that ranged in relevance from one variable to another regarding the research objectives. Development involved formulating clear, concise, and relevant questions, which pretesting showed were reliable and valid. The questions were a mix of close-ended and Likert-scale questions in nature, so that the data could be manipulated statistically. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents based on a random sampling process: in-person, using digital platforms, or telephone interviews, depending on the context and other logistical concerns. In-person administration entailed the use of trained data collectors who went through the survey process with the participants in an effort to ensure completeness and accuracy in response. Responses were entered into a secure, encrypted database for analysis. Computerised automated data entry systems were instituted, which kept the incidence of errors to an absolute minimum; data was regularly backed up so that any loss of data was not possible.

### **3.8 Quality of Research Instruments**

To validate the research instruments used in this research and assure that they possessed the capability to generate results that were both valid and reliable, rigorous testing and evaluation mechanisms were initiated.

Validity: The "extent to which an instrument measured what it was intended to measure" in terms of Carmines & Zeller, 1979. The content validity of the research

instruments was pursued through a panel of experts who possess considerable experience in the area concerned. This panel examined whether the instrument was appropriate to capture relevant factors comprehensively and clearly with respect to the issues under investigation. The Content Validity Index was computed as a means of quantifying this assessment. In this respect, the CVI meant that experts had to rate each of the items on a relevance scale, the range often being between 1 (not relevant) and 4 (highly relevant). The proportion of the items rated as relevant-that is, rated 3 or 4-by the experts was calculated in order to estimate the CVI of each of the items and the overall instrument. The mean CVI score is generally considered acceptable if the mark is 0.80 or higher (Lynn, 1986).

Reliability: Reliability is "the degree to which an instrument measures a construct in a consistent manner across different occasions". To test for reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was determined for the research instruments. The purpose of Cronbach's alpha was to estimate internal consistency based on the average correlation of items that comprised a scale. An alpha level of 0.70 or greater has generally been accepted as satisfactory for research related to the social sciences. Larger values indicate higher reliability. The research instruments were pretested with a sample similar to the population of the current study. Data from this pretest were used to determine Cronbach's alpha, and items which did not contribute to a high degree of internal consistency were revised or removed.

Pilot testing is meant to serve the dual purposes of validation and refinement. This entailed the administration of each of these research instruments on a small, representative sample under conditions almost similar to those that would face this particular study. This assured that there were no question-wording,

comprehension, and response-option problems. Revisions have thus been effected to make them clearer and more relevant.

**Expert Review and Pre-testing:** In addition to the pilot test, the instruments were also reviewed by subject matter experts to establish that they were conceptually sound and oriented toward the research objectives set out for the study. The expert review assisted in locating questions that were biased, ambiguous, or even unimportant. Meanwhile, pre-testing of the instruments with a small subset of the target population helped identify practical issues in conducting the survey or interview.

**Iterative Refinement:** The validation and testing of instruments were an iterative process. Instruments were revised and re-tested, as appropriate, based on the feedback from experts and pilot participants. Such iteration was necessary to ensure that final versions of instruments are valid and reliable.

Statistical methods were applied in a further assessment for their reliability and validity. For instance, the underlying structure of the instruments has assessed by factor analysis, to ensure the items clustered together as expected. Such an analysis confirmed that the instruments measured the intended constructs.

### **3.9 Data Collection Process**

Data collection was an integral part of the research to ensure that the data collected was both valid and reliable, guaranteeing the realization of all the objectives of the study. The process was carefully executed in a systematic manner, with key stages in sequence. Before actual data collection activities by the research team commenced, all research approvals and ethical clearance were sought from the Research Ethical Committee (REC). This was meant to ensure that

the research followed ethical practices of conducting research, respect for the rights of its participants, and adhered to both legal and institutional requirements. Approval included the submission of comprehensive proposals in research studies, a statement of objectives, methodologies, potential risks involved, and mitigation strategies to the ethics committees for review and approval. Informed consent to participate was obtained, and full information regarding the purpose of the study, the procedures followed, the potential risks, and the benefits was provided to all the selected community members before the actual participation. An informed consent was to be provided by each respondent, who had to understand the study and provide his or her free will to take part in it. The consent was documented, and at any one given time, participants were free to ask questions about the research and to withdraw from it without penalty.

### **3.10 Data Analysis**

The quantitative data analysis involved data preparation through processes that included data coding, editing, and validation to transform unstructured data into information that was easily comprehended and analyzed.

The two most common techniques of quantitative data analysis included descriptive and inferential statistics. Computation in descriptive statistics to provide absolute numerical summaries included mean, median, mode, percentage frequency, and range (Bhati, 2018). To be able to develop forecasts, generalize observations, and also establish relationships between variables, inferential analysis was also conducted. This involved methods of regression analysis, correlation, and also analysis of variance, which helped to ascertain the extent to

which two or more groups differed from each other. SPSS 20 was employed to support these operations. 3.11 Ethical Considerations

Other ethical considerations included the usual ones of informed consent, anonymity of research participants, confidentiality of research data, and voluntary participation.

Besides these, variables that involved even a remotely possible injury were deeply considered so that no harm was caused to participants of the study whatsoever. The actual results were candidly presented, and honest interactions concerning the study were genuinely carried out to uphold the highest ethics. Secondly, the protection of rights and dignity for participants was ensured while accuracy in data collection was observed. The conflicts of interest were at minimal, while institutional and professional codes of conduct were observed. Furthermore, ethical approval from the institutional review board or ethics committee was sought before embarking on the study as a means of ensuring that standards and regulations on ethics were met.

## CHAPTER FOUR

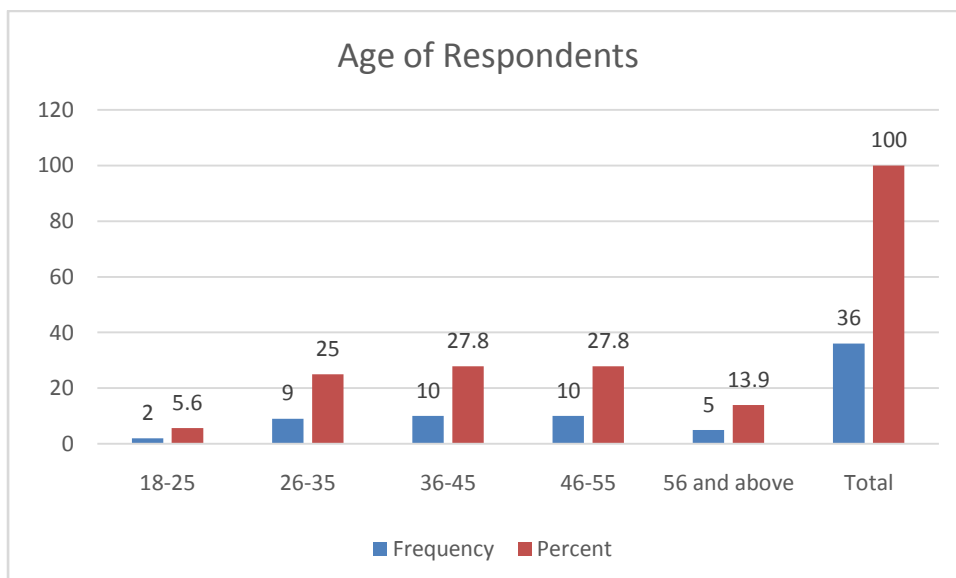
### PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

The findings of this study, based on the objectives, are highlighted in this chapter. These objectives were assessing the economic benefits accrued from community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park, making an assessment of the social impacts from such initiatives on the local communities by Lake Mbuoro National Park, identifying environmental impacts resulting from community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park, analyzing cultural impacts of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park on local communities, and investigating instituted sustainability practices and measures in community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park.

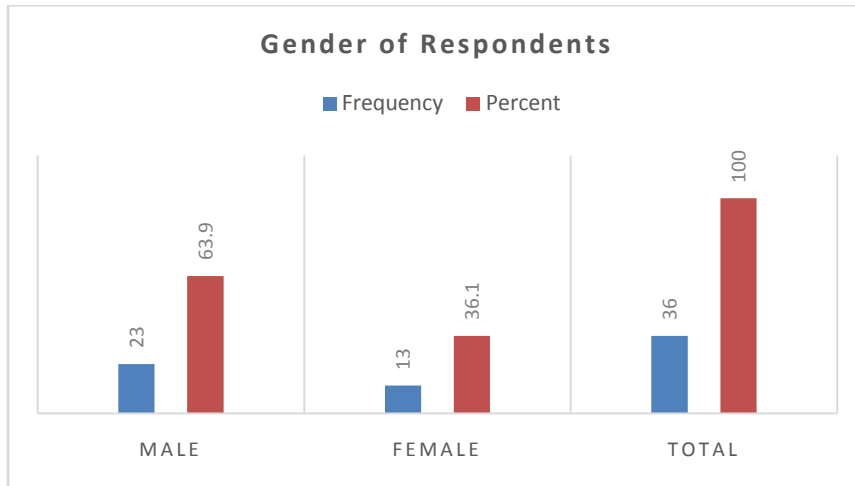
#### 4.1 Demographic Results

The demographic variables targeted by this study into the social economic impacts of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park were: age, gender, education, and occupation.



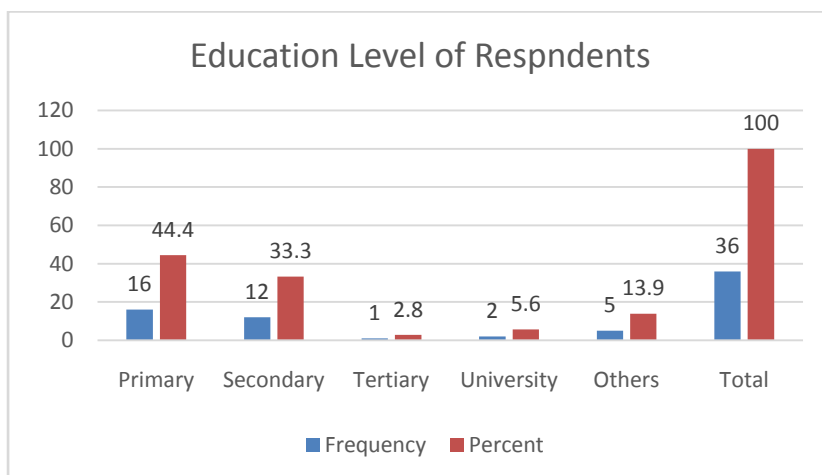
**Figure 1: Age of respondents**

According to the results in the figure 1 above majority of the respondents were between 36-45 and 46-55 each making up 10 (27.85) of the respondents. Only 2(5.6%) of the respondents were between the age of 18 and 25.



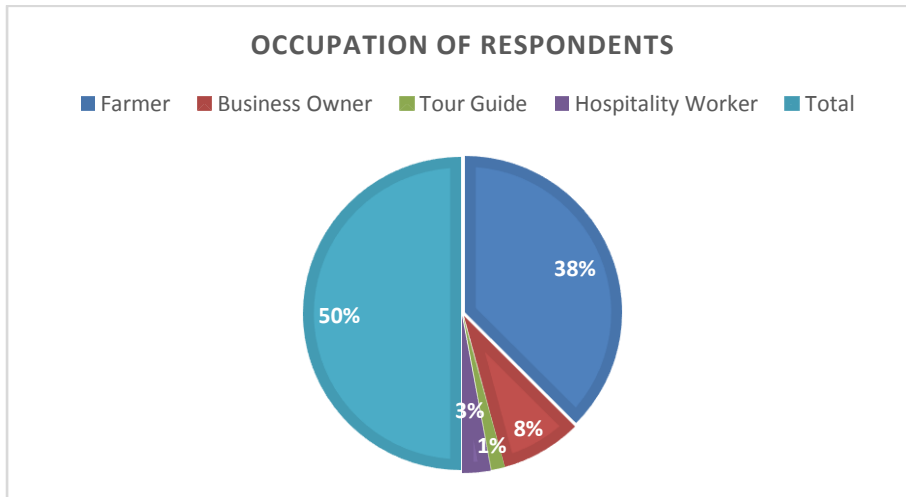
**Figure 2: Gender of respondents**

According to the results in the figure 2 above, majority of the respondents were male making up 23 (63.9%) of the respondents only 13 (36.1%) were females.



**Figure 3: Education Level of Respondents**

According to the results in the figure 3 above, educational attainment of the respondents was diverse: 16 (44.4%) have primary education, 12 (33.3%) have secondary education, 1 (2.8%) has tertiary education, 2 (5.6%) have university degrees, and 5 (13.9%) fall into other educational categories.



**Figure 4: Occupation of respondents**

Occupation-wise, 27 (75%) of the respondents were farmers, 6 (16.7%) were business owners, 1 (2.8%) is a tour guide, and 2 (5.6%) are hospitality workers.

#### 4.2 The economic benefits of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park

This section looks at the economic benefits of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park.

**Table 1: Results on the economic benefits of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park**

	Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %		
Community-based tourism has increased household income.	14	38.90%	21	58.30%	1	2.80%	3.64	0.543
Community-based tourism initiatives have created more job opportunities.	3	8.30%	31	86.10%	2	5.60%	3.97	0.377
The income from community-based tourism is reinvested in local businesses.	4	11.10%	32	88.90%	0	0.00%	3.89	0.319
Community-based tourism has improved the financial stability of families.	12	33.30%	23	63.90%	1	2.80%	3.69	0.525
Tourism-related activities have led to better infrastructure (roads, electricity) in the community.	0	0.00%	20	55.60%	16	44.40%	4.44	0.504

The findings from table 1 above actually present that community-based tourism has had a notable impact on household income, with 21, representing 58.3%, agreeing to the increase in household income and an overall mean score of 3.64. Even though only 1 is strongly in agreement, the positive consensus tends to show

there is a general perception of economic improvement. They attach a great deal of importance to job creation since 31 respondents or 86.1% agreed that tourism initiatives have created more jobs, while 2 or 5.6% strongly agreed, which is a very high mean score of 3.97. Concerning the statement that income from community-based tourism is reinvested in local businesses, 32 or 88.9% of the respondents agreed, while none strongly agreed, and the mean score was 3.89. Moreover, on the statement that "Community-based tourism has provided families with better financial stability", 23 or 63.9% agree, while 1 or 2.8% strongly agreed, thus yielding the mean score of 3.69. And lastly, 20 or 55.6% agree, while 16 or 44.4% strongly agree, on the statement that "With tourism-related activities, there is better infrastructure regarding roads and electricity". These two statements obtain a high mean score of 4.44.

The results show that tourism at a community level has significantly contributed to the improvement of the economic status of the host community in Lake Mburu National Park. It's evident that such initiatives really bring about local economic development since a great majority have agreed upon an increase in household income, job opportunities, and reinvestment of income within the same community. The benefits on financial stability and infrastructure further indicate this. Overall, these findings tend to suggest that further support and development of community-based tourism will lead to increased levels of economic resilience and overall development, with livelihoods and infrastructure that are more sustainable in the communities concerned.

The social impacts of community-based tourism initiatives on local communities, by Lake Mburu National Park

This section looks at the social impacts of community-based tourism initiatives on local communities, by Lake Mburo National Park

**Table 2: The social impacts of community-based tourism initiatives on local communities, by Lake Mburo National Park**

	Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %		
Tourism initiatives have improved social interactions among community members.	0	0.00%	29	80.60%	7	19.40%	4.19	0.401
Tourism has increased cultural exchanges between locals and tourists.	0	0.00%	27	75.00%	9	25.00%	4.25	0.439
The community has benefited from improved social amenities due to tourism.	0	0.00%	20	55.60%	16	44.40%	4.44	0.504
Tourism activities have strengthened	2	5.60%	30	83.30%	4	11.10%	4.06	0.41

community cohesion and trust.								
Tourism has encouraged community members to engage in social development projects.	0	0.00%	30	83.30%	6	16.70%	4.17	0.378

The social impacts of tourism are normally positive, as tabulated in table 2 above. A net portion of 29 (80.6%): agree to the statement that "Tourism initiatives have improved social interaction among community members, while 7 (19.4%) strongly agree. This is reflected in a mean score of 4.19. Tourism initiatives have increased cultural exchange between community members and visitors, 27 (75%) agree, while 9 (25%) strongly agree, as reflected by the mean score of 4.25. The changes improved social amenities; for instance, 20 (55.6%) agree, and 16 (44.4%) strongly agree to a mean of 4.44, while the cohesion and community trust is increased with 30 (83.3%) agreeing and 4 (11.1%) strongly agreeing to a mean score of 4.06. Additionally, tourism has encouraged members of the community to be more involved in social development initiatives, and 30 responding who agreed account for about 83.3%, while 6 strongly agree, accounting for 16.7%, as reflected by a mean score of 4.17.

Community-based tourism has visibly strengthened social relations in the host communities around Lake Mbuoro National Park. High consensus on improved social interactions, cultural exchanges, and community cohesion suggests that tourism interventions have brought the social groups closer together and the community members living more amicably. It also reflects wider benefits to society through a realization of social amenity development and higher levels of involvement in social initiatives. Benefits thus indicate that tourism not only brings social capital gain but also empowers community interest and collective well-being through active pursuit of social goals with regard to tourism planning and implementation.

The environmental effects of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park

This section provides findings on the environmental effects of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park

**Table 3: Results on the environmental effects of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park**

	Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %		
Tourism initiatives have led to better conservation practices in the community.	22	61.10%	14	38.90%	4.39	0.494
Community-based tourism has increased awareness of environmental issues.	15	41.70%	21	58.30%	4.58	0.5
Tourism activities have had a positive impact on local biodiversity.	18	50.00%	18	50.00%	4.5	0.507
Tourism has led to the implementation of sustainable environmental practices.	17	47.20%	19	52.80%	4.53	0.506
Tourism has contributed to the improvement of waste management in the community.	24	66.70%	12	33.30%	4.33	0.478

As shown in Table 3 above, tourism development generally has contributed to good conservation practices, with 22 (61.1%) agreeing and 14 (38.9%) strongly agreeing to yield a mean score of 4.39. There was also high agreement that community-based tourism has ensured the sensitization to environmental issues, with 15 (41.7%) agreeing and 21 (58.3%) strongly agreeing to yield a mean score of 4.58. The impact on local biodiversity is positive, with 18 at 50% agreeing and 18 at 50% strongly agreeing, an average score of 4.5. Better environmental practices are sustainable, with 17 at 47.2% agreeing and 19 at 52.8% strongly agreeing, which gives it a mean score of 4.53. Improvement in the management of solid waste is seen by 24, or 66.7%, agreeing and 12, or 33.3%, strongly agreeing, reflected in a mean score of 4.33.

The impacts of the community-based tourism initiatives around Lake Mburu National Park are generally positive in environmental terms. Agreement that there is stronger conservation practices, increased environmental awareness, and positive impacts on local biodiversity all point toward tourism being able to contribute much to environmental sustainability. This point of view has further support through the implementation of sustainable practices and improved waste management. These findings suggest that tourism in community-based tourism has the capability to be a viable tool for environmental stewardship through persuading good practices and, in turn, further improving local conservation outcomes. Ensuring that such tourism initiatives emphasize and reinforce environmental sustainability will be key to sustaining these positive impacts.

To analyze the cultural impacts of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mburu National Park on local communities.

The finding below analyzes the cultural impacts of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park on local communities

**Table 4: Results on the cultural impacts of community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park on local communities**

	Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %		
Tourism has helped preserve local cultural traditions.	0	0.00%	23	63.90%	13	36.10%	4.36	0.487
Community-based tourism initiatives promote local arts and crafts.	0	0.00%	20	55.60%	16	44.40%	4.44	0.504
Tourism has fostered a sense of cultural pride among community members.	0	0.00%	31	86.10%	5	13.90%	4.14	0.351
Local festivals and cultural events have increased due to tourism.	2	5.60%	33	91.70%	1	2.80%	3.97	0.291
Tourism has led to the development of cultural education programs.	1	2.80%	30	83.30%	5	13.90%	4.11	0.398

From the table 4 above, tourism has greatly contributed to the preservation of local cultural traditions. This is apparent from 23 (63.9%) who agree and 13 (36.1%) who strongly agree, giving a mean of 4.36. Again, promotion of local arts and crafts is agreed to by 20 (55.6%) and strongly agreed to by 16 (44.4%), reflecting a mean of 4.44. The tourism creates a sense of cultural pride in the community, where 31 respondents which account for 86.1% agreed and 5 respondents strongly agreed at 13.9%, thus giving a mean score of 4.14. Tourism has resulted in an increased number of local festivals and cultural events, where 33 of the respondents agreed, accounting for 91.7%, 1 strongly agreed at 2.8%, thus giving a mean score of 3.97. Those who strongly agree and agree include 30 respondents, 83.3%, and 5 respondents, 13.9%, respectively, giving a mean score of 4.11.

Over the years, tourism within the communities in Lake Mbuoro National Park has contributed much toward the preservation and promotion of local cultural traditions. A high level of agreement on the preservation of the cultural tradition, promotion of local arts, and fostering pride in culture reflects that tourism has been advantageous to cultural heritage. The further increase in local festivals and the development of cultural education programs shows that tourism also supports cultural vibrancy and education. These results would therefore mean that tourism is an effective means of preserving culture and enriching it. Continuation means in local traditions and increased cultural pride within the community.

The sustainability practices and measures implemented within community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park

This section looks at the sustainability practices and measures implemented within community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park

**Table 5: Results on the sustainability practices and measures implemented within community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park**

	Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %		
Tourism initiatives have implemented effective sustainability practices.	0	0.00%	28	77.80%	8	22.20%	4.22	0.422
Community-based tourism promotes the responsible use of natural resources.	0	0.00%	24	66.70%	12	33.30%	4.33	0.478
Local tourism initiatives include measures to mitigate environmental impacts.	0	0.00%	28	77.80%	8	22.20%	4.22	0.422
Community members are trained in sustainable tourism practices.	3	8.30%	30	83.30%	3	8.30%	4	0.414
There are ongoing efforts to ensure the long-term viability of tourism initiatives.	3	8.30%	32	88.90%	1	2.80%	3.94	0.333

As shown in the table above, the results indicate positive attitudes concerning the sustainability practices of community-based tourism initiatives. For effective sustainability practices, 28 (77.8%) agree and 8 (22.2%) strongly agree, giving a mean score of 4.22. The promotion of responsible use of natural resources stated that 24 (66.7%) agreed, while 12 were strongly agreed (33.3%), hence giving a mean score of 4.33. On the contrary, local tourism ventures are initiated along with the strategy that lessens environmental impacts. Similarly, 28 or 77.8% agree that local tourism ventures are initiated along with strategies that reduce environmental impacts, while 8 or 22.2% strongly agree. The mean score is 4.22. For training community members with sustainable tourism practices, 30 or 83.3% agree and 3 or 8.3% strongly agree, the mean score is 4.00. Having the efforts continue toward the long-term viability of the tourism initiatives has 32 (88.9%) agree and 1 (2.8%) strongly agree with a mean score of 3.94.

These findings would suggest that community-based tourism in Lake Mburu National Park is well considered in line with sustainability principles, good environmental management, and full incorporation of sustainability issues into the tourism strategy. Good perception of such practices, therefore, would mean that sustained attention to sustainability issues can only continue to increase the apparent success and impact of tourism development in the longer term. These will need to be highly emphasized and reinforced regarding sustainability practices that will be important to maintain environmental health, support the livelihoods of the locals, and secure the future of tourism in the region.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF FINDING

#### 5.0 Introduction

Which chapter covers the summary and discussion of findings against the objectives of the study?

#### 5.1 Summary of findings

##### 5.1.1 Summary of findings on Economic Benefits of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park

The economic benefits arising from the community-based tourism initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park have been immense positivity. However, in the case of the first statement, "As a result of tourism development, my household income has increased significantly"; most of the respondents strongly agreed that through tourism there is considerable improvement in sources of income. Employment opportunity has been one of the major benefit; a considerable number of the respondents mentioned that tourism development ventures have generated increased opportunities for jobs and the mean score for this variable was very high. Another factor that speaks in favor is that tourism incomes are reinvested within the community, indicating still further that such economic gains trickle along within the community. Increased financial security of families and improvements on roads and electricity show that these undertakings have a greater economical impact. In a nutshell, these findings suggest that tourism within this community has acted as a driver to local economic development via income rise, job creation, and infrastructural improvement that have further enhanced economic resilience and growth within the region.

### **5.1.2 Summary of Findings on Social Impacts of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives on Local Communities by Lake Mbuoro National Park**

Community-based tourism in Lake Mbuoro National Park has transformed social dynamics in the communities around the park. The study found out that due to tourism developments, the level of social interaction within the community has highly improved, hence improving interpersonal relationships and bonding within the community. The respondents reported that there is heightened cultural interaction between the host community and visitors, which has resulted in a more enriching social interaction and vital cross-cultural understanding. Social infrastructural development, like schools and health facilities resulting from investment in tourism, signifies positive changes linked to the tourism initiatives. Additionally, tourism has encouraged active participation in social development projects, enhancing social coherence and well-being. The findings bring out that tourism has been instrumental in the development of social capital and interchange of culture, and has also facilitated infrastructure development in communities, leading to an integrated and cooperative local community.

### **5.1.3 Summary of findings on Environmental Effects of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park**

The environmental impacts of community-based tourism initiatives in Lake Mbuoro National Park were indeed very positive, as indicated by positive responses. Tourism activities have had a positive impact on the conservation behavior in that most agreed that the community-based tourism initiatives have positively contributed toward natural resource protection. Tourism activities are increasing in environmental awareness among community members, leading to better

understanding and concern about ecological issues and how to help manage them for sustainability. Local-level biodiversity positively testifies that tourism plays a role in the preservation of both wildlife and natural habitats. The enactment of sustainable environment practice coupled with appropriate waste management indicates concern for the ecological footprint resulting from tourism activities. Overall, findings indicate that community-based tourism has put in place a place regarding environmental stewardship in practice, which largely promotes conservation, increases awareness, and fosters sustainability in natural resource management.

**5.1.4 Findings Summary of Cultural Impacts of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives** by Lake Mbuho National Park on Local Communities Community-based tourism has influenced the culture around Lake Mbuho National Park, with the most considerable positive influence on cultural traditions and heritage. The study found that one of the agreed-upon benefits among a majority of respondents was cultural tradition preservation; in other words, tourism initiatives have helped in maintaining and celebrating local customs and practices. Also, the continued promotion of local arts and crafts depicts a positive impact on traditional crafts and forms of artistic expression. Tourism also inspires a sense of cultural pride among community members because of their newfound attachment and appreciation for their culture. The numerous festivals and events which tourism has organized in that region have been instrumental in facilitating this richness within the culture of the community. In addition to this, the development of cultural education programs indicated the importance of tourism in educating both locals and visitors in relation to the region's cultural heritage. This result verifies that tourism has been highly important in the maintenance of cultural traditions

and the development of local arts, thus increasing cultural pride and allowing local cultural practices to be passed on and evolve.

#### **5.1.5 Summary of findings on Sustainability Practices and Measures put in place within Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park**

The sustainability practices adopted within the community-based tourism initiatives at Lake Mbuoro National Park have received rave reviews, depicting a great commitment towards responsible and long-term tourism development. The respondents appreciated effective sustainability practices, stating that initiatives within tourism are trying to put in place measures to enhance the proper use of natural resources and reduce adverse environmental impacts. Support has been given for training on community members about sustainable tourism practices; this shows an effort to create a sense in the locals of the knowledge and skill for responsible tourism. The study also pointed out that long-term viability efforts continue beyond the start-up phase, indicating that sustainability is an intrinsic part of the overall strategy for tourism. The positive perception of such measures for sustainability would therefore mean that community-based tourism goes along quite well with environmental and social responsibility. It will be, therefore, very important that these practices remain the focus for the sustainability of tourism initiatives as well as maintaining local livelihoods and preserving cultural and environmental resources for the future generations to come.

## 5.2 Discussion of findings

### 5.2.1 Discussion of findings on Economic Benefits of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park

The findings of this study confirm the literature on the economic benefits that have been accrued from the CBTIs. The study also established that CBTIs significantly enhance household income, generate employment, and stimulate investments in education, health, and local infrastructure. In this respect, the finding is in agreement with Khartishvili et al. (2020) that CBTIs contribute to economic development through direct generation of income and employment opportunities in the local communities. The present study, coupled with the reviewed literature, has ascertained the contribution that CBTIs make to poverty reduction through reinvesting tourism income in community enterprises and community infrastructure. Moreover, literature on sustainable tourism has focused on product development where economic benefits emanate from reinvestment within local communities, thereby indirectly contributing to overall well-being. Krittayaruangroj, Suriyankietkaew, & Hallinger (2023)

This research points out shades that have not been viewed at large in the literature. While much of the literature highlights direct economic benefits, such as income and jobs, Stone & Nyaupane, 2018 point out that "this research documented these benefits as not being equitably shared amongst community members". It is a selected few who have direct contacts with tourist clients through activities such as guiding and hospitality, which perpetuates inequality amongst community members, as identified by Mbaiwa (2015). Also, unlike the literature that mainly cite economic growth, this study identified specific issues like a lack of access to credit and financing that prevent local entrepreneurs from

taking advantage of opportunities provided by tourism. In this study, it was also found out that CBTIs are vulnerable to exogenous shocks-for instance, seasonal change and economic downturn-factors not strongly disposed to in the general literature.

### **5.2.2 Discussion of findings on social Impacts of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives on Local Communities by Lake Mbuoro National Park**

In general, the literature and this study arrive at a consensus that indeed the social impacts that CBTIs have on local communities along the Lake Mbuoro National Park include encouraging social interaction, maintaining cultural heritage, and strengthening community bonds. Afenyo-Agbe & Mensah, 2022. Both these sources also support the notion that tourism is based on community participation, which builds up social resilience and a sense of pride and ownership among citizens within a community. Besides, literature shows that CBTIs may achieve the objective of empowering marginalized groups, like women and the youth, by giving these groups avenues for participating in tourism-related activities. Thus, this phenomenon concurs with Scheyvens (1999).

This study has, however, identified a few unwanted social implications that somewhat contradict the literature. For instance, the literature mostly identifies positive cultural exchange, but this study showed that increased tourism at times leads to commodification of cultures where culture and tradition are manipulated for tourists, something that impairs their authenticity (McKercher & du Cros, 2002). This study also outlined the social conflict arising from a feeling of unequal participation and benefits accruing, which is not well documented in literature. While literature generally describes community participation as a boon, this study

found that participation, if not well managed, may lead to conflict and perceptions of bias, especially in decision-making processes dominated by a few influential members of the community.

5.2.3 Discussion of findings on impacts of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park .The results of this investigation confirm what was already in the literature about environmental impacts of CBTIs. This study and literature review remind that CBTIs operating with good practices can contribute to environmental sustainability since these are able to raise interest and promote conservation of natural surroundings by developing responsible forms of tourism Elizondo et al., 2017. Generally, CBTIs promote the intention to preserve local natural settings due to the increasing economic revenues linked with sustainable tourism practices López-Guzmán et al., 2011.While the literature has emphasized that conservation and less degradation of the environment are potential environmental benefits of CBTIs, which may open this option to alleviate poverty, according to the statement by Weaver (2012), this study highlighted less discussed environmental challenges in the literature. Whereas tourism growth that is not well managed may lead to environmental problems related to deforestation, habitat loss, and higher amounts of waste, as Akama (2011) mentioned. Contrary to the literature, that is normally inclined towards the positive impacts, this study established a paradox: the CBTIs overexploit water and wildlife resources, hence compromising sustainability of ecosystems. Additionally, this study found weak enforcement of environmental guidelines, leading to degradation—a notion that is not very well addressed in the literature review by Beeton, 2006.

#### **5.2.4 Discussion of findings on cultural Impacts of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park on Local Communities**

The study identified that the CBTIs around Lake Mbuoro National Park contribute to the preservation of local cultural heritage, an occurrence that is in line with the greater literature that continues to report tourism as a mechanism for culture conservation. In fact, the economic incentives associated with tourism influence the community to preserve traditional arts and crafts, music, and dance, among other forms of culture expression that would otherwise have been discarded. This is consistent with Richards (2007), who argued that tourism may revive cultural practices as tourists' spending provides an incentive and economic reason for people to continue the culture. Similarly, the present research, together with literature, recognizes that sites of cultural heritage, traditional homesteads, and sessions of storytelling provide tourists with exceptional cultural experiences, while at the same time promoting the cause of cultural preservation.

CBTIs foster community pride and strengthen local identity; Mbaiwa and Stronza (2010) verify that CBTIs create a sense of ownership and pride among the communities where they operate. More often than not, the exposure to tourists offers a conducive environment in which traditional practices and customs among locals are vindicated, therefore reawakening the interest in cultural heritage among the younger generations who may otherwise be disconnected from their indigenous culture. This is in line with the repeated literature on the contribution of tourism to the communities' sense of identity-building (Moscardo, 2008). The findings that the interactions from tourism create pride in heritage and present

confidence to visitors are in agreement with the wider discourse on the cultural empowerment of the host communities.

However, the present research indicates an important departure: while the literature often represents cultural preservation as an automatic and unproblematic result of tourism, in this study, it was determined that most of the time, motivations towards such cultural preservations are economically and not culturally motivated. For instance, there are cases where, with a view to catering to the expectations of tourists, local cultural performances and traditional crafts have been altered at the expense of authenticity. While most the studies previously undertaken have idealised the motivations of such cultural preservations, this study discloses that the cultures are preserved in a bid to attract revenues resulting from tourism revenues, a fact that somewhat dampens the overly simplistic view that tourism is simply the "cultural savior" depicted by McKercher & du Cros, 2002.

#### **5.2.5 Discussion of findings on sustainability Practices and Measures Implemented within Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mburo National Park.**

The study established that the most important concerns in CBTIs around Lake Mburo involve environmental conservation through various activities, such as planting trees, waste management, and care for wildlife. This finding supports the literature, which also stresses that the role of CBTIs in sustainable tourism practices should have the aim of protecting natural habitats and biodiversity (Honey, 2008). These include the reforestation processes of the community involvement that rehabilitate degraded landscapes, reduce carbon footprints, and

protect wildlife corridors-all practices in line with broader environmental goals as highlighted by Scheyvens (2002). Besides, emphasis on resource usage not going overboard-for example, water and energy-saving measures-shows trends present in global sustainable tourism.

Whereas some literature idealizes CBTIs as a perfect world where there is absolute integration of conservation and tourism, the empirical evidence from the study proved otherwise. In particular, practical challenges such as lack of resources and conflicting interests at times provide setbacks for the initiatives. For example, despite the reforestation program, illegal logging and poaching are still a problem, hence something is lacking in the enforcement of the conservation measures. The study also indicated that, though most often CBTIs are supported to be sustainable, it is difficult to fully implement due to the resource and local economic constraints, hence contrasting with other literature which may blind to the socio-economic status that has usually faced conservation areas. In this regard, the study found that CBTI around Lake Mburu focuses on sustainable livelihoods through various alternative sources of livelihood like ecotourism, handicrafts, and cultural performances. This is in agreement with the literature, which shows how tourism can actually diversify the local economies away from destructive uses of the environment, such as agriculture and poaching. CBTIs offer economic empowerment to the local communities through employment opportunities in guiding, hospitality, and selling of crafts, thereby alleviating poverty-a key objective of sustainability as described by Ashley and Roe. Both this research and the literature agree on how a better economic involvement by local communities would enhance interest in conservation, hence creating a positive feedback loop between economic and environmental sustainability.

However, this study adopts a more nuanced approach by pointing to the fact that not all members of the community benefited from those kinds of interventions. While often envisioned in the literature as a panacea—a remedy for all ills—offering wide-ranging benefits, as argued by Goodwin, this study has actually identified that the benefits are distributed variably and often to those with proximity to tourism sites or better access to social networks. Such inequalities in benefit distribution may create tensions and resentment at the level of the community, which are not identified in more optimistic renditions of CBTIs presented in the literature. More importantly, tourism income tends to be seasonal and susceptible to a range of external shocks, such as political instability or global economic recessions, making those livelihoods less resilient than some studies might have suggested (Mbaiwa, 2005).

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMEND

#### **6.1.1 Conclusion on Economic Benefits of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park.**

The results indicate that community-based tourism initiatives in Lake Mbuoro National Park have significantly contributed towards the economic development of the local communities. The initiatives have promoted household income, employment opportunities, and have facilitated reinvestment of tourism income back into the local businesses. These infrastructural developments, such as roads and electricity, further demonstrate how tourism can have positive economic impacts that allow for financial stability of families and the building of economic resilience in a region. These points out the importance of community-based tourism as a driver of local economic growth and development.

#### **6.1.2 Conclusion on Social Impacts from Community-Based Tourism Initiatives on Local Communities around Lake Mbuoro National Park**

Community-based tourism brings immense change in social dynamics at the local community living around the Lake Mbuoro National Park area. These initiatives increased social interactions, improved community cohesion, and increased cultural exchanges between the locals and tourists. The construction of social amenities, such as schools and health facilities facilitated by funding from tourism initiatives, testifies to wider social gains from these initiatives. By encouraging active participation in social development initiatives, tourism has enhanced

community participation, and levels of social capital, improved in the well-being of the community.

### **6.1.3 Conclusion on environmental Effects of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park**

Overall, the environmental impacts that have been associated with community-based tourism initiatives at Lake Mbuoro National Park have been primarily positive, including the promotion of conservation and increased environmental awareness and support for sustainable management of natural resources. In particular, tourism has helped in protecting biodiversity in the area through the promotion of various activities in managing wastes and preserving resources in a sustainable manner. Environmental stewardship is integrated in their operations and focused on the preservation of the park's natural environment for the future.

### **6.1.4 Conclusion on Cultural Impacts of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mbuoro National Park to Local Communities**

Community-based tourism has played a positive role in the preservation and promotion of the local cultural heritage traditions around Lake Mbuoro National Park. The initiatives support the maintenance of cultural heritage, encourage artistic expression, and have fostered a sense of cultural pride among members of this community. The rise of local festivals and cultural events, in addition to the development of the cultural education programs, shows that tourism has a positive impact on the cultural aspect within the region, thus strengthening the community's bond with its customs and traditions.

### **6.1.5 Conclusion on Sustainability Practices and Measures Implemented Within Community-Based Tourism Initiatives by Lake Mbuho National Park**

The community-based tourism initiatives around Lake Mbuho National Park are at a high level of commitment toward responsible tourism development in sustainability practices. The measures to encourage responsible use of natural resources, reduce environmental impacts, and ensure long-term viability are an integral part of such initiatives. The community members were given various training programs on sustainable tourism skills. All continuous efforts put forth to infuse sustainability into the tourism operations served as a good example of how these programs connect with both environmental and social responsibility objectives.

### **6.2 Recommendations**

Appropriately, for community-based tourism initiatives, training programs should be scaled up to equipping more members with the management, tourism, social, and entrepreneurial skills. This will enable the locals to be more involved in tourism-related economic activities and self-initiate their own business ventures. Furthermore, tourism associations and local leaders should promote diversification of tourism-related enterprises by supporting a range of services related to guiding, cultural experiences, and ecologically friendly accommodations. This would decrease dependence on one source of income and improve the resiliency of the local economy to exogenous economic shocks.

They should enhance the local supply chains by developing better linkages between tourism enterprises and local suppliers, such as farmers and artisans. This will ensure that the economic benefits of tourism are distributed widely within the community, fostering local economic growth. Moreover, the concerned local

governments and agencies in infrastructure development should sustain investment in better infrastructural improvements that support tourism, such as access roads, reliable electricity, and improved communication networks. Such improvements will ensure easier business operations, attracting more visitors, and improving the overall visitor experience, hence boosting the economy of the local people.

This would ensure that the accrued benefits from tourism are shared equitably and diverse views considered in framing strategies on tourism. Community leaders and local NGOs must create conditions for inclusive participation by redoubling efforts to ensure that the marginalized, including women and the youth, are effectively involved in decision-making processes related to tourism, thereby fully maximizing the social benefits of tourism. In return, local governments and development partners should invest in social infrastructure such as schools, health centers, and community centers using the revenues accrued from tourism. This will directly be channeled to improving the living standards of the residents and creating a more conducive environment for social development.

Cultural exchange programs between the locals and tourists should be created through the tourism operators and cultural institutions. Such programs would enhance mutual understanding and respect for other people's cultures, adding to the richness of the social texture of society. Finally, local governments and community organizations should undertake initiatives aimed at engaging communities with a view to stimulating volunteerism and the active participation of community members in various social development projects. The ties will become tighter among those living in the community, collective well-being will be

enhanced, and a sense of shared responsibility for the growth of the community will increase.

Environmental conservation should be enhanced through the development of environmental education programs by the conservation NGOs and park management for members of the community and tourists. This will ensure a community more involved in natural resource conservation with increased awareness in conservation issues and sustainable practices. The agencies responsible for environmental protection and the local authorities should be more serious in terms of enforcement against some of the challenges facing this protected area, such as illegal logging and poaching. This enhanced enforcement will protect the biodiversity of the region and at least ensure continuity over time of those gains made through conservation.

Businesses in tourism and park management should foster sustainable tourism practices by including eco-friendly accommodations, strategies for minimizing waste, and tours friendly to conservation. Such will minimize ecological footprint that might emanate from tourism and raise the standard bar for responsible tourism operations in the area. Secondly, the community-led conservation projects need to be given more support from local authorities and conservation NGOs. The support can include incentives, capacity building, and actual resources that will enable locals to act more in environmental stewardship so that community involvement in their natural environment is enhanced.

Preservation and promotion of local culture through investments by cultural institutions and local authorities should be done in activities aimed at documenting and securing traditional practices. This will ensure that the cultural heritage is

preserved for generations to come and continues to enrich community identity. Tourism operators and associations of local artisans promote local arts and crafts by creating platforms that showcase and market these products. Greater visibility for local craftsmanship not only raises income for artisans but also strengthens cultural pride and appreciation at the community level.

Guided tours, workshops, and interpretive centers that reflect upon the rich heritage of the region should supplement this cultural education to tourists from local guides and cultural organizations. Thus, visitors will be exposed to the local culture and consequently have more respect for the traditions they come across. Moreover, community organizations and tourism associations can give very good assistance in organizing community-led cultural festivals and events. Such events allow the natives time to celebrate and share culture with visitors, which goes a long way in creating cultural pride as well as social cohesion within the communities.

Sustainability training courses targeting community members should be upscale by NGOs and Tourism training institutions. This will go a long way in ensuring that the tourism initiatives are long-term. The communities will gain knowledge and skills on adopting responsible methods of tourism as well as encourage the culture of environmental and social responsibility. Tourism associations and park management have to establish solid systems for monitoring and evaluation in order to understand how effectively the sustainability measures are taken. Sustainability measures shall be reviewed again and again by the stakeholders from time to time to ensure that this still remains a priority for tourism development.

Partnerships will be supported among local governments, NGOs with a focus on environmental issues, and private sector stakeholders, adding value through additional resources, expertise, and opportunities for collaboration. This, on the other hand, has more and wider coverage in terms of effects and benefits arising out of sustainability to the environment and community. Finally, tourism regulatory bodies and industry stakeholders are supposed to call for the adoption of sustainable tourism standards. It is expected that the tourism sector should prove an example of compatibility between economic development and sustainability by committing itself to best practices in environmental management and community engagement.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Questionnaire

#### Introduction

This is a questionnaire designed to elicit information from stakeholders on community-based tourism initiatives around Lake Mbuoro National Park in Uganda. The study also aims at capturing information on economic benefits, social impacts, environmental effects, cultural changes, and sustainability practices regarding these initiatives. Your contribution is important in providing insights that will inform strategies for enhancing the positive impacts of tourism while mitigating potential challenges.

Your participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, and all responses will be subjected to strict confidentiality. By completing the questionnaire, you are giving consent to participate in this research. We appreciate the time taken to fill out this questionnaire, and your remarks will enrich our knowledge in revealing the role and contribution of community-based tourism to local development around Lake Mbuoro National Park.

#### SECTION 1

Biographical Information (*Please tick against the response which is applicable*)

Age:

18-25

26-35

36-45

46-55

56 and above

Gender:

Male

Female

Other

Education Level:

Primary

Secondary

Tertiary

University

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation:

Farmer

Business Owner

Tour Guide

Hospitality Worker

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been living in the community surrounding Lake Mbuoro National Park?

Less than 1 year

1-5 years

6-10 years

More than 10 years

## SECTION 2

### Objective 1: Economic Benefits of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Community-based tourism has increased household income.					
Community-based tourism initiatives have created more job opportunities.					
The income from community-based tourism is reinvested in local businesses.					
Community-based tourism has improved the financial stability of families.					
Tourism-related activities have led to better infrastructure (roads, electricity) in the community.					

## Objective 2: Social Impacts of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Tourism initiatives have improved social interactions among community members.					
Tourism has increased cultural exchanges between locals and tourists.					
The community has benefited from improved social amenities due to tourism.					
Tourism activities have strengthened community cohesion and trust.					
Tourism has encouraged community members to engage in social development projects.					

### Objective 3: Environmental Effects of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Strongly Agree					
Tourism initiatives have led to better conservation practices in the community.					
Community-based tourism has increased awareness of environmental issues.					
Tourism activities have had a positive impact on local biodiversity.					
Tourism has led to the implementation of sustainable environmental practices.					
Tourism has contributed to the improvement of waste management in the community.					

### Objective 4: Cultural Impacts of Community-Based Tourism Initiatives

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Strongly Agree					
Tourism has helped preserve local cultural traditions.					
Community-based tourism initiatives promote local arts and crafts.					
Tourism has fostered a sense of cultural pride among community members.					
Local festivals and cultural events have increased due to tourism.					
Tourism has led to the development of cultural education programs.					

Objective 5: Sustainability Practices and Measures in Community-Based Tourism Initiatives

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Strongly Agree	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
Tourism initiatives have implemented effective sustainability practices.					
Community-based tourism promotes the responsible use of natural resources.					
Local tourism initiatives include measures to mitigate environmental impacts.					
Community members are trained in sustainable tourism practices.					
There are ongoing efforts to ensure the long-term viability of tourism initiatives.					

## Appendix B: Data Collection Letter

