
**ASSESSMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOSTILE COMMUNITIES ON TOURISM
DESTINATION IN UGANDA. A CASE STUDY OF MT. ELGON NATIONAL PARK****1 Nsangi Sawuya, 2 Namuyonga Rebecca****1, 2 Metropolitan International University****ABSTRACT**

The study aimed at assessment of the relationship between hostile communities on tourism destination in Uganda with a case study of Mt Elgon national park and it was guided by the following objectives; To examine the attitude of hostile communities towards tourism sector, to examine how tourism decision making has affected communities around Mt Elgon and to examine challenges faced by hostile communities as a result of tourism decision making. This study used stratified random sampling to ensure even distribution of males to females. In probability random sampling, each subject from the population is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each subject has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process. Data collection involved gathering both numeric information as well as text information so that both quantitative and qualitative information are accrued. Descriptive data was collected through a questionnaire developed by the researcher; qualitative data was collected by FGDs and content analysis. From the findings, 32% strongly agreed their lives became better because of tourism development that is through creation of employment opportunities, 24% to agreed, while 6% were undecided and 20% disagreed while 18% strongly disagreed. This shows that most of hostile communities around Mt. Elgon national park have positive attitude towards tourism sector. Park officials should be trained in conflict resolution, principles of non-formal education and the use of participatory approaches. In order to improve the prospects for conservation of the forest and wildlife resources of Mt. Elgon National Park, there must be an effective education programme which aims at convincing people of the significance of conservation and its benefits to them.

Key words: hostile, communities, tourism and destination**Background of the study**

The tourism sector is one of the most important drivers of social and economic development for underdeveloped and developing countries (Ronald et al., 2023). Worldwide, 1.4 billion people travelled in 2018, with 1.7 trillion dollars in exports (Victor et al., 2022). Additionally, over 360 million people in 2019 were employed in the tourism sector (WTTC, 2020). With the consistent increase in travel around the world, not only economic impacts are experienced by communities and wider nations, but there are also social, cultural, environmental impacts (Suzan &

Kazaara, 2023). There are even political (Çelik& Uygun, 2017) and social psychological impacts (Oromo et al., 2023). Tourism has become an important phenomenon for both tourists and residents as they interact. Tourism has been for a long time recognized as an important form in economic development in developing countries, contributing to foreign exchange earnings, gross domestic product and employment opportunities (Christopher & Felex, 2022). According to January 20 14 UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, international tourist arrivals

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grew by 5% in 2013, reaching a record 1,087 million arrivals (Christopher & Micheal, 2022). Despite global economic challenges, international tourism results were well above expectations, with an additional 52 million international tourists travelling the world in 2013. For 2014, LINWTO forecasts 4% to 4.5% growth and this is again, above the long-term projections (Ivan & Kazaara, 2023). In 2013, the global Travel & Tourism industry's total contribution to GDP grew by 3.0%, faster than other global sectors such as manufacturing, retail and financial and public services, outperforming overall GDP growth for the third consecutive year (Frank et al., 2023).

Problem statement

The Republic of Uganda occupies 241,038 km², of which 81.8% is covered by land and 18.2% by water. It has an estimated population of 36 million with annual growth rate of 3.24 % (Rashid et al., 2023). Uganda is bordered by the Republic of South Sudan to the north, Kenya to the east, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west, and Tanzania and Rwanda to the South. Today, the country is a major African destination that has developed since the 1950s. It is divided into four main administrative regions (Ninsiima et al., 2023) with the Western region having most of the attractions (Figure 1). The country's seven wonders (key attractions) are Gorilla Gorillaberingei (the star attraction), Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth National Park, Murchison Falls National Park, the snow-capped peaks of the Rwenzori Mountains, Kibale Forest National Park, and Lake Victoria the source of the river Nile

Specific objectives

1. To examine the attitude of hostile communities towards tourism sector.

(Baluku 2012). Mount Elgon is the last of the seven with a caldera believed to be one of the world's largest and still undisturbed by human activities. The country is also known for an equatorial landscape punctuated with scenery and unique physical features (Christopher & Micheal, 2022).

The conversion of Mt. Elgon Forest reserve into a national park has however, exacerbated the conflicts between the conservation agencies and the local communities (Kazaara & Kazaara, 2023). The conversion has meant that access and use of forest and wildlife resources by the local people has become restricted. Until recently, national parks were governed by the Wildlife statute 1996 (now Act 2000) which restricted resource exploitation. The Act was ill suited to the needs and problems of local communities living around National Parks. According to Hough (1988), the "fences of fines" approach resulted in conflicts with local communities over use of natural resources (Shamim et al., 2023). Mount Elgon National Park was formerly a natural forest reserve with a variety of wild animals. Under the forest department the biodiversity declined in the 1970s (Malpas, 1980). Nearly 25,000 ha of forest were destroyed by the local communities for agriculture, settlement and resource extraction (Kazaara & Christopher, 2023). Despite their eviction in 1989, the park continues to experience intense pressure from the local communities for land, wildlife and forest resources, which has resulted in conflicts with park authorities.

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2. To examine how tourism decision making has affected communities around Mt Elgon N.P
3. To examine challenges faced by hostile communities as a result of tourism decision making

Methodology

Research design.

Qualitative method according to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003), Qualitative research is a general term pertaining to investigate methodologies and techniques described as naturalistic, ethnographic, field, anthropological or observer research. This type of research gave emphasis on the value of looking on variables in their natural setting where they are commonly found. Comprehensive data is collected by open ended questions providing direct quotations. The interview played a vital role in the investigation. Qualitative research was used to study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. It was used because issues and subjects covered can be evaluated in depth and in details.

Target Population

This study used stratified random sampling to ensure even distribution of males to females. In probability random sampling, each subject from the population is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each subject has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process. Only probability samples provided estimates of precision and offer the opportunity to generalize the findings to the population of interest from the sample population (Kothari, 2004). Thus, the researcher covered 100 respondents from Mt. Elgon National Park and the researcher selectively took only 50 respondents.

Sampling and sample size

Sampling is the process of obtaining the information about an entire population by examining only a part of it. Also, a sample, according to Cohen. (2000), is a small group of the respondent's deacon from the population in which the researcher is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusion. Sampling was done for the purpose of measuring some elements of the population and drawing conclusions regarding the entire population. The study focused on the relationship between hostile communities and tourism destination in Uganda. Therefore, the sample size was 50 respondents, selected from different areas of Queen Elizabeth National Park. However, to avoid bias both men and women represented this study.

Purposely, the sample size was selected from the following categories.

Table 1: Sample size of the respondents

Category	Sample size
Managers	5
Employees	10
Community members	25
Tourists	10

TOTAL	50
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Source; Researcher, 2022

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection involved gathering both numeric information as well as text information so that both quantitative and qualitative information are accrued. Descriptive data was collected through a questionnaire developed by the researcher; qualitative data was collected by FGDs and content analysis.

Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a set of questions used to gather information in a survey. It had a technique designed for collecting primary data by eliciting written responses from the subject. The questionnaire contained both close ended and open-ended questions. The closed ended questions were easier to analyze, because they were in their immediate usable form. Open ended questionnaires engaged the respondents more and in-depth information was accrued. The respondents too had a chance to express their feelings and attitudes.

Data Analysis

The data collected was mainly qualitative in nature. The researcher examined raw data in order to find linkages between the research objectives and the outcomes with reference to the original research questions. This provided the researcher with an opportunity to triangulate data in order to strengthen the research findings and conclusions. According to Berkowitz (1996), a researcher should move beyond initial impressions to improve the likelihood of accurate and reliable findings and therefore the data was sorted in many different ways to expose or create new insights and deliberately looked for conflicting data to disconfirm the analyses. The researcher categorized, tabulate, and recombine data to address the initial propositions of the study, and conduct cross-checks of facts and discrepancies in accounts using SPSS (Nelson et al., 2022).

RESULTS

Table 1: Attitude of hostile communities towards tourism sector

Statement	F	SA	F	A	F	NS	F	D	F	SD
Tourism development in general has put our local communities offside.	20	40%	10	20%	5	10%	9	18%	6	12%
The general quality of life has become better because of tourism development.	16	32%	12	24%	3	6%	10	20%	9	18%
The arrival of international tourists in my community has helped me to have a	12	24%	10	20%	2	4%	15	30%	11	22%

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better perspective of the world										
Tourism development has interfered with our	15	30%	14	28%	4	8%	10	20%	7	14%
culture and heritage										
My community would be a dull place if tourism did not develop to this extent.	10	20%	5	10%	5	10%	17	34%	13	26%

Source: *primary data, 2022*

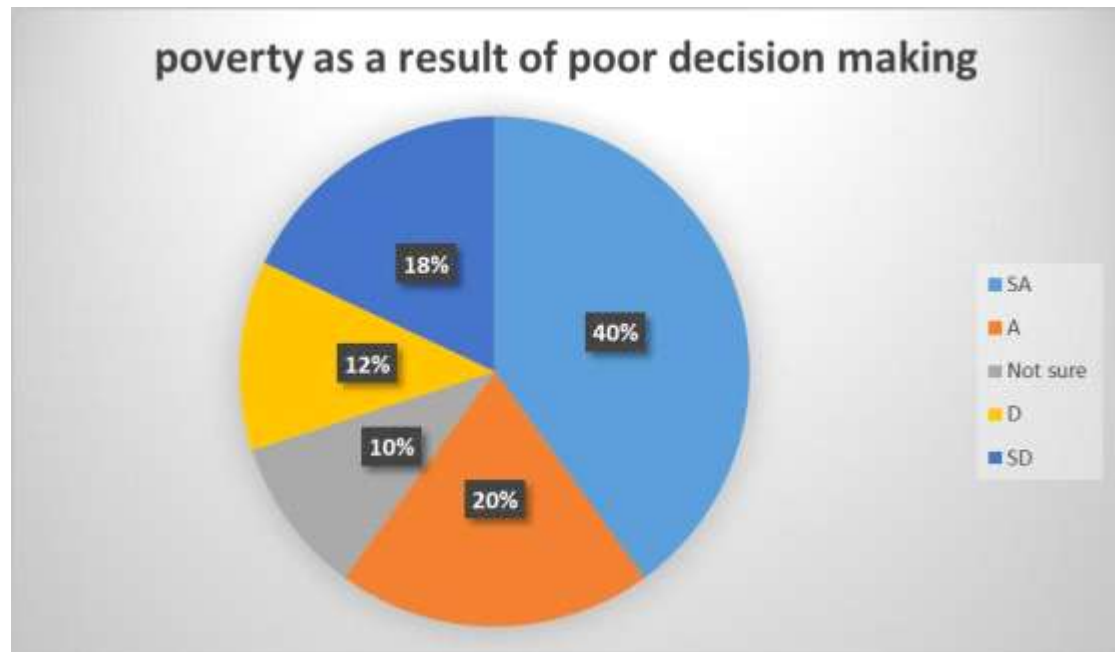
In their response as to whether tourism development in general has put local communities offside, 40% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, 20% to agreed, 10% remained undecided, while 18% disagreed and 12% strongly disagree. This is an indication that most local people around Mt. Elgon national park are in agreement that (60%) tourism development has put their community offside (Ronald et al., 2023).

32% strongly agreed their lives became better because of tourism development that is through creation of employment opportunities, 24% to agreed, while 6% were undecided and 20% disagreed while 18% strongly disagreed. This shows that most of hostile communities around Mt. Elgon national park have positive attitude towards tourism sector.

30% of the respondents strongly agreed that tourism decision making has interfered with their culture and heritage which in turn makes hostile towards tourism thus affecting the development of tourism sector in Uganda, 28% agreed, 8% were undecided 20% disagreed while 7% strongly disagreed with the statement (Brighton et al., 2023).

Effect of tourism decision making on local communities

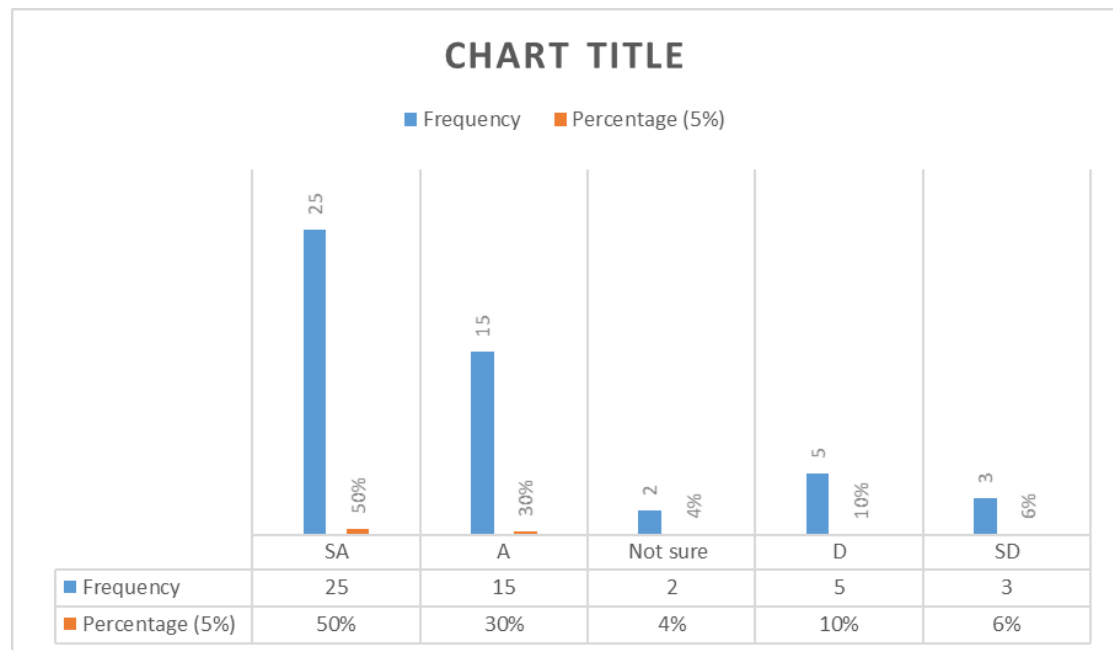
Figure 1: Poverty as a result of poor decision making



Source: *primary data, 2022*

Poverty refers to a situation of lack of or inadequate basics of human life. For example, food leading to low standards of living, diseases and even death. From the figure above, it was discovered that major effects of poor tourism decision making on local communities was poverty that is 40% strongly agreed, 20 % agreed with the agreement, 20 % were not sure, 12 % disagreed while 18% strongly disagreed with the statement. Thus, indicating that before the gazettement of Mt. Elgon areas into a national park, the residents used to collect a lot of resources like food, fruits, timber, among others, which they could consume or even sell to earn a living. Since the 1993 when the area was turned into national park local residents found it difficult to access all the wealth from the park. The UWA officials have restricted them from entering the national park freely, this therefore have left many people poor since the park was their immediate source of income and food

Figure 2: Land slides



Source: *primary data, 2022*

The figure above showed that landslides in Mt. Elgon area have, to some extent been caused as a result of poor tourism decision making, indicating that 50% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 30% agreed, 4% were not sure, 10% disagreed while 6% strongly disagreed. As people are evicted from the park, they end up settling on steep slopes of the mountain where they cultivate, graze and even clear for settlement. In rainy season therefore, the rains find rocks bare, loose and consequently falling thus resulting into landslides which eventually cause death of communities near Mt. Elgon national park.

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Figure 2: Greater demand for local food and crafts

Source: primary data, 2022

Challenges faced by hostile communities as a result of tourism decision making

Table 2: Challenges faced by hostile communities as a result of tourism decision making

Statement	F	SA	F	A	F	NS	F	D	F	SD
Loss of life forms and practices	15	30%	20	40%	3	6%	10	20%	2	4%
Food insecurity	17	34%	16	32%	5	10%	7	14%	5	10%
Lack of enough space for agriculture	20	40%	15	30%			10	20%	5	10%
Restriction to resource use	15	30%	17	34%	4	8%	6	12%	8	16%
Encroachment	25	50%	10	20%	3	6%	9	18%		

Source: primary data, 2022

The research further showed that local people around the park have lost their lives that is out of the people interacted with in the field, 15 (30%) strongly agreed that death have occurred in the park region since it was gazetted in 1993, some people have been shot, once found in national park while others simply found dead and their bodies placed or hidden in the park, 40% agreed, 3% were not sure, 20% disagree while 4% strongly disagreed. In Mt. Elgon

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National park people have been believed to jump over the cliffs when confronted by UWA staff, most of them end up dying (Christopher et al., 2022).

On food insecurity, 34% strongly agreed that there has been lack of enough food since most of the areas were encroached by national park thus lack of enough area for agriculture which in turn results into food insecurity, 32% to agreed, 10 % were undecided, 14% disagreed while 10% strongly disagreed. This shows that as animals escape from national parks and destroy people's food which in turn leads to food insecurity.

Restriction to forest resource use also was given as another challenge faced by hostile communities living around Mt. Elgon national park with 30% strongly agreeing with the statement, 42% agreed, 8% were not sure, 123% disagreed while 16% strongly disagreed. National parks have traditionally had more restrictions on the access to resources than in forest reserves. The establishment of the park in 1993 meant that forest resources were not accessible as before, this caused friction between the local people who want resources like fire wood, building poles, stakes with park authorities. Local people claim that they are arrested, beaten, raped and even killed in the park whenever found unlawfully collecting minor forest products such as mushrooms and medicinal plants from the park. The same notice was established by Obua (2004), who emphasized the wild life statute which restricted the resources than ever before although it emphasized community conservation practice and participatory method of park management has never taken off.

From table 2, 50% strongly agreed that encroachment was the main challenge faced by the hostile communities, 20% agreed, 6% were not sure while 18% strongly disagreed. the main reason for encroachment was to expand the national park thus many people were evicted from their homes leaving them homeless which resulted into death.

Conclusion

The study has demonstrated how resource use are impacting adversely on community conservation of MENP. A multi-pronged approach is needed to minimize the effects of various conflicts. Although eviction of people from the park was implemented in 1989, park officials are aware of their dependency on the forest and wildlife resources. However, the present human and livestock populations cannot be sustained on the present land and forest resources of Mt. Elgon. To date, there has been no major study in MENP or other parks in Uganda, which addressed the sustainability of resource extraction by local communities living local communities living around the park is needed.

Recommendations

Park officials should be trained in conflict resolution, principles of non-formal education and the use of participatory approaches. In order to improve the prospects for conservation of the forest and wildlife resources of Mt. Elgon National Park, there must be an effective education programme which aims at convincing people of the significance of conservation and its benefits to them. This programme should include awareness raising and effective delivery of family planning services. Family planning should also be supported by measures and incentives that encourage people to move to the less populated parts of the country.

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