



**INFLUENCE OF STRATEGY EVALUATION ON SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM IN THE COAST REGION OF KENYA**

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### ABSTRACT

*The objective of this study was to establish the influence of strategy evaluation on sustainability of community based tourism in the coast region of Kenya. The target population was 193 members of community based tourism. Stratified random sampling method was used to classify the thirteen community groups into a single stratum. The respondents were then selected through random balloting so as to reduce bias selection of respondents. The study used structured questionnaire and documented literature as the main tools for both primary and secondary data collection. The findings indicated that strategy evaluation had a positive relationship with sustainability of community based tourism. The variables were normally distributed and hence no significant differences at 95% confidence level. The study established that a strong linear relationship existed between strategy evaluation and sustainability of community based tourism. The study also found out that community based tourism enterprises need strategy evaluation to enhance their sustainability. The study recommended development of appropriate incentives that promotes investment in tourism ventures especially infrastructure and information technology so as to attract private sector partnerships and bring about sustainable community based tourism for the overall development of tourism in the coast region of Kenya.*

**Key Terms:** Strategic Management, Strategy Evaluation, Sustainability, Strategic Resources

## INTRODUCTION

Strategic management is an ongoing process undertaken by managers to evaluate and control business initiatives, set SMART goals and regularly reassesses them to meet the ever changing and dynamic circumstances so as to enhance performance (Rao, 2016). Managers and entrepreneurs undertake strategic management by employing contingency planning. A well formulated strategy is a tool that helps an organization to attain a desirable level of effectiveness (Roth & Ricks, 2014). A strategy describes the general direction that an organisation is taking at the corporate, business and unit levels. Key issues at the business level are definition of the business the organization is engaged in and at the corporate level the focus is on organisation performance (Glaister & Falshaw, 2015). Making the plan happen is as critical as the actual execution that leads to results. Accountability should be explicit with those responsible for executing specific aspects of the plan and they should be held accountable for completion of tasks (Mbaka, 2015).

Strategy evaluation throws light on the efficiency and effectiveness of plans in achieving desired results (Wang & Walker, 2012). Its significance lies in its capacity to co-ordinate the tasks performed by managers, groups and units through performance evaluation. Strategy evaluation feeds the new strategic planning process and strategic management process and validates strategic choices (Mbithi & Kiruja, 2015). Strategic decisions are needed at all levels and in each level data provide a picture of trends that are useful in forward planning. Long term strategies are needed to ensure continuous engagement between events and workshops to maintain commitment (Muli, Bwisa, & Kihoro, 2016). Adequate financial support is also required to enable stakeholders attend workshops. At the same time innovative online tools are needed for collaborative engagements with the government so as to secure commitments that add value to project outcomes and act as incentive for other sectors to engage (Witold,

Sinziana, & Lite, 2014). Active stakeholder engagement is an essential foundation for practical delivery of project outputs. There is need for greater stakeholder collaborations to ensure delivery of expected outcomes (Elias, Jackson, & Cavana, 2014). Community based approach is a more inclusive approach in tourism planning and is aimed at enhancing performance and attainment of set goals.

Community Based Tourism (CBT) involves multiple actors from local communities to governments with 9% of the world's workers connected to tourism (WTTC, 2015). CBT is a growing economic activity globally and it currently accounts for 5% of the global tourism market with a growth rate of 20-30% annually. Tourism stimulates economic growth both at the international, regional, national and more important at local levels (Hellen, 2015). It fosters growth of other sectors such as agriculture, industry, and service sectors thus providing a wide range of easily accessible employment opportunities to the poor. The development of tourism infrastructure has improved the livelihood of the community through improvement of tourism-linked service sectors, such as transport, water supply, energy and health services (Burgos & Mertens, 2017). An increasing number of tourists have been indicating the need to interact with local communities and stay in places that have a positive impact both on the environment and on the local population (Crook, Ketchen, Combs, & Todd, 2015). The rural village of Ccaccacollo in Peru is traditionally a livelihood farming community (Lincoln & Neelam, 2012). In order to enhance community livelihood, the village got involved in community based tourism when a weavings cooperative society was established to provide both employment and income to women through selling of weavings to the tourists. The Meket Community Tourism Walk in Ethiopia has eight community based tourism projects that allow for a week of hiking in spectacular scenery to explore the mountain scenery (Zemenu, 2017). This has enabled the communities to register as private businesses

and manage their tourism enterprise. Community-based tourism involves local communities in all aspects of development and the resulting economic empowerment contributes to poverty reduction (Zemenu, 2017). The economic linkage to other sectors need to be strengthened by applying appropriate strategic management skills aimed at improving efficiency and performance.

The growth of community based tourism in Kenya varies from time to time with the number of tourist arrivals dropping in the late 1980's and picking up again in 1992 and 1996. Over 60% of Kenya's tourism is coastal based providing jobs both directly and indirectly with a considerable size of coastal population directly depending on tourism for their livelihoods (Republic of Kenya, 2013). There have been efforts towards diversification of tourism attractions to make them unique and to offer quality products and services. In regions where CBT has been implemented, the community has been accorded an important role in strategic planning and management with the aim being to enhance co-existence (Ondicho, 2017). This has contributed to localizing community empowerment through strategic management trainings, governance, and awareness which are necessary for sustainability in the exploitation of these resources. There is growing awareness on the benefits of CBT projects in Kenya (Imbali, Muturi, & Abuga, 2016). CBT projects such as Ngwesi and Tassia in Laikipia and Shompole in Magadi have gained essential managerial capabilities ranging from community management to partnership with investors who provide capital for investment (Owuor, Knerr, Ochieng, Wambua, & Magero, 2017). Community members are often employed and trained in sustainability management of tourism projects and they benefit from employment and community development funds. This has further reinforced the need for strategic and sustainability management of resources (Harrington, Chathoth, Ottenbacher, & Altinay, 2014). Community based tourism requires appropriate strategic management of locally available resources (Saurombe, Plessis, &

Swanepoel, 2018). Competitiveness and innovativeness are essential factors for the success and sustainability of community based tourism projects (Lincoln & Neelam, 2012).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Kenyan scenario with respect to community based tourism paints a slow growth despite adequate resource endowment. Sustainability has been dismal due to weak strategic management focus amongst community groups (Mayaka, Croy, & Cox, 2017). CBTs in Kenya face management challenges where strategic management skills, resource management skills and governance skills are lacking amongst most of the community groups (Owuor et al., 2017). The study on identification of strategy implementation influencing factors and their effects on performance indicated that most strategies fail at implementation stage and hence strategies become ineffective (Abdullah, Hamad, Romano, & Faisal, 2017). However, these studies did not address contribution of strategy evaluation to sustainability of community based tourism. In the absence of a strategic approach even the most superior strategy becomes useless (Waititu, 2016). Community based tourism has not measured up to their full expectations with anticipated socio-economic benefits yet to be realized. Sustainability is a deliberate strategic management initiative required to address inherent deficiencies in the promotion of community based tourism enterprises and hence requires appropriate strategic management actions.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

The following Null Hypotheses were tested during the research:

- H<sub>01</sub>: Assessing milestones and timeframes has no influence on sustainability of community based tourism in the coast region of Kenya
- H<sub>02</sub>: Assessing reporting mechanism has no influence on sustainability of community based tourism in the coast region of Kenya

H<sub>03</sub>: Assessing communication framework has no influence on sustainability of community based tourism in the coast region of Kenya

## RELATED LITERATURE

### Theoretical Framework

#### Contingency Theory

The Contingency Theory (CT) is based on the idea that there is no best way or single approach to organising and managing an organisation and making strategic decisions (Ejimabo, 2015). The optimal course of action is therefore contingent upon prevailing internal and external situations (Brock, 2015). The managers need to work out unique managerial strategies depending on such situations. This explains contingency approach that management effectiveness is contingent on management behaviour and specific situations. The theory emphasizes on the importance of both the leader's personality and the situation in which the leader operates in and as such the leadership style is either task motivated or relationship motivated (Kaya, 2016). The result is either task accomplishment or interpersonal relationship. When measured using the Least Preferred Co-Worker (LPC) Scale, leaders who score high are relationship motivated and those who score low are task motivated (Nunes, Maria, & Pinheiro, 2012). The contingency theory is characterised by leader-member relations, task structure, and position power which determine how favourable various situations are in an organisation (Brock, 2015). The theory suggests leaders should not be expected to be equally effective in all situations. In this respect the theory is a useful tool for planning and prediction. For organisations to be effective there is need for a 'goodness of fit' between structures and conditions in the external environment. Good management approach is dependent on organisation's situation.

To achieve organisational effectiveness, there is need to fit organisational characteristics to contingencies that reflect the current situation an

organisation operates in (Dale, 2014). At all times, an organisation aims at attaining the 'goodness of fit' that leads to high performance which is continually shaped by contingencies that 'fit' it in order to sustain its performance and avoid stagnation. The time alignment between the organisation and its contingencies further creates an association between the organisation and its contingencies thus bringing stability and sustainability that can be predicted over time. The theory shows that strategy implementation though important is also challenging and hence a need for sequential and simultaneous thinking by implementation managers (Candido & Santos, 2015). Strategic management has been neglected because published research reveals less emphasis on strategy evaluation (Alhaddi, 2016).

#### Stakeholders Theory

Stakeholder approach to strategy was developed in mid 1980s through the publication of Richard Edward Freeman Book entitled Strategic Management, A Stakeholder Approach in 1984. It aimed at building the framework responsive to the concerns of managers who were being confronted with unprecedented levels of environmental turbulence and change (Harrison, Freeman, & Abreu, 2015). The purpose of stakeholder management was to create methods to manage different groups and relationships that resulted in strategic failures. The theory suggests that managers must formulate and implement processes which satisfy all groups with a stake in the business. The main task in the process is to manage and integrate relationships and interests of stakeholders which include employees, customers, community, government entities, and other interested groups in a way that guarantees long term success of the organisation. Stakeholder approach focuses on active management of the business, relationships and shared interest (Elias et al., 2014). The normative approach in stakeholder management looks at the identification of moral and philosophical guidelines linked to activities and management. Stakeholder theory enables

managers to move from organisation-based approach towards an approach based more on relationships and networks. This shifts the understanding of stakeholders as dependant bodies to the one where managers need to care about stakeholder needs. The primary purpose of a stakeholder theory is to help managers identify influential stakeholders and manage them. Stakeholder theory has been applied to research, construction, water projects, donor funded projects. The managers require necessary skills and experiences so as to manage stakeholders as deficiencies in this respect result in project failures. Successful completion of construction projects is dependent on meeting respective stakeholders' expectations (Muli et al., 2016).

### Resource-Based View Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory is based on the principle that organisational competitive advantage depends on unique resources and capabilities an organisation possess (Peteraf & Barney, 2013). It is a management tool that establishes strategic resources available and accessible to an organisation. Strategic resources provide the foundation to develop organisation's capabilities that leads to superior performance (Lado, Boyd, Wright, & Kroll, 2015). A resource is strategic to the extent that it is valuable, rare, difficult to imitate and non-substitutable. Organisation's resources are classified into three categories namely physical capital, human capital and organisational capital. Simply these resources are either tangible resources or intangible resources (Penrose, 2015). Whereas resources refer to what an organisation owns, capabilities refer to what an organisation can do such as its ability to manage or exploit resources in a manner that provides value added and advantage over competitors (Peteraf & Barney, 2013). The theory explains the organisational ability to deliver sustainability competitive advantage by managing its resources so as to create a competitive edge over its competitors. The theory assumes resource

heterogeneity and resource immobility which makes such resources costly to copy (Barney, 2015).

The success and failures of organisations is determined with respect to their competitiveness and those of their subsidiaries by employing the RBV theory. The theory is applicable to this study as it helps in understanding how organisations utilise strategy formulation, strategy implementation, strategy evaluation, and stakeholder management in strategically managing their organisations and in executing strategies aimed at sustaining their operations. This is more so given the highly competitive and dynamic business environment organisations operate in hence the need to understand how well and prepared an organisation is in mobilising its resources towards sustaining its operations (Lado et al., 2015). The theory is also specifically applicable in examining strategy formulation in an organisation where the resource base is taken into account when designing appropriate strategies aimed at sustaining its operations and realising its full potential.

### Conceptual Framework

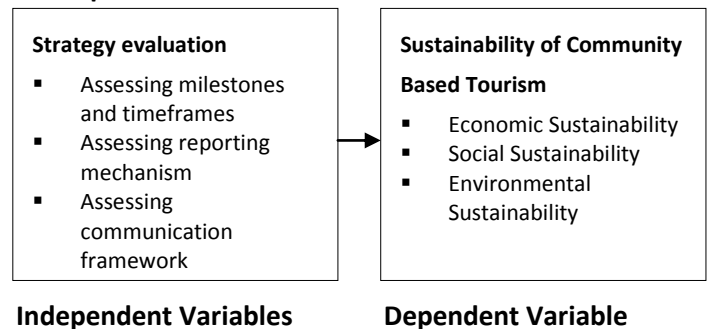


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### METHODOLOGY

The study used quantitative research to assess influence of strategy evaluation on sustainability of community based tourism in the coast region of Kenya (Cresswell, 2013). The approach ensured data was captured at one single point in time thus allowing for comparison of groups. The study focused on members of community based tourism enterprises in Kwale, Mombasa, and Kilifi counties (Republic of Kenya, 2014). A total of 13 CBT's each

with a total membership of 220 were identified from the three counties under the study. The sample provided an understanding on the behaviour and thinking of the target population (Eldredge, Weagel, & Kroth, 2014). The sample size was determined through use of stratified random sampling which involved determining the population in the three counties of study. The sample size was 69 respondents from the management committee and 124 respondents from the general membership giving a total of 193 determined using the Yamane formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$
 Where n = number of samples, N = number of total population, e= error designated to be at 95% significant level (Uwemedimo, 2014).

The respondents were then selected through random balloting (Tommy & How, 2018). The study used the questionnaires the main tools for primary data collection while literature review was used to collect secondary data (Andrea & Chantelle, 2012). The areas of focus included assessing miles stone and timeframes, assessing reporting mechanism, and assessing communication framework to establish how they influence sustainability of community based tourism. The study used questionnaires to collect primary data (Singh, 2014). The study was designed to generate both quantitative and qualitative data which were both structured and unstructured with structured portion helping respondents to respond more easily

**Table 1: Reliability Test**

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Comments
Assessing milestones and timelines	.885	Accepted
Assessing reporting mechanism	.885	Accepted
Assessing communication framework	.918	Accepted
Sustainability of community based tourism	.916	Accepted

**Factor Analysis of Sustainability of Community Based Tourism**

Factor analysis helps in grouping together variables with similar characteristics and allows for factor loading that correlates original variables and factors

and allowing the researcher to summarize the responses more efficiently (Battaglia, Dillman, & Frankel, 2016).

The researcher collected, coded and keyed the data into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for computation of descriptive statistics, regression and correlation. Testing for normality and reliability were undertaken using Cronbach's Coefficient to ensure the instruments used were consistent (Zulfigar & Bala, 2016). Hypothesis testing was undertaken using the probability (P) value method of hypothesis testing (Solomon, Tarus, & Cheruiyot, 2015).

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The internal consistency was tested using Cronbach's coefficient alpha and found to have high internal consistency (Khawaja, Haim, & Dileep, 2012). Reliability test results in Table 1 shows that assessing milestones and timelines has Cronbach's coefficient alpha of 0.885, assessing reporting mechanism has a coefficient of 0.885, assessing communication framework has a coefficient of 0.918, and sustainability of community based tourism has a coefficient of 0.916. From the study, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each variable is higher than 0.7 which is considered "acceptable" in most social science research (Hatice, Esin, Eda, & Selahattin,2017).

so as to understand a factor. The factor loading indicate the percentage of the variance in the original variables that are explained by the factor being analysed. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO's) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of simplicity were used in testing the significance of

the relationship between the variables (Cresswell, 2013). From the analysis, KMO value for strategy evaluation is given as 0.544 which falls within acceptable limit. The Bartlett's test of Sphericity is

also significant with a chi-square of 2895.323 and  $p < 0.000$ . This shows strong correlations as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Sustainability of CBTs**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling	.544
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	2895.323
Bartlett's df	45
Bartlett's Sig.	.000

The Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation was performed to establish the dimension aspect of assessing milestones and timeframes, assessing reporting mechanisms, and assessing communication framework on sustainability of CBTs. The first two components had Eigen values

of more than 1.0 indicating their high influence on sustainability of CBTs as they accounted for 78.198% of the total variance. This means the other components combined accounted for 21.802% of the variance as indicated in table 3.

**Table 3: Total Variance Explained – Sustainability of CBTs**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Evaluation is inbuilt	6.374	63.743	63.743	6.374	63.743	63.743
Regular audit	1.445	14.454	78.198	1.445	14.454	78.198
Knowledge/learning	.914	9.142	87.339			
Reporting deadlines	.539	5.392	92.731			
Project implementation	.327	3.272	96.004			
Project reports	.201	2.015	98.018			
Proper documentation	.124	1.243	99.261			
Milestones and timeframes	.060	.604	99.866			
Team leaders	.011	.114	99.979			
Regular communication	.002	.021	100.000			

**Extraction Method:** Principal Component Analysis  
From the above results, the KMO's measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of simplicity

showed that all components were found to relate to each.

**Test for Normality**



The test for normality was undertaken using Skewness and Kurtosis method. In a perfect distribution, the values of both skewness and kurtosis are zero. The value of skewness is within

$\pm 2.00$  and the value of Kurtosis is within  $\pm 3.00$  of their respective standard error at 95% significance level (Kising'u, Namusonge, & Mwirigi, 2016).

**Table 4: Test for Normality using Skewness and Kurtosis**

Variable	n	Kurtosis		Skewness	
		Statistic	Std Error	Statistic	Std Error
Assessing milestones and timeframes	178	-1.135	.362	-.348	.747
Assessing reporting mechanisms	178	-1.142	.362	-.520	.772
Assessing communication framework	178	-.291	.362	-.831	.945
Sustainability of community based tourism	178	-.904	.362	-.304	.694

The skewness statistic on assessing milestones and timeframes was  $-.348$  and the kurtosis statistic was  $-1.135$ . Assessing reporting mechanism had a skewness statistic of  $-.520$  and a kurtosis statistic of  $-1.142$  while assessing communication framework had a skewness statistic of  $-.831$  and a kurtosis statistic of  $-.291$ . Sustainability of community based tourism had a skewness statistic of  $-.304$  and kurtosis statistic of  $-.904$ . The skewness and kurtosis values for each of the variables did not exceed the absolute values of 3 for kurtosis and 2 for skewness and hence the study results met the normal distribution criterion.

**Linear Regression Model for Sustainability of Community Based Tourism**

The relationships among the variables, the overall model fit, and how well the dependent variables predict the independent variable were defined using the regression analysis. Multiple Regressions determines how predictors (assessing milestones and timeframes, assessing reporting mechanism, and assessing communication framework) predicted the dependant variable (sustainability of community based tourism).

**Table 5: Multiple Regression Coefficients**

Variables	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	t	
Constant	.780	.168		4.655	.000
Assessing milestones and timeframes	.710	.065	.764	10.976	.000
Assessing reporting mechanism	.174	.074	.194	2.345	.020
Assessing communication framework	-.073	.055	-.099	-1.326	.186

a. Dependent Variable: SUS (Sustainability of Community Based Tourism)

The coefficients  $\beta_0$  is the Y-intercept (.780), while  $\beta_1$  is the first regression coefficient for assessing

milestones and timeframes with a value of .710,  $\beta_2$  is the second regression coefficient for assessing

reporting mechanism with a value of .174, and  $\beta_3$  is the third regression coefficient for assessing communication framework with a value of -.073. Using the regression coefficients, the regression model is:  $Y = 0.780 + 0.710X_1 + 0.174X_2 - 0.073X_3$ . With a zero value for other independent variables, one unit change in assessing milestones and timeframes will give rise to the predicted value of Y as .710 (Pandis, 2016).

### Goodness-of-Fit

**Table 6: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of the Estimate
1	.850 <sup>a</sup>	.722	.717	.369

a: Predictors (constants)

b: Dependant variable (Sustainability of Community Based Tourism)

### Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The Analysis of Variance tests the significance of the independent variables on the dependent variables and establishes existence of variations in the variables (Rotich, 2017). The F-ratio tests whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data (Sow, 2014). From the study, the test result

**Table 7: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	61.617	3	20.539	150.845	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	23.692	174	.136		
	Total	85.309	177			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability of Community Based Tourism

b. Predictors: (Constant), forming implementation teams, developing milestones, and developing group tasks and activities

### Discussion of Key Findings

There were three variables in the study identified as: assessing milestones and timeframes, assessing reporting mechanisms, and assessing communication framework. From the data analysis, a positive relationship between strategy evaluation and sustainability of CBTs was established.

By using the regression analysis, it was established how independent variables predicted sustainability of community based tourism. The square of R ( $R^2$ ) indicated that 72.2% of the variance in sustainability of community based tourism is explained by the predictors. Adjusted  $R^2$  states that 71.7% of the changes in sustainability of community based tourism is explained by the model and the remaining 28.3% is not explained by the model. In this study, strategy evaluation showed a strong influence on sustainability of community based tourism.

revealed F-statistic of 150.845 which was significant at 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ) since the P value was 0.000 which is less than 5% level of significance. The independent variables represented by strategic evaluation had significant influence on the dependent variable represented by sustainability of community based tourism. The results indicated a linear regression model.

Evaluation is essential and it should be in-built into the group system from the initial stages. Performance audit and analysis need to be performed regularly and the management decisions should be based on such results (Mbithi & Kiruja, 2015). Continuous reporting should identify areas where there has been learning and knowledge as a result of evaluation otherwise the learning cycle will

be broken. There should also be a section in the group that is dedicated to proper and continuous documentation of events and highlighting successes stories (Wamalwa & James, 2018). Properly documented reports are good for resource mobilization and awareness creation. There is also need for regular assessment of milestones and timeframes that will allow for timely action when validated results are at variance with reported results. There are always delays in performing results measurement at the right time (Sull, Homkes, & Sull, 2015). Haste corrective measures are costly and counterproductive and the group management should consider having a well thought communication strategy as implementation of strategies will not succeed if they are misunderstood (Waititu, 2016).

As noted by (Noah & Were, 2018), strategic management has great influence on the performance of business companies. How well strategic mix is formulated and executed determines the performance level of such businesses. Strengthening the capacity of local communities is the major goal of CBTs. Development agencies should find ways of removing barriers to market access by collaborating with the private sector to understand how the local communities currently participate in tourism. Focus should be on technical training aimed at helping the local community access tourism value chain. There is need to incubated tourism ventures especially those managed by disadvantaged groups such as people living with disabilities.

### **Conclusion**

The study confirmed that strategy evaluation has a positive influence on sustainability of community based tourism. Community based tourism groups should apply strategy evaluation to guide in undertaking performance audits and in developing intervention mechanisms to address variances between target and actual results. The

management committee has a bigger oversight role in ensuring plans and strategies are executed so as to take advantage of the good potential of community based tourism to improve the livelihoods of the local communities.

### **Recommendations**

The study on influence of strategy evaluation on sustainability of community based tourism recommends the establishment of a certification unit for community based tourism enterprises to promote establishment of environmentally responsible businesses which in turn is used as a marketing tool by already certified enterprises. Community groups need to put in place specific sub-committees for monitoring & evaluation for proper management of community groups, improved performance, and sustainability. A governance model is needed to address the impact of tourism at the local community level and it will require appropriate training for group members in business operation, service delivery, publicity and resource mobilization.

### **Areas for Further Research**

The study focused on the influence of strategy evaluation on sustainability of community based tourism in the coast region of Kenya. Although the findings from the study indicated a positive relationship between strategy evaluation and sustainability of community based tourism, there are other factors that influence sustainability. The regression analysis showed that strategy evaluation only explained 71.7% of the changes in sustainability of community based tourism and the remaining 28.3% is explained by other factors. There is need for future studies to focus on the influence of cultural, religious, and historical issues and; the role of project management skills, biodiversity conservation skills and resource mobilisation skills on the performance of the community based tourism.

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