

DETERMINANTS OF TOURISM AND TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY IN SAMBURU COUNTY, KENYA

¹ Ann Wanjiku Goro & ² Heather Eddah Kipchumba, PhD

¹ MBA Student, School of Law Arts and Social Sciences, Kenyatta University, Kenya

² Lecturer, Department of Public Policy & Administration, Kenyatta University, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This research explored sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County, Kenya and identified key elements that influenced tourism sustainability in the region. The study examined four primary variables that were, marketing, security, natural attractions and infrastructure and how they affected tourism growth and its long-term viability. Recognizing issues such as low domestic tourist participation, dearth of infrastructure, insecurity, and absence of stakeholder alignment, the study showed the significance of sustainable practice in entrenching the region as appealing and resilient to global tourist volatility. In a descriptive study design, the study gathered quantitative and qualitative data from a broad category of stakeholders including government representatives, conservancy personnel, chiefs, and community elders to present a clear indication of Samburu East sub-county's tourism environment. The theoretical frameworks were guided by stakeholder theory with an emphasis on cooperative participation and destination life cycle theory with the assessment of phases of tourism development for facilitating sustainable development. The study's findings were intended to inform policy recommendations for the sub-county government of Samburu East and other stakeholders, supporting targeted infrastructure development, enhanced security measures, and community-based tourism initiatives. The research findings demonstrates that marketing initiatives had a significant positive influence on sustainable tourism with R squared of (0.858) and Beta value of 0.927. Security initiatives had a significant influence at R-squared of 0.853, a high correlation of (R=0.924) and a significant F-statistic. Natural attractions were found to promote sustainable tourism with an R-squared of 0.816 and F-statistic (1167.434). Infrastructure was found to have a significant role with an F-statistic of 723.949 and t-value of 26.906. All the four independent variables had a significant p-value. Thus, the study rejected the entire four hypotheses. The research findings added to the general comprehension of sustainable tourism in Kenya, providing realistic answers towards a harmony between economic development, nature preservation, and cultural conservation. The study also addressed knowledge gaps in tourism sustainability, specifically in rural Kenyan contexts, positioning Samburu East as a model for community-centered and environmentally conscious tourism practices.

Key Words: Marketing, Security, Natural Attractions, Infrastructure

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an important driver of development in the world and it leads to major growth in the economy. In 2017, tourism was the industry that has produced one out of every ten jobs in the world, and the industry has been pretty influential to contribute 10 percent of the world GDP. The current form of tourism is among the fastest growing sectors in any given global economy that is changing to capture the opportunity and beat the challenges of an immensely competitive international environment. Its potent transformatory nature does not end with its direct influence, but creates significant effects on many spheres of economic progress (UNWTO, 2018).

The UNWTO ranked the top ten destinations for tourists in the world in 2020 with France topping the list at 88 million visitors (UNWTO, 2019b). Reports from 2018 showed a notable increase of revenue in Kenya generated from tourism, which grew by 32.2%, reaching KSh. 158 billion. Additionally, the number of international tourists increased to 2,024,216, marking a notable 38.2% rise compared to the previous year (Bargoret, 2019). One of the developing nations with a range of possibilities for tourism development is Indonesia, which also has a certain allure that promotes the travel and tourism sector's operations Sulistyadi et al. (2019).

The tourist sector is made up of various interdependent factors rather than as a separate industry (Camilleri, 2018). The tourist sector is identified as an economically significant undertaking on the international scene with the possible ability to contribute significantly towards development. The foreign exchange revenue of the tourist sector relies on the arrivals of international tourists, the purpose of visit, and their spending per trip (Varelas, Karvela & Georgopoulos, 2021).

The Travel and Tourism sector in Kenya was recovering remarkably, as a total of 870,465 international visitors arrived in the country in the post-Covid recovery drive, which is a 53% increase relative to 567, 848 international visitors in 2020 (TRI, 2021). The Kenya Annual Tourism Sector Performance Report 2021 reflects an increase of 5 percent, and the prospects of 2022 are also optimistic since international travel is gradually recovering (TRI, 2021). Being a major tourist and technological destination in East Africa, Kenya has an extensive tourist attraction site, which includes wildlife, game reserves, national parks, unique scenery, lakes, forests, beaches, and coral reefs (International Monetary Fund, 2023). Government efforts to invest in the tourism sector, which is a major industry with a close relationship to entertainment, retailing, food production, and transport, have resulted in the emergence of new hotels, tourist circuits, resort cities, branding of Premium Park, and high priced niche products (Humphreys et al., 2019; International Monetary Fund, 2023; Wink, 2019).

Samburu East Sub-County is a member of the North Rift Economic Block (NOREB) and it has a population of 310,327 people, as of the 2019 census (KNBS, 2019). Samburu East Sub-County is one of the most popular tourism destinations with a rich cultural experience, whereby the tourist takes an adventure and secluded life free of the hustle and bustle that is characterized by urbanization. The Sambaru National Reserve (SNR) has various wildlife including elephants. The community conservancies like the Kalama, west gate, Namunyak and Sera are important in expanding the space to wildlife and protecting them thereby leading to better livelihoods.

Sustainable tourism aims at sustaining equilibrium considering ecological, social, and economic aspects so as to foster the sustainable use of natural resources. In Kenya, the sustainable tourism concept was embraced in the early 1990s and has since remained a topical issue for scholars, policymakers, as well as regulatory bodies, an indicator of its increasing significance in the national development plan. Tourism sustainability is also a key issue in the global tourist sector, trying to find a balance between economic gains and environmental

conservation as well as social accountability. As destinations are confronted with climate change pressures and over-tourism, sustainable tourism has been the order of the day.

As a tourism destination, Samburu County is crucial to the economy growth and the preservation of certain outstanding cultural traditions and landscapes in the region. The County, therefore, presents an interestingly huge and varied tourist attraction drawing visitors from all over the world. In particular, the Samburu National Reserve stands apart as a key tourist attraction with its dramatic landscape and wildlife. The tourists watch and interact with rare species of elephants, lions, and other wild animals of Africa. Others tourist attraction sites include; Namunyak Wildlife Conservancy, Sera Rhino Sanctuary, Mparinkon Bird Sanctuary, Maralal Sanctuary, Maralal International Camel Derby, Nachola Conservancy, Ndoto Conservancy and Loltiyan Vultures nesting cliff. All these offers opportunities for cultural immersion, allowing visitors to engage with the Samburu people and explore their traditional customs and practices (SES-C, 2020).

Statement of the Problem

The KNT Strategy (2013-2018) suggests that the country's uptake in domestic tourism is behind, with low participation. Despite recent effective marketing efforts, which has seen the number of domestic tourists growth, the overall uptake remains comparatively low, especially against the international background whereby domestic tourism represents 80% of international tourism (UNWTO, 2018). The recent performance of domestic tourism is short of Kenya's target of 6.5 million bed nights (GOK, 2018). The trend is a concern as it reflects a fragile domestic segment that is unable to provide adequate buffer to the tourism industry amidst international market volatility uncertainties. It is thus important to examine the determinants of participating in domestic tourism.

The Government of Kenya is dedicated to the concepts of sustainable tourism development, partly driven by the recognition that tourism can be hindered by negative externalities that diminish the quality of life for local residents and the satisfaction of tourists (Ariya, Sempele & Nderitu, 2021). Although sustainable tourism development is broadly regarded as essential for successful tourism growth, including the sustainability of the tourism sector in Samburu East Sub-County, Kenya, challenges persist that hinder positive outcomes in sustainable tourism. These are among the challenges like a hazy understanding of the key players in the adoption of sustainable tourism initiatives and the fact that all the stakeholders cannot be equally concerned about the growth of sustainable tourism because some are less engaged or totally inactive (Ariya et al., 2021). A major factor impeding the development of a more competitive tourism sector in Samburu East Sub-County is the low quality and limited provision of air, and road connectivity infrastructure, particularly in the north (Council of Governors, 2018). Although national efforts are made to address tourism safety and security, the lack of a cohesive policy approach and affirmative strategy hampers positioning Samburu East Sub-County as a preferred destination (Council of Governors, 2018).

Numerous challenges exist, including insufficient financial resources, domestic and international security issues such as road banditry, inter-ethnic conflicts, terrorism, escalating wars in tourist source countries, and the spread of small arms in Northern Kenya, economic recession from source markets, low bed capacity, poaching, climate change that affects flora and fauna as well as the weather patterns and advances land degradation in the lowlands affect the flow of tourists to Samburu, contributing to the overall impediment in tourism development in the county (Samburu East Sub-County Tourism Strategic Plan, 2022). The implementation of sustainable tourism and hospitality development requires a cooperative solution, by creating awareness among the parties involved on their roles and responsibilities, addressing conflicts, issues, and engaging in a friendly relationship at personal and business levels (Iazzi et al., 2020).

The sustainability in tourism sector has been studied in many studies. As an illustration, Jernsand (2017) investigated how stakeholder engagement can restructure tourism development opportunities in the Dunga area, which is situated along Lake Victoria, in Kenya. Ogembo (2018) discussed the MICE tourism contribution to sustainable development in Kenya, and Welthagen (2019) created a conceptual model of e-

tourism competitiveness. In spite of these comprehensive studies, there are still gaps in the concept and context. Based on the above, the present research aimed at investigating the determinants of tourism and tourist sustainability in Samburu East Sub-County, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives guided this research.

- Investigate the effects of marketing strategies on sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County.
- Analyze the effects of security on sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County.
- Assess the role of natural attractions in promoting sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County.
- Determine the effect of infrastructure on sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County.

This research was grounded on the subsequent research hypotheses.

- H_{01} : There is no significant connection between marketing strategies and tourism sustainability in Samburu County.
- H_{02} : There is no significant connection between security and tourism sustainability in Samburu County.
- H_{03} : There is no significant connection between natural resources and tourism sustainability in Samburu County.
- H_{04} : There is no significant connection between infrastructure and tourism sustainability in Samburu County.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing and tourism sustainability

Marketing enables tourism destinations in bringing to focus their environmentally friendly efforts, attracting visitors with environmentally sensitive interests and develops collaborations with their host communities and businesses. It has been demonstrated that collaboration with tour operators increases destination management and sustainability initiatives (Sotiriadis and Shen, 2021). Moreover, marketing media can also play a decisive role in the behaviour of sustainable tourism, and online platform has a chance to offer innovative solutions to advertise green destinations and ethical forms of travelling (Volo, 2023).

A study performed by Sigala and Gretzel (2019) talked about the role of social media in affecting tourism performance in Switzerland. The research was quantitative, involving 150 tourism businesses and tourists in undertaking a survey in order to understand how social media affect travel experiences and business decision making. The research has revealed that the influence of social media on the process of making decisions is significant among tourists because they seek information actively and use user-generated content when selecting a destination and a service provider. The use of social media is a contemporary word of mouth medium that shapes the perception and preference of the tourists. The researchers also found out that social media contributes major perspectives in the development of sustainable tourism in areas that it provides information in managing nature-based tourism and enhancing green practices. The gap in this study is in the Samburu East Sub-County in which tourism sustainability has not been exploited especially on how one can apply tourism sustainability to stimulate sustainable tourism interventions and to shape decision-making in the area.

Security and tourism sustainability

The influence of security on tourist sustainability is extensive in the sense that it bears a direct connection to visitors' perceptions of safety and, subsequently, destination choice. Crime rates in tourist areas play a critical

part in determining tourists' choices to visit a place, with lower crime rates having a tendency to accompany higher tourist activity (Arana & Leung, 2023). The security staffing also offers a certain degree of crime deterrence and a feeling of safety to the tourists (Józwiak and Żemela, 2022). Additionally, effective incidence report systems allow timely response to security threats and, thus, eradicate the possible threats and allow tourists to trust in destination safety measures (Berezina et al., 2021).

Koch (2022) researched the impact of technological and digital innovations in South African hotels. The study was able to collect data through interviews with 150 industry professionals, including travel agencies, airlines and cruise lines but working in different areas of the industry. The findings indicated that the T&T sector has already been affected by the conflict in an instantaneous negative way, including the amplification of travel disruption, security, and alterations in the confidence of travellers. The research also identified that there are wider security issues that are destination specific, such as geopolitical variables and military might, which play an important role in the economic contribution of the tourism industry. These issues especially in regards to expenditure by leisure travelers and employment generation can affect the security perceptions of the tourist and therefore affect the decisions and destination appeal to the tourist. These factors can be used to indicate how international security problems are interdependent and have a direct impact on tourism flows and local economies. The contribution of Koch provokes the necessity to pay attention to these problems so as to assess the sustainability of tourism development in such areas as Samburu East Sub-County, where the tourism sector can be susceptible to the challenges of international security. This research gap suggests the urgency of establishing specific actions to counter any security threat and foster sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County.

Natural Attractions and tourism sustainability

The natural places serves a significant role in the sustenance of tourism because they provide unique experiences and facilitate activities to conserve nature. The regions which are visited annually by millions of people globally have diverse topography including national parks, wildlife reserves, beaches, mountains, and forests. According to a recent study by Waldemar and Dajer (2023), since natural wonders are able to sustain biodiversity, reduce the impact of climate change, and boost local economies, they nowadays are considered as significant components of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism practices are important in conserving such natural wonders and maintaining them as attractive tourist destinations. Such strategies are examples of ecotourism lodges, ethical wildlife viewing, and community-based conservation projects.

To study how a nature tourism experience leads to respecting nature and conservation, Spring (2023) assisted in research conducted in France. It was designed as qualitative research, which involved the interview of 100 tourists and 30 employees working in the tourism industry around some natural sites in the country. The findings disclosed the important functions of educational programs, guided tours, and interactive exhibits to help in conservation issues and encouraging visitors to transform their lifestyles to more sustainable methods of behavior. With education and interpretation as an experience ingredient to the visitors, destinations were capable of inculcating an impression of environmental stewardship, thus ensuring a sustainable approach in the long run.

Infrastructure and tourism sustainability

The infrastructure development is a slow process requiring a precise estimate of capabilities and resources, especially geographical areas. Since tourist services are all dependent on one or several elements of infrastructure, the tourism industry is highly dependent upon them.

Tourism expansion entails the construction of key infrastructure components (Nguyen, 2021). The vibrant industry entails the growth of transportation facilities, accommodations, public centers, and cultural centers. Modern efficient transport networks, such as airports, roads, and public transport systems, are essential in linking locations to the global tourism system (Tojiyeva & Ibragimov, 2021).

Shehzad et al. (2019) also conducted an empirical study to examine the role of technology in influencing the development of tourism infrastructure in the case of the Chinese economy. The study was a quantitative study and sampled 400 tourism stakeholders within different regions of China. These results suggested that there is a high statistical connection between the use of ICT in regard to the improvement of tourism infrastructure, which involves transportation, accommodation, and tourist facilities. These inventions made tourist services more efficient and cost effective, promoting the growth in the industry. The research, however, was more or less concentrated in China and as such, it left a gap in knowledge on whether ICT adoption can affect any form of tourist infrastructure development in other areas such as Samburu East Sub-County in Kenya where other problems and opportunities may be involved.

Theoretical Framework

Stakeholder Theory

The Stakeholder Theory is traditionally connected with Freeman, R. (1984), provides a model of seeing the relations and the impact of different groups and individuals (stakeholders) on a system or organization. The stakeholders consist of local residents, businesses, government organizations, tourists, non-governmental organizations, and other parties having interest in the industry. The theory is essential in the attainment of sustainable tourism development since it underlines the significance of the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders in the strategic planning and decision-making processes in a way that bestows the consideration of their interests and balancing (Freeman, 1984).

Lastly, the theory believes that maintaining such relationships with a state of balance would be sustainable and successful in the long run because it creates a sense of trust and collaboration among the stakeholders, which will eventually pay off to the organization in the long run (Freeman, 1984).

Stakeholder Theory was applied in this research on Samburu East Sub-County tourism sustainability in management of needs and interests of different stakeholders. Through the use of Stakeholder Theory, the current study can determine and evaluate the role and contribution of the different cultural custodians of the various stakeholders. This will be effective as the interests of all the stakeholders shall be considered which will result to more integrated and effective strategies of developing sustainable tourism in Samburu East Sub-County.

Destination life cycle theory

This is a theory proposed by Butler in 1980, which states that destinations can undergo the growth and decline cycles, which are caused by such events as building an infrastructure, shift of the taste among tourists, degradation of environment, etc. The Destination Life Cycle Theory has already been applied to various destinations on our planet, and its usability is now considered as one of the keys to the explanation of the nature of tourism development and sustainability (Dwyer, 2022).

The theory relies on several assumptions. First is that destinations have attracted more visitors over time, eventually leading to some degree of change in infrastructure and local culture. Second is that tourism growth will reach a point where it will peak when the destination would either suffer from over-tourism or saturation and then eventually stagnate. Finally, the theory held that the response of a destination to stagnation in any form of either rejuvenation or innovation or inadaptability would determine its future path, either towards decline or towards new development (Butler, 1980).

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory, originally suggested by Homans in 1958 and subsequently advanced by Blau in 1964, suggests that individuals take part in social interactions with the expectation of reciprocal benefits. In tourism, the theory would suggest that travelers visit destinations in expectation of deriving some benefits, such as cultural enrichment, relaxation, or adventure, in exchange for money, time, and effort. Similarly, host

communities and tourism stakeholders provide goods, services, and hospitality to tourists in exchange for economic benefits, social contact, and cultural exchange (Ahmad, Nawaz, Ishaq, Khan & Ashraf, 2023).

Social Exchange Theory was based on several key assumptions. First, it assumes that individuals are rational actors who calculate the potential rewards and costs of their interaction. Second, the theory assumes that social exchanges are regulated by reciprocity and the potential for future exchanges, i.e., individuals are motivated by the desire to have balanced relationships. Lastly, it assumes that rewards and costs hold varying values for varying individuals and affect their satisfaction and willingness to establish or maintain social relationships (Homans, 1961).

In studying the sustainability of tourism in Samburu East Sub-County, Social Exchange Theory was employed to point to the connections between various stakeholders in tourism. By uncovering how local communities, tourism entrepreneurs, and government institutions perceive and respond to the benefits and drawbacks of tourism, the study can gain insights on drivers of sustainability in tourism. For example, if the stakeholders believe that tourism has significant benefits with minimal costs in excess, then they can be induced to support and assist sustainable approaches.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A research design serves as a roadmap to the research (Leavy, 2022). It evaluates theories and solves issues through research. This paper exploited a descriptive type of research design. The design that proved appropriate in this research was descriptive design because it enabled in-depth investigation of the prevailing state and the determinants of tourism and sustainability in Samburu East Sub-County. This offered an in-depth insight into how marketing, security, cultural traditions, natural resources, and infrastructure are interconnected.

Target Population

This was the specific segment of the overall population that the researcher focused on, has access to, or is most likely to gather the necessary data from (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2023). The study engaged 1,398 respondents. This includes 9 officials from the Department of Tourism in Samburu East sub-County comprising of 1 director for Samburu national reserve (County government of Samburu, 2024), 6 directors of the 6 conservancies in Samburu East sub-county, that is Meibae, Namuyak, Ngilai central, Kalama, Westgate and sera Rhino conservancy, (NRT,2024) 1 manager of conservancies in Samburu East sub-county and 1 chief warden from Samburu East sub-county. (County government of Samburu, 2024). 1 Chief Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Tourism and Culture and 1 director from NRT was also be part of the study (NRT, 2024).

Further, the research included 4 chiefs in the four wards of the sub county, 9 clan elders from the nine clans in Samburu county and 1,366 permanently employees in conservancies (NRT,2024) 1 OCS and 7 police post commanders from the sub-county (Relief web, 2020).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample represents a subset of the population under study. Sampling involves selecting this subset to study and draw conclusions about the entire population (Giedre & Sliogeriene, 2020). The research utilised both purposive sampling and simple random sampling. Purposive sampling entailed the 9 officials from county tourism department, CECM,1 director NRT,1 OCS ,7 police officers,4 chiefs and 9 clan elders.

The research used Yamane's (1967) formula to compute the sample size for the permanent employees. The study's confidence level was set at 95%, with a 5-percentage-point margin of error.

n = 309 respondents

The stratified random sampling method was employed in order to boost the representativeness of the sample. The respondents were selected randomly using random sampling technique.

Data collection methods and procedures

The research employed a semi-structured questionnaire comprising both quantitative and qualitative questions. These questionnaires were administered to officials from the County Tourism Department, chiefs, permanent conservancy's employees, police officers and clan elders. Additionally, an interview schedule was planned for the Chief Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Tourism in Samburu East Sub-County, the OCS and the seven directors from NRT and the six conservancies to gain deeper insights into their perspectives on tourism sustainability in the region. According to Nayak and Singh (2021), a questionnaire is a written document containing questions that respondents are required to answer in writing.

FINDINGS

Response Rate

The study had a total sample of 309 responders, the researcher distributed 309 questionnaires. Out of which 265 questionnaires were duly filled and returned. This represents 85.8%, which implies a robust suggestion that the respondents understood and were eager to contribute to the study and data collection by providing their responses. Saunders (2020) indicates that a percentage more than 80 % percent represents a good threshold and understanding of the study.

Marketing Strategies on Sustainable Tourism Development

The research intended to ascertain the link between marketing strategies on sustainable tourism with the specific aim of analyzing whether marketing has an influence on sustainability of tourism in Samburu County. The following analyses presents the influence of marketing strategies. The research aimed to establish the link between marketing strategies on sustainable tourism with the specific aim of analyzing whether marketing has an influence on sustainability of tourism in Samburu County. The following analyses presented the influence of marketing strategies.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics Marketing Strategies

Statements	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	SD	Total F (%)
Partnerships with travel agencies	8 (3.0)	41 (15.5)	48 (18)	104 (39.2)	64 (24.2)	3.66	1.097	265 (100)
Mediums of marketing	8 (3.0)	34 (12.8)	56 (21.1)	91 (34.3)	76 (28.7)	3.73	1.102	265 (100)
Participation in promotional events	5 (1.9)	43 (16.2)	55 (20.8)	92 (34.7)	70 (26.4)	3.68	1.091	265 (100)
Marketing campaigns	12 (4.5)	40 (15.1)	42 (15.8)	93 (35.1)	78 (29.4)	3.70	1.174	265 (100)
Marketing strategy	5 (1.9)	43 (16.2)	49 (18.5)	88 (33.2)	80 (30.2)	3.74	1.114	265 (100)

Field data, 2025

The respondents were asked to describe their agreeability or disagreeability on a variety of aspects of marketing practice. To the option of partnerships with travel agencies, 39.2% agreed, 24.2% strongly agreed, while 18% were in the middle. A smaller proportion, 15.5% disagreed and 3.0% strongly disagreed. This provided a mean of 3.66 (SD = 1.097), suggesting that the respondents were generally in agreement. On the

issue of marketing media, 34.3% and 28.7% agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, while 21.1% were neutral. On the other hand, 12.8% disagreed and 3.0% strongly disagreed. The mean response was 3.73 (SD = 1.102) with positive perception. On whether to attend promotional events, 34.7% and 26.4% agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, while 20.8% were neutral. The 16.2% disagreed while only 1.9% strongly disagreed. The average of 3.68 (SD = 1.091) reflects a positive direction. With regard to the marketing campaigns, 35.1% agreed, and 29.4% strongly agreed, while 15.8% were neutral. Still, 15.1% disagreed, and 4.5% strongly disagreed. The average score of 3.70 (SD = 1.174) shows that respondents more or less agreed with this statement. Finally, on the statement regarding marketing strategy, 33.2% agreed and 30.2% strongly agreed, with 18.5% being neutral. In contrast, 16.2% disagreed and only 1.9% strongly disagreed. The mean response was 3.74 (SD = 1.114), reflecting an overall positive attitude toward marketing strategy. Overall, the findings indicate that most respondents agreed with the listed marketing practices, with mean scores ranging between 3.66 and 3.74, all above the neutral point (3.00), signifying favorable perceptions.

A mean standard deviation of 3.66 ± 1.097 indicated most of the respondents agreed with the claim on partnerships with travel agencies. The average values for each of the five marketing-related items exceeded 3.60, demonstrating overall positive perceptions. The standard deviations, which ranged from 1.091 to 1.174, suggest moderate variation in responses. Majority of the respondents expressed agreement, while a smaller subset maintained divergent perspectives. Among the items, Marketing Strategy emerged with the highest consensus (M = 3.74, SD = 1.114), while Partnerships with Travel Agencies recorded the lowest average score (M = 3.66, SD = 1.097), though still above neutral. Respondents considered marketing strategies as vital in advancing sustainable tourism in Samburu. Each statement received agreement or strong agreement from the majority of participants, underscoring the importance of marketing practices. In particular, involvement in promotional events and marketing campaigns emerged as practical approaches for achieving tourism sustainability.

Challenges of Marketing Strategies

Poor infrastructure was one of the most outstanding issues that were identified by the respondents in Samburu. The road systems to some of the main tourist destinations were also cited to be in bad condition and therefore tourists found it hard to reach their destinations and do sightseeing. Respondents observed that the challenge of accessing them, despite the well-advertised sites or the collaboration with travel agencies lowered the tourist traffic across the board. This follows the conclusions of Mazrekaj (2020) who notes that a poor road network restricts the access of tourists and diminishes the success of marketing policies.

Lack of involvement in promotional activities was also another challenge that was highlighted. The stakeholders attested that the high costs, time issues and logistical challenge that come with travelling bad roads usually restricted their participation in tourism fairs, exhibitions and joint campaigns. This did not only limit the networking but also made Samburu less visible as a tourist destination. According to research conducted on traders of onyeocha et al. (2015) it has been established that inadequate transport infrastructure prevents both the involvement of the operators and the tourists in promotional activities, which is essential in creating awareness and promoting a visit.

Lastly, the issue of poor accessibility was identified as being the source of low tourist satisfaction by respondents. The bad roads and long distances used to take tourists to their destinations had a negative impact even when the tourists had been drawn to the region through the marketing campaigns. This dissatisfaction may result in a decrease of the number of repeat visits and word-of-mouth promotion that are key elements of successful marketing. According to Dascălu et al. (2024), the key to positive experience of tourists and the full utilization of marketing efforts is their accessibility.

Solutions to the challenges of marketing strategies

The respondents indicated a recommendation to develop better road infrastructure as one of the main solutions to make marketing strategies more effective. Through maintenance and improvement of roads, which serve

the tourist sites, the tourists would reach the places with ease, which would boost the number of visitors and the satisfaction levels of the tourists. This is in line with academic suggestions that the growth of infrastructure provides the basis of tourism development and marketing campaign success (Mazrekaj, 2020; Dascălu et al., 2024).

The second solution that was suggested was to work more closely with local stakeholders and travel agencies. Respondents also stressed that the organized work on the organization of promotion activities and collective marketing campaigns would help alleviate the difficulties with accessibility through guided tours, transportation, or package packages. This type of cooperation increases awareness and makes promotional activities more accessible even in the regions that lack logistical access. Onyeocha and colleagues (2015) confirm this observation by discovering that the stakeholder cooperation balances infrastructural constraints in tourism development.

Finally, respondents also emphasized the need to use other marketing channels including online platforms, social media, and virtual tours. Marketers can also attract more tourists who might be deterred by strenuous physical access by making online content involving activities that tourists find interesting and interesting in Samburu and presenting it online. Such strategies will be able to supplement the normal marketing strategies and ensure that the interest of the tourists does not wane until the infrastructure solutions are put in place. Research indicates that a unified approach of digital marketing and infrastructural development can optimize tourist involvement and satisfaction (Dascălu et al., 2024).

Security on Sustainable Tourism

The study sought to analyze whether security matters at the county level had an effect on tourism sustainability.

Table 2: Descriptive analyses on Security on Sustainable Tourism

Statements	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	SD	Total F (%)
Crime rates in tourist areas	7 (2.6)	43 (16.2)	47 (17.7)	109 (41.1)	59 (22.3)	3.64	1.078	265 (100)
Systems for reporting security	7 (2.6)	45 (17.0)	53 (20.0)	99 (37.4)	61 (23.0)	3.61	1.096	265 (100)
Emergency response	7 (2.6)	49 (18.5)	48 (18.1)	92 (34.7)	69 (26.0)	3.63	1.134	265 (100)
Security measures	9 (3.4)	48 (18.1)	47 (17.7)	110 (41.5)	51 (19.2)	3.55	1.097	265 (100)
Security Personnel	9 (3.4)	32 (12.1)	63 (23.8)	75 (28.3)	86 (32.5)	3.74	1.136	265 (100)

Field Data, 2025

The respondents were requested to specify whether they agreed or did not agree, and to what degree they agreed, on whether rates of crime in the tourist areas affected the sustainability of tourism within Samburu East Sub-County. 41.1% agreed, 22.3% strongly agreed, and 17.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. On the other hand, 16.2% disagreed and 2.6% strongly disagreed. A mean variation of 3.64 ± 1.078 indicated that most of the respondents were in agreement with the fact that crime rates in tourist destinations have a significant effect on visitors' perceptions of safety and security. This is based on a mean rating scale where ratings greater than 3.5 indicate leaning towards agreement.

On the statement on security reporting systems, 37.4% and 23.0% agreed and strongly agreed, while 20.0%

remained neutral. Conversely, 17.0% disagreed and 2.6% strongly disagreed. A mean variation of 3.61 ± 1.096 indicated that respondents moderately agreed that effective reporting systems enhance security management at tourist areas.

For emergency response, 34.7% agreed and 26.0% strongly agreed while 18.1% neither agreed nor disagreed. On the contrary, 18.5% disagreed and 2.6% strongly disagreed. A mean variation of 3.63 ± 1.134 showed that the respondents considered emergency response as a necessary but not always effective measure for protecting tourists.

On security measures, 41.5% and 19.2% agreed and strongly agreed respectively, while 17.7% remained neutral. However, 18.1% and 3.4% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. Mean variation of 3.55 ± 1.097 shows that while the majority of respondents accepted the presence of security measures, others were not so certain about their adequacy.

Finally, among security officers, most concurrence was obtained, with 28.3% in agreement and 32.5% in strong agreement, compared to 23.8% neutral, 12.1% in disagreement, and 3.4% in strong disagreement. Strong concurrence that security officers active and visible have a significant impact on making visitors feel secure and enhancing the overall perception of safety had a mean variation of 3.74 ± 1.136 .

Challenges to Security on Sustainable Tourism

The results show that crime in tourist places is a significant issue to tourism sustainability in Samburu East Sub-County. Crime and insecurity attitudes have a powerful impact on the decision-making of tourists, which is why Tarlow (2014) notes, and this research proves that the sense of safety of the visitor directly depends on the reported crime rates. This needs to be dealt with by both minimizing real crime, but also the perception of such by being able to communicate proactively on security and showcase the safety.

The other issue is associated with reporting systems. Although most of the respondents recognize their significance, discrepancies in its functionality and accessibility render it ineffective. According to Kovari and Zimanyi (2016), sustainable tourism development requires effective reporting systems since they facilitate prompt courses of action in case of security threats. Enhancement of reporting systems by use of effective hotlines, mobile applications and tourist information centers will consequently augment prevention and response systems.

Another challenge relates to emergency response. Even though it is perceived as essential, the respondents voice grievances over the sufficiency and promptness of current actions. Kovari and Zimanyi (2016) assert that preparedness and emergency planning is a key variable that defines sustainability in tourism. To enhance emergency response, it is necessary to invest in training, equipment, and coordination of local authorities, health services, and security agencies.

The security level is another issue. Respondents recognize that they are in place but they doubt that these measures are adequate in response to the changing threats. This is in tandem with a claim by Tarlow (2014) that lack of effective or coordinated security measures may destroy the confidence of tourists. To reduce this, more resilient and better-coordinating strategies, including the incorporation of new surveillance systems, patrols as well as partnerships between the police and the community are indicated.

Solutions to Security on Sustainable Tourism

In order to improve the sustainability of tourism at Samburu East Sub-County, some solutions can be distilled based on the research's results and the available literature. To begin with, to combat the problem of crime in tourist destinations, one has to enhance community-police relations, active surveillance and regular safety education to tourists. Tarlow (2014) outlines that the perception of crime highly influences the decision-making of tourists, and thus the occurrence of crime, as well as perceived insecurity, needs to be reduced in creating confidence in Samburu as a safe destination.

Second, the reporting systems on security incidents need to be improved. By implementing the system of effective and trustworthy hotlines, online reporting tools, and linking reporting services to the tourist lodges and information centers, it can be guaranteed that the incidents will be reported effectively and in a timely manner. Kovari and Zimanyi (2016) emphasize that these mechanisms are the keys to the development of sustainable tourism because they will permit timely interventions to be implemented and increase accountability in security management.

Third, it is essential to build capacity in responding to emergencies. This can be done through provision of local authorities with better equipment, enhancing communication between police, health facilities, and local governments, and training of personnel on tourist-related crisis management. Kovari and Zimanyi (2016) state that the preparedness and responsiveness to emergencies are the main factors of sustainable tourism as it minimizes the crisis effects and ensures tourists that they are safe.

Fourth, there is the need to enhance the sufficiency of security measures that should be able to address the changing threats. Modern infrastructure (CCTV, lighting, fencing, use of patrols and technologies, like drones) can greatly increase coverage and effectiveness. Tarlow (2014) remarks that the inadequate or ineffective measures would decrease tourist confidence, whereas effective, conspicuous measures would boost the impression of security and safety.

Lastly, the security personnel should have increased capacity and visibility. The number of deployed officers in tourist hotspots and training them on how to handle security as well as hospitality and encouraging them to support the community as volunteers can enhance the effectiveness of the officers. George (2017) discovered that visible security personnel (both professional and visible) greatly enhanced the feeling of security among tourists in South Africa, which greatly reflects the case in Samburu.

Overall, the security challenges in Samburu East Sub-County can be solved in the areas of crime prevention, enhanced reporting, enhanced emergency response, enhanced security measures, and enhanced characteristics of the security personnel in terms of training and visibility. The cumulative effect of these interventions is to enhance safety perceptions, develop tourism confidence and ensure long term sustainability of tourism industry.

Cultural Practices

The table below presents the descriptive analysis on the variable cultural practices.

Table 3: Descriptive analysis Cultural Practices

Statements	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	SD	Total F (%)
Cultural events and festivals	6 (2.3)	45 (17.0)	47 (17.7)	104 (39.2)	63 (23.8)	3.65	1.087	265 (100)
Cultural awareness programs	14 (5.3)	45 (15.8)	41 (15.5)	93 (35.1)	75 (28.3)	3.65	1.197	265 (100)
Preserve cultural heritage sites	11 (4.2)	35 (13.2)	48 (18.1)	97 (36.6)	74 (27.9)	3.71	1.133	265 (100)
Integration of local cultural practices	10 (3.8)	41 (15.5)	47 (17.7)	96 (36.2)	71 (26.8)	3.67	1.139	265 (100)
Cultural practices	10 (3.8)	40 (15.1)	45 (17.0)	102 (38.5)	68 (25.7)	3.67	1.126	265 (100)

Field Data, 2025

The respondents were asked to say whether cultural festivals and events contributed to tourism in Samburu East Sub-County and whether they agreed or disagreed with that. 39.2% agreed and 23.8% strongly agreed, but 17.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. 17.0% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. A mean standard deviation of 3.65 ± 1.087 implied that most of the responders were of the opinion that cultural events and festivals contribute significantly to the sustainability of tourism.

On the statement concerning cultural awareness programs, 35.1% of the respondents agreed and 28.3% strongly agreed, but 15.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. In contrast, 15.8% disagreed and 5.3% strongly disagreed. The mean standard deviation of 3.65 ± 1.197 revealed that the respondents moderately agreed that cultural awareness programs enhance cultural identity and entice tourists.

For preservation of cultural heritage sites, 36.6% and 27.9% agreed firmly and 18.1% were neutral. On the other hand, 13.2% and 4.2% disagreed and strongly disagreed. The mean standard deviation of 3.71 ± 1.133 showed stronger agreement with the need to preserve cultural heritage sites as a way of perpetuating Samburu's cultural resources as well as its tourism potential.

On the statement concerning integration of local cultural practices into tourism, 36.2% agreed and 26.8% strongly agreed, while 17.7% were neutral. A smaller proportion, 15.5% disagreed and 3.8% strongly disagreed. A mean variation of 3.67 ± 1.139 reflected general agreement that blending local traditions with tourism products creates authentic experiences that appeal to visitors.

Finally, on the role of cultural practices in general, 38.5% agreed and 25.7% strongly agreed, while 17.0% were neutral. Conversely, 15.1% disagreed and 3.8% strongly disagreed. A mean variation of 3.67 ± 1.126 indicated a positive perception, showing that respondents viewed cultural practices as essential pillars of sustainable tourism.

Challenges of Cultural Practices on Sustainable Tourism

Among the challenges that were found out is the fact that cultural heritage sites are not preserved well with some respondents saying that sites and traditions are not being given proper care. This is almost similar to the observation of Timothy and Nyaupane (2009) that, in the absence of conscious conservation, cultural heritage assets will eventually face degradation, thus making them less valuable in the long term to tourism.

The other obstacle is associated with the insufficient penetration of the cultural awareness programs. Even though several of the respondents understand their significance in the enhancement of cultural identity and visitors, there is a significant percentage of those who are either indifferent or do not believe that they influence the things. This is an indication that there are loopholes in the implementation and promotion of such programs. Richards (2018) notes that cultural events and programs poorly organized or underfunded in most cases do not maximize their prospects to improve tourism.

The research also indicates that there are difficulties in adopting the local cultural practices into the tourism products. Although the interviewees mostly concurred with their value, some of them differed with it showing some reservations concerning the extent to which traditional practices are well integrated in tourism experience. According to Smith and Robinson (2006), cultural authenticity is necessary in cultural integration with not being authentic, which may restrict the attraction of tourists because more tourists seek authentic cultural experiences.

And lastly is the issue of sustainability with culture because some stakeholders fear that the meaning of the traditions may be lost as they are commercialized. Respondents observed that unless tourism was properly managed, it would end up exploiting instead of supporting cultural practices which reduced their cohesiveness as components of community identity.

Solutions to Cultural Practices on Sustainable Tourism

To address these issues, a number of solutions are suggested. To start with, the conservation of cultural

heritage sites should take precedence by community-based conservation and development of protection of traditions. According to Timothy and Nyaupane (2009), preserving heritage resources not only helps in maintaining cultural identity but also helps in ensuring future appeal of destinations.

Second, cultural awareness programs are to be increased and more resourceful in reaching more populations. According to Richards (2018), properly organised festivals and cultural events create pride in their community as well as being a potent tourist attraction instrument. This implies that Samburu is able to enhance its cultural profile, by organizing awareness, and periodical festivals.

Third, it is crucial to improve the incorporation of the local practices in the tourism industry. When the tourism products are incorporated with dances, attire, crafts and other traditions they provide real experiences that are attractive to the visitor. According to Smith and Robinson (2006), the authentic cultural integration creates inclusivity and differentiation, which provide destinations with an advantage in international tourism.

Lastly, the association between sustainability and culture will make sure that the growth of tourism is not in conflict with the community values. This entails enhancing the cultural tourism paradigms that are focused on ensuring the ownership rights of the locals are upheld, tradition is not exploited and that the hosts and the visitors mutually benefit. Through this, Sambaru can use cultural promotion as a vehicle to long-term sustainable tourism.

Natural Attractions in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development

The study sought to analyze whether natural attractions promoted sustainable tourism development. The analysis was supported by descriptive, model summary, Coefficients and ANOVA. The table below presents the descriptive analysis on Natural Attractions on tourism sustainability.

Table 4: Natural Attractions in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development

Statements	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	SD	Total F (%)
Accessibility of natural attractions	23 (8.7)	51 (19.2)	40 (15.1)	111 (41.9)	40 (15.1)	3.35	1.201	265 (100)
Conservation initiatives	12 (4.5)	36 (13.6)	47 (17.7)	85 (32.1)	85 (32.1)	3.74	1.177	265 (100)
Customer relations practices	9 (3.4)	48 (18.1)	41 (15.5)	96 (36.2)	71 (26.8)	3.65	1.155	265 (100)
Cleanliness of natural attractions	9 (3.4)	43 (16.2)	46 (17.4)	96 (36.6)	70 (26.4)	3.66	1.133	265 (100)
Promote and manage natural attractions	11 (4.2)	34 (12.8)	60 (22.6)	93 (35.1)	67 (25.3)	3.67	1.126	265 (100)

Field Data, 2025

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on issues relating to the management and promotion of natural attractions in Samburu East Sub-County. On the accessibility of natural attractions, 41.9% agreed and 15.1% strongly agreed, while 19.2% disagreed and 8.7% strongly disagreed. A mean of 3.35 ± 1.201 shows that while a significant number supported the statement, accessibility remains a moderate concern compared to other parameters.

Regarding conservation initiatives, 32.1% agreed and another 32.1% strongly agreed, while 13.6% disagreed and 4.5% strongly disagreed. With a mean of 3.74 ± 1.177 , the results indicate that conservation initiatives were strongly acknowledged as vital in sustaining tourism attractions.

On customer relations practices, 36.2% agreed and 26.8% strongly agreed, while 18.1% disagreed. The mean score of 3.65 ± 1.155 suggests that customer relations are well recognized but with room for improvement.

For cleanliness of natural attractions, 36.6% agreed and 26.4% strongly agreed, while 16.2% disagreed and 3.4% strongly disagreed. The mean of 3.66 ± 1.133 indicates strong agreement that cleanliness was maintained, though not universally.

Finally, on whether the county promotes and manages natural attractions effectively, 35.1% agreed and 25.3% strongly agreed, while 12.8% disagreed and 4.2% strongly disagreed. With a mean of 3.67 ± 1.126 , it can be inferred that the county government has made commendable efforts in promoting natural attractions, though further improvements are needed.

In conclusion, an average mean score of 3.61 ± 1.158 across the parameters suggests that most respondents were in agreement that natural attractions in Samburu East are fairly well-managed, with conservation initiatives and cleanliness being rated more positively compared to accessibility. Promotions and management of natural attractions (Mean = 3.67, SD = 1.126), cleanliness of natural attractions (Mean = 3.66, SD = 1.133) and customer relations practices (Mean = 3.65, SD = 1.155) also had a high mean score. This indicates a good awareness that visitor's experience of tourism serves a critical role in boosting the management, sanitation and customer experience.

Challenges to Natural Attractions

The research demonstrates that there are some issues in managing and promoting natural attractions in Samburu East Sub-County. One of the obstacles is accessibility, because some natural attractions are inaccessible because of the lack of infrastructure and the existence of rough surfaces. This will reduce the number of tourists visiting these sites and hence their full potential. Stone and Nyaupane (2016) note that the issue of accessibility in the protected areas still causes a major limitation to exploiting the tourism points, which is also the case with Samburu East.

Visitors and customer relations also pose a challenge. Though respondents are mostly aware of the significance of good customer service, they observe that some holes exist in terms of the quality of engagement between service-givers and tourists. The poor relationship with customers can influence the level of satisfaction and discourage the repeat visit, which will hamper the growth of tourism.

Environmental management and cleanness of the natural attractions, though mostly understood, are not always observed. There are places where sanitation is lax and this is a concern to the ecological maintenance and tourist attractiveness. As Honey (2008) puts it, the issue of cleanliness in the natural sites is paramount to realizing the concept of sustainability, which implies that the existing gaps in the area can result in reduced competitiveness of Samburu as a tourist attraction.

Natural attractions also have difficulties in terms of promotion and marketing. The respondents note that though the county has done a commendable job, the strategies are still a weak point to make Samburu East the best eco-tourism destination. Poor marketing and poor coordination minimize visibility in a very competitive tourism market.

Solutions to challenges on Natural Attractions

A number of solutions are suggested to solve these problems. By enhancing accessibility by developing infrastructure, like, improving roads, increasing signs, etc., tourist numbers to natural attractions would greatly increase. According to Stone and Nyaupane (2016), it is essential to minimize the barriers to access to maximize the tourism potential and infrastructure development is one of the areas of focus.

Another solution is to reinforce conservation efforts. The respondents place a lot of value on the idea of preserving wildlife and natural sites to have long-term sustainability. Akama and Kieti (2007) observe that the conservation and sound management of the natural attractions are the key to sustaining tourism, and in this

respect, there is a need to increase the community participation in the conservation and the protection of the resources.

There is also the need to improve visitor experiences via better practices in customer relations. Training of tourism employees on professionalism, cultural sensitivity and hospitality can be provided to enhance customer satisfaction and subsequent visits. This echoes the stance of Honey (2008) that visitor satisfaction is directly associated with the management practices and environmental stewardship.

It is also crucial to maintain a high level of environmental management and cleanliness. Education (marriage campaigns and awareness creation) and community-oriented activities like cleanup exercises can make sure the natural sites are beautiful and create a feeling of ownership among the locals. Honey (2008) posits that places that are well maintained do not only attract tourists but also ensure that long-term sustainability is maintained.

Lastly, promotion and marketing needs to be intensified. This can be done by conducting organized campaigns, partnership with tour operators and use of digital platforms to promote Samburu East as a destination of unique natural resources. Akama and Kieti (2007) also highlight that effective conservation and robust promotion are components that expand ecological provisions and economic advancement and hence this is one of the key entry points to the region.

Infrastructure on Sustainable Tourism Development

The research aimed to ascertain the effect of infrastructure on sustainable tourism development. This was analyzed via descriptive statistics, model summary, Coefficients analysis and ANOVA. The table below presents the descriptive analysis on Infrastructure on Sustainable.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics-Infrastructure on Sustainable Tourism Development

Statements	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	SD	Total F (%)
Accommodation facilities	9 (3.4)	47 (17.7)	48 (18.1)	110 (41.5)	51 (19.2)	3.55	1.093	265 (100)
Transport connectivity	11 (4.2)	48 (18.1)	51 (19.2)	78 (29.4)	77 (29.1)	3.61	1.198	265 (100)
Digital infrastructure	12 (4.5)	47 (17.7)	46 (17.4)	105 (39.6)	55 (20.8)	3.54	1.138	265 (100)
Tourist information centers	11 (4.2)	45 (17.0)	51 (19.2)	81 (30.6)	77 (29.1)	3.63	1.186	265 (100)
Current state of infrastructure	14 (5.3)	43 (16.2)	81 (30.6)	76 (28.7)	51 (19.2)	3.40	1.128	265 (100)

Field Data, 2025

The study sought to assess the status on infrastructure necessary for sustainable tourism. Accommodation facilities had a mean score of (3.55) and SD of (1.093) majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed. Transport connectivity had a mean score of (3.61) with an SD of 1.198, majority of the responders agreed and strongly agreed. Digital infrastructure had a mean score of (3.54) with an SD of 1.138, most of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed. While the aspect of current state of infrastructure had a mean score of (3.40) which was the least and an SD of (1.128), most of the respondents on this aspect were neutral and some agreed suggesting the respondents were not satisfied. The responders were requested to specify their level of agreement or disagreement on whether accommodation facilities influence tourism in Samburu East Sub-

County. The findings show that 41.5% agreed, 19.2% strongly agreed, 18.1% were neutral, 17.7% disagreed, while 3.4% strongly disagreed. With a mean of 3.55 ± 1.093 , the results indicate that most of respondents agreed that accommodation facilities contribute significantly to tourism development in the region.

On transport connectivity, 29.4% of the respondents agreed, 29.1% strongly agreed, 19.2% were neutral, 18.1% disagreed, while 4.2% strongly disagreed. A mean of 3.61 ± 1.198 suggests that transport infrastructure was considered an important factor influencing accessibility and attractiveness of the area for tourists.

Regarding digital infrastructure, 39.6% agreed, 20.8% strongly agreed, 17.4% were neutral, 17.7% disagreed, while 4.5% strongly disagreed. The mean of 3.54 ± 1.138 indicates that most respondents recognized the role of ICT and internet access in supporting modern tourism operations such as marketing and reservations.

On tourist information centers, 30.6% of the respondents agreed, 29.1% strongly agreed, 19.2% were neutral, 17.0% disagreed, while 4.2% strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.63 ± 1.186 shows that most respondents valued the role of information centers in enhancing tourists' experiences and decision-making.

Finally, when asked about the current state of infrastructure in the region, 30.6% were neutral, 28.7% agreed, 19.2% strongly agreed, 16.2% disagreed, while 5.3% strongly disagreed. The mean of 3.40 ± 1.128 suggested that although responders acknowledged infrastructural development, concerns remain about adequacy and modernization of facilities to fully support tourism.

The researcher points out a number of issues concerning the infrastructure required in sustainable tourism in Samburu East Sub-County. Although the accommodation facilities are accepted to be important, their size and quality is poor, which influences the capacity of the region to accommodate more tourists or even towards international standards. This is in line with Giddy and Webb (2018) who assert that poor accommodation facilities are a deterrence to tourist satisfaction, especially in emerging destinations.

Connectivity in terms of transport also becomes a major challenge. The respondents stressed that accesses to major natural and cultural attractions are hindered by poor road networks and underdeveloped transport systems. This is aligned with Giddy and Webb (2018) who have emphasized the centrality of transport infrastructure in the development of accessibility as well as the total experiences of tourists.

Digital infrastructure, although it is becoming significant in tourism, is underdeveloped in Samburu East. The lack of internet access and unreliable mobile connectivity will hinder the modern form of tourism activities like online booking, internet payments and marketing. Adeola and Evans (2019) also indicate an increased importance of ICT in enhancing tourism competitiveness in Africa, and therefore, lack of effective digital systems makes Samburu less competitive.

The other difficulty is associated with the low effectiveness of the tourist information centers. As such facilities are available, their services are not fully exploited and developed to offer complete guidance and orientation. According to Rogerson and Rogerson (2020), ill-managed or underdeveloped tourist information centers limit tourist movement, which is experienced in Samburu East both domestically and internationally.

Lastly, the overall infrastructure in the area communicates poor infrastructure quality and technological development. The respondents noted that although development activities are evident, several facilities are old or in a poor condition. The region is at risk of falling behind in the competitiveness of the other destinations unless they continue to improve.

Sustainable Tourism Development

The table presents the model summary on regression analysis based Infrastructure on Sustainable Tourism Development.

Table 6: Descriptive analysis- Tourism Sustainability on Sustainable Tourism Development

Statements	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	SD	Total F (%)
Increased number of visitors improvement in tourism sustainability	10 (3.8)	35 (13.2)	48 (18)	117 (44.2)	55 (20.8)	3.65	10.67	265 (100)
Changes and increased visiting patterns	10 (3.8)	32 (12.1)	63 (23.8)	91 (34.3)	69 (26.0)	3.67	1.102	265 (100)
Tourism improvements	10 (3.8)	36 (13.6)	55 (20.8)	96 (36.2)	68 (25.7)	3.66	1.113	265 (100)
Efficient utilization of funds	13 (4.9)	30 (11.3)	63 (23.8)	108 (40.8)	51 (19.2)	3.58	1.074	265 (100)
Growing number of tourism	14 (5.3)	35 (13.2)	55 (20.8)	95 (35.8)	66 (24.9)	3.62	1.149	265 (100)

Field Data, 2025

The respondents were requested to specify their level of concurrence or disagreement on whether increased visitors and related factors influence tourism sustainability in Samburu East Sub-County.

On the statement that increased number of visitors improves tourism sustainability, 44.2% agreed, 20.8% strongly agreed, 18% neither agreed nor disagreed, 13.2% disagreed, while 3.8% strongly disagreed. A mean of 3.65 ± 1.067 suggests that most of respondents were in agreement that increased visitors contribute positively to tourism sustainability.

Regarding changes and increased visiting patterns, 34.3% agreed, 26% strongly agreed, 23.8% were neutral, 12.1% disagreed, while 3.8% strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.67 ± 1.102 suggests that most respondents agreed that visiting patterns serves a vital role in sustaining tourism in the region.

For the statement on tourism improvements, 36.2% agreed, 25.7% strongly agreed, 20.8% were neutral, 13.6% disagreed, and 3.8% strongly disagreed. The mean of 3.66 ± 1.113 indicates general agreement among the respondents that tourism improvements contribute to sustainability.

On the issue of efficient utilization of funds, 40.8% agreed, 19.2% strongly agreed, 23.8% were neutral, 11.3% disagreed, and 4.9% strongly disagreed. A mean of 3.58 ± 1.074 reveals that respondents generally agreed that financial management is critical for sustaining tourism in Samburu East.

Finally, for growing number of tourism opportunities, 35.8% agreed, 24.9% strongly agreed, 20.8% were neutral, 13.2% disagreed, and 5.3% strongly disagreed. The mean of 3.62 ± 1.149 confirms that most respondents believed growth in tourism opportunities enhances sustainability.

Challenges of Sustainable Tourism Development

This research discloses that although more visitation has a favorable impact on the sustainability of tourism in Samburu East Sub-County, there are a number of issues that still exist. A major issue is connected with the visitor numbers management. According to the respondents, unless there is adequate control, increased numbers of visitors can strain the natural resources, cultural assets and infrastructure. The same researcher, Butler (2019), noted that despite the sustainability brought by the increase in the number of visitors, the absence of proper management can cause excessive exploitation of resources and natural degradation. The other problem is associated with a shift in the visiting patterns. Although seasonal variation in the kind of visitors visiting is a good idea, seasonal changes in demand introduce uncertainties to local businesses and communities which depend on tourism. Respondents pointed out that unpredictable tourist inflows restrict the

predictability of tourism revenue and makes it hard to plan in the long term.

Areas where there were gaps were also found in tourism improvements and development. Even though facilities and services have been improved, a few respondents were of the view that the development has failed to keep pace with the rising demand of the visitors. Giddy and Rogerson (2021) state that inadequate or disproportionate advances in infrastructure and services limit tourism development, and this problem is evident in Samburu East. Another urgent challenge was noted as financial management. Inefficiencies and misuse of transparency in use of tourism revenues raised concern among respondents. According to Mbaiwa (2017), weak accountability in fund utilization undermines the equitable distribution of tourism benefits, particularly at the community level.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research intended to establish the determinants of tourism and tourism sustainability in Samburu County. This was achieved through the four objectives of the study and subsequent establishment of whether there existed a connection between the independent variables and dependent variables by testing the hypothesis using simple linear regression. This study was guided by the following objectives; Investigate the effects of marketing strategies on sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County; Analyze the effects of security on sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County; Assess the role of natural attractions in promoting sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County; Determine the effect of infrastructure on sustainable tourism development in Samburu East Sub-County.

The following hypothesis were tested. Ho1: There is no significant connection between marketing and sustainable tourism development in Samburu County. Ho2: There is no significant connection between security and sustainable tourism development in Samburu County. Ho3: There is no significant connection between natural resources and sustainable tourism development in Samburu County. Ho4: There was no significant connection between infrastructure and sustainable tourism development in Samburu County.

The first objective was to investigate the effects of marketing strategies on sustainable tourism development. The independent variable was marketing strategies while the dependent variable was sustainable tourism. Table 4.2 revealed that the effects of marketing strategies influenced tourism sustainability since the mean score for marketing was. This perception was supported by the regression analysis used by the researcher to predict the existence of a connection between the two variables. The model summary in table 4.2.1 revealed that the effect of marketing strategies predicted the changes in sustainable tourism development in Samburu County. This was supported by R-squared value of 0.858, suggesting that 85.8% of the changes in achieving sustainable tourism was influenced by the marketing strategies. This suggests that the effects of marketing strategies have a significant influence on sustainable tourism development. Further the Coefficient analysis presenting with a p-value of 0.015, which was less than the required level of 0.05, suggest that effects of marketing strategies have a significant influence on sustainable tourism. This was further supported by the (Beta) of 0.927 which suggests effects of marketing strategies having a significant influence on sustainable tourism in Samburu County. The ANOVA analysis also affirm that effects of marketing strategies have significance influence on sustainable tourism as suggested by the analysis. Since the F-value was 1600.802, while the p-value (Sig) was 0.000 less than the required p- value of 0.05, therefore the model was statistically significant. Based on the findings the study rejected the null hypothesis.

The research study has shown that visitor development is a very important factor that leads to sustainability because the development in the number of visitors relates directly to the community development and cultural conservation. Alteration of visiting patterns especially diversification of tourists that feature both domestic and international visitors proved to stabilize the sector in various seasons and this overdependence became less evident. Along with this, the enhancement and further development of tourism infrastructure and services was also noted to be necessary in attracting repeat tourism and also competitiveness of the tourism sector. The

respondents also highlighted on the importance of financial accountability and clear use of tourism revenue so as to be confident of ensuring long-term trust and effective reinvestment in the sector. Finally, the growth of tourism opportunities, such as cultural festivals, eco-tourism, and wildlife safaris, was identified as a key factor in broadening visitor experiences while strengthening the sustainability of tourism.

The second objective was to analyze the security on sustainable tourism development and to accept or reject the null hypothesis. The regression analysis presented in the model summary, coefficients and ANOVA presented a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. The model summary revealed that the correlation coefficient (R) was 0.924, suggesting a very strong positive connection between the two variables. This was further supported by the fact that R-squared value was 0.853, thus 85.3% of the variance or change in tourism sustainability was because of the influence of effects of security. This suggests that security was a major predictor of sustainable tourism in Samburu. These findings further confirm that the model was a good fit for the study. In addition, with a p-value <0.05 ; the model was considered statistically significant, suggesting that the security had a significant effect on sustainable tourism.

The aforementioned findings were supported by ANOVA test where the p-value (Sig). of 0.000 which was <0.05 . Based on the findings the study rejected the null hypothesis.

The perceptions of the safety were also one of the most dominant determinants of tourist confidence and respondents pointed that the presence of visible security personnel and low levels of crime are important to the welcoming environment. The theme of preparedness and response also highlighted the significance of efficient emergency systems and effective reporting mechanisms, which are the determinants of how quickly and efficiently security issues can be resolved. Furthermore, the theme of the adequacy of measures showed that there are initiatives, but they are not fulfilled, and more extensive and coordinated initiatives are necessary to ensure the security of visitors and residents. Lastly, the topic of trust and stability was present, where good security does not just assure of safety but also harvests faith in Samburu as a safe place to be. This trust is essential for sustaining tourism growth and ensuring long-term benefits for the community.

The third objective was assessing the role of natural attractions in promoting sustainable tourism development. The findings revealed that majority of the respondent's generally perceived natural attractions in the area at a moderate level. In addition, the model summary suggested that there was a robust favorable connection between Natural Attractions and Sustainable Tourism. The R Square Change was 0.816, and the F Change was 1167.434 with a p-value (Sig. F Change) of 0.000 less than the accepted threshold of 0.05, the model was considered statistically significant, confirming that Natural Attractions had a significant effect on sustainable Tourism. In addition, the Coefficients results suggested similar findings. The t-value of 34.168 and the p-value of 0.000, also suggested a highly statistically significance, due to a p-value which was below the required threshold of 0.05. From the ANOVA test the F-statistic was 1167.434, with a p-value (Sig.) of 0.000 less than 0.05, suggesting a highly statistically significant relationship. Therefore, the study rejected the null hypothesis.

The issue of accessibility became one of the main issues, and participants mentioned that the poor infrastructure restricts the number of tourists that can access some sites. The conservation and sustainability theme promoted the importance of protecting wildlife and natural resources in order to guarantee a long-term tourism payoff. The respondents as well have mentioned quality experience of the visitor and relationship of the visitor and that quality customer service practices increase tourist satisfaction and leads to repeated visits by the visitors. On the same note, cleanliness and environmental management were found crucial since a clean and well-managed environment is more attractive and enhances the attractiveness of attractions. Finally, the topic of natural resources promotion and marketing was emphasized and the stakeholders requested more marketing and coordinated actions to make Samburu East a competitive eco-tourism destination.

The results on the impact of infrastructure on sustainable tourism development showed that the F-statistic

723.949 p-value of 0.000 indicated that the relationship was very significant. The coefficients analysis conducted on table 4.5.2 where the t-value of infrastructure was 26.906 with a p-value of 0.000 confirmed that there was a statistically significant relationship. Lastly, the ANOVA findings also indicated that there was a level of significant effect with the F-statistic of 723.949 that tested the general significance of the model and the p-value was 0.000.

The issue of accessibility and connectivity was also found to be a significant issue, with the respondents highlighting that better road networks and transport infrastructure is essential in the ease of access to cultural and natural attractions. The digital transformation theme also played a major role, with internet connectivity and mobile connectivity being regarded as a way of making bookings, digital payments, and marketing products online. The respondents also emphasized the need to maintain and upgrade the facilities because they said that the condition of poor maintenance lowers the tourism potential of the area. Another important factor was identified as information and guidance, where an efficient tourist information center positively influences orientation and experience of the visitors. Finally, the aspect of infrastructure sustainability was also mentioned, as it is necessary to develop infrastructure that can not only help tourists but also sustain the local population in the long run.

Regarding the expansion of tourism, a visitor growth was perceived by the respondents as a sustainability driver as the growth of tourists leads to community, preservation of culture, and creation of new opportunities. The shift in the visiting habits, especially the balance between native and foreign visitors was observed to stabilize the industry in the season. The need to develop and improve tourism had the theme of competitiveness and the importance of improving facilities and services to be able to maintain a repeat visit. Fiscal responsibility and the effective use of funds was pointed out to be very vital in the effective management of the tourism revenues to be transparently used to serve the society. Lastly, the growth of tourism opportunities through diversification such as cultural festivals, eco-tourism, and wildlife safaris was identified as key to broadening tourist experiences while reinforcing the long-term sustainability of the sector.

The study concluded that the independent variables had a highly statistically significant effect on the dependent variable sustainable tourism in Samburu County. Both marketing strategies and security measures were found to have a significant effect on sustainable tourism while natural attractions promote sustainable tourism through the attraction of both local international tourists. Infrastructure improvements, which include roads and accommodation, were considered critical in supporting and sustaining tourism.

With respect to the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were presented;

The researcher recommends the involvement of both the National and County government and tourism stakeholders locally and globally. This is to promote more current strategies in promoting and sustaining tourism in Samburu County.

The County government and National government should develop strategies of security that can be easily adopted at the county of Samburu to support the various stakeholders such as the tour firms, hotel industry and the KWS. Samburu County is prone to security challenges such as those of inter-community and were found to have a serious effect on various aspects of income generating to the County government. Therefore, the National government should support tourism in Samburu County for the benefit GDP of Kenya and as an income generating activity that can enable Samburu County to generate its own funding.

Conserving and preserving of natural attractions enables the County to have the required resources of managing and maintaining the resources. Consistent monitoring of the natural attractions enables the County government to sustain the resources by maintaining them through environmental experts and providing required security. This in turn attracts more local and international tourists.

To sustain tourism, it is important for the Samburu County to work with the National government in

identifying roads that need repair and other infrastructure. This creates access to the natural attractions and serves to improve on security of the Samburu County.

Further Research

Based on the findings the study presents the following areas of further research;

- Comparative studies between Samburu County and other Counties in Kenya based on the same title.
- Longitudinal studies on Sustainable tourism in Samburu County.
- Studies on the perspectives of both local and international tourists about how they perceive tourist attractions in Kenya.

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