

**INFLUENCE OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT-LED GOVERNANCE ON
ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SAMBURU NATIONAL RESERVE**

CICILIA AMACHI

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master in Tourism Management
of Chuka University**


CHUKA UNIVERSITY

OCTOBER 2024

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS


Declaration


This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for an award of diploma or conferment of degree in any other institution

Signature..........Date: 24/10/2024.....
Amachi Cicilia
NM13/51175/21

Recommendation

This thesis has been examined, passed and submitted with our approval as University supervisors

Signature..........Date: 24/10/2024.....
Dr. Lemmy Mureti Muriuki, PhD
Chuka University

Signature..........Date: 24/10/2024.....
Dr. Stephen Omwenga Momanyi, PhD
Rongo University



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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my dear Mum, Grace Nakakawa Otwane.

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Much appreciation to the Almighty God for the grace, knowledge, wisdom, guidance and strength to complete this study.

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ABSTRACT

Effective governance is crucial for managing natural resources and promoting sustainable ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve, yet its role remains under-documented. The reserve continues to face persistent challenges, including inconsistent stakeholder inclusion, security issues, and ineffective policy enforcement. Despite efforts to address these challenges, the root causes remain unclear. This study assessed the influence of Samburu County government policies and management strategies on ecotourism development, using governance principles from the PROFOR/FAO Governance assessment framework. The study aimed to explore the influence of accountability, transparency, equity, security, and regulations on ecotourism development within Samburu National Reserve. A qualitative approach was employed using a single holistic case study method, which involved 26 semi-structured interviews with local community members, tourists, accommodation managers, and reserve management officials. To ensure reliability and validity, the research employed rigorous transcription checks, consistent coding with detailed memos, and validation through supervisor feedback, varied data sources, member checking, and peer reviews, ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of the findings. Thematic analysis, guided by the six-step framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), was conducted using both deductive and inductive approaches, with the aid of MAXQDA software. The findings of the study were presented using both quantitative and qualitative visual tools including tables, graphs, verbatim quotations and word cloud. The study found that while accountability and conservation efforts have improved community involvement and benefits, issues such as superficial participation, inequitable benefit distribution, cultural commodification, and transparency gaps persist, undermining sustainable ecotourism. Security challenges, including poaching, banditry, and human-wildlife conflicts, along with inconsistent enforcement of regulations due to limited ranger capacity, insufficient resources, and inadequate political will, particularly during peak tourist seasons, also threaten wildlife safety and governance effectiveness. Additionally, equity in benefit sharing remains uneven, with many locals feeling excluded from fair employment and compensation opportunities, highlighting the need for more inclusive, transparent, and equitable policies to foster genuine community engagement. To improve ecotourism, the study recommends promoting lesser-known activities, enhancing community engagement, and providing locals with skills in hospitality and conservation. Equitable revenue sharing, stronger security measures, and improved waste management policies are vital. Supporting local cultural initiatives and expanding conservation education will foster responsible tourism. Future research should explore the long-term impacts of governance on ecotourism, employ diverse data collection methods, and examine transparency practices, digital tools, and comprehensive governance frameworks to further enhance ecotourism development.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
CST	Certification for Sustainable Tourism
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GSTC	Global Sustainable Tourism Council
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Service
MAXQDA	Max Weber Qualitative Data Analysis
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science and Technology
PROFOR	Program on Forests
RDB	Rwanda Development Board
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SNR	Samburu National Reserve
TA	Tourism Act
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nation Environmental Programme
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
WCMA	Wildlife Conservation and Management Act
WGI	Worldwide Governance Indicators

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Ecotourism, a niche within the broader tourism industry, has garnered global attention as a sustainable and responsible approach to exploring natural environments and preserving cultural heritage (El, 2022; Kamyabi & Rajaei Rizi, 2018). Statista (2022) estimated that the global ecotourism industry had a market value of approximately \$172.4 billion in 2022. Projections for the sector indicated robust growth, with expectations of reaching around \$374.2 billion by 2028, representing a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 13.9%. These figures underscore the economic potential of the sector and its alignment with the increasing global emphasis on environmentally conscious travel experiences (Carvache-Franco et al., 2019).

Ecotourism development involves strategic planning with a focus on environmental conservation, community engagement, and sustainable use of resources (Koure et al., 2023). Key principles include conservation, which protects biodiversity and minimizes environmental impacts; education, which raises awareness of conservation and cultural significance; and cultural preservation, which safeguards local heritage and prevents commodification (Carvache-Franco et al., 2019). Additionally, socio-economic welfare ensures that ecotourism generates economic benefits, supporting local communities while balancing conservation goals.

Socio-economic welfare ensures that ecotourism generates economic benefits, such as job creation and revenue for local communities, balancing economic growth with conservation effort (Forje et al., 2022). Globally, the success of ecotourism development is greatly influenced by various factors, including governance, environmental conservation efforts, economic factors and socio-cultural factors (Heshmati et al., 2022). Effective governance is crucial for regulating tourism activities and aligning them with conservation objectives (Nolte et al., 2013). Despite its significance, governance often remains underexplored in ecotourism literature, with a limited and developing knowledge base on its impact (Antonio dos Anjos & Kennell, 2019).

Governance, as defined by the EU White Paper, encompasses the various rules, processes and behaviors that influence the application of power (Atkinson, 2002). The UNDP defines it as a system of principles, regulations, policies and institutions used by a community to manage its economic, political and social affairs through interactions among state, civil society and private sectors. In protected areas, governance encompasses the framework that guides decision-making and management to ensure effective conservation and sustainable resource use (Worboys et al., 2015). Governance regimes in these areas can be categorized into four types: government-managed, collaboratively managed, privately managed and community-managed (Feyerabend et al., 2013).

There are several principles that can be used to evaluate and monitor governance initiatives such as: Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) proposed by World bank which include voice and accountability, rule of law, regulatory quality, government effectiveness, control of corruption, political stability, absence of violence and terrorism. The IUCN has put forward a different set of five principles for evaluating governance in protected areas, which include legitimacy and voice, direction, performance, accountability and fairness/rights (Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2013).. However, this study will focus on the principles as proposed by Kishor and Kenneth (2012) which include; accountability and transparency, regulations (efficiency), security, equity and inclusivity to evaluate the effectiveness of government-led governance in achieving the goals of ecotourism development.

In North America, governance frameworks have had a profound impact on the development of ecotourism, resulting in both beneficial and challenging outcomes (Peroff et al., 2017). Positive examples include initiatives such as the "Leave No Trace" program by the United States National Park Service, which has advanced sustainable tourism practices, thereby improving conservation efforts and enhancing visitor experiences (National Park Service, 2020). In Canada, the integration of Indigenous communities into park management, such as in the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, has led to successful conservation outcomes and stronger local involvement (Berkes, 2012). However, challenges persist, including commercialization and over-

tourism in parks, human-wildlife conflicts, issues related to environmental degradation and land use conflicts (Solano-Gómez & Mora, 2023).

In Asia, ecotourism development is guided by a range of governance frameworks that emphasize environmental sustainability, community involvement and cultural preservation (Tseng et al., 2019). Countries like Thailand and Malaysia incorporate ecotourism into their national conservation strategies, engaging local stakeholders and enforcing strict regulations (Palmer & Chuamuangphan, 2021). Meanwhile, China and India involve both government bodies and local communities in the management of protected areas (Kummitha, 2020). Despite these efforts, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, overreliance on tourism revenues and conflicts between conservation goals and development needs remain prevalent (Salman et al., 2024).

Ecotourism development in Africa is closely linked to governance frameworks that prioritize environmental conservation, community participation and sustainable development (Forje et al., 2022; Backman & Munanura, 2015). In South Africa, the governance approach within national parks like Kruger National Park has successfully integrated sustainable practices and local community involvement, fostering both conservation and socio-economic growth (Mengwai, 2021). However, challenges such as short-lived ecotourism projects, corruption, inadequate infrastructure, lack of transparency, poor accountability, weak integration with national development plans and insufficient funding for conservation and tourism management in protected areas still persist (Francolini et al., 2023; Pasape et al., 2015). Additionally, there is a notable lack of research on the intersection of ecotourism and governance in Africa (Harilal & Tichaawa, 2024).

Ecotourism development in Kenya is shaped by governance frameworks, policies, legislations and institutions such as the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act (2016), Ecotourism Strategic Plan (2020), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), East African Community Treaty (EAC), Climate Change Act (2016), Environmental Management and Coordination Act (2015), Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) and African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), all emphasizing environmental conservation, community involvement and sustainable resource

management. The inclusion of local communities in conservation efforts through community conservancies, particularly in renowned protected areas like Maasai Mara and Amboseli National Parks, has been a key strategy in promoting both ecological sustainability and socio-economic benefits (Okello et al., 2014; Muriithi, 2022). However, challenges such as corruption, inadequate infrastructure, human-wildlife conflicts and uneven distribution of tourism revenues persist, undermining these efforts and straining community relations (Wishitemi et al., 2015).

Samburu National Reserve is managed by the County Government in partnership with various stakeholders, including conservation organizations like Ewaso Lions, Grevy's Zebra Trust, Action for Cheetahs in Kenya, Save the Elephants and community conservancies such as Namunyak, Westgate and Kalama, along with private sector entities (Kiteme et al., 2021). While the County Government is responsible for policy formulation, resource management and infrastructure development, its partners contribute expertise in conservation, community engagement and sustainable tourism. Despite these collaborative efforts, the reserve faces persistent challenges such as human-wildlife conflicts, community resistance, inadequate infrastructure and uneven tourism benefits. This study seeks to explore how governance influences ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve by focusing on principles of accountability, transparency, security, regulations, and equity and how they impact ecotourism goals of conservation, education, cultural preservation and socio-economic welfare.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Governance plays a crucial role in managing economic, political, and social affairs, significantly shaping the success of ecotourism in protected areas by fostering sustainable practices, equitable benefit distribution, and conservation efforts. In Samburu National Reserve, however, governance challenges such as inconsistent stakeholder inclusion, security concerns and ineffective policy enforcement continue to impede the growth of ecotourism, as identified in reports like the Samburu National Reserve Revitalization Task Force Report (July 2023). Despite efforts by the County government to address these issues, they persist, suggesting deeper, unresolved problems. A notable gap in existing research is the lack of comprehensive documentation on the root causes of these governance issues and how principles like

accountability, transparency, security, regulations, and equity specifically influence ecotourism development within the reserve. This study aims to address this gap by employing a qualitative, single case study approach to examine and provide holistic understanding of how the County government-led governance framework impacts sustainable ecotourism development in Samburu National reserve, revealing both obstacles and positive contributions.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To explore the influence of county government-led governance on ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County, Kenya

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To explore the influence of accountability on ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County
- ii. To examine the influence of transparency on ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County
- iii. To assess the influence of security on ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County
- iv. To analyze the influence of regulations on ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County
- v. To explore the influence of equity on ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County

1.4 Research Questions

- i. How does accountability influence the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve?
- ii. How does transparency influence the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County?
- iii. What influence does security have on the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve?
- iv. What is the influence of regulations on the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve?

- v. How does equity influence the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study provides valuable insights for the County Government of Samburu, policymakers, local communities, tourism operators, wildlife and conservation organizations, tourists, researchers and NGOs. The County Government will benefit from evidence-based recommendations to improve governance, policy formulation and management practices, boosting sustainable ecotourism and local revenue. Policymakers will gain a deeper understanding of governance and its impacts on ecotourism, enabling the creation of equitable policies. Local communities will benefit from increased inclusion, fairer compensation and capacity-building opportunities. Tourism operators and accommodation providers will be better positioned to enhance the visitor experience, while conservation organizations can improve their strategies through strengthened governance. Tourists will enjoy better infrastructure, security and diverse activities. Researchers will have a valuable case study for future studies and NGOs can use the findings to advocate for policy changes and support community development.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The research employed single holistic case study design, utilizing selected governance principles; accountability, transparency, security, regulations and equity adapted from the PROFOR/FAO framework (Kishor & Kenneth, 2012; Kimengsi et al., 2022). This framework was chosen for its comprehensive yet straightforward approach to analyzing governance. The study was conducted over a one-month period, from April 23rd to May 26th, in Samburu National Reserve. It targeted a diverse population, including the county-level tourism officer, reserve wardens and rangers, top managers of accommodation facilities, local community members from four adjacent communities, and tourists visiting the reserve.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study encountered several limitations, notably the small sample size, which affected the generalizability of the findings beyond the study site. Although the sample

size was suitable for the chosen methodology and design, it limited the ability to extend the results broadly. This limitation impacts the overall trustworthiness of the results. However, the use of data triangulation from multiple sources enhanced the validity of research. To mitigate researcher bias during data collection and analysis, interviewees reviewed the reports via phone calls, reducing subjectivity. Additionally, the study did not meet the targeted response rate within the reserve due to some potential respondents being unavailable because of leave or duty. To address this, the study supplemented the data with insights from local residents who had a deeper understanding of current governance issues.

1.8 Assumption of the Study

It was assumed that employing a qualitative methodology and utilizing multiple data sources would provide a comprehensive, holistic and in-depth understanding of the influence of governance on ecotourism development. To support this assumption, member checking was implemented by posing follow-up questions to participants, allowing them to clarify and elaborate on their responses, as well as to provide additional information. Another assumption was that respondents would provide honest and accurate information. To foster this, the researcher ensured quality time was spent with interviewees to build rapport, encouraging honesty and openness. Furthermore, all respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, which was reinforced by the signing of consent forms.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Accountability	The obligation and responsibility of organizations, governments, or other entities to actively engage and include local communities in ecotourism activities
Ecotourism	This is the act of travelling to an almost unperturbed natural area either for studying, appreciating and enjoying the scenery and its biodiversity, as well as any existing cultural aspects
Ecotourism Development	The intentional planning and management of tourism activities and destinations with a primary focus on promoting environmental conservation, responsible travel and the well-being of local communities.
Equity	Refers to the fair and just distribution of resources, opportunities and advantages among all stakeholders, particularly in the context of a community or organization.
Governance	All forms of arrangements that regulate, manage and guard the range of activities in a system allowing it to respond to any issues, disruptions, or circumstances from both internal and external origins.
Management	The process of planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling resources, including people, finances, materials and time, to achieve specific goals and objectives within an organization.
Protected areas	A clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.
Regulations	Refer to a set of rules, guidelines and policies established by government authorities, environmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders to manage and oversee the sustainable development and operation of ecotourism activities in natural and environmentally sensitive areas.
Security	Refers to measures and processes put in place to safeguard and protect stability, integrity and functioning of the government, its institutions, destinations, assets and people.

Transparency Refers to the open, honest, timely and accessible communication of relevant data, facts and insights between organizations, stakeholders and the public.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of the Study

Governance involves the processes, structures and principles that guide decision-making, policy implementation and management within organizations, institutions, or societies, ensuring efficiency, transparency and accountability (Gao & Yu, 2020). It plays a key role in ecotourism by balancing economic, social and environmental aspects through effective coordination among stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities and private enterprises (Akhtar S, 2023). International bodies like the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) promote sustainable ecotourism and have established agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to protect ecosystems while fostering responsible tourism (UNWTO, 2023). Certification programs by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), Travelife and EarthCheck further enhance governance by setting standards for sustainable practices, prioritizing environmental conservation and community engagement.

Additionally, governance impacts ecotourism development through financing and aid mechanisms. International funding bodies, NGOs and development banks often require adherence to governance standards such as transparency, community involvement and environmental responsibility as prerequisites for financial support (Suriyankietkaew et al., 2022). Effective governance structures help secure necessary funding, ensuring that ecotourism initiatives are ethical, sustainable and beneficial to both the environment and local communities (Mulyani et al., 2021). This underscores the importance of governance in shaping the responsible and sustainable growth of ecotourism, enabling it to coexist harmoniously with natural ecosystems and support local livelihoods (Zoysa, 2022).

Costa Rica is a global leader in ecotourism governance, known for its extensive network of national parks and protected areas, which cover over a quarter of the country and are carefully managed to protect its rich biodiversity (Blanco-Cerradelo et al., 2022). The eco-certification programs, like the Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST), encourage sustainable practices among tourism businesses, minimizing environmental

impact (Hunt & Harbor, 2019). A critical factor in success of Costa Rica is its active involvement of local communities in ecotourism, which provides economic benefits and motivates conservation efforts (Kalen, 2020). The strong environmental policies, including reforestation, carbon neutrality goals and sustainable waste management, by the government further support responsible tourism (Hunt & Harbor, 2019). Costa Rica also emphasizes education and awareness for both tourists and locals, promoting a culture of environmental responsibility (Kalen, 2020). This comprehensive approach not only attracts eco-conscious travelers but also sets a global standard for balancing economic development with environmental conservation (Hunt & Harbor, 2019).

Africa plays a significant role in ecotourism development, leveraging its natural beauty and biodiversity for economic growth and conservation (Bukola Omotomilola Adetola, 2023). Effective governance is crucial in this context, as it involves policy frameworks that balance tourism development with wildlife protection (Snyman & Bricker, 2019). Community-based initiatives are also vital, empowering local populations and promoting sustainable ecotourism with equitable benefit-sharing (Olale, 2020). However, challenges such as corruption, inadequate infrastructure and limited funding can impede progress. Addressing these obstacles requires coordinated efforts from governments, international organizations and local communities to foster ecotourism growth while preserving natural heritage (Francolini et al., 2023;).

Governance has been pivotal in fostering sustainable ecotourism across Africa, which holds significant potential for the continent (Pasape et al., 2017). Several African countries have developed policies and strategies to harness economic and conservation benefits of ecotourism (Forje et al., 2022). South Africa exemplifies effective governance in ecotourism, particularly in the management of national parks like Kruger National Park. The South African government has implemented stringent regulations and developed robust infrastructure, enhancing visitor experiences while protecting biodiversity (Rytkönen & Hotakainen, 2020). Nonetheless, challenges persist, including poaching, human-wildlife conflicts and managing community expectations, highlighting the ongoing need for adaptive governance approaches (Mabibibi et al., 2021).

Conversely, Rwanda offers a unique governance approach to ecotourism, particularly exemplified in Volcanoes National Park. A study by Rwanda Development Board (2022) asserts that this strategy has contributed to the growth of the sector and played a pivotal role in protecting critically endangered mountain gorillas. By implementing strict visitor regulations, Rwanda has ensured that the number of tourists remains in check, preventing undue stress on the gorillas' habitat (RDB, 2022). The revenue generated from ecotourism in this region is thoughtfully directed towards gorilla conservation and improving local communities' livelihoods (Sabuhoro, et al., 2021). RDB (2022) concludes that this comprehensive approach underscores the commitment of the country to balancing the economic gains of ecotourism with the preservation of its natural heritage and the welfare of its people. Despite the on-going efforts to enhance ecotourism, there are challenges such as poaching, human-wildlife conflicts, habitat loss and under developed infrastructure whose cause of persistence is yet to be documented (Munanura et.al., 2013)

The Kenyan government has implemented regulations to promote sustainable ecotourism in protected areas like Samburu National Reserve, positively impacting conservation and local communities' well-being (Juma & Khademi-Vidra, 2019). By imposing visitor limits, the government prevents overcrowding, reduces environmental footprints and preserves the natural wilderness, providing an authentic ecotourism experience where wildlife can be observed in their natural habitats without harm. The involvement of local communities in managing lodges and tour services highlights the commitment of the government to community engagement, leading to increased income and improved livelihoods for residents (Juma & Khademi-Vidra, 2019). However, challenges persist, including the need for better strategies to mitigate conflicts and enhance the security of wildlife, employees and tourists within the reserve (Ipara et al., 2017).

2.2 Influence of Accountability on Ecotourism Development

Accountability in ecotourism development plays a critical role in ensuring that all stakeholders, including local communities, are actively involved in decision-making processes and benefit equitably from tourism activities (Laba et al., 2021). In the context of ecotourism, accountability refers to the obligation of tourism developers,

managers and governments to be answerable to local communities, ensuring transparency, responsibility and inclusive participation (Chan et al., 2021). Local communities play a pivotal role in the success of ecotourism projects and their involvement fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, which is crucial for the sustainability of ecotourism initiatives by ensuring that the voices and concerns of local stakeholders are heard and addressed (Khaledi Koure et al., 2023).

Community involvement is widely recognized as essential to the success of ecotourism globally. This involvement can be enhanced through robust standards, certifications and guidelines for sustainable tourism (UNEP, 2017). While some destinations have developed effective accountability mechanisms that support local communities in managing resources, many regions, including parts of Africa, face challenges in implementing such frameworks due to insufficient legal backing and the need for capacity-building in local communities (Rastegar, 2010). For instance, local communities often face significant barriers, such as limited skills, lack of resources, and power imbalances with government agencies and private investors, which can lead to inequitable benefits and undermine sustainability (Khaledi Koure et al., 2023). Overcoming these challenges requires strong legal frameworks, capacity-building programs and equitable partnerships that empower local stakeholders in the decision-making and benefit-sharing processes (Chan et al., 2021).

In Costa Rica, accountability in ecotourism is strengthened by legal frameworks that ensure community involvement in conservation and tourism activities. The Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve exemplifies this approach through legal recognition of community rights, community-based tourism enterprises and development associations that integrate local residents into governance and decision-making (Bien, 2010). These measures have led to significant socio-economic benefits, including increased local employment and revenue from community-operated lodges and tours, while also preserving traditional practices that enhance visitors' appreciation of local heritage (Khaledi Koure et al., 2023). However, challenges such as conflicts over resource management and uneven benefit distribution still persist, highlighting the need for ongoing dialogue and adjustment to maintain both community welfare and environmental sustainability (Newcomer, Camacho Céspedes, & Stallcup, 2022).

In South Africa, accountability in ecotourism is effectively demonstrated through the community-based management of the Addo Elephant National Park. Akinyemi and Mushunje (2020) illustrate that this approach involves mechanisms such as community forums and partnerships, where local communities, including those from nearby rural areas, participate directly or through representatives in managing tourism and conservation efforts. This model has led to significant socio-economic benefits, including increased local employment opportunities and revenue from community-operated lodges and tourism ventures. It has also facilitated the preservation of cultural practices and enhanced local heritage, while contributing to effective wildlife and habitat conservation within the park (Fezeka & Stella, 2020). However, challenges such as occasional conflicts over land use and the equitable distribution of benefits underscore the need for ongoing dialogue and adaptation to sustain the positive impacts on both community welfare and environmental conservation (Giddy & Rogerson, 2023).

In Namibia, the communal conservancy model, exemplified by the Torra Conservancy in the Kunene Region, demonstrates accountability in ecotourism by involving local Himba and Herero communities in managing and benefiting from wildlife conservation and tourism activities (Snyman, 2012). Legal frameworks such as the Namibia Communal Land Reform Act grant these communities rights over land and natural resources, which supports sustainable ecotourism management (Kavita & Saarinen, 2016). This approach has yielded significant socio-economic benefits, including increased local employment and revenue from community-run lodges and eco-tourism ventures, while also preserving traditional practices and enhancing cultural heritage. Additionally, it has strengthened conservation efforts through effective local management and monitoring (Wenborn et al., 2022). However, challenges such as resource conflicts and uneven benefit distribution persist, highlighting the need for ongoing efforts to ensure the sustainability of these positive outcomes for both communities and the environment (Kavita & Saarinen, 2016).

In Kenya, accountability in ecotourism is demonstrated through community involvement in the Maasai Mara National Reserve, where local Maasai communities participate actively in wildlife conservation and tourism activities through community

conservancies (Nampushi & Nankaya, 2020). Legal frameworks, such as the Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association (MMWCA), ensure that local communities are involved in decision-making processes and benefit directly from tourism (Chakrabarti, 2021). This approach has generated significant socio-economic benefits, such as increased local employment and revenue from community-owned lodges and guided tours, while preserving Maasai cultural heritage (Ogutu et al., 2016; Wishitemi et al., 2015). However, challenges such as conflicts over resource use and the equitable distribution of benefits remain, underscoring the need for ongoing efforts to ensure the sustainability of these positive impacts (Wishitemi et al., 2015). This highlights the need for further research on how accountability mechanisms in ecotourism, such as those implemented in Maasai Mara, can be improved and adapted to the context of Samburu.

In Samburu National Reserve (SNR), accountability is demonstrated through community engagement mechanisms such as conservancies and partnerships that involve local Samburu communities in decision-making and management (Mkutu & Mdee, 2020). However, there is limited research on the impacts of these mechanisms, highlighting a significant gap in the literature (Heisel et al., 2021). Despite these efforts, challenges like human-wildlife conflicts and uneven benefit distribution continue to threaten the sustainability of ecotourism in the region (Kieti, Jones, & Wishitemi, 2008). Further research is needed to explore how accountability affects ecotourism development and to address governance challenges, ensuring the long-term success of community-based ecotourism in Samburu.

2.3 Influence of Transparency on Ecotourism Development

Transparency refers to the openness, accountability and accessibility of information shared among all stakeholders involved in ecotourism (Wondirad et al., 2020). In the context of protected areas, transparency encompasses clear communication about conservation goals, financial matters, decision-making processes and the impacts of tourism activities (Leung et al., 2018). Globally, there is a growing emphasis on incorporating technology and innovative approaches to enhance transparency in ecotourism (Borutska et al., 2024). Digital platforms, social media and real-time data sharing are increasingly being used to provide stakeholders with up-to-date information

and engage them more effectively (Chakraborty, 2024). Additionally, many successful ecotourism projects are adopting participatory governance models that involve stakeholders in decision-making processes to ensure transparency (Wondirad et al., 2020).

Studies have shown that transparency is essential for fostering stakeholder trust and engagement, promoting active participation and ensuring that ecotourism initiatives are both environmentally sustainable and socially equitable (Khaledi Koure et al., 2023). Moreover, clear and honest information about offerings within a destination, policies and potential risks positively impacts tourists' travel intentions, enhances their overall experience and builds trust and credibility (Zhang et al., 2019; Wang & Yan, 2022). Additionally, transparency is vital for the success and sustainability of ecotourism facilities in protected areas as it builds trust, manages guest expectations, increases facility visibility, encourages responsible behavior and improves facilities through guest feedback (Gaurav, 2023).

However, some research suggests that while transparency in information sharing is generally beneficial for ecotourism development, it can also lead to negative impacts. These include overwhelming guests, complicating the decision-making process and deterring bookings (Spenceley & Snyman, 2017), increased scrutiny from both the public and regulatory bodies, negative publicity, visitor misinterpretation and privacy concerns (Fernández Génova et al., 2020). Additionally, transparency can result in the overexposure of sensitive natural areas, cultural sensitivity issues, security risks, management challenges and economic and social disruptions (Spenceley & Rylance, 2021).

Despite its importance, recent studies have shown that achieving transparency in ecotourism development is not without challenges. One significant barrier is the asymmetry of power and information among stakeholders, where certain groups may have more access to information and influence over decision-making than others (Saarinen, 2016). Additionally, there may be cultural or political factors that limit the willingness of authorities to share information openly (Mulyani et al., 2021), as well as a lack of infrastructure and technology (Pasape et al., 2017). These challenges have led

to difficulties in ensuring inclusive participation and have fostered mistrust and conflict, particularly in areas where communities feel excluded from the benefits of ecotourism (Mbaiwa, 2011).

Transparency significantly impacts ecotourism development in Asia by promoting ethical practices, enhancing trust, improving environmental management, empowering communities and supporting financial accountability, which helps attract funding and investment (Umachandran & Said, 2022). However, excessive transparency can have negative effects, such as increased tourist pressure, environmental degradation and conflicts between conservation and community interests, as seen in Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park, Vietnam (Tang, 2018). These outcomes highlight the importance of a balanced approach to transparency to ensure sustainability without compromising ecosystems or community welfare (Fabro, 2020).

Research conducted by Risfandini et al. (2023) on sustainable tourism development in Edelweiss Park in Wonokitri Village, Indonesia, found that empowering the local community through transparent information sharing significantly enhanced the quality of tourist attractions and increased visitor satisfaction. This approach fostered a sense of ownership among the community members, which not only improved the management of the attractions but also contributed to the long-term sustainability of tourism in the area. Similarly, research on the impacts of ecotourism on local communities and their environment in Ghalegaun and Golaghat, Nepal, conducted by KC et al. (2021), indicated that while ecotourism had positive effects such as improving local infrastructure and culture, the lack of clear and consistent communication channels led to poor coordination among stakeholders. This resulted in ineffective conservation efforts and an unequal distribution of economic benefits, highlighting the critical role of transparency in successful ecotourism initiatives.

Chandran and Bhattacharya (2023) conducted a study in Munnar that examined tourists' awareness and attitudes towards ecotourism. They found that transparent communication about environmental conservation and sustainable practices significantly influenced tourists' satisfaction. Tourists valued clear information about the ecological significance of the area and the efforts made to preserve it. However,

research also highlighted that transparency about environmental and infrastructural limitations in Munnar sometimes led to dissatisfaction. Tourists who were informed about the limited availability of certain services or the necessity for strict environmental regulations often felt inconvenienced, which negatively impacted their overall satisfaction. A study by Wang et al. (2023) also confirmed that transparent communication about conservation efforts and the benefits of ecotourism has been an effective strategy for the development of ecotourism in Lower Kinabatangan, Sabah, Malaysia, leading to higher community engagement and tourist satisfaction.

Cameroon, with its rich biodiversity and cultural heritage, is emerging as a key ecotourism destination in Central Africa (Forje & Tchamba, 2022). Transparency in information sharing has facilitated stakeholder collaboration and informed decisions for natural resource preservation (Ndenecho, 2011). However, transparency challenges remain, especially in financial matters like tourism revenue distribution (Harilal & Tichaawa, 2024). Awung and Marchant (2016) found that while transparent communication about park facilities in Mount Cameroon National Park improved tourist satisfaction and community involvement, limited transparency in economic benefit distribution caused conflicts and dissatisfaction and lack of transparent follow-up fostered ongoing tensions, hindering sustainable ecotourism development.

Recent studies in East African protected areas highlight that a lack of transparency in resource allocation and decision-making is a significant challenge (Pasape et al., 2017; Wei et al., 2020). However, limited research has explored how this lack of transparency affects conservation efforts, tourist satisfaction, and the socio-economic well-being of local communities (Stephenson et al., 2021). Addressing these impacts is crucial for developing strategies that promote transparency and support sustainable ecotourism (Schreckenberget al., 2016; Stephenson et al., 2021). In Kenya, transparency is essential for fostering stakeholder trust, community engagement, and sustainable practices. Clear communication about the distribution of tourism revenue has strengthened community support for conservation, as residents benefit from improved infrastructure, education, and healthcare (Atieno & Njoroge, 2018). Additionally, transparency regarding conservation goals, environmental impacts, and tourist

expectations promotes responsible tourism and enhances visitor satisfaction (Manyara & Jones, 2007).

The Revised National Tourism Policy of 2020 highlights that limited information sharing, particularly about revenue distribution in government-managed ecotourism destinations like Amboseli National Park and community-based projects, has resulted in negative perceptions among tourists, mistrust and disengagement from local communities. Transparent communication about the distribution of economic benefits is crucial for fostering community trust and support. For example, community-owned conservancies in the Maasai Mara have implemented transparent revenue-sharing models that directly benefit local communities, increasing engagement and support for conservation efforts (Muriithi & Ileri, 2024). Additionally, transparency in tourism operations encourages sustainable practices, as seen in the Eco-Rating Certification Scheme, which assesses facilities based on conservation, community involvement and resource efficiency, promoting best practices and enhancing sustainability (Ikwaye, 2019).

Samburu National Reserve faces significant challenges in ecotourism development due to a lack of transparency, particularly in revenue allocation and decision-making, which has led to inconsistent stakeholder inclusion, security concerns, and ineffective policy enforcement (Mbaria & Ogada, 2016; Samburu National Reserve Revitalization Task Force Report, 2023). This lack of transparency hinders community participation and conservation efforts. Research from other regions shows that clear communication about revenue distribution builds trust, promotes sustainable practices and enhances community engagement (Atieno & Njoroge, 2018; Muriithi & Ileri, 2024). Therefore, investigating the role of transparency in ecotourism development in Samburu is crucial for addressing governance issues and fostering an equitable and sustainable tourism framework.

2.4 Influence of Security on Ecotourism Development

Protected areas (PAs) are essential for biodiversity conservation and ecotourism, with their effectiveness in attracting tourists closely linked to security measures (Chape et al., 2008). Common strategies include deploying rangers, using surveillance technologies, and involving local communities. Research shows that strong security strategies enhance the appeal of PAs by ensuring safety and wildlife preservation, key factors for ecotourism (Chape et al., 2008). Anti-poaching initiatives using technologies like drones and camera traps have been successful in reducing illegal activities and protecting wildlife, creating a safer environment for tourists (Belecky & Gray, 2020). However, challenges such as high costs and potential human-wildlife conflicts remain (Coad et al., 2019).

Levels of awareness within a protected area on the security issues are crucial for the success of conservation and ecotourism efforts, as they ensure the safety of locals, tourists, and wildlife. Effective communication about security measures to all stakeholders; tourists, local communities, and conservationists is essential for ensuring compliance and support (Pulido-Chalid et al., 2023). However, research indicates that awareness levels vary significantly across different regions and groups. For example, while tourists may be familiar with basic security measures like ranger presence and activity restrictions, their understanding of more complex strategies, such as anti-poaching technologies and community-based initiatives, is often limited (Moreto, 2016). This gap in awareness can lead to unintentional breaches of regulations and diminished support for conservation efforts.

Furthermore, efforts to increase awareness have included educational programs, community meetings, and media campaigns aimed at informing both locals and visitors about the importance of security in protected areas and their role in supporting these initiatives (Duffy, 2014). According to Western et al. (2015), community-based conservation programs, such as conservancies, have successfully educated locals about security strategies, fostering a high level of awareness and a strong sense of ownership. This has been vital for the success of conservation and ecotourism programs. Nonetheless, challenges remain, particularly in regions with less developed ecotourism

infrastructure and among tourists. Continued efforts are needed to enhance awareness and engagement among all stakeholders (Duffy, 2014).

In Yosemite National Park, Machlis and Field (2000) found that involving local communities in monitoring and protecting natural resources significantly enhances the effectiveness of security strategies. The study emphasized successful partnerships between the park, local residents, and NGOs, which have improved resource protection and reduced illegal activities such as poaching and unauthorized access to restricted areas. This community involvement not only bolstered security but also strengthened relations between the park and local populations, contributing to more sustainable ecotourism practices (Ntuli et al., 2019). Nevertheless, challenges persist, including inadequate funding, corruption, and the potential militarization of conservation efforts, which can sometimes alienate local communities (Duffy, 2014).

A study in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda by Muylaert et al. (2021) highlights the pivotal role of ecotourism in driving conservation efforts, particularly in protecting the endangered mountain gorilla population. Security measures in the park are essential for safeguarding these primates by preventing diseases and minimizing human disturbance through strict monitoring of tourist interactions. Similarly, in Kenya, security strategies such as ranger patrols, community-based conservation, and the use of technologies like GPS tracking and surveillance cameras have proven effective. These measures have significantly reduced wildlife poaching and supported the growth of ecotourism, especially in the Maasai Mara and Samburu National Reserve (de Jong & Butt, 2023; Okello et al., 2014).

Despite these successes, challenges persist in Kenya's protected areas. Western et al. (2015) highlight that while community involvement through conservancies has been instrumental in managing and protecting wildlife, issues such as human-wildlife conflict and insufficient funding for security measures continue to pose risks to the long-term sustainability of ecotourism. Furthermore, Young and Korir (2011) report that Samburu National Reserve suffers from external pressures, including armed conflicts outside the reserve, which lead to environmental degradation and hinder the effectiveness of conservation and security management efforts.

Overall, effective security measures, including anti-poaching initiatives, are crucial for maintaining healthy wildlife populations, which are a significant draw for tourists. A well-secured ecosystem increases the likelihood that visitors will encounter rare and endangered species in their natural environment (Okello et al., 2014). Consequently, tourists are more inclined to visit and spend extended periods in areas where they feel safe, leading to higher revenue for both protected areas and local communities (Spenceley, 2012). Additionally, these security strategies help safeguard habitats from illegal activities such as logging, mining, and encroachment. By preserving the ecosystem's integrity, these measures ensure that wildlife has access to essential resources for their survival (Coad et al., 2019). Furthermore, such initiatives create job opportunities in conservation-related fields, including ranger and guide positions. For instance, in Kenya, conservancies like the Maasai Mara have enhanced the livelihoods of local Maasai communities by generating income through ecotourism (Western et al., 2015).

Insufficient enforcement and lack of stringent measures can negatively impact wildlife and local communities, sometimes leading to retaliatory killings by affected residents (Dickman, 2010). For instance, without enough rangers to manage wildlife, tourists may face increased risks of dangerous encounters (Smith, 2020). Rangers play a crucial role in guiding tourists, ensuring safety from potentially hazardous wildlife, and enforcing park regulations (Smith, 2020). A shortage of rangers can lead to risky tourist behavior, such as straying from paths or feeding animals, resulting in accidents (Miller, 2021). Inconsistent compensation schemes can also frustrate local communities, reducing cooperation and potentially worsening human-wildlife conflicts, including retaliatory killings (Milner-Gulland & Singh, 2010). Effective compensation schemes are essential to managing conflicts and securing community support for conservation efforts (Dickman, 2010).

In Samburu National Reserve, security measures such as ranger patrols, community-based conservation, and the use of surveillance technologies have proven effective in reducing poaching and supporting ecotourism growth (de Jong & Butt, 2023; Okello et al., 2014). However, challenges such as human-wildlife conflict, limited funding, and external pressures, including armed conflicts outside the reserve, continue to pose

significant barriers (Western et al., 2015; Young & Korir, 2011). Examining the influence of security on ecotourism development is crucial to understanding how these strategies can preserve wildlife, enhance visitor experiences and ensure the long-term sustainability of both the reserve and local communities (Spenceley, 2012; Coad et al., 2019).

2.5 Influence of Regulations on Ecotourism Development

Regulations in ecotourism development encompass rules and guidelines established by authorities and stakeholders to ensure the sustainable operation of tourism activities in sensitive natural areas (Wijayanto et al., 2022). These regulations are essential for balancing the promotion of tourism with the protection of the environment, biodiversity and local communities (Eagles et al., 2002). Effective management of waste, energy use and visitor access plays a critical role in this context. Proper waste management and the adoption of renewable energy practices enhance environmental sustainability and appeal to eco-conscious tourists, while visitor regulations help safeguard ecosystems and wildlife, resulting in greater visitor satisfaction and support for conservation efforts (Buckley, 2012). However, these regulations can also present challenges, such as high implementation costs and potential conflicts with community needs, underscoring the importance of achieving a balance that ensures both environmental protection and local community benefits (Kumar et al., 2023).

A study by Kenchington (1991) on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in Australia highlights the measures to address energy, waste management and visitor impacts in the park. The park utilizes renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Waste management is strictly regulated to prevent marine pollution, with a strong emphasis on recycling. Visitor access is controlled through restricted areas, guided tours and regulated boat traffic to minimize environmental damage, which enhances visitor satisfaction by preserving the biodiversity and supporting eco-friendly tourism (Ritchie et al., 2022). However, challenges include the high cost of renewable energy technologies, ongoing threats from climate change, inconsistent enforcement and substantial financial requirements, which pose significant difficulties in maintaining these initiatives (Azarmi et al., 2019).

Torres del Paine National Park in Chile has implemented comprehensive regulations for energy, waste and visitor management to support ecotourism development (Ruiz et al., 2019). The park utilizes renewable energy sources, such as hydroelectric power and solar panels, to reduce environmental impacts. Waste management strategies include recycling programs and waste reduction initiatives to maintain the cleanliness of the park. Visitor regulations, including controlled entry and designated trails, aim to minimize human impact on natural habitats (Ruiz et al., 2019). These measures have enhanced visitor satisfaction by preserving the natural beauty of the park and ensuring a high-quality experience and have also boosted tourism revenue for local communities (Fernández Génova et al., 2020). However, challenges remain in managing high visitor numbers, which can place strain on the ecosystems of the park and infrastructure if not effectively regulated (Pegler et al., 2024).

Tarimo et al. (2017) found that implementation of solar panels and wind turbines in Serengeti National Park significantly reduced reliance on diesel generators, thereby minimizing pollution and supporting sustainability goals of the park. Their study highlighted that waste management strategies, including recycling and proper disposal systems, were effective in maintaining pristine environment of the park. Additionally, visitor regulations, such as designated routes and controlled entry points, helped limit environmental disturbance and preserve natural beauty of the park. The study concluded that while these measures enhanced visitor satisfaction and improved park facilities, managing high visitor numbers continued to pose challenges, potentially leading to resource strain and environmental stress if not properly addressed.

Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, known for its mountain gorilla population, emphasizes sustainable energy and waste management practices. The park has introduced energy-efficient lighting and solar power for ranger stations and eco-lodges to reduce environmental impacts (Costa et al., 2023). Waste management systems include composting and recycling programs to handle organic and non-organic waste. Visitor regulations, such as limiting the number of daily gorilla treks and using licensed guides, are designed to protect wildlife and reduce habitat degradation (Costa et al., 2023). These regulations have positively impacted visitor satisfaction by ensuring a high-quality experience while preserving ecological integrity of the park. The benefits

extend to local communities through improved infrastructure and employment opportunities, although challenges remain in managing the impact of increased tourism (Mugerwa, 2018).

Amboseli National Park has adopted several measures for energy, waste and visitor management to enhance its ecotourism development. Solar energy is used extensively in park facilities, reducing the dependence on diesel generators and lowering carbon emissions (WWF, 2018). Waste management includes recycling and composting to minimize pollution and maintain environmental quality (WWF, 2018). Visitor regulations involve controlled access to sensitive areas and the use of designated routes to protect wildlife and habitats (Mwakima, 2013). These regulations have led to higher visitor satisfaction by preserving the pristine environment of the park and improving the quality of facilities (Mwakima, 2013). Local communities benefit from ecotourism through revenue-sharing mechanisms that fund development projects and create employment opportunities (Kipkeu, 2014). However, challenges such as ensuring equitable distribution of benefits and managing the socio-economic impacts of conservation efforts remain (Mwakima, 2013).

In Samburu National Reserve, regulations concerning energy use, waste management, and visitor access play a crucial role in shaping ecotourism development. The adoption of renewable energy sources, such as solar panels, reduces environmental impacts, while waste management practices, including recycling, help maintain the pristine condition (Bruyere, Beh, & Foster, 2011). Visitor regulations, such as controlled access and designated viewing areas, aim to protect wildlife and enhance the visitor experience (Bruyere, Beh, & Foster, 2011). However, challenges persist, including the high costs of implementing renewable energy, strain on resources from stringent waste management practices and potential conflicts arising from limited enforcement of visitor regulations (Bruyere, Beh, & Foster, 2011). Understanding how these regulations influence ecotourism is essential for evaluating their impact on visitor satisfaction, facility quality, environmental conservation, and community benefits, as they are vital for ensuring sustainable tourism in the reserve.

2.6 Influence of Equity on Ecotourism Development

Equity in protected areas is essential for successful conservation efforts, ensuring that all stakeholders, including local communities, indigenous groups and other marginalized populations, have fair access to participation and benefits (Franks, Booker, & Roe, 2020). In ecotourism development, equity plays a critical role in the fair distribution of tourism benefits, helping to prevent the exclusion of marginalized communities (Schreckenber, Martin, & Lang, 2016). As highlighted by Sica et al. (2020), equity also encompasses making ecotourism experiences accessible to a diverse range of people by providing inclusive infrastructure, educational programs and promoting cultural sensitivity. Moreover, equity in employment within the tourism sector is vital, as it fosters workforce diversity and ensures equal opportunities for local communities to participate and benefit from ecotourism (Sica et al., 2020).

Equity in ecotourism is crucial for sustainable tourism development, as evidenced by the approach taken in Costa Rica, where policies have been implemented to ensure that local communities receive a fair share of ecotourism benefits (Jones & Spadafora, 2016). This is exemplified by Corcovado National Park, where management engages local communities through community-based ecotourism projects, such as guided tours and community-run lodges, facilitated by Osa Conservation (Hunt, Durham, Driscoll, & Honey, 2015). These initiatives provide economic benefits and support local development through revenue-sharing mechanisms that fund essential services like education and healthcare (Hunt et al., 2015). Additionally, training programs enhance local skills in guiding and hospitality, integrating communities into the ecotourism industry (Hunt et al., 2015). This collaboration has strengthened conservation efforts, diversified local economies and improved tourist experiences. However, challenges remain in balancing conservation costs with local needs and ensuring equitable benefit distribution, highlighting the need for effective management and governance (Horton, 2018).

The Galápagos Islands, a UNESCO World Heritage site and key ecotourism destination, highlight the challenges of benefit and burden sharing in protected areas. While ecotourism brings economic benefits, such as employment in tourism and conservation sectors, much of the revenue is captured by foreign-owned companies,

limiting financial gains for local communities. Additionally, some residents feel excluded from decision-making, creating tensions between economic development and environmental protection. Tourism also impacts the fragile ecosystem, leading to pollution and habitat disruption. These issues emphasize the need for more inclusive governance and fairer benefit-sharing mechanisms to support local communities and sustain ecotourism (Schep et al., 2014; Benitez-Capistros et al., 2014; Burbano, 2021).

Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda exemplifies benefit and burden sharing in ecotourism through initiatives led by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust (BMCT). Revenue from gorilla tracking permits is partially directed to local community projects, such as education, healthcare and infrastructure, to foster community support for conservation. This approach has improved local acceptance of conservation efforts by providing direct economic benefits from tourism (Ahebwa, van der Duim, & Sandbrook, 2012). However, challenges remain, including the equitable distribution of benefits and managing human-wildlife conflicts, which can affect the perceived fairness and effectiveness of these initiatives (Tumusiime & Sjaastad, 2014).

Selous Game Reserve, one of the largest protected areas in Africa, employs a benefit-sharing model involving local communities through the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor. This initiative aims to alleviate the impacts of wildlife conservation on adjacent communities by distributing tourism revenue and offering direct benefits. According to Jaeger, Debonnet and Guma (2014), a portion of tourism revenue is allocated to community development projects, such as building schools and water supply systems. These projects are implemented in collaboration with the Wildlife Division of Tanzania, which fosters positive relationships between the reserve and local residents by directly involving them in conservation efforts. Kalokola, Chegere and Mabhuye (2024) highlight that while this benefit-sharing model has improved local support for conservation, challenges persist in managing community expectations and addressing the burdens associated with wildlife-related damage to property and crops.

The Maasai Mara National Reserve, famed for its abundant wildlife and the annual wildebeest migration, implements benefit and burden-sharing initiatives involving local

communities, supported by the Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association (MMWCA) and other stakeholders. Shah, Mukhovi and Olago (2019) note that revenue from tourism in the Maasai Mara is shared with local communities through initiatives such as the Maasai Mara Community Conservancies, which allocate a portion of the revenue from the reserve to fund community projects, including schools, healthcare and infrastructure. This approach has been effective in enhancing community support for conservation efforts by demonstrating tangible benefits from tourism revenue (Shah et al., 2019). However, challenges remain, particularly with the equitable distribution of benefits and managing wildlife-related damage to property and crops, as disparities in how different community segments perceive and access these benefits can affect community support for conservation initiatives (Oduor, 2020).

Amboseli National Park, renowned for its large elephant herds, implements benefit-sharing mechanisms through the Amboseli Trust for Elephants and various community projects. According to Kipkeu (2014), tourism revenue is utilized to support local development initiatives, including schools, health facilities and water supply systems. The Amboseli Trust for Elephants plays a pivotal role in distributing benefits and engaging local communities in conservation activities (Kipkeu, 2014). This approach has bolstered local support for conservation, as communities benefit from enhanced infrastructure and services (Njuguna, 2017). However, challenges persist in ensuring equitable distribution of benefits across all community members and effectively managing the burden of wildlife-related conflicts, as noted by Ekisa and Okello (2016). These issues underscore the need for more inclusive and balanced benefit-sharing mechanisms that address both the advantages and drawbacks of living in proximity to wildlife.

Equity in benefit and burden sharing is crucial for ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve, as it determines how economic benefits and conservation responsibilities are distributed among stakeholders, particularly local communities. Efforts to ensure fair distribution include revenue-sharing, employment opportunities and community involvement in decision-making (Samburu National Reserve, 2023). However, challenges such as uneven benefit distribution and disproportionate burdens like human-wildlife conflicts and environmental degradation can lead to dissatisfaction

among local residents and strain relationships between stakeholders. This imbalance can negatively impact ecotourism outcomes, highlighting the need for research to understand the full range of equity impacts on visitor satisfaction, facility standards, environmental conservation and community welfare. Addressing the literature gap on the positive and negative effects of equity will help optimize sustainable and inclusive ecotourism strategies in Samburu.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

Various theories have emerged to evaluate governance quality in ecotourism destinations, including the Tourism Policy and Planning Framework, the PROFOR/FAO Governance Assessment Framework and The Governance and Tourism Development Assessment Framework. The Tourism Policy and Planning Framework assesses the effectiveness of governance structures in shaping tourism development. In contrast, The Governance and Tourism Development Assessment Framework evaluates governance quality by examining stakeholder roles, decision-making processes and collaboration within the tourism sector. However, these frameworks were deemed less suitable for this study due to their inflexibility, complexity and numerous interconnected components.

This study utilized the Program on Forest (PROFOR) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) governance framework, as proposed by Kishor and Kenneth (2012). Originally developed to monitor forest governance, this framework is adaptable for assessing ecotourism governance due to its simplicity and comprehensiveness. It encompasses three core pillars: policies, legal-institutional and regulatory frameworks; planning and decision-making processes; and implementation, enforcement and compliance. The framework outlines six key principles for monitoring governance: accountability, transparency, efficiency, effectiveness, equity (or fairness) and participation.

In line with Kimengsi et al. (2022), this study adapted the PROFOR/FAO framework by emphasizing accountability, transparency, security, regulations and equity as fundamental principles affecting the three pillars of governance. Accountability is measured by the level of local community involvement in ecotourism development,

while transparency refers to the ease of accessing and sharing information, including reports on tasks and challenges. Security assesses the safety measures implemented during ecotourism activities. Efficiency is reflected in the effectiveness of regulations aimed at reducing environmental degradation and equity focuses on the fair distribution of benefits and burdens among stakeholders.

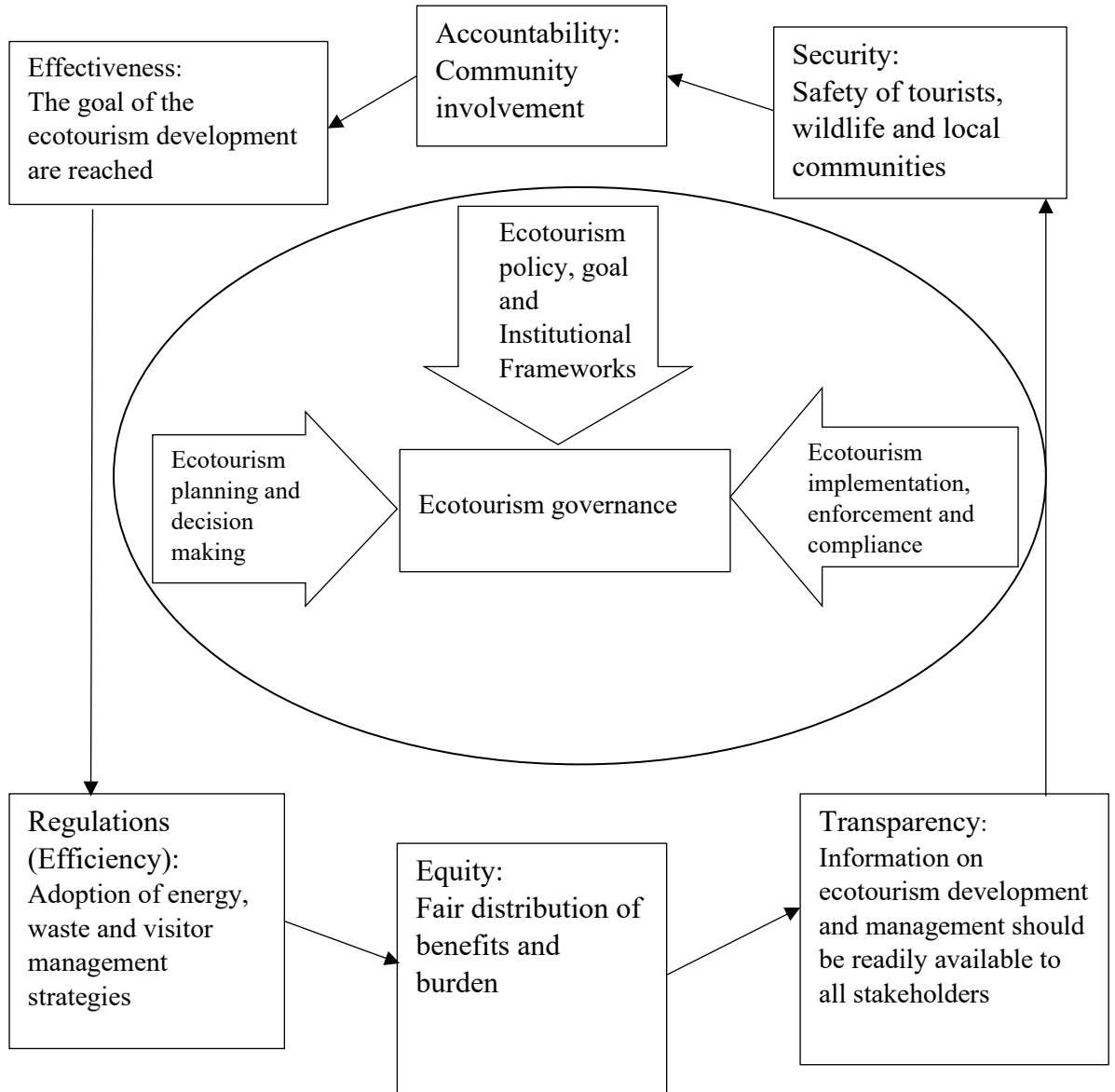


Figure 1: Program on Forests analytical framework for ecotourism governance.

(Modified from Kimengsi and Bhusal, 2022).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Study Area Characteristics

This research was conducted within Samburu National Reserve, located in Samburu County, a prominent safari destination in East Africa. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the county had a population of 339,103 residents in 2022 (KNBS, 2022). The Samburu wildlife ecosystem also includes several conservancies and group ranches adjacent to the main reserve, such as Kalama Conservancy, Westgate Community Conservancy, Nasuulu Conservancy and Namunyak Wildlife Conservancy. The reserve, situated in Northern Kenya, lies north of the Equator and has an elevation ranging from 800 to 1,230 meters above sea level. Covering approximately 165 square kilometers, it is bordered to the south by the Ewaso Ng'iro River, which separates it from Buffalo Springs National Reserve.

Samburu is a desert and semi-desert region with a dry, warm climate. The Ewaso Nyiro River is the only permanent water source, crucial for the area's wildlife. The reserve receives an annual rainfall of 354mm, mainly in November and April, with temperatures ranging from 16 to 32°C (61 to 90°F). Samburu is known for its rare species, including the Grevy's Zebra, Somali Ostrich, Reticulated Giraffe, Gerenuk, Beisa Oryx and nearly 900 elephants. Large predators like lions, leopards and cheetahs are also major attractions, alongside over 450 bird species. The vegetation in the Samburu ecosystem is predominantly characterized by wooded grassland, with a substantial presence of perennial and annual grasses, as well as thorny acacia trees.

The reserve is bordered by four communities: Lorubae, Kiltamany, Westgate and Loruko. These communities are home to local semi-nomadic tribes, including the Samburu, Turkana, Borana and Somali. The primary economic activities in the area include tourism, nomadic pastoralism and commercial enterprises. In Kiltamany and Lorubae, tourism enterprises such as cultural villages, craft making and tour guide associations are prevalent, while in Loruko and Lpus-Leluai, livestock keeping and management are the main activities. However, these communities face challenges such as drought, inter-tribal conflicts, cattle rustling and human-wildlife conflict.

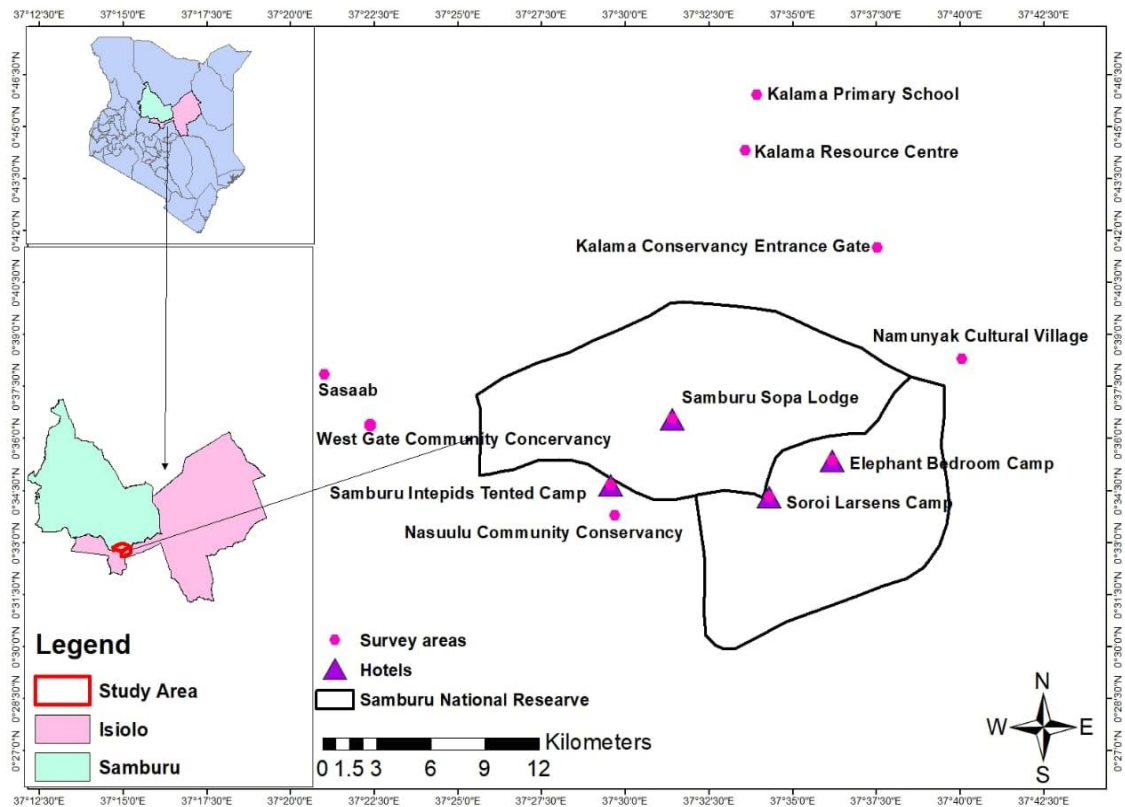


Figure 2: Detailed Map of the Study Area.

Source: Researcher (2024)

3.2 Research Design

The study utilized single holistic case study research design to explore in-depth the topic of governance at Samburu National Reserve and its impacts on ecotourism development, focusing on the lived experiences of those involved. This research design allows for the transferability of the findings.

3.3 Target Population of the Study

The targeted population included the county-level tourism officer, wardens and rangers of Samburu National Reserve, top managers of accommodation facilities within the reserve, local community members from four adjacent communities and tourists visiting the reserve. The county tourism officer was interviewed to provide insights on the by-laws mandated by the Ministry of Tourism and the measures implemented within the reserve, including accountability, transparency, regulations, security and equity and their influence on ecotourism development.

Rangers and wardens were also engaged to discuss the governance indicators being assessed and the extent of their impact on ecotourism development. Interviews with top managers of accommodation facilities and tourists focused on their experiences with the existing rules and regulations. Additionally, local residents from the four communities bordering the reserve, who are the grassroots beneficiaries of ecotourism development, provided valuable information on governance-related issues.

3.3.1 Inclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria for respondents focused on individuals involved in governance issues related to ecotourism at Samburu National Reserve. This included the county tourism officer, game wardens and rangers who had served in the reserve for at least three months and top managers of active accommodation facilities within the reserve at the time of data collection. Local community members were selected based on their active participation in at least one ongoing ecotourism activity within the reserve, such as providing services in eco-lodges, offering educational and interpretation services during game viewing and bird watching, engaging in conservation activities like tree planting and litter collection, and showcasing culture and selling souvenirs. Individuals who did not meet these criteria were excluded from the study.

3.4 Determination of Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

3.4.1 Sample Size

It has previously been recommended that qualitative studies require a minimum sample size of at least 12 to reach data saturation (Clarke & Braun, 2013; Fugard & Potts, 2014). Data saturation is the point at which new data appears to no longer contribute to the findings due to repetition of comments and views by the respondents. Therefore, there is no straight forward responses to what is an adequate sample size for qualitative but rather focus is usually on the quality and richness of data. The sample size should be determined based on information needed so that research questions can be addressed adequately (Krippendorff, 2004). In qualitative studies, it is common that data are based on one to 30 informants (Hildingh & Fridlund, 2000). In this study, 26 out of the 30 targeted respondents were interviewed to provide sufficient information regarding the governance of the reserve in relation to ecotourism development. A total response rate

of 100% was not achieved due to the absence of some employees from the reserve who were on leave and others who were on duty. This is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Target Respondents

Target group	Number of targeted respondents
Tourism officer	1
Rangers	7
Wardens	4
Top managers	2
Tourists	4
Local community members	12 (3 from @community)
Total	30

Source: Researcher (2024)

3.4.2 Sampling Procedure

The study employed convenience, purposive, and snowball sampling techniques to overcome specific challenges and ensure the inclusion of relevant participants. Convenience sampling was used to select game wardens, rangers, top managers of active accommodation facilities, and tourists, allowing for flexibility given the constraints of their availability due to factors such as annual leave for the top managers, extended field operations for wardens and rangers, or reluctance of tourists to participate. Purposive sampling targeted individuals with specialized knowledge, including the county tourism officer, assistant chiefs, and village elders, ensuring the inclusion of key informants critical to the study's objectives. To expand the pool of relevant respondents, the snowball technique was used, where an initial participant identified others, enabling the researcher to build a network of respondents actively involved in ecotourism projects. These combined sampling methods allowed for a more comprehensive and adaptable approach, ensuring the inclusion of a diverse range of stakeholders crucial to understanding the research topic.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Semi-structured interviews (Appendix II, III, IV & V) were employed for the collection of primary data due to their flexibility, allowing for deeper exploration of specific themes and responses to gather in-depth information. The interviews were scheduled at mutually agreed-upon dates and times, lasting between one and a half to two hours. Efforts were made to establish proper rapport with the interviewees both before and

after the sessions, ensuring a comfortable and open environment. During the interviews, the researcher maintained a friendly approach, listening with understanding, respect and curiosity, which facilitated a more insightful and engaging discussion. All the interview were audio- recorded and supplemented with note taking to cater for items which could not be audio-recorded.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

3.6.1 Validity

Initially, interview questions were crafted to correspond with the research questions, following the guidelines for developing interview questions in qualitative case study research proposed by Castillo Montoya (2016). These questions were then validated by the supervisors. To ensure consistency and depth, multiple sources of qualitative data were used, including interviews with respondents holding varied positions, such as high-level managers like senior wardens and lower-ranked employees like rangers. Comprehensive data collection was achieved by briefing respondents about the study, obtaining their consent (Appendix I), for audio-recording interviews and taking field notes. After conducting the interviews, member checking and communicative validation were carried out. This involved contacting interviewees by phone to gather their feedback and engaging with peers and supervisors to review and critique the findings, ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of the collected data.

3.6.2 Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the research instruments, several key measures were implemented. First, all transcripts were carefully checked for any obvious transcription errors, ensuring that the data accurately reflected the original recordings. In addition, the coding process was rigorously managed to prevent any shifts in the meaning of the codes. Each code was meticulously defined and the data was consistently compared with these definitions throughout the analysis. To further support this, detailed memos were documented, outlining the definitions and applications of each code. This approach ensured clarity and consistency in the coding process, contributing to the overall reliability of the research instruments.

3.7 Data Collection

Data for the study was obtained from primary sources, with the collection process taking place over a one-month period, from April 23rd to May 26th. The interviews were labeled using random alphabets, and numbers were assigned based on the sequence of the interviews. For tourists, a specific label was kept constant, followed by sequential alphabets, as illustrated in Table 2

Table 2: Anonymized Characteristics of Participants'

Respondent	Label
Management Officials including wardens and The County Tourism Officer	SNRO
Rangers	SNRR
Managers of accommodation facilities	MAF
Tourists	T
Local community members from Lorubae	BALC
Local community members from Kiltamany	KILC
Local community members from Loruko	LOLC
Local community members from Lpus Leluai	LELC

Source: Researcher (2024)

3.8 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis, guided by both inductive and deductive approaches, was used in the data analysis process with the support of MAXQDA software. The analysis adhered to the six-step framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) as illustrated in Table 3. The findings of the study were presented using both quantitative and qualitative visual tools including tables, graphs, verbatim quotations and word cloud.

Table 3: Six-step Framework for Data Analysis

Steps	Process Description	Execution Details
Step 1	Familiarization with data	This initial phase involved repeatedly listening to the audio recordings of all interviews, specifically three times per recording. These recordings were manually transcribed and imported into MAXQDA.
Step 2	Coding	The transcripts were then reviewed line by line on three occasions, both within and across different groups, to assess individual words and perceptions relevant to the research questions. During this stage, relevant terms were highlighted and detailed notes were taken.
Step 3	Search themes	for A second round of open coding was conducted after establishing the initial codes. During this stage, the initial codes were grouped into broader categories that formed the emerging themes. This is illustrated in Appendix I. New codes that surfaced during this process were also incorporated, ensuring that insights beyond those covered by the initial framework were captured.
Step 4	Reviewing themes	The identified themes were reviewed against the data for relevance and accuracy. Each theme was refined for internal consistency, ensuring that all data within it related to a central idea. Efforts were also made to differentiate themes clearly, avoiding overlap and representing unique aspects of the findings.
Step 5	Defining and naming	Themes were polished and named to accurately reflect their essence and align with the research objectives.
Step 6	Reporting	Identified themes were synthesized by integrating data extracts with corresponding analytical insights. The presentation of these themes was aligned with the research objectives.

Source: Researcher (2024)

3.8 Ethical Considerations

A clearance letter (Appendix VII) was issued to the researcher by Chuka University Board of Postgraduate Studies. The researcher was further granted Ethics review letter (Appendix VIII) by the Chuka University Institutional Ethics Review Committee and a research permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) (Appendix IX). The ethical form was accompanied by sample interview schedules. The researcher appropriately cited and referenced all secondary materials used to develop the study. This study neither falsified data nor plagiarized what others have done. Access to both raw and analyzed data is restricted to the relevant parties who were part of the research studies. Respect of the respondents involved was assured and also justice was done through presenting back the research findings to the county government of Samburu and the local community.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the study results thematically, based on responses from the interviews, with the presentation guided by the study objectives. The results specifically focus on the influence of accountability, transparency, security, regulations and equity policies and strategies implemented by the County Government on the development of ecotourism within Samburu National Reserve. The research aimed for a comprehensive exploration, highlighting how participants' responses aligned and reinforced one another while also identifying differences in opinions. Out of the 30 targeted respondents, 26 were interviewed, representing an 87% response rate. The respondents included 1 County Tourism Officer, 2 wardens, 5 rangers, 12 local community members adjacent to Samburu National Reserve, 2 managers of accommodation facilities and 4 tourists. The interviews were transcribed, coded and analyzed for data. In the subsequent sections, a description of the sample is provided.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study demonstrated a balanced representation, with males comprising 58% and females 42% of the sample. The majority of respondents (35%) were aged between 39-48 years, while a smaller proportion (11%) were between 49-58 years. Most respondents held university degrees: 23% had bachelor's degrees, 11% had masters' degrees and 4% held doctorates, with only one respondent (4%) being illiterate. Table 4 displays the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 4: Demographic Overview of Participants.

Demographic variable		Frequency (N=26)	Percentage
Gender	Male	15	58%
	Female	11	42%
Age	Below 28 years	6	23%
	29-38 years	8	31%
	39-48 years	9	35%
	49-58 years	3	11%
	59-68 years	0	0%
Educational Level	Doctoral	1	4%
	Master's degree	3	11%
	Bachelor's degree	6	23%
	Diploma	7	27%
	Certificate	8	31%
	None	1	4%

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3 Influence of Accountability on Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

The section presents empirical findings on accountability concerning local community engagement in ecotourism within Samburu National Reserve. Analysis of interview data uncovered five key themes: Awareness of Ecotourism Activities, Community Influence and Participation, Reserve -Conservancy Collaboration, Local Employment Dynamics and Cultural Impact of Ecotourism. These themes illustrate how local community involvement significantly affects the effectiveness and sustainability of ecotourism initiatives.

4.3.1 Awareness of Ecotourism Activities

The findings revealed that cultural interactions and wildlife viewing stand out as the primary attractions in Samburu National Reserve, with an impressive 96% of respondents expressing familiarity with these activities. Additionally, a significant portion of participants (65%) reported awareness of nature walks and walking safaris, while 61% recognized conservation initiatives and research projects. Eco-friendly accommodations were acknowledged by 58% of respondents, indicating a growing interest in sustainable lodging options. However, awareness of educational tours was notably lower, with only 46% of respondents identifying this activity. Other attractions received even less recognition: hiking was noted by 31% of participants, photography by 27%, and sundowners by 23%. Community-based conservation organizations garnered awareness from 19% of respondents, while bush meals and scenic viewing were recognized by just 15%. Outreach programs had the least recognition, with only 4% of participants aware of them. These findings are presented in Figure 3.

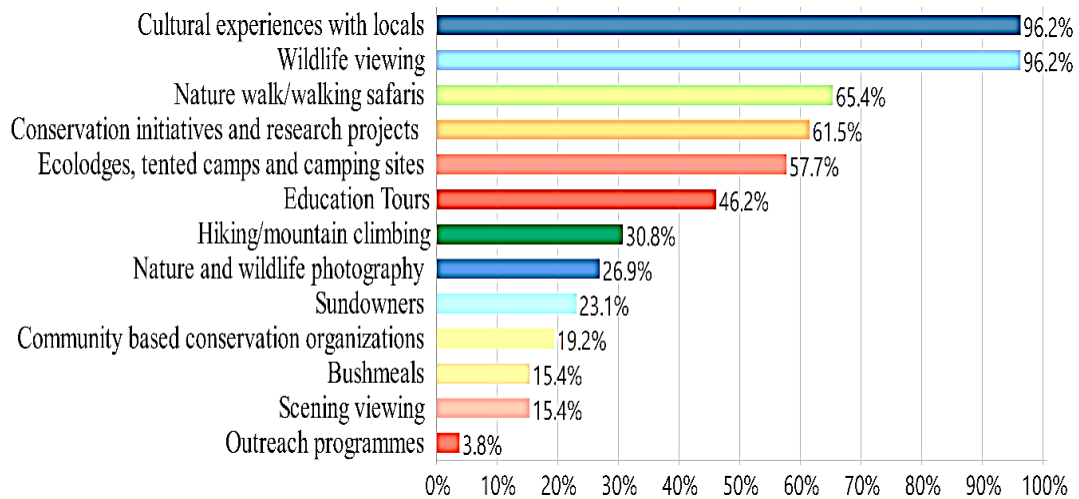


Figure 3: Levels of Awareness on Ecotourism activities within SNR

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3.2 Community Influence and Participation

The findings reveal that community involvement in decision-making within Samburu National Reserve largely occurs through community representatives, village trustees, and public barazas, as reported by 85% of respondents. While a significant number of management officials (67%) and rangers (80%) believe that local residents have meaningful control over decisions, a stark contrast emerges from the locals' perspective. A substantial 83% of community members feel that their influence is primarily restricted to community-owned enterprises such as cultural villages, craft markets, and cultural tours, which they view as economically unsustainable due to their seasonal nature. Moreover, 70% of locals indicated that, although their opinions are solicited during public meetings and via community representatives, they often feel that their contributions are not genuinely valued. As an illustration, a local community member stated:

“We only have specific decision-making powers... when it comes to cultural practices which we manage outside the reserve for instance, craft making and presentation of cultural performances. Since we have control, we are able to keep all the profits within ourselves... however, during low seasons when visits to cultural villages are minimal, we receive less or no profits. A few of us have been included on advisory boards or committees. It's a step forward, but we still feel that our influence is limited”. (Interview 2024, KILC1).

4.3.3 Reserve -Conservancy Collaboration

Most respondents (85%) noted that Samburu National Reserve collaborates with community conservancies such as Namunyak, Kalama, and Westgate. This partnership has notably enhanced wildlife protection, curtailed poaching, and created income opportunities for locals through cultural tourism. However, the challenge of balancing conservation efforts with community needs especially regarding land use for grazing persists. While 70% of local respondents recognized the benefits of this collaboration, many expressed concerns about their limited involvement in decision-making processes. They also highlighted issues related to the unequal distribution of economic benefits, with some feeling marginalized and excluded from the gains derived from these partnerships. One of the community respondents commented:

“The reserve works hand in hand with our conservancy...A lot of benefits accrue from this collaboration but to be frank only the chosen few enjoy...you find that those in power positions in the conservancies and those who relate well with them benefit more...and it’s not just about employment...even when it comes to supporting local businesses and dance groups, there are people who are always first priority...” (Interview 2024, BALC1).

4.3.4 Local Employment Dynamics

The data reveal that local communities are engaged with Samburu National Reserve through both direct and indirect employment, with 92% of respondents acknowledging their participation. All management officials and rangers (100%) recognized that this involvement has significantly enhanced the living standards of local residents. However, 83% of locals expressed that their participation mainly consists of indirect employment, which they regard as less sustainable due to its seasonal nature and the limited support provided by the reserve. Additionally, locals highlighted a shortage of direct employment opportunities, particularly in higher-paying positions within the reserve and its facilities. All accommodation facility managers (100%) reported that, while most employees in housekeeping, maintenance, and security services come from nearby communities, there is a notable lack of local experts for specialized roles. Consequently, these facilities often resort to hiring skilled professionals from outside the community. One facility manager noted that the limited availability of local experts

forces them to rely on external hires for positions that require specialized skills. The manager stated:

“70% of our employees including guards, housekeepers, artisans and grounds men are locals...we provide stable incomes which has reduced reliance on traditional livelihoods which is often unsustainable...However, most locals lack specialization, so we provide initial training... but for roles requiring expertise, we source externally...” (Interview 2024, MAF2)

4.3.5 Cultural Impact of Ecotourism

A significant majority of respondents (84%) indicated that ecotourism has played a crucial role in preserving local cultures by maintaining and showcasing traditional practices to attract tourists. Many participants (76%) noted that interactions with tourists have facilitated the sharing of cultural practices. Additionally, 69% highlighted that these interactions have created a market for local artifacts, offering artisans a valuable economic opportunity to sell their products. However, cultural revitalization was mentioned as an impact by only 38% of respondents. Conversely, concerns about cultural loss and the commercialization of culture were prominent, identified by 65% of participants. One community member articulated this issue, stating that in an effort to attract tourists, some performances and cultural elements have been altered, raising concerns about the authenticity and integrity of their traditions. The respondent pointed out:

“In an effort to attract tourists...cultural performances are being altered to suit tourist tastes, rather than preserving their original significance and authenticity. There are also instances where the elements of our culture are taken out of context and used in ways that don't respect their original meaning” (Interview 2024, BALC3)

Additionally, a tourist remarked that the cultural performances were not genuine and were primarily money oriented. The tourist stated:

“...it was clear that the villagers were performing for an audience rather than sharing genuine cultural practices...with an overemphasis on selling souvenirs rather than engaging in meaningful cultural exchange...” (Interview 2024, TA)

4.4 Influence of Transparency on Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

Findings in this section particularly focus on information dissemination about Samburu National Reserve and its impacts on various facets of ecotourism. Through the analysis, five key themes emerged: Channels of Information Sharing, Information Accessibility and Transparency, Tourist Experience and Information Clarity, Accessibility and Gaps in Information Sharing, Impact of Information Clarity on Tourist Experience, Influence of Information on Facility Performance and Understanding and Mistrust Due to Information Gaps. These themes will be examined in detail in the subsequent sections.

4.4.1 Channels of Information Sharing

The results reveal that a variety of channels, including both traditional methods and modern tools, are utilized for information sharing within Samburu National Reserve. Social media and online platforms emerged as the most commonly cited sources, with 85% of respondents highlighting their significance. Reserve staff members were also frequently mentioned, noted by 81% of participants, while community meetings or barazas were referenced by 73%. Community conservancies and radio broadcasts were acknowledged by 58% of respondents, and word of mouth was cited by 54%. In contrast, print media and tour operators or guides received less attention, with only 38% and 23% of respondents mentioning them, respectively. Figure 4 illustrates these results.



Figure 4: Information Sharing Channels

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.4.2 Information Accessibility and Transparency

The study revealed that information accessible through various channels includes the history of the reserve, geography, ecosystem, available activities and projects, wildlife species, accommodation facilities, safaris, route maps and directions, transport options, entry tickets and fees, job opportunities, training and workshops. While management officials asserted that all information about the reserve is shared with locals, 75% of local respondents expressed concerns that critical details, such as finances, benefit-sharing and project resource allocation, are not clearly communicated or easily accessible. Additionally, 60% of rangers echoed this concern, stating that they are generally limited to sharing information that aligns with what is publicly available and only provide additional information relevant to locals when directed by officials. One ranger commented:

“... there are restrictions... When you share too much information...you seem like a threat to them... In fact, there is information which cannot be shared at all especially about finances and management issues, even we as rangers are never informed about them...For the community, we usually inform them when something happens for example if an animal is on the run...” (Interview 2024, SNRR5).

4.4.3 Tourist Experience and Information Clarity

The information shared significantly motivated tourists to visit and improved their experiences by making it easier to book accommodations and identify safari packages ahead of their arrival, as noted by all tourist respondents. However, 75% of tourists reported experiencing confusion upon arrival due to a lack of clarity regarding details such as entry fees and payment methods. This issue was particularly pronounced when their preferred payment method was unavailable, forcing them to resort to cash payments instead. One tourist criticized:

“.... I had assumed I could pay by credit card cause that’s one of the modes they had stated in the website... but they wanted only cash. I insisted that I didn’t have cash but they said that their credit card machine did not work ...I spent a whole day trying to contact my bank...since they would not approve an email money wire transfer.” (Interview 2024, TA)

4.4.4 Influence of Information on Facility Performance

Information sharing by the county government has significantly impacted facilities within the reserve, as acknowledged by all managers of accommodation facilities. Respondents noted that these efforts had increased visibility and awareness about their establishments, attracted more tourists, boosted booking rates and improved the facilities' credibility. Additionally, 50% of the tourists highlighted that the emphasis on conservation efforts and safety measures influenced them to make informed decisions when choosing facilities, prioritizing those that align with their preferences for sustainability and comfort.

4.4.5 Understanding and Mistrust Due to Information Gaps

Empirical findings revealed that access to information about conservation activities, tourist offerings, and facilities has greatly improved local communities' understanding of conservation efforts. All management officials, along with 80% of rangers and 75% of local respondents, recognized that this access has highlighted the importance of protecting wildlife and adopting sustainable practices within the reserve. However, despite these positive impacts, a significant issue emerged: the lack of access to information regarding finances, benefit-sharing, and resource allocation for community projects has led to mistrust and spread misinformation among many community members. This sentiment was echoed by 75% of local respondents. A local respondent stated:

“Despite having access to information that can even be found on the website... there is no clear breakdown of some financial, benefit sharing strategies and allocation of resources to the projects. I know that the moment we will access this information..., we will demand for accountability of each coin which am very sure it will cause so much chaos...” (Interview 2024, KILC2).

4.5 Influence of Security on Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

This section explores the findings on the influence of security on ecotourism development in the reserve. Four themes emerged including: Awareness of Security Strategies, Effectiveness of Security Measures for Tourists, Community Involvement and Security Concerns and Effectiveness and Challenges in Wildlife Protection. The

findings reflect how these strategies contribute to creating a secure environment that promotes tourist confidence and protects wildlife while addressing the safety concerns of local communities.

4.5.1 Awareness of Security Strategies

Participants across all groups recognized the presence of various security strategies within the reserve. All rangers, wardens and accommodation managers exhibited the highest levels of awareness across all security measures. Tourists were highly aware (100%) of direct security measures like checkpoints, regulation of activities, escort by rangers and the presence of security personnel in facilities. However, they showed limited awareness of more complex strategies, with none of the tourists mentioning collaboration efforts or legal enforcement.

Local community members showed moderate to high awareness, particularly with visible and direct strategies such as checkpoints and patrols (100%), security personnel in facilities (80%), community and tourists' education (75%), prosecution of wildlife offenders (75%) and escort by rangers and tour guides (70%). However, there were significant gaps in their knowledge regarding collaboration with law enforcers such as KWS, local authorities and conservation organizations (67%), regulation of activities (58%) and emergency response protocols (50%).

Table 5: Levels of Awareness on Security Strategies amongst Participants

Security strategies	Levels of awareness (%)			
	Locals	Rangers & wardens	Facilities' Managers	Tourists
Collaboration	67	100	100	0
Emergency response protocols	50	100	100	50
Regulation of activities	58	100	100	100
Escort by rangers and guides	70	100	100	100
Security personnel in facilities	80	100	100	100
Checkpoints	100	100	100	100
Regular patrols	100	100	100	50
Community & tourists' education	75	100	100	25
Prosecution of wildlife offenders	75	100	100	0

Source: Researcher 2024.

4.5.2 Effectiveness of Security Measures for Tourists

Empirical findings indicated that participants held mixed views on the effectiveness of strategies aimed at ensuring tourists' security. A majority of management officials (67%), rangers (60%), and all accommodation facility managers (100%), along with 75% of tourists, believed that these measures had significantly improved security within the reserve. However, a notable portion expressed scepticisms: 33% of management officials, 40% of rangers, and 25% of tourists felt that the measures were only partially effective and did not provide complete reassurance. One management official pointed out that the effectiveness of these measures is hampered by managerial constraints. The official stated:

“...cases of attacks on tourists have greatly reduced... though I can't stay that it's all over and the place is 100% safe, cause bandits are still on the run...moreover... we have very few rangers, limited security vehicles and radio communication equipment ... these challenges constrain patrolling and also duty allocation...” (Interview 2024, SNRO1)

When asked about their safety, one tourist expressed concerns about the perceived lack of visible security in certain areas of the reserve, which caused feelings of unease. The tourist stated:

“While the lodge seemed secure, I noticed that some areas of the reserve had less visible security, which made me feel uneasy at times... briefings on safety protocols are basic and didn't really reassure me about the security situation (Interview 2024, TC)

4.5.3 Community Involvement and Security Concerns

The implemented measures were viewed as effective in ensuring the safety of the local community by 67% of management officials and 60% of rangers. However, concerns from the community were significant. While 25% of local respondents acknowledged the benefits of these strategies, a substantial majority (75%) felt that the measures were inadequate in protecting them from wildlife attacks. One local respondent further illustrated this concern by stating:

“These wild animals have already costed us a lot... The measures still fall short of protecting our families and livestock from wildlife encounters. We

continue to face risks daily, and the situation hasn't really changed as much as we had hoped...” (Interview 2024, LOLC3)

The analysis also underscored the proactive role of local community members in enhancing security within Samburu National Reserve, with 75% of respondents noting their contributions. Community members were found to provide timely information, participate in joint patrols, support conservancies, engage in capacity-building activities, partner with the reserve and act as security enforcers. However, all rangers, management officials and accommodation facility managers reported that some locals also contribute to security challenges by defying reserve regulations. For example, a management official respondent from the reserve mentioned:

“...some local members can be quite resistant when we try to stop them from engaging in certain activities, which often makes us appear as the enemy. During droughts, they encroach on the reserve to graze their livestock, leading to habitat loss for wildlife. Many of these individuals carry firearms, making our attempts to remove them for their safety ineffective. They often retaliate and subsequently blame us....” (Interview 2024, SNRO3).

Additionally, the findings indicated that community resistance primarily stems from being denied access to resources within Samburu National Reserve and from uninformed decisions made by the reserve management. This sentiment was shared by 50% of the local community respondents. One local community member expressed their frustration, stating:

“...we depend on our livestock for our livelihood... During drought, the only place where morans can find vegetation for the livestock is in the reserve, yet they deny us a chance to graze... At times you have to risk in order to survive... and...it's not just about the grass; without our input, they have been deterring us from using the remaining corridors which we use to access water and saltlicks for our livestock.” (Interview 2024, LOLC1)

4.5.4 Effectiveness and Challenges in Wildlife Protection

All management officials and accommodation facilities managers (100%), 80% of rangers and 83% of local respondents reported that the security strategies implemented have been effective in safeguarding wildlife in the reserve through reducing poaching incidents, natural deaths and habitat destruction. However, they pointed out that human-wildlife conflicts involving elephants, lions and hyenas, as well as retaliatory killings and livestock predation, remain prevalent issues. Management officials indicated that the ongoing challenges are primarily due to community resistance, particularly related to livestock encroachment and the misuse of livestock corridors for specific purposes.

Additionally, 60% of the rangers reported that, aside from local community opposition, a range of managerial and operational issues has hindered their ability to effectively protect wildlife within the reserve. These issues include lack of replacement of retired and deceased rangers, resulting in reduced staffing levels; delays or non-payment of allowances; salary discrepancies; inadequate health insurance coverage; insufficient on-the-job training; and a lack of essential resources, such as security vehicles, firearms and communication equipment.

4.6 Influence of Regulations on Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

This section presents findings thematically on how regulations related to energy consumption, visitor numbers and access and waste management impact ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve. These areas were identified as critical factors affecting both the sustainability and growth of ecotourism in the reserve. Respondents shared their perspectives on how these regulations help maintain ecological balance, shape visitor experiences and foster sustainable practices within the reserve. The findings highlight both the benefits of these regulations in supporting ecotourism development and the challenges they pose to local communities and stakeholders.

4.6.1 Clean Energy Adoption Amid Policy Gaps

All management officials and accommodation managers (100%) confirmed that facilities within the reserve adhere to national energy consumption policies, including the Energy Act 2019, the National Energy Policy 2018, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS)

guidelines and Tourism Regulatory Authority guidelines, all of which emphasize the use of clean and renewable energy to reduce the environmental footprint of tourism facilities. However, 60% of these respondents further stated that there are no clear policies from the county government to ensure the enforcement of these standards.

4.6.2 Transition to Renewables

A substantial 80% of respondents indicated that most facilities within the reserve have transitioned to renewable energy sources, such as solar power and biomass, relying on generators only during adverse weather conditions. Additionally, all accommodation managers emphasized that while the transition to renewable energy required a significant initial investment, it has led to reduced utility costs, the recovery of those investments and a lower carbon footprint an effort that is well-received by guests.

4.6.3 Impact of Biomass Sourcing

All accommodation facility managers and reserve management officials (100%), along with 60% of rangers, observed that facilities and camping groups generally purchase biomass from local vendors and, when permitted, collect dry fallen tree debris for firewood. Furthermore, 50% of local respondents indicated that they benefit from supplying biomass to these facilities and selling it to camping groups.

4.6.4 Waste Management Challenges

Management officials and rangers (100%) reported that the reserve follows a "pack in, pack out" policy, requiring visitors not staying at on-site facilities to dispose of waste either outside the reserve or at designated points near the gates. Despite this, they noted challenges in enforcing the policy during peak seasons, leading to regular litter collection efforts within the reserve. However, all accommodation managers recommended establishing more ablution facilities due to the presence of human waste, particularly during peak seasons. Additionally, 42% of local respondents observed that while waste is collected inside the reserve, tourists occasionally litter outside its boundaries, causing environmental degradation. One local community member highlighted this issue, noting how it negatively impacts the perception of community members about tourism and its environmental effects. The respondent remarked:

“We still face challenges with waste management in our villages especially when tourists at times litter the roads, leading to visual pollution of our town...” (Interview 2024, LELC1)

All management officials and accommodation managers (100%) also reported that waste is segregated into organic and inorganic categories, with ablution blocks and composting pits for organic waste. Inorganic waste is either reused or transported to NEMA-designated green points for recycling. However, 50% of local respondents noted that waste is sometimes burned or discarded in open pits accessible to wildlife, raising concerns about animal safety. Furthermore, 30% of the local community expressed alarm over waste disposal practices, particularly the direct draining of waste into the River Ewaso-Nyiro. One local community member highlighted this as a significant issue that negatively affects the health of the community and livestock. The respondent grumbled:

“...Draining of wastes into this river has led to a lot of diseases and loss of livestock... Some lodges have dug open pits where food remains are dumped and these pits are easily accessible by animals like monkeys...what if they shut down again who’s going to feed these monkeys? Nobody...” (Interview 2024, LELC3)

4.6.5 Visitor Numbers Regulation

The research revealed that all respondents acknowledged a lack of regulations governing visitor numbers in the reserve. While 60% of rangers and 67% of management officials reported that this absence has not yet affected the reserve, all accommodation managers noted that, although occupancy rates at their facilities peak during high season, certain areas of the reserve often experience overcrowding. Additionally, 50% of tourists who visited during peak season agreed that the reserve felt overcrowded with people and vehicles, which negatively impacted their experience, particularly by limiting their opportunities to spot wildlife during various activities. One tourist stated:

“...During the high peak season, there were so many people and vehicles that it was nearly impossible to enjoy the experience. The overcrowding

made it difficult to spot the animals, which was the main reason I came to the reserve." (Interview 2024, TC).

4.6.6 Access Regulations Effectiveness

The study found that all respondents (100%) were aware of regulations governing visitor conduct and access within the reserve, with high recognition of permits and fees (100%), the use of designated roads, trails and stopping points (100%), and speed limits (100%). Timed entry and exit regulations were noted by 85% of respondents, while wildlife viewing guidelines and the requirement for guided tours with local guides were recognized by 73%. Despite this, 33% of management officials and 40% of rangers identified off-road driving as a significant issue, particularly during peak seasons and holidays and noted challenges in enforcing timed entry and exit rules due to high visitor volumes and limited ranger capacity.

Additionally, 75% of tourists felt that while regulations are implemented, there is a need for more thorough enforcement and increased awareness. All accommodation managers echoed this sentiment, suggesting that guests should be briefed upon arrival at the gate to encourage responsible behavior. One manager pointed out that while regulations are posted at the gate and included in brochures, tourists need direct briefings and the brochures should be updated.

"...just mounting the rules at the gate is not enough since even most entrants barely recognize them...they also give out brochures but very outdated ones in which rules are not clearly stated...honestly the reserve needs to do more when it comes to clearly briefing guests about regulations so that they can also make our work easier ..." (Interview 2024, MAF1)

4.7 Influence of Equity on Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

This section presents findings on the influence of equity on ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve, focusing on how benefits and burdens are shared among various stakeholders. The analysis revealed six key themes: Equity in Revenue Distribution, Employment and Indirect Benefits, Challenges in Wildlife Compensation, Market Inequities in Local Artefacts, Impact of Conservation Education and Community Empowerment via Ecolodges. These themes collectively explore how the

allocation of ecotourism benefits and the management of related challenges impact the local communities, emphasizing the fairness of resource distribution, the effectiveness of compensation processes and the contributions of educational and support programs towards equitable development.

4.7.1 Equity in Revenue Distribution

The majority of respondents (92%) agreed that ecotourism activities in Samburu National Reserve play a significant role in generating revenue for the County government, which allocates a portion of these funds to local communities through community conservancies. While 67% of management officials and 40% of rangers stated that these revenues are evenly distributed among nearby communities, each receiving Ksh. 5,000,000 annually, local perceptions varied. Specifically, 50% of community members reported receiving Ksh. 5 million, but not on an annual basis. Meanwhile, 25% believed the county allocates Ksh. 10 million annually. Additionally, 25% of respondents from Loruko expressed dissatisfaction, claiming that the funds are not shared equitably and that they have yet to see tangible benefits from these allocations. A community member stated:

“There’s a lot of talk about equal distribution of revenues, but the reality on the ground is different for us... it’s frustrating and disheartening that despite being just as close to the reserve as other communities, we haven’t seen any of these benefits come our way.” (Interview 2024, LOLC1)

Additionally, 33% of the management officials and 60% of the rangers explained that revenue allocation is influenced by the level of activity and cooperation of the communities with the reserve. Commenting on the benefit-sharing situation in the Loruko community, one management official noted that the community is often excluded from revenue allocation schemes due to a strained relationship between the reserve management and Loruko, stemming from long-standing enmity and conflicts.

“... there were past confrontations between rangers and the Loruko. that led to casualties. Ever since then, there’s been an enmity...Due to their stubbornness, they are always left out....” (Interview 2024, SNRO1)

A majority of the respondents (75%) stated that these revenues are used to provide communal benefits depending on the needs of particular communities such as constructing water systems, establishing healthcare facilities and supporting student education through bursaries, scholarships and the construction of schools. However, 67% of the local respondents mentioned discrepancies in the distribution of some benefits, particularly bursaries and scholarships suggesting that these resources are disproportionately benefiting the more powerful members of society.

4.7.2 Local Employment and Indirect Benefits

All management officials and rangers (100%) stated that the majority of employees in the Samburu National Reserve and its associated facilities are from the local communities. Managers of the accommodation facilities agreed, with the reserve management asserting that 70% of their employees are locals. However, 83% of the local community members expressed concerns, stating that they barely benefit from direct employment at the reserve and there is minimal employment from the facilities within it. They also pointed out that even those who are employed occupy low-paying positions such as security personnel, janitors, guides, porters, gardeners and rangers. Additionally, 58% of locals noted that the closure of several lodges, such as Sentrim, resulted in job losses for many community members, further exacerbating their economic challenges.

Despite the challenges, 75% of local community respondents acknowledged that, although there is minimal involvement through direct employment within the Samburu National Reserve, many community members benefit indirectly. These benefits include making beadworks, providing transportation and tour guiding services to tourists, performing cultural dances and supplying goods such as biomass and milk directly to the reserve and its facilities. However, 50% community members highlighted a lack of recognition and support for local investments such as cultural villages and local tour guides association from the reserve management which has made it difficult for them to fully benefit from the opportunities provided by tourism in the reserve.

4.7.3 Challenges in Wildlife Compensation

All management officials (100%) and 80% of rangers confirmed that compensation schemes are in place to address damages, such as livestock losses or injuries resulting from wildlife encounters. However, 75% of local community members expressed dissatisfaction with these schemes, citing their ineffectiveness due to delays in processing claims. This frustration has fueled a growing sentiment among community members to take matters into their own hands to protect themselves in the event of wildlife attacks. A respondent from the local communities stated:

“While the idea of compensation is good in theory, in reality, it doesn’t help us much... Am aware of several victims of wildlife attacks...they’ve waited for months, others even years, to receive any payment yet damage has already been done...We can’t afford to wait for compensation that might never come and we are losing livestock and loved ones... we need to defend ourselves and our property, even if it means going against them... We need a system that works for us, not against us.” (Interview 2024, LELC1)

4.7.4 Market Inequities in Local Artefacts

The majority of respondents (69%) reported that ecotourism activities have created a market for local artefacts. Additionally, 58% of respondents elaborated that these artefacts are sold through various channels, including individual sales by locals, sales through conservancies and a significant portion through souvenir shops located in ecolodges and camps within the reserve. As a result, community members recognized the high economic potential of these activities. Moreover, all management officials, rangers and accommodation facility managers confirmed that several community groups are involved in providing goods such as souvenirs and services like entertainment either directly to tourists or to the eco-lodges themselves. However, 50% of locals expressed concerns that not all community members benefit, as only certain individuals are involved or contracted by the lodges and the reserve to provide these goods and services.

4.7.5 Impacts of Conservation Education

All management officials, accommodation facility managers, and rangers (100%), along with 75% of local community respondents, confirmed that various educational

initiatives targeting both the community and tourists have been implemented within the reserve, led by conservation organizations such as Grevy's Zebra, Ewaso Lions, Actions for Cheetahs in Kenya, and Save the Elephants. These initiatives aim to promote environmental awareness and conservation through workshops, seminars on wildlife conservation, ecotourism training, and environmental stewardship.

Management officials unanimously noted that these educational programs have effectively fostered conservation ethics, raised awareness, and supported local economic development by equipping community members with valuable skills and knowledge that can lead to economic opportunities. However, 50% of local respondents expressed concern that these programs are no longer being implemented as frequently or actively as they once were. One respondent from the community stated:

“NGOs and conservation-based organizations like Save the Elephants, Grevy's zebra, Ewaso lions used to train us... I am a beneficiary of Support a child project by Save the Elephants which mentored and trained me to become an ambassador for conservation... However, these organizations are not as fruitful as before cause most of the programs have been scrapped off and for the past few years these programs have ceased to exist...” (Interview 2024, BALC2)

Most management officials (67%), rangers (60%) and all tourists noted that the primary educational program available for tourists is delivered by rangers and local guides during ecotourism activities. Management officials and rangers further stated that lack of visitor information centre to enable immediate education of visitors upon arrival has led to integration of the education programs with ecotourism activities. While these rangers and 25% of the tourists stated that the role of rangers in educating tourists provides in depth educational experiences about environmental conservation, 75% of tourists stated that these educational programs are shallow and basic and did not appear to be effective in terms of creating indepth understanding of the importance of conserving wildlife through encouraging responsible behaviours of tourists. One of the tourists stated:

“...They appeared to be more of a formality rather than a genuine effort to educate and involve us... felt like they were designed to check a box rather

than truly engage and inform. Honestly, I didn't feel a strong connection to the conservation efforts and it seemed like other tourists were also more interested in the safari experience than the educational aspects. They kept on shouting and laughing at a glance of anything (wild animal) they spotted...I was disappointed with the lack of depth and authenticity ...” (Interview 2024, TB)

4.7.6 Community Empowerment via Ecolodges

A significant portion of the respondents that is 67% of locals along with all management officials, rangers and accommodation facility managers reported that ecolodges within the reserve empower communities by supporting various community projects. These include initiatives for women groups, youth groups and soccer teams, with the lodges providing both funding and other forms of support. Additionally, they highlighted that some lodges run educational support programs for school-going children, which involve training the youth to become conservation ambassadors.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1 Accountability and Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

Awareness of ecotourism activities in protected areas plays a vital role in engaging stakeholders, fostering ownership, and encouraging participation. In Samburu National Reserve, this study revealed that while there is a high awareness of popular activities such as cultural interactions and wildlife viewing, with 96% of respondents familiar with these experiences, awareness significantly declines for less prominent activities like nature walks, hiking, conservation projects, photography, and community outreach. This finding highlights a gap in the promotion of these lesser-known ecotourism opportunities. Similar patterns have been observed in other well-known ecotourism destinations, such as Serengeti National Park in Tanzania and Addo Elephant National Park in South Africa. In both cases, iconic activities like wildlife viewing are widely recognized, while niche activities, such as guided walks and conservation education, are under-promoted (Kaltenborn, Nyahongo, & Kideghesho, 2011; Fezeka & Stella, 2020). These findings suggest that an overemphasis on key attractions can overshadow the broader range of ecotourism experiences, limiting both community involvement and tourist engagement.

Community involvement in decision-making is essential for the development and sustainability of ecotourism in protected areas, promoting ownership, equitable benefit distribution, participation, and conflict resolution (Zheng et al., 2021). However, this study reveals a significant gap between formal participation mechanisms and actual local influence. While 85% of respondents reported structured participation, many felt their impact was limited and undervalued, indicating that formal participation often fails to genuinely empower local communities. Similar challenges are evident in other ecotourism sites, such as the Maasai Mara, where formal involvement often lacks practical significance (Wishitemi et al., 2015). In contrast, Monteverde Reserve in Costa Rica exemplifies how robust legal frameworks can lead to more meaningful community engagement (Bien, 2010). For accountability to be effective, it requires not only symbolic representation but also transparent processes that actively incorporate and act on community inputs, enhancing empowerment and ownership among local stakeholders, thus bridging the gap between formal inclusion and practical influence.

Collaborations between community conservancies and protected areas significantly enhance ecotourism by bolstering wildlife protection and generating new economic opportunities (Infield & Tolisano, 2019; Romero-Brito et al., 2016). This study findings indicate that 85% of respondents observed improvements in wildlife conservation and increased income from partnerships between Samburu National Reserve and adjacent conservancies. However, significant concerns remain about the limited involvement of locals in decision-making processes and the uneven distribution of benefits. This situation mirrors challenges observed in Torra Conservancy, Namibia, where despite community participation, issues of fair benefit sharing and resource conflicts persist (Kavita & Saarinen, 2016). These findings highlight that while collaborations can yield positive outcomes in terms of conservation and economic benefits, they also reflect ongoing challenges in ensuring that community participation translates into meaningful and equitable benefits for all involved.

The data reveals a complex impact of community involvement in ecotourism employment in Samburu, reflecting broader global trends. While 92% of respondents acknowledged local participation in both direct and indirect jobs, a significant 83% of locals reported that most of these roles are indirect and often seasonal, leading to job instability. This finding aligns with observations from the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve, where increased community involvement improved socio-economic conditions but also highlighted disparities in job quality and benefit distribution (Bien, 2010). Similarly, reliance on external experts for specialized roles, as seen in Addo Elephant National Park, underscores a common issue where local skill gaps can limit the sustainability and long-term impact of ecotourism benefits (Akinyemi & Mushunje, 2020).

Community involvement in ecotourism offers significant opportunities for preserving and revitalizing local cultures, as seen in these findings, where ecotourism has promoted cultural preservation and created markets for traditional artifacts. However, the drive for tourism-related income also introduces challenges related to cultural commodification and the alteration of cultural performances to align with tourist expectations. This tension is evident globally, with similar issues reported in destinations such as Addo Elephant National Park (Akinyemi & Mushunje, 2020).

Ensuring cultural integrity in ecotourism requires accountable practices that prioritize authentic representation over commercial appeal.

5.2 Transparency and Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

The use of diverse communication channels in protected areas is essential for improving visitor experiences, engaging communities and supporting conservation efforts (Khaledi Koure et al., 2023). Findings indicate that 85% of respondents utilize digital platforms like social media, reflecting the advantages of rapid communication but also raising concerns about excluding those without internet access or digital skills, as noted by Hennig et al. (2013). Direct methods, such as interactions with reserve staff and community meetings, remain highly valued, showing the importance of blending traditional and modern approaches. This is supported by Casimiro et al. (2023) who highlighted that diverse channels improve resource management and best practice sharing. The use of community conservancies, radios and word of mouth further emphasizes the need for accessible communication, while lower reliance on print media and tour operators points to areas for improvement, aligning with Cvetković et al. (2023).

Transparency in ecotourism is vital for building stakeholder trust and ensuring effective participation and sustainability (Khaledi Koure et al., 2023; Leung et al., 2018). It involves clear communication about conservation goals, financial matters and decision-making processes, with digital tools and participatory governance models enhancing engagement (Borutska et al., 2024; Brosius, 2010). The study finds a significant gap in transparency at Samburu National Reserve, with 75% of locals and 60% of rangers noting concerns about unclear financial and benefit-sharing information. This mirrors transparency challenges in other areas, such as Mount Cameroon National Park (Awung & Marchant, 2016) and East African protected areas (Pasape et al., 2017) and highlights the need for improved information sharing to boost community trust and engagement. The issue of information accessibility in Samburu, where locals report insufficient clarity on financial and benefit-sharing matters, reflects a common challenge in ecotourism. Similar issues are observed globally, where transparency about financial and resource allocation is often limited, leading to mistrust and dissatisfaction (Wondirad et al., 2020). The restricted information sharing by rangers in Samburu

echoes the barriers faced in other protected areas, such as the asymmetry of power and information highlighted in studies from Cameroon and East Africa (Awung & Marchant, 2016; Pasape et al., 2017). These issues suggest that while information is shared, the depth and scope are often controlled, impacting transparency and community trust (Saarinen, 2016).

The findings from this study emphasize the crucial role of information clarity in enhancing tourist experiences, aligning with broader research that shows how clear and accurate communication positively influences tourist satisfaction and engagement (Wang & Yan, 2022). Studies by Chandran and Bhattacharya (2023) in Munnar and Wang et al. (2023) in Lower Kinabatangan similarly indicate that transparent communication about services and conservation efforts significantly boosts tourist satisfaction and builds trust. However, the issue of inconsistent information, such as discrepancies in payment methods noted in Samburu, reflects findings from Spenceley and Snyman (2017), who reported that unclear or contradictory information can cause confusion and dissatisfaction among tourists.

On the other hand, some studies caution that while transparency generally benefits tourists, providing excessive or overly detailed information can overwhelm them, complicate decision-making and negatively impact their experience (Spenceley & Snyman, 2017). These contrasting insights highlight the importance of striking a balance between providing clear, sufficient and accurate information to enhance, rather than detract from, the tourist experience. Balancing the amount and detail of information shared with tourists is key to ensuring that it remains helpful and does not overwhelm, thus maintaining a positive impact on the overall tourist experience.

The findings indicate that information sharing by the county government plays a critical role in enhancing the visibility and attractiveness of accommodation facilities within the reserve. Managers of these facilities unanimously acknowledged the positive impact of these efforts, highlighting increased visibility, higher booking rates and improved credibility as direct benefits. This aligns with broader literature that emphasizes the importance of clear and accessible information in influencing tourist choices and boosting the competitiveness of ecotourism facilities (Gaurav, 2023). Effective

information sharing, especially about conservation efforts and safety measures, can significantly shape tourists' perceptions and preferences, leading them to select facilities that match their values regarding sustainability and comfort.

However, the study also reveals a nuanced impact on tourist decision-making, as only 50% of tourists reported that information about conservation and safety measures influenced their facility choices. This partial influence suggests that while information sharing can guide tourists towards more sustainable options, other factors, such as personal preferences, prior experiences, or marketing strategies, also play a significant role. This finding contrasts with studies that suggest comprehensive information consistently leads to more responsible tourist choices (Wang et al., 2023; Chandran & Bhattacharya, 2023). Additionally, it highlights the complexity of tourist decision-making processes, indicating that while information on sustainability and safety is influential, its effect varies among different segments of tourists. Therefore, ensuring the information is not only accessible but also resonant with diverse tourist values and expectations is crucial for maximizing its impact on facility visibility and choice.

The findings underscore the dual role of information access in shaping local communities' conservation awareness and trust within the reserve. The accessibility of information on conservation activities, tourist engagement and facilities has significantly increased the communities' understanding and appreciation of the importance of wildlife protection and sustainable practices, as acknowledged by all management officials, 80% of rangers and 75% of local respondents. This aligns with existing literature that emphasizes how transparency and information sharing can foster stakeholder engagement, enhance conservation awareness and promote active community involvement in ecotourism initiatives (Borutska et al., 2024). The availability of clear information helps demystify conservation efforts, making them more relatable and encouraging communities to participate in sustainable practices.

However, the study highlights a significant gap in transparency regarding financial information, benefit-sharing and resource allocation, which has fostered mistrust and misinformation among local communities, as reported by 75% of respondents. Without access to comprehensive financial details, communities feel excluded and suspicious of

mismanagement and inequity, a concern reflected in other contexts, such as Mount Cameroon National Park, where limited revenue transparency led to dissatisfaction and conflicts (Awung & Marchant, 2016). This aligns with broader literature on transparency challenges in ecotourism, including information asymmetry and reluctance from authorities to disclose financial details (Saarinen, 2016; Pasape et al., 2017). The findings underscore the need for full transparency, including financial matters, to build trust, ensure accountability and secure community support for ecotourism and conservation initiatives.

5.3 Security and Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

The study findings indicated high awareness of visible and direct security measures, such as ranger presence and checkpoints, among all groups of respondents, reflecting similar findings in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda and Maasai Mara Reserve in Kenya (Muylaert et al., 2021; Okello et al., 2014). However, there was a notable difference in awareness of more complex and collaborative security strategies. While all rangers, wardens and accommodation managers respondents had a strong grasp of these measures, tourists and local communities showed limited awareness, particularly regarding collaboration with law enforcement and legal mechanisms. This contrasts with Yosemite National Park, where community involvement and awareness of complex strategies have significantly enhanced conservation efforts (Machlis & Field, 2000). The gaps in awareness among tourists and local communities in Samburu highlight challenges to ecotourism development and underscore the need for targeted educational programs and improved communication strategies, as emphasized by Pulido-Chalid et al. (2023).

Effective security strategies in protected areas (PAs) are crucial for biodiversity conservation and promoting ecotourism. Robust measures not only protect wildlife but also enhance tourist safety, making PAs more attractive and sustainable (Chape et al., 2008; Pulido-Chalid et al., 2023). However, their success can vary based on implementation and stakeholder perceptions (Karadeniz & Yenilmez Arpa, 2022). This study found that while most management officials (67%), rangers (60%), accommodation managers and 75% of tourists felt that security measures significantly improved safety within the reserve, mixed opinions persist. These positive perceptions

are consistent with findings from Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda and Maasai Mara National Reserve in Kenya, where effective security measures have similarly safeguarded wildlife and tourists (Muylaert et al., 2021; Okello et al., 2014).

However, a significant portion of participants, including 33% of management officials, 40% of rangers and 25% of tourists, raised concerns that the security measures were only partially effective and not fully reassuring. The study also highlighted those managerial constraints, such as inadequate funding, insufficient training and logistical challenges, sometimes impede the implementation of these measures. This reflects similar issues observed in other protected areas globally, where the effectiveness of security strategies can be compromised by resource limitations and capacity constraints (Coad et al., 2019; Duffy, 2014). The mixed opinions among stakeholders in Samburu National Reserve suggest that while current security strategies are generally perceived as effective, addressing these managerial gaps is crucial for improving their overall efficacy.

The study found that management officials and rangers believe current security measures effectively protect the local community, tourists and wildlife. This is consistent with research by Tranquilli et al. (2014), which emphasized the importance of law enforcement and ranger presence in African protected areas. Similarly, Annecke & Masubelele (2016) reported that anti-poaching measures in Kruger National Park successfully protected wildlife and tourists, although they mainly focused on illegal hunting rather than human-wildlife conflicts. However, many locals in Samburu feel that these security measures are insufficient for protecting them from wildlife attacks. This concern parallels findings by Okello et al. (2014) in the Maasai Mara National Reserve, where local communities felt conservation efforts did not fully address the risks of wildlife encroaching on human settlements. This discrepancy between official perspectives and local experiences is also noted in Ogra (2008), who observed that while Rajaji National Park's management focused on wildlife protection, local communities faced increased dangers from wildlife due to inadequate conflict mitigation strategies.

The proactive role of the local community in enhancing security within Samburu National Reserve is notable, with 75% of respondents recognizing their contributions. Community members support security efforts through information sharing, joint patrols and partnerships with the reserve, reflecting successful models observed in places like the Maasai Mara, where community involvement is crucial for effective conservation and security (Western et al., 2015). However, the study also revealed that challenges arise when some locals, driven by survival needs during droughts, violate reserve regulations, leading to habitat loss and increased tensions with reserve authorities. Similar conflicts have been documented in other protected areas where local livelihoods are closely tied to the natural resources within reserves (Coad et al., 2019).

Findings further revealed, the resistance primarily stems from the communities' frustration with being denied access to critical resources within the reserve, such as grazing land and water sources, especially during droughts. This sentiment is shared by 50% of local respondents and reflects broader challenges in the management of protected areas where the needs of local communities are often at odds with conservation goals. According to Duffy (2014), the uninformed or rigid management decisions can exacerbate conflicts, leading to retaliatory actions from the community and undermining conservation efforts. Addressing these issues requires a more inclusive approach that considers the needs of local communities while ensuring the protection of wildlife, as successful examples in other regions have shown (Machlis & Field, 2000).

Wildlife conservation and protection is a key objective to all the protected areas globally. Findings in this study show that, security strategies have played a key role in reducing poaching, natural deaths and habitat destruction as attested by managerial officials, accommodation managers, rangers and the local community. These findings have similar outcomes in Kruger National Park, study done by Annecke & Masubelele (2016) who found that anti-poaching initiatives, including the use of advanced surveillance technologies and increased ranger presence, have significantly curbed illegal hunting activities and contributed to the preservation of wildlife habitats. Similarly, Tranquilli et al. (2014) reported that in several African protected areas, the implementation of robust security measures, such as regular patrols and community

engagement, has effectively reduced poaching incidents and habitat degradation, thereby supporting biodiversity conservation.

However, findings also indicated the persistent issues of human-wildlife conflict, retaliatory killings and livestock predation within the reserve as highlighted by 73% of the respondents, reflecting broader challenges that are also observed. This aligns well with a study by Okello et al. (2014) in Masai Mara who noted that while security strategies have successfully reduced poaching, the local community expressed concerns that these measures did not fully address issues of human-wildlife conflict or habitat encroachment. Similarly, Coad et al. (2019) also noted that these conflicts are particularly prevalent in areas where communities rely heavily on natural resources within protected areas, leading to tensions and retaliatory actions, as seen in other studies. The report of community resistance in the reserve, particularly regarding livestock encroachment and misuse of corridors, mirrors similar situations in other PAs where local needs and conservation objectives clash, resulting in ongoing conflict and challenges for wildlife management (Duffy, 2014).

Moreover, the operational and managerial challenges reported by 60% of the rangers in the findings, such as reduced staffing, lack of essential resources and inadequate training, are critical issues that undermine the effectiveness of security strategies. These challenges are common across many protected areas globally, where insufficient funding, logistical constraints and inadequate support for ranger staff weaken conservation efforts (Coad et al., 2019). For instance, in Yosemite National Park, the effectiveness of security strategies has been compromised by funding shortages and resource constraints (Machlis & Field, 2000). Addressing these challenges is essential for enhancing the overall effectiveness of wildlife protection measures, as well-supported and well-equipped rangers are crucial for the success of conservation initiatives.

5.4 Regulations and Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

The findings indicate that Samburu National Reserve and its facilities follow national energy policies, showing a strong commitment to clean energy, as confirmed by management officials and accommodation managers. However, 60% of respondents

noted a lack of clear county-level enforcement policies, which may weaken the effectiveness of these national standards. This regulatory gap could lead to inconsistent application of clean energy practices, potentially impacting the reserve's sustainability and reputation. This situation mirrors challenges observed in other case studies, such as the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, where inconsistent enforcement has affected sustainability efforts (Azarmi et al., 2019). This suggests that while national policies are in place, local enforcement mechanisms play a crucial role in ensuring consistent adherence and supporting ecotourism growth, aligning with the literature on effective policy implementation (Costa et al., 2023).

The transition to renewable energy sources by 80% of respondents demonstrates a significant shift towards more sustainable practices, leading to lower utility costs and a reduced carbon footprint. Although the initial investment is substantial, the long-term benefits, including reduced operational costs and enhanced guest satisfaction, validate the investment. This transition aligns with the reserve ecotourism goals by showcasing environmental responsibility and appealing to eco-conscious tourists. Similar positive outcomes are observed in Amboseli National Park, which benefits from reduced reliance on fossil fuels and lower carbon emissions (WWF, 2018). Literature supports the view that while upfront costs are a barrier, the long-term advantages of renewable energy align with sustainability goals and improve ecotourism outcomes (Kumar et al., 2023).

Findings show that facilities sourcing biomass from local vendors and collecting dry fallen tree debris contribute to local economic development and promote sustainable resource use. This practice supports local vendors and aligns with conservation goals, benefiting the community and enhancing sustainability in the reserve. Such practices are similar to those in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, where local biomass sourcing is used to integrate economic benefits with conservation objectives (Mugerwa, 2018). The literature underscores the dual benefits of local biomass sourcing, which strengthens community ties and supports environmental sustainability, reinforcing the positive impact of such practices on both the local economy and conservation efforts (Kipkeu, 2014).

The "pack in, pack out" policy for waste management in Samburu is in place; however, enforcement challenges, especially during peak seasons, and littering outside the reserve highlight gaps in waste management practices. The need for additional ablution facilities during peak periods indicates limitations in infrastructure. Effective waste management is essential for maintaining ecological integrity and enhancing visitor satisfaction. These issues align with challenges observed in Amboseli National Park, where similar infrastructure and enforcement problems during peak times have been noted (Mwakima, 2013).

The absence of regulations governing visitor numbers in Samburu results in overcrowding during peak seasons, which impacts wildlife visibility and overall visitor satisfaction. This issue is consistent with findings from Torres del Paine National Park, where high visitor numbers also strain ecosystems and infrastructure (Fernández Génova et al., 2020). Managing visitor numbers is crucial for preserving natural habitats and maintaining a high-quality visitor experience, aligning with broader literature that emphasizes the need to regulate visitor capacity to mitigate overcrowding (Pegler et al., 2024).

Although regulations governing visitor conduct, such as permits, fees, and designated routes, are established in Samburu, enforcement challenges, particularly with off-road driving and timed entry/exit rules, reduce their effectiveness. Tourists perceive these regulations as inconsistently enforced, which can compromise ecological balance and the overall visitor experience. These enforcement issues mirror challenges reported in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, where inconsistent enforcement has impacted regulatory effectiveness (Azarmi et al., 2019). This situation aligns with broader literature that highlights the importance of effective enforcement in ecotourism settings to promote responsible behavior and protect ecological integrity (Buckley, 2012; Pegler et al., 2024).

5.5 Equity and Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve

The findings suggest that while ecotourism significantly contributes to county revenue in Samburu National Reserve, the distribution of these funds among local communities is perceived as inequitable, particularly by the Loruko community, which feels

excluded from the benefits. This perception of inequity can undermine community support for conservation efforts, as the perceived lack of fair revenue distribution leads to feelings of marginalization. This result is consistent with the broader literature that highlights the importance of equitable revenue distribution in maintaining community support for conservation (Franks, Booker, & Roe, 2020; Shah et al., 2019). For example, in the Maasai Mara, similar issues of perceived inequitable benefit distribution have led to community dissatisfaction, demonstrating the impact of these perceptions on stakeholder relationships (Shah et al., 2019).

The dissatisfaction among local residents regarding employment opportunities, which are predominantly limited to low-paying positions, highlights a broader issue of unequal access to economic benefits from ecotourism. Although a significant number of locals are employed, the prevalence of low-tier jobs suggests a gap between the potential of ecotourism to enhance local economies and the reality experienced by community members. This finding is in line with Sica et al. (2020), who point out the importance of equitable employment opportunities in ecotourism to foster local support and engagement. The situation contrasts with examples like Amboseli National Park, where deliberate efforts to involve locals in higher-value roles have strengthened community support for conservation (Kipkeu, 2014).

The frustration of communities with delays and inefficiencies in wildlife compensation schemes highlights a significant challenge in maintaining local support for conservation initiatives in Samburu. This result indicates that the current compensation mechanisms are not adequately meeting community needs, leading to dissatisfaction and a tendency among locals to take independent actions against wildlife. This finding is consistent with studies in the Galápagos, where ineffective compensation for conservation burdens has similarly resulted in community tensions (Benitez-Capistros et al., 2014). The lack of an efficient and transparent compensation system in Samburu emphasizes the ongoing struggle with human-wildlife conflict and its impact on local perceptions of conservation efforts.

The uneven distribution of economic opportunities from the sale of local artifacts reflects broader market inequities that can undermine the potential positive impacts of

ecotourism in Samburu. This finding is consistent with challenges observed in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, where disparities in access to tourism-related markets led to dissatisfaction among community members (Tumusiime & Sjaastad, 2014). The results suggest that market access and participation are not uniformly experienced by all community members, affecting their ability to benefit from ecotourism-related economic activities. Similar patterns have been noted in community-based ecotourism models in Costa Rica, where equitable market access has been associated with greater community buy-in (Hunt et al., 2015).

Conservation education programs in Samburu have been seen as beneficial; however, both locals and tourists perceive these initiatives as lacking in depth and frequency. This suggests that the programs may not be fully leveraging their potential to cultivate a strong conservation ethic. This perception aligns with findings from the Galápagos, where limited educational efforts were insufficient in significantly enhancing visitor understanding of conservation (Schep et al., 2014). The results indicate that the current conservation education efforts in Samburu are not meeting the expectations of stakeholders, which may affect overall support for conservation. Comparatively, in Amboseli National Park, more comprehensive educational programs have been noted to empower communities and foster active participation in conservation (Kipkeu, 2014).

Ecolodges in Samburu are contributing to community empowerment by supporting local projects and educational initiatives, indicating a positive impact on ecotourism development. This finding is consistent with models in Corcovado National Park and Amboseli, where community-based ecotourism initiatives have enhanced local economies and conservation efforts (Hunt et al., 2015; Kipkeu, 2014). The engagement of ecolodges that support local communities demonstrates ecotourism's potential to provide economic benefits and empower communities through capacity-building and involvement in conservation. However, the success of these initiatives is closely tied to the equitable distribution of benefits, as inequities can undermine their positive impact on community empowerment and ecotourism development.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Summary of the Findings

Accountability plays a significant role in the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve by influencing community engagement and the distribution of benefits. The findings reveal that while there is high awareness of ecotourism attractions, community participation in decision-making is limited and primarily affects seasonal and economically unsustainable community-owned businesses, such as cultural villages. Collaborative efforts with community conservancies have improved conservation outcomes and provided income opportunities; however, concerns about unequal benefit distribution persist. Employment opportunities for locals are mostly indirect, seasonal and often lack sustainability, with specialized roles frequently filled by outsiders. Additionally, while ecotourism has contributed to the preservation and showcasing of local cultures, it has also led to cultural commercialization and loss.

Transparency has played a crucial role in shaping ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve, with varied impacts across different areas. Information dissemination through diverse channels, such as social media and reserve staff, generally aided in enhancing tourist experiences and facility visibility. However, significant gaps in transparency were noted, particularly regarding financial details, benefit-sharing and resource allocation, which limited community engagement and fostered mistrust. Tourists experienced confusion due to unclear information on entry fees and payment methods, impacting their overall satisfaction. Despite the positive influence on conservation awareness and facility choices, restricted access to critical information undermined community trust and hindered effective participation in ecotourism development.

Security concerns, including poaching, banditry and human-wildlife conflicts, were identified as significant challenges impacting ecotourism development. Although access regulations, such as timed entry and exit, are in place to enhance security, enforcement during peak seasons is hampered by limited ranger capacity and high visitor volumes. Despite these measures, instances of off-road driving and non-compliance with designated routes persist, threatening the safety of both wildlife and

visitors. The study emphasized the need for more robust security measures and greater ranger capacity to improve enforcement and enhance the overall visitor experience.

Regulations governing energy consumption, visitor numbers and waste management play a crucial role in promoting sustainable ecotourism in SNR. The findings revealed that while most facilities have transitioned to clean energy sources like solar and biomass, the lack of enforcement from the county government poses a challenge to consistent compliance. Regulations on waste management, such as the "pack in, pack out" policy, face enforcement difficulties during peak seasons, leading to environmental degradation both within and around the reserve. Moreover, the absence of visitor number regulations has resulted in overcrowding during peak seasons, diminishing the quality of the visitor experience and potentially impacting the ecological balance of the reserve.

Findings on equity in benefit and burden sharing indicated that it has both fostered and obstructed ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve. While ecotourism has generated revenues, created employment opportunities, opened markets for local goods and supported community education and empowerment through ecolodge initiatives, disparities in revenue distribution have left some communities, like Loruko, feeling marginalized and excluded. Locals often occupy indirect and low-paying jobs with limited advancement and job losses from lodge closures have worsened economic difficulties. Delays and inefficiencies in wildlife compensation schemes have led to community frustration, sometimes causing locals to take protective measures into their own hands. Although conservation programs have had positive impacts, their reduced frequency and perceived lack of depth limit their effectiveness in engaging both locals and tourists.

6.2 Conclusion

This study examined the impact of governance on ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve (SNR), focusing on key elements of governance accountability, transparency, security, regulations and equity. The research addressed a significant gap in the literature regarding the root causes of persistent governance challenges and the positive impacts of governance on ecotourism development. The findings indicate that

while governance structures have positively influenced aspects of ecotourism, such as improved community engagement and enhanced tourist experiences, significant challenges persist.

Accountability measures have facilitated increased community involvement and better benefit distribution. However, local participation often remains superficial, undermining the sustainability of community-owned businesses and fostering a sense of exclusion among residents. Despite successful conservation efforts, persistent issues with inequitable benefit distribution and unsustainable employment practices continue. Additionally, the commercialization and alteration of local cultural practices to meet tourist preferences have led to a loss of cultural authenticity, undermining the goals of equitable and genuine ecotourism. Transparency issues have also affected ecotourism development. While diverse information channels have enhanced tourist experiences and facility visibility, gaps in transparency regarding financial details, benefit-sharing and resource allocation have led to limited community engagement and trust. Tourists have encountered confusion due to unclear information on entry fees and payment methods, impacting their overall satisfaction and experience.

Security challenges, including poaching, banditry and human-wildlife conflicts, continue to pose significant threats despite existing regulations. Inconsistent enforcement of these regulations, due to limited ranger capacity, insufficient resources and inadequate political will, particularly during peak tourist seasons, compromises both wildlife safety and the overall effectiveness of governance in promoting sustainable ecotourism practices. Regulatory measures concerning energy use, waste management and visitor numbers are vital for sustainable ecotourism; however, weak enforcement, especially during peak tourist seasons, has led to environmental degradation and overcrowding. These issues detract from the quality of the visitor experience and threaten the ecological balance of the reserve.

Finally, the study highlights the mixed outcomes of equity in ecotourism development. While there are benefits from ecotourism revenue, local perceptions of fairness are varied, with some communities feeling excluded. Employment opportunities are primarily low-paying and compensation schemes for wildlife damage are often delayed,

leading to dissatisfaction and self-reliance among locals. Market opportunities for local artefacts are present but not evenly distributed, and while conservation education and community empowerment programs have made strides, their decreasing frequency and perceived superficiality call for further improvement.

6.3 Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings of this study, several measures should be undertaken to enhance ecotourism development in Samburu National Reserve. These approaches include:

- i. Develop marketing strategies that specifically highlight lesser-known activities such as nature walks, hiking, conservation projects, photography, and community outreach. Also encourage tour operators to integrate niche activities into their standard itineraries. Offering bundled experiences that include wildlife viewing alongside guided nature walks or conservation projects can enhance the appeal and awareness of these activities.
- ii. Advocate for robust legal frameworks that ensure genuine community involvement in decision-making processes. Policies should require stakeholder consultations, ensuring that local voices are not just heard but also acted upon. In addition, create a transparent feedback system where community members can share their insights and concerns regarding ecotourism initiatives. Regularly report back on how their input has influenced decision-making, fostering a sense of ownership and accountability.
- iii. Encourage initiatives that prioritize authentic cultural experiences rather than those designed solely for tourist consumption. This can involve collaborating with local artisans and performers to develop experiences that reflect true cultural practices and values. Additionally, implement educational programs for tourists that emphasize the importance of cultural sensitivity and respect for local traditions. This can enhance their appreciation for the culture while minimizing the pressure to conform to commercialized expectations.
- iv. In terms of transparency of information, include community representatives in financial decision-making processes to ensure that local voices are heard and that financial matters are transparently addressed. This involvement can help build trust and ensure that community needs are prioritized. Also, establish a system for regular reporting on financial matters and the distribution of benefits.

Transparency in reporting can foster trust and encourage community engagement in ecotourism initiatives.

- v. To address the issue of security, include information about security measures and collaboration efforts in the orientation sessions for tourists. Providing this information upfront can enhance their understanding and awareness during their visit. In addition, engage local leaders and influencers to help disseminate information about security strategies within their communities. Their involvement can enhance credibility and encourage participation among community members.
- vi. Advocate for increased funding from government sources, NGOs, and private investors to support security measures. This funding should be earmarked for training, equipment, and logistical needs.
- vii. The county government should encourage integrated livelihood programs that provide alternative sources of income for local communities, reducing their dependence on resources within the reserve for their livestock. These programs could include sustainable agriculture, eco-friendly tourism initiatives, and artisanal crafts.
- viii. To curb the challenge of visitor numbers during peak seasons, the county government and the reserve should promote lesser-known areas and attractions within the reserve to disperse visitor traffic. Developing and marketing alternative routes or activities can alleviate pressure on popular sites while enhancing overall visitor experience. Also, they should implement a robust monitoring system to assess the impact of visitor numbers on wildlife and ecosystems. Regular evaluations can inform management decisions and guide adjustments to visitor capacity as needed.
- ix. Implement training programs that equip locals with skills needed for higher-value jobs in the ecotourism sector, such as management, hospitality, and guiding.
- x. Establish transparent and fair revenue-sharing models that ensure a portion of ecotourism revenue is allocated to local communities. Should also engage local stakeholders in discussions about how revenues are allocated to enhance perceptions of fairness and inclusion.

- xii. Encourage partnerships between ecolodges and local organizations to co-develop programs that address community needs and enhance conservation efforts.

6.4 Suggestion for Future Research

Future research on governance and ecotourism development should focus on several key areas to enhance understanding and effectiveness.

- i. Longitudinal studies are recommended to track the long-term impacts of governance practices on sustainability and visitor experiences, providing insights into how community involvement influences accountability and development over time.
- ii. Employing diverse data collection methods, such as surveys, observations and secondary data analysis, alongside interviews, will enhance the depth and validity of research findings. Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches will allow researchers to capture a fuller picture of governance dynamics, particularly in complex ecotourism settings.
- iii. Investigating innovative governance models from other ecotourism destinations can offer valuable insights for improving local governance structures. Understanding these models can lead to the development of more adaptive and resilient governance systems that benefit both local communities and conservation goals.
- iv. Conducting comparative case studies across various ecotourism sites can also reveal effective practices and challenges, providing a broader perspective on governance.
- v. Exploring transparency practices and the role of digital tools in enhancing stakeholder engagement is crucial.
- vi. Integrated security models that address both wildlife protection and community safety should be studied to understand their impact on conservation and community relations.

- vii. Future studies should focus on creating and testing comprehensive governance frameworks that incorporate principles of accountability, transparency, equity and regulation which are essential for evaluating their influence on ecotourism development.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview consent form

Dear respondent,

I am student researcher carrying out research entitled: *Governance and Ecotourism Development: A case study of Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County, Kenya* for academic purposes. This interview schedule will aid in obtaining information in order to gain in-depth understanding on how selected principles of governance influence conservation of the environment, education, appreciation of culture and well-being of the local communities. The research aims at identifying areas of consensus and building momentum for change by providing necessary information to the policy makers and users.

Confidentiality of responses will be maintained at all costs. Kindly feel free to give your responses.

Respondent section.

Ivoluntarily agree to participate in this research study. I have understood the purpose and nature of the study as explained by the researcher. I also understand that;

- i. All information provided in this study will be treated with confidentiality.
- ii. I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind
- iii. I will not benefit directly from participating in this research
- iv. The interview will be audio-recorded
- v. I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted
- vi. In any report on the results of this research, my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- vii. I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

.....
Signature of the research participant

.....
Date of interview

.....
Signature of the researcher

.....
Date of interview

Appendix II: Local Community Members' Interview

	Sub –topics	Questions
Accountability and transparency	Local community involvement	<p>a. Which ecotourism activities are carried out within Samburu National Reserve?</p> <p>b. Which ecotourism activities or projects do you take part in Samburu National Reserve?</p> <p>c. How are you involved in the project?</p>
	Information access	d. How do you access information about Samburu National Reserve?
Security	Tourists' security	a. Which security measures have been placed within Samburu National Reserve to ensure the safety of tourists?
	Local community security	b. To what extent have security measures ensured the safety of local community members bordering Samburu National Reserve safe?
	Wildlife security	c. To what extent are the wildlife species in Samburu National Reserve safe from poachers, local community attacks, tourists' disturbances and natural calamities?
Regulations	Energy consumption	a. Which sources of energy are used within the reserve for heating and lighting?
	Waste management	b. What are some of the waste management strategies used within the reserve and what impacts do they have on the community, tourists and environment?
Equity and inclusivity	Benefit sharing	<p>a. What are the benefits accruing from ecotourism activities within the reserve?</p> <p>b. How are these benefits are shared?</p> <p>c. How effective are the benefit sharing approaches adopted within the Samburu National Reserve?</p>
Ecotourism development	Conservation	d. Which ways have ecotourism projects within the reserve contributed towards conservation of wildlife within Samburu National Reserve?
	Local community cultures	b. How does ecotourism activities affect conservation of local community cultures?
	Education	c. To what extent has the education programs contributed towards development of ecotourism activities in Samburu National Reserve?

Appendix III: Tourism Officers' Rangers' and Wardens' Interviews

	Sub –topics	Questions
Accountability and transparency	Local community involvement	a. Which ecotourism activities and projects are carried out within the reserve? b. What approaches are used to involve local community members in ecotourism projects in Samburu National Reserve?
	Media access	c. Which channels are used by the reserve to provide information about the reserve?
Security	Tourists' security	a. Which security measures have been implemented by the reserve to ensure safety of tourists?
	Local community security	b. What strategies are used by the Samburu National Reserve to provide security for local community members?
	Wildlife security	c. What strategies are used by the Samburu National Reserve to provide security for the wildlife?
Regulations	Energy consumption	a. Which regulations governing energy consumption are facilities mandated to adhere to in Samburu National reserve?
	Waste management	b. What are some of the waste management strategies that facilities adhere to in Samburu National reserve?
	Visitor regulations	c. Which regulations governing visitor numbers and access are facilities adhering to in Samburu National reserve?
Equity and inclusion	Benefit sharing	a. Which benefits accrue from ecotourism activities within the reserve? b. To what extent have the benefit sharing schemes been effective in terms of ensuring improvement of the welfare of communities' bordering Samburu National Reserve?
Ecotourism development	Conservation	a. How has ecotourism projects contributed towards conservation of Samburu National Reserve?
	Local community cultures	b. What are the effects of ecotourism activities on local communities' culture conservation in Samburu National Reserve?
	Education	c. Which education programs have been implemented by the reserve? d. To what extent have the ecotourism projects contributed to the education of tourists and local communities? e. To what extent have these education programs contributed towards of ecotourism activities in Samburu National Reserve?

Appendix IV: Tourists' Interviews

	Sub –topics	Questions
Accountability And transparency	Local community involvement	a. To what extent have you interacted with locals during your stay within Samburu National Reserve?
	Media access	b. How do you access information about Samburu National Reserve?
Security	Tourists' security	a. How are security measures enforced within Samburu National Reserve? b. How effective are the security measures imposed?
Regulations	Visitor numbers	a. What are the regulations governing visitor numbers and stay within the reserve? b. How do you perceive the visitor-imposed regulations on ecotourism activities?
	Energy consumption	a. What are the energy sources utilized within the reserve? b. How do you perceive the waste management regulations on ecotourism activities?
	Waste management	a. What are the regulations governing waste management within the reserve? b. How do you perceive the waste management regulations on ecotourism activities?

Appendix V: Accommodation Managers' Interviews

	Sub –topics	Questions
Accountability and transparency	Local community involvement	<p>a. Which ecotourism activities and projects are carried out within the reserve?</p> <p>b. What approaches are used to involve local community members in ecotourism projects in Samburu National Reserve?</p>
	Media access	<p>c. Which channels are used by the county government to share to information concerning the reserve?</p> <p>d. How has the information disseminated by the county government affected your facility?</p>
Security	Tourists' security	a. Which security measures have been implemented to ensure safety of tourists within the reserve?
	Local community security	<p>b. Which strategies are used by the Samburu National Reserve to enhance security for local community members?</p> <p>c. How does the local community enhance security issues within the reserve?</p>
	Wildlife security	d. Which strategies are used by the Samburu National Reserve to provide security for the wildlife?
Regulations	Energy consumption	a. How has the energy regulations within the reserve affected your facility?
	Waste management	b. How has waste management regulations within the reserve affected your facility?
	Visitor regulations	<p>c. What are some of the regulations governing visitor numbers and access that facilities should adhere to in Samburu National reserve?</p> <p>d. To what extent have the regulations on visitor numbers affected facilities within the reserve?</p>
Ecotourism development	Conservation	a. How has ecotourism projects contributed towards conservation of Samburu National Reserve?
	Local community cultures	b. What are the effects of ecotourism activities on local communities' culture in Samburu National Reserve?
	Education	<p>c. Which are some of the education programs implemented by the reserve?</p> <p>d. To what extent have these education programs contributed towards development of ecotourism activities in Samburu National Reserve?</p>

Appendix VI: Illustrative Quotes and Examples

Illustrative Quotes	CODES	THEMES
<i>How does accountability influence the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve?</i>		
<p>“We went on guided safari drives, took part in bird watching excursions, and joined nature walks with local guides. I also had the opportunity to visit a nearby Samburu village, where I have learned about their culture and traditional ways of life” (Interview 2024, TD)</p>	<p>Community and Cultural Engagement Sustainable Practices and Amenities Conservation and Research Efforts Outdoor Adventure and Exploration</p>	<p>Awareness of Ecotourism Activities</p>
<p>“We only have specific decision-making powers... when it comes to cultural practices which we manage outside the reserve, we are able to keep all the profits within ourselves... however, during low seasons, we receive less or no profits. A few of us have been included on advisory boards or committees. It's a step forward, but we still feel that our influence is limited”. (Interview 2024, KILC1)</p>	<p>Decision-Making Participation Economic Impact and Sustainability Engagement Effectiveness</p>	<p>Community Influence and Participation</p>
<p>“The reserve works with our conservancy...A lot of benefits accrue from this collaboration but to be frank only the chosen few enjoy...you find that those in power positions in the conservancies and those who relate well with them benefit more...and it's not just about employment...even when it comes to supporting local businesses and dance groups, there are people who are always first priority...” (Interview 2024, BALC1).</p>	<p>Impact of Collaboration Challenges in Implementation</p>	<p>Reserve - Conservancy Collaboration</p>
<p>“70% of our employees including guards, housekeepers, artisans and grounds men are locals...we provide stable incomes which has reduced reliance on traditional livelihoods which is often unsustainable...However, most locals lack specialization, so</p>	<p>Participation and Employment Types Economic Impact and Challenges</p>	<p>Local Employment Dynamics</p>

<p>we provide initial training... but for roles requiring expertise, we source externally...” (Interview 2024, MAF2)</p> <p>“Members from these communities are engaged through employment by the reserve as well as the facilities within it. Depending on their skills they are engaged in different positions ...” (Interview 2024, SNRR3)</p> <p>“Even if they want to employ us, they usually go for the powerful and vocal people in the community...” (Interview 2024, LELC2)</p>	<p>Access and Equity in Employment</p>	
<p>“In an effort to attract tourists...cultural performances are being altered to suit tourist tastes, rather than preserving their original significance and authenticity. There are also instances where the elements of our culture are taken out of context...” (Interview 2024, BALC3)</p> <p>“...it was clear that the villagers were performing for an audience rather than sharing genuine cultural practices...with an overemphasis on selling souvenirs rather than engaging in meaningful cultural exchange...” (Interview 2024, TA)</p> <p>“Ecotourism has helped preserve our traditional customs, rituals, and crafts by creating a market for cultural performances and handmade products. Tourists' interest in our culture has fostered a sense of pride among the Samburu people...” (Interview 2024, KILC3)</p>	<p>Challenges and Negative Impacts</p> <p>Positive Cultural Impacts</p>	<p>Cultural Impact of Ecotourism</p>
<p><i>How does transparency influence the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County?</i></p> <p>“...travel blogs to familiarize myself with the reserve...” (Interview 2024, TC)</p> <p>“I visited their website as well as the website of the camps and lodges...” (Interview 2024, TB)</p> <p>“...also, staff were invaluable sources...” (Interview 2024, TD)</p> <p>social media platforms, for example, we have a Facebook page...” (Interview 2024, SNRR4)</p> <p>“...Community meetings, local leaders and occasional workshops organized by conservation organizations” (Interview 2024, LELC2)</p>	<p>Primary Information Channels</p> <p>Community and Traditional Channels</p> <p>Informal and Less Utilized Channels</p>	<p>Channels of Information Sharing</p>

<p>“... there are restrictions... When you share too much information...you seem like a threat to them... In fact, there is information which cannot be shared at all especially about finances and management issues, even we as rangers are never informed about them...” (Interview 2024, SNRR5).</p> <p>“... there is no clear breakdown of some financial, benefit sharing strategies and allocation of resources to the projects...” (Interview 2024, KILC2)</p>	<p>Extent of Information Sharing</p>	<p>Information Accessibility and Transparency</p>
<p>“Information is readily accessible through their website, so it was so easy to book my stay in the lodge like a month before, which was really fantastic...” (Interview 2024, TB)</p> <p>“... I had assumed I could pay by credit card cause that’s one of the modes they had stated in the website... but they wanted only cash...” (Interview 2024, TA)</p>	<p>Facilitators of Positive Experiences Barriers to Smooth Experience</p>	<p>Tourist Experience and Information Clarity</p>
<p>“...attracted more tourists and boosted our booking rates ((Interview 2024, MAF1)</p> <p>“...has also enhanced our lodge's credibility, as the government's emphasis on conservation efforts and safety measures has built trust among potential visitors... ((Interview 2024, MAF2)</p>	<p>Positive Impacts on Facility Operations Tourist Preferences and Influences</p>	<p>Influence of Information on Facility Performance</p>
<p>"Access to information has made it easier for us to share conservation updates, which has boosted local support for protecting wildlife." (Interview 2024, SNRR2)</p> <p>"Knowing more about the importance of conservation through accessible information has encouraged us to protect our natural resources and wildlife." (Interview 2024, BAC2)</p> <p>“I know that the moment we will access this information, we will demand for accountability of each coin which am very sure it will cause so much chaos. (Interview 2024, KILC1)</p>	<p>Positive Impacts of Accessible Information Challenges Due to Information Deficits</p>	<p>Understanding and Mistrust Due to Information Gaps</p>
<p><i>What influence does security have on the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve?</i></p> <p>“There are regular patrols by armed rangers...” (Interview 2024, TD)</p>	<p>High Awareness of Visible Security Measures</p>	<p>Awareness of Security Strategies</p>

<p>“The rules include; 6pm rule, stopping at a designated place, no getting too close to the animals, driving only on the labelled routes just to name but a few...” (Interview 2024, SNRR1)</p>	<p>Moderate Awareness of Education and Legal Efforts</p>	
<p>“The reserve has established clear emergency response plans, including medical evacuation procedures and first-aid services, to handle any health or safety incidents that may arise...” (Interview 2024, KILC2)</p>	<p>Low Awareness of Collaborative and Complex Strategies</p>	
<p>“...cases of attacks on tourists have greatly reduced... though I can’t stay that it’s all over and the place is 100% safe, cause bandits are still on the run...moreover... we have very few rangers, limited security vehicles and radio communication equipment ... these challenges constrain patrolling and also duty allocation...” (Interview 2024, SNRO1)</p>	<p>Positive Perceptions of Security Enhancements Operational Challenges Affecting Effectiveness</p>	<p>Effectiveness of Security Measures for Tourists,</p>
<p>“While the lodge seemed secure, I noticed that some areas of the reserve had less visible security, which made me feel uneasy at times... briefings on safety protocols are basic and didn't really reassure me about the security situation (Interview 2024, TC)</p>		
<p>“... At times you have to risk in order to survive... and...it’s not just about the grass; without our input, they have been deterring us from using the remaining corridors which we use to access water and saltlicks for our livestock.” (Interview 2024, LOLC1)</p>	<p>Active Community Engagement in Security Resistance and Opposition Factors</p>	<p>Community Involvement and Security Concerns</p>
<p>“...some local members can be quite resistant when we try to stop them from engaging in certain activities, which often makes us appear as the enemy...Many of these individuals carry firearms, making our attempts to remove them for their safety ineffective. They often retaliate and subsequently blame us...” (Interview 2024, SNRO3)</p>	<p>Local Concerns and Security Effectiveness Gaps</p>	
<p>“These wild animals have already costed us a lot... The measures still fall short of protecting our families and livestock from wildlife encounters...” (Interview 2024, LOLC3)</p>		
<p>“Regular patrols by our rangers have ensured that wildlife are safe. for instance, they have helped in driving poachers away... ((Interview 2024, SNRO2)</p>	<p>Achievements in Wildlife Conservation</p>	<p>Effectiveness and Challenges in</p>

<p>“The biggest problem we face is with the community...some members forcefully encroach others for the sake of grazing, others use the panya routes” side roads & short cuts in fragile areas which are yet to be closed...” (Interview 2024, SNRO1)</p>	<p>Challenges Due to Community Resistance and Conflict Operational and Resource-Based Challenges</p>	<p>Wildlife Protection.</p>
<p><i>What is the influence of regulations on the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve?</i></p>		
<p>“There are no regulations on energy for facilities enforced by the reserve. However, as an ecolodge we have national standard guidelines that govern our practices... (Interview 2024, MAF2)</p>	<p>Commitment to National Standards Challenges in Local Policy Implementation</p>	<p>Clean Energy Adoption Amid Policy Gaps</p>
<p>“...transitioning from use of generators to solar required an initial investment, it was so expensive to install...but ever since the installation, we’ve reduced the consumption rate which equates to reduced costs...” (Interview 2024, MAF1)</p>	<p>Shift to Sustainable Energy Practices Challenges with Initial Investment</p>	<p>Transition to Renewables</p>
<p>“The shift to local biomass not only aids in reducing our ecological footprint but also strengthens our partnership with local communities, ensuring that conservation and local development go hand in hand...” (Interview 2024, MAF1)</p>	<p>Integration of Local Biomass Suppliers Sustainability Concerns</p>	<p>Impact of Biomass Sourcing</p>
<p>“...Draining of wastes into this river has led to a lot of diseases and loss of livestock... Some lodges have dug open pits where food remains are dumped and these pits are easily accessible by animals like monkeys...what if they shut down again who’s going to feed these monkeys? Nobody...” (Interview 2024, LELC3)</p>	<p>Implementation of Waste Management Protocols Enforcement and Environmental Impact Challenges</p>	<p>Waste Management Challenges</p>
<p>“We still face challenges with waste management in our villages especially when tourists at times litter the roads, leading to visual pollution of our town...” (Interview 2024, LELC1)</p>	<p>Health and Safety Concerns</p>	
<p>“...The overcrowding made it difficult to spot the animals, which was the main reason I came to the reserve.” (Interview 2024, TC)</p>	<p>Need for Visitor Management Policies Tourist Experience Deterioration</p>	<p>Visitor Numbers Regulation</p>

<p>“...just mounting the rules at the gate is not enough since even most entrants barely recognize them...they also give out brochures but very outdated ones in which rules are not clearly stated ...” (Interview 2024, MAF1)</p>	<p>Strong Awareness of Access Rules Among Stakeholders Operational Barriers to Effective Regulation Improving Visitor Education and Compliance</p>	<p>Access Regulations Effectiveness</p>
<p><i>How does equity influence the development of ecotourism in Samburu National Reserve?</i></p>		
<p>“There’s a lot of talk about equal distribution of revenues, but the reality on the ground is different for us... it’s frustrating and disheartening that despite being just as close to the reserve as other communities, we haven’t seen any of these benefits come our way.” (Interview 2024, LOLC1)</p> <p>“... there were past confrontations between rangers and the Loruko. that led to casualties. Ever since then, there’s been an enmity...Due to their stubbornness, they are always left out....” (Interview 2024, SNRO1)</p>	<p>Discrepancies in revenue on revenue received distribution Influence of historic conflicts on revenue allocation Revenue utilization for community projects Influence of community cooperation</p>	<p>Equity in Revenue Distribution</p>
<p>"It's challenging to see many tourism jobs go to outsiders when there are locals who are eager and ready to work. We need more inclusive hiring practices to ensure that our community benefits more from the reserve's activities..."(Interview 2024, LOLC3)</p> <p>"The closure of Sentrim lodge left most of us jobless..., affecting everything from small businesses to local services that depend on the influx of tourists." (Interview 2024, KILC3)</p> <p>"As an owner of a tour company, I confess that local businesses struggle to get the attention they deserve due to lack of support and recognition..." (Interview 2024, LELC3)</p>	<p>Limited direct employment opportunities for locals Economic impact of facility closures Indirect economic benefits Barriers to local business recognition and support</p>	<p>Local Employment and Indirect Benefits</p>
<p>“While the idea of compensation is good in theory, in reality, it doesn’t help us much... Am aware of several victims of wildlife attacks...they’ve waited for months, yet damage has already been done...We can’t afford to wait for compensation that might never come and we are losing livestock and loved ones... we need to defend ourselves and our property, even if it means going against them... We need a system that works for us, not against us.” (Interview 2024, LELC1)</p>	<p>Ineffectiveness of wildlife compensation schemes Community responses to wildlife threats Perception of unfair compensation practices</p>	<p>Challenges in Wildlife Compensation</p>

<p>"Access to markets is often uneven, with only a few getting the chance to showcase their products..." (Interview 2024, KILC1)</p>	<p>Inequitable access to market opportunities</p>	<p>Market Inequities</p>
<p>"Lodges play a crucial role in supporting local artifact markets by providing a platform for us to display and sell our crafts individually or through their courier shops..." (Interview 2024, KILC2)</p>	<p>Economic benefits from artifact sales Role of lodges in supporting artifact markets</p>	<p>in Local Artefacts</p>
<p>"...They appeared to be more of a formality rather than a genuine effort to educate and involve us... felt like they were designed to check a box rather than truly engage and inform. Honestly, I didn't feel a strong connection...I was disappointed with the lack of depth and authenticity ..." ((Interview 2024, TB)</p>	<p>Decline in conservation education initiatives Effectiveness of tourist education</p>	<p>Impacts of Conservation Education</p>
<p>"NGOs and conservation-based organizations like Save the Elephants, Grevy's zebra, Ewaso lions used to train us...However, these organizations are not as fruitful as before cause most of the programs have been scrapped off and for the past few years these programs have ceased to exist..." (Interview 2024, BALC2)</p>	<p>Role of conservation organizations Challenges in educating visitors</p>	
<p>"The education and skills training provided by ecolodges have empowered many of us to pursue better job opportunities and improve our lives. It's a game-changer for our community." ((Interview 2024, BALC3)</p>	<p>Contribution of ecolodges to community development Empowerment through education and skills training Support for vulnerable groups</p>	<p>Community Empowerment via Ecolodges</p>

Source: Researcher (2024)

Appendix VII: Institutional Introductory Letter



Knowledge is Wealth (*Sapientia divitia est*) Akili ni Mali
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Telephones: 020-2310512/18
Direct Line: 020-268 7625

postgraduate@chuka.ac.ke

P. O. Box 109-60400, Chuka
Website: www.chuka.ac.ke

REF: NM13/51175/21

26th March, 2024

Director
National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete
P O Box 30623, 00100
Nairobi.


Dear Sir / Madam,

Cicilia Amachi

The above-named person is a *bona fide* student of Chuka University pursuing Masters in Tourism Management proposal titled: **Influence of County Government –led Governance on Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County, Kenya.**

Ms. Amachi has defended at the Faculty level and is now expected to conduct research. Any assistance accorded will be highly appreciated

Yours sincerely,


Prof. Moses Muraya, Ph.D.

DIRECTOR
BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Appendix VIII: Ethics Review Letter



CHUKA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Telephones: 020-2310512/18

Direct Line: 0772894438

Email: info@chuka.ac.ke,

P. O. Box 109-60400, Chuka

Website: www.chuka.ac.ke

19th March, 2024

REF: CUIERC/ NACOSTI/484

TO: Cicilia Amachi

RE: Influence of County Government-Led Governance on Ecotourism Development in Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County, Kenya

This is to inform you that *Chuka University IERC* has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is *NACOSTI/NBC/AC-0812*. The approval period is 19th March, 2024 – 19th March, 2025.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by *Chuka University IERC*.
- iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to *Chuka University IERC* within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to *Chuka University IERC* within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to *Chuka University IERC*.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://oris.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Benjamin Kanga
SECRETARY

Appendix IX: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) License


REPUBLIC OF KENYA


NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

RefNo: **988547** Date of Issue: **13/April/2024**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Miss.. CICILIA MUHINDA AMACHI of Chuka University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Samburu on the topic: INFLUENCE OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT-LED GOVERNANCE ON ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SAMBURU NATIONAL RESERVE, SAMBURU COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 13/April/2025.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/24/34373**

988547
Applicant Identification Number


Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



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See overleaf for conditions