

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COMMUNITY DRIVEN PROGRAMS  
ON THE GROWTH OF LOCAL BASED TOURISM IN AMBOSELI  
ECOSYSTEM, NAROK COUNTY, KENYA**

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**Abstract**

This paper investigates the effectiveness of the community driven programs on local based tourism development in the Amboseli ecosystem, Kajiado County. Burgeoning literature have underscored the global importance of tourism; for example, it has been rated as the second most important industry after petroleum commodities. In that regard, local communities have realized the importance of tourism, and they stepping up their involvement in local tourism; thus local tourism has gained popularity in highest measure. There is no doubt that community tourism has been widely acknowledged worldwide as fundamental for the stimulation of economic progression and generation of foreign exchange. Community Based Tourism thus involves tourism owned and/or managed by communities and intended to deliver wider community benefit. The objective of the study is the ref or to examine the success efficient levels of existing community driven programs on the expansion of local based tourism in Amboseli ecosystem. The research method employed was descriptive method which assisted the researcher to capture the experiences and practices of the indigenous communities living within Amboseli ecosystem; while using mixed research methodology with investigations being carried out on if the community members in Olgulului Group ranch carried out community based tourism effectively. The study further used the survey research design with mixed research methods being implemented. Systematic sampling method was utilized to select the sample from the population with a target of 380 members of the community to be sampled and a return rate of 328 respondents. The study thus investigated community empowerment, sense of community ownership and the decision making process as part of the independent variable that if handled effectively would ensure sustainable community based tourism. The hypothesis was measured in the quantitative findings in the conclusion which indicated after model fitting, predictor variable (effectiveness) to some extent has an association to enhanced local based tourism with the null

hypothesis being rejected and the alternative hypothesis adopted which stated that there is an association between efficient community driven programs and CBT advancement. The study concluded that the locals should concentration on the value chain system to ensure effectiveness of community initiatives on the growth of CBT; with the community cross-examining from product generation and ensuring value is delivered to the visitors since they deal with not just domestic but also international visitors to the national park.

**Keywords:** Community; community based tourism; management; participation, empowerment; ownership.

### **Introduction**

Community-based tourism originated in the 1980s, as an end result of the World Conservation Strategy's highlighting linking protected area management with thrifty important activities to local communities (Mearns, 2003). Another school of thought states that the theoretical premises of community tourism have a lengthy history, originating from the participatory and empowerment of development models that arose as an original paradigm in development discourse in the 1970s (Giampiccoli 2007 cited Cornelissen, 2005). Since then, CBT has enabled local communities to take control of their land and resources as well as to obtain skills which can be used for self-development (Mearns, 2003).

Five principles have been mooted as a clear guarantee to the success of community based tourism:-

The local communities should be fully involved in all the stages of the Community based tourism ventures.

The implementation of community tourism should be implemented by their hands

Community based tourism should be based on the community's cultural and natural assets and attractions

Community based tourism should for the benefit of the given local community

In the process of initiating and implementing community tourism, care should be taken to conserve the environment

Additionally, there are additional benefits to communities identified with facilitation of the community driven tourism; for example, access to the tourism market, building and complementing existing livelihood strategies through employment and small enterprise development and ensuring that tourism projects contribute to local economic development. However, when not appropriately managed, the positive benefits of tourism run the risk of bypassing local residents who are the community members. Consequently, indigenous communities end up reaping less benefit from tourism since they have little control over the ways in which the industry is developed. The focal objective of the study was to investigate performance of community effectiveness on development of local based tourism. The hypothesis was measured in the quantitative findings with indication through model fitting that the predictor variables (effectiveness) to some intensity has an association to enhanced local based tourism with effectiveness null hypothesis rejected

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) similarly highlighted that tourism benefits should be extensively spread in the community and the underprivileged should gain from tourism development (WTO, 2002). Thus, community participation in tourism development processes can support and uphold indigenous culture, tradition, knowledge and skill, and generate community heritage pride (Lacy et al., 2002). It is further argued that community participation in decision making escalates people's trust and confidence with the tourism industry and provides the local community with a voice in design and decision-making in order to improve plans, service delivery, and finally, endorses a sense of community by bringing people who share common goals together (Muganda 2013 cited Pongponrat 2011). Therefore various scholars are in agreement that CBT is important in the development of communities through its adoption and uptake.

### **Effectiveness towards the Achievement of Community Based Tourism**

For effectiveness to fully be felt, the accomplishment of CBT programs lie in the empowerment of local communities, improving skills locally, bringing about a sense of ownership by local community members which can lead to locality development. Universally, within the general tourism sector, the emphasis on CBT as a mode of enhancing community development, poverty alleviation, cultural heritage, and conservation is growing (Equation, 2008). Other than guaranteeing community development, CBT is grounded on the formation of tourist products characterized by community participation in their progress. Thus, CBT emerged as a probable solution to the negative effects of mass tourism in developing countries, and was, at the same time, a strategy for community organization in order to accomplish better living conditions (Guzman, 2011). In diverse parts of the world, particularly in many Third World countries, the swift development of mass tourism can overwhelm indigenous communities and the environment having far-reaching negative socio-ecological and economic impacts. Moreover, tourism can contribute to the exacerbation of the already existing socio-economic inequity by widening the gap between the beneficiaries of tourism and those who are already marginalized by the current forms of development (Akama, 2011).

It's significant to note that tourism, more so community based tourism has contributed significantly to the development of numerous developing countries leading to most of the international donor communities and organizations focusing their policies on tourism development. Community-based tourism exists in many different geographical areas of the world, and more particularly in developing countries. This has given rise to the creation of particular destinations which permits wealth generation and job creation for indigenous communities. With this background, it is significant to note that Community-based Tourism is gaining stature worldwide as an alternate to mass tourism. This type of tourism favors contact with the local community with the experimentation of different sensations (Guzman, 2011). In addition, community participation is important since it is the apparatus for active community involvement in partnership working, decision making and representation in community structures (Chapman & Kirk, 2001). It thus should be noted that as part of the effectiveness to sustainable CBT, community participation increases people's sense of control over issues that

affect their lives and at the same time promotes self-confidence and self awareness (Nampila, 2005).

In Kenya, a study conducted in Amboseli ecosystem indicated that local people were not only excluded from the main wildlife tourism profits, but have also had to pay a price in losing access to critical natural resources, such as water and land. In recent years, development planners and wildlife conservationists have come to appreciate that the indigenous community people should get a piece of the cake as well. One of the new developments is the creation of small 'community based' wildlife parks in partnership with the Maasai (Steener, 2000). Subsequently, the Amboseli management plan 2008 – 2018 demonstrates that there is local based tourism through cultural Manyattas that exhibit the Maasai culture to tourists which has also augmented to the south of the Park, in Olgulului/Olararashi group ranch. It then highlights the unplanned and unappealing tin-shack markets that lower the aesthetic appeal of the area and encroach on the security of the park entry gates have sprung up and continue to expand at Meshanani, Ol Kelunyiet and Iremito gates. Likewise, the uncontrolled and unplanned development within Ol Tukai area has given rise to run-down and abandoned tourist facilities that are currently an eyesore to visitors (KWS, 2008). Based on the discussed literature above, the effectiveness of CBT initiatives seem to be insufficient due to concerns mentioned like exclusion of communities from profits generated from tourism activities, unplanned development among others. However, it's important to note that the significance of CBT is well known and it has been repeatedly highlighted by many scholars; though with the emphasis of inclusion of community members as key stakeholders.

More studies have further revealed that developing a sense of community contributes to participation by empowering people to feel connected and motivated to live in harmony and work together towards common goals. Sense of community can be seen as the capacity of the local people to participate in development activities (Cupples, 2005). Therefore, CBT is a tool that can and has been used by several countries in the inclusion of community members in local tourism and bringing a sense of community. As stated above, CBT initiatives have so far added to improving the livelihoods of community members where it is practiced. To further ensure that the community gains from tourism are amplified, the Amboseli management plan 2008-2018 stipulates the need to renegotiate the lease agreements for tourist facilities and concession areas, promote local cultural tourism, establish a cultural center association, and launch curio shops at suitable strategic points (KWS 2008). This among others is community initiatives in Amboseli Park. This demonstrates that the communities should play a bigger active role in local based tourism. The literature above indicates that most of the time, communities are involved in smaller jobs which make them live hand to mouth, yet no high impact is seen on community standards. Therefore it is imperative to identify the community driven initiatives and highlight their effectiveness or impact on the community livelihood. The Amboseli Management plan therefore recognizes plans for community projects like curio shops which are famous in Amboseli. However, the effectiveness of such local based tourism projects is yet to be measured. The study will seek to measure the role of the community, benefits from the initiatives. Success

of local driven initiatives in terms of profitability and the challenges the communities face in the implementation of these initiatives.

**Research Method**

This study embraced a mixed research methodology with non-probability sampling used to pinpoint the community members who live in the Amboseli park ecosystem in Olgulului ranch which ascertained working with local Maasai who live in similar settings and relevant conditions that befit the topic of the study; and are knowledgeable enough to augment the achievement of the study goals and research objectives. Questionnaires were distributed to the members of the group ranch with 328 fully filling them and returning for data analysis. These were a clear representation of the indigenous community members in Olgulului group ranch. This also comprised four groups for the focus group discussions with each group having women, men, youth and older men to give a true representation. An interview guide and questionnaires were used to collect the data. The data was coded, analyzed and presented in tables and graphs.

**Findings and Discussions**

The study’s key intention was to investigate the level of effectiveness in how community based tourism is handled towards the achievement of sustainable community based tourism. Effectiveness in this study involved numerous indicators that were identified for the purpose of the study namely empowerment, sense of ownership, community initiated programs and income generating projects for locals which warranted that CBT activities are carried out in a certain manner that would safeguard success. The study therefore checked on if the CBT structure employed will ensure empowerment, sense of ownership, Community initiated programs and income generating projects towards the success of community initiated programs in Amboseli ecosystem.

**Community’s Gender**

**Table 1.1: Gender of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	202	61.6	61.6	61.6
Valid Female	126	38.4	38.4	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

In table 1.1 above, men were majority in the study at 61.6% while women accounted only for 33.3%. Men were anticipated to be more furthermore because it was acknowledged that it was a male dominated community and men played a bigger role in the numerous activities. On an

additional note, the findings indicated above could be a sign that women are to some degree involved in economic activities in Amboseli ecosystem.

**Level of Education and Training among the community members**

Education level was key to the study since education affects the community members’ attitude and how they comprehend social phenomena. The responses given by community members was likely to be determined by the education status which made it imperative to know the level of education of the study respondents.

**Table 1.2 Highest Level of Education and Training**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
None	217	66.2	66.2	66.2
Adult Education	28	8.5	8.5	74.7
Primary	38	11.6	11.6	86.3
Valid Secondary	37	11.3	11.3	97.6
Technical College	7	2.1	2.1	99.7
University	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total	328	100.0	100.0	

Source: Study Findings, 2017.

A portion of community members by the education accomplished indicated they are not educated. Table 1.2 above shows that majority of the respondents (66.2%) were illiterate. 8.5% had adult education, 11.6% were primary school graduates, 11.3% were secondary school graduates, 2.1% were technical college graduates and 0.3% were university graduates as shown in table 1.2 above. This measure was important to determine some of the decisions and choices made by the community members and to determine how exposed they were which can aid them make better decisions.

**The Effectiveness of Community Driven Programs on Development of Local Tourism**

This highlights the indicators that quantify the effectiveness of community driven programs to define if it is managed with the inclusion of the local member of the community. In this case, the indicators identified to measure effectiveness were empowerment, sense of ownership,

community initiated programs and income generating projects for locals as earlier indicated which the study felt would play a role in the sustainable achievement local tourism in Amboseli ecosystem. The findings are as emphasized below starting with the generation of a hypothesis.

**Study Hypothesis**

$H_0$ : There is no association between efficient community driven programs and CBT advancement

$H_1$ : There is an association between efficient community driven programs and CBT advancement

**Table 1.3: Chi-square test on Effective Community Driven Programs and CBT advancement.**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.429 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000		
Continuity Correction	11.272	1	.001		
Likelihood Ratio	12.061	1	.001		
Fisher's Exact Test				.001	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.392	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	328				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 16.52.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Source: Field data (2017)

Table 1.3 above indicated that for those who agreed or disagreed on the effectiveness of community programs on CBT progression, the number that agreed or disagreed on the relationship in terms of responses on the set out questions were different. In order to recognize if this difference is substantial, the chi-square test on association was carried on to confirm this. In table 5.1 above, the Pearson’s chi-square value is 12.429 and the p-value is 0.00. Since  $0.00 < 0.05$ , which shows that there is statistical significant association between efficient community driven programs and CBT advancement.

**Table 1.4: Phi and Cramer’s Tests for Confirmation.  
Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.195
	Cramer's V	.000
N of Valid Cases	328	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
- b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Source: Field data (2017)

In table 1.4 above, the Phi and Cramer’s chi-square values are -0.195 and 0.195 respectively and the p-value is 0.00. Since  $0.00 < 0.05$ , this confirms the results in table 1.4 that there is statistical significant association between effective community driven programs and CBT advancement which then sets the pace for the study findings. This was deduced to mean that the respondents likewise agree that the community has gained from the fact that they are currently operating well-organized community based tourism initiatives. Thus the alternative hypothesis is accepted on the foundation that the observed data is satisfactorily inconsistent with the null hypothesis which led to the null hypothesis rejection. This then means that the different gender should not be an obstruction to the community members’ participation on CBT.

The impact of effectiveness on enhancing local based tourism findings therefore are as indicated in the findings above with the independent variable strength indicated. The findings of this study indicate in totality that there is particular improvement on the lives of the community members in line with the numerous initiatives on CBT. The study contributes to the fact that effectiveness of CBT, meaningfully makes an optimistic contribution to the implementation of CBT. Nevertheless, after the model fitting the data showed a larger P value which concluded, it fails to reject the null hypothesis which concluded that there is no association between effective community driven programs and CBT advancement though effectiveness which has 1.212 times more likely to be sustainable towards enhanced CBT.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The community members ought to extremely focus on the value chain system to warrant effectiveness of community initiatives on the growth of CBT. The community should then cross-examine from the point of product generation to sell to the contact with the customer and ensure



value is delivered to the visitors since they deal with not just domestic but also international visitors to the national park. The study contributes to the fact that effectiveness of CBT, significantly make a positive contribution to the implementation of CBT. The significant conclusion is that effectiveness as an independent variable can lead to sustainable CBT for the community. The community members most essentially should be more involved to have a sense of ownership and empowerment which are elements of effectiveness as an independent variable of the study. The study findings indicated that numerous stakeholders have a role to play in the effectiveness of CBT with different ways to sharing tourism benefits with the locals. Most stakeholders have an Ad hoc way of benefit sharing which recommends the need to have a policy in place focused on the community benefits systematic benefit sharing schemes to generate opportunities for the local people and ease poverty towards the achievement of sustainable CBT. The study hence concluded that effectiveness is a significant elements towards the accomplishment of CBT implementation. For continuous effectiveness towards the realization of fruitful CBT implementation, the stakeholders will need to be cognizant of the need to design a practical, transparent and well-governed mechanism for allocating benefits from tourism. This then should contain all tourism development projects which consider the community as significant stakeholders who are at the center of all tourism projects successful implementation.

As a way forward, the study additionally recommends the necessity to further evaluate the identified indicators that contribute towards the realization of community based tourism progression. There is significance attached towards developing networks with the community members while at the center while identifying their drivers for CBT, developing a community vision, analyzing opportunities and threats of developing CBT. The study thus emphasizes the need to constantly quantify the impact of how effectiveness is handled towards the achievement of CBT to ensure that the proposed enriched quality of life is measured against relevant benchmarked standards. This would guarantee that the community is further challenged and not self-satisfied with the achievements they have made.

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