

# Sustaining Ecotourism in Tanzania through Community Empowerment

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## Abstract

■ This study explores the contribution of community empowerment to the sustainability of ecotourism in Tanzania using education programmes, access to information and language. Through the survey approach data was collected from Tanzania's ecotourism stakeholders (N=250) in the eight selected regions of Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Morogoro, Tanga and Zanzibar (for the eastern tourism circuit) and Arusha, Kilimanjaro and Manyara (for the northern circuit) and thereafter a qualitative analysis was employed complemented by estimation of the multinomial logistic regression model. The findings show that tourism stakeholders lack sufficient knowledge on ecotourism conservation and preservation. Likewise community members have poor access to information due to insufficient ecotourism publications, tourist information centres, a reliable mechanism for communicating with stakeholders and the use of foreign languages in most of the publications. It is therefore the study's recommendation that community members be empowered through being provided with adequate education programmes and access to relevant information and the use of a language that is understood by them in order to broaden their level of understanding, enhance their management skills and contribute significantly to ecotourism-related activities.

### Key Words:

Community empowerment, education programmes, access to information, language, sustainable ecotourism, Tanzania

## Resumen

■ Este estudio explora la contribución del empoderamiento comunitario a la sostenibilidad del ecoturismo en Tanzania, a través de programas de educación, el acceso a la información y el lenguaje. Por medio del método de encuesta, se recogieron datos de los actores del ecoturismo de Tanzania ( N = 250 ) en las ocho regiones seleccionadas: Dar es Salaam, Pwani , Morogoro , Tanga y Zanzíbar (para el circuito turístico del Este ), y Arusha, Kilimanjaro y Manyara (para el circuito Norte) y, posteriormente, se empleó un análisis cualitativo complementado con la estimación del modelo de regresión logística multinomial. Los resultados muestran que los agentes del turismo carecen de conocimientos suficientes sobre la conservación y preservación del ecoturismo. Así mismo los miembros de la comunidad tienen poco acceso a la información debido a la falta de publicaciones sobre ecoturismo, centros de información turística, un mecanismo fiable para la comunicación entre actores y el uso de lenguas extranjeras en la mayoría de las publicaciones. Por tanto, la recomendación de este estudio es que los miembros de la comunidad estén empoderados a través de programas de educación adecuados y acceso a la información pertinente y el uso de un lenguaje que sea comprendido por ellos con el fin de ampliar su nivel de comprensión, mejorar sus habilidades de gestión y contribuir de manera significativa a las actividades relacionadas con el ecoturismo.

### Palabras clave:

Empoderamiento comunitario, programas educativos, acceso a la información, lenguaje, ecoturismo sostenible, Tanzania

## Introduction

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■ Ecotourism has emerged as one of the most emphasized areas worldwide as a means of sustainable development. It refers to travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations found in these areas (Anderson, 2009; Fennel 2001; Ceballas-Lascurain 1983). Numerous authors, for instance (MacKercher, 1993; Honey, 1999; Mwamwaja, 2006), have written on ecotourism and Wight (1994) depicted that the key principles governing eco-tourism are that it should not degrade the resource and should be developed in an environmentally sound manner; it should in the long term benefit the resource, the local community and industry; it should involve the education of all parties, local communities, the government non-government organizations, industry and tourists (before, during and after the trip); it should provide first-hand, participatory and enlightening experiences; it should encourage all those involved to recognize the intrinsic value of the resource; it should involve acceptance of the resource on its own terms and recognition of its limits, which involves supply-oriented management; it should promote understanding and involve partnerships between many players, which could involve the government, non-government organizations, industry, scientists and local communities (both before and during operations); it should promote moral and ethical responsibility for and behaviour towards the natural and cultural environment by all players.

For a long time now, ecotourism has been well known worldwide for contributing substantially to both social and economic development. For example in Tanzania, earnings as a share of the gross domestic product increased significantly, from about one per cent in the 1986–92 period to over six per cent in the 1993–98 period. Comparable data for the East Africa region and African countries on average show that tourism earnings as a share of the gross domestic product increased marginally from 1.5 per cent to about two per cent over the same period. In addition, as a share of total exports, tourism earnings increased from about 15 per cent in the 1980s to over 40 per cent in the 1990s, becoming the second largest foreign exchange earner after agriculture, as revealed in Kweka, Morrissey and Brake (2003). Moreover, Carlson (2009) and Anderson (2010) depicted that the sector is one of the primary national foreign exchange earners in Tanzania, contributing 17.2 per cent of the gross domestic product and producing over 250,000 jobs. The substantial contribution of tourism to the social and economic development of Tanzania has resulted from the biodiversity of the country as far as ecotourism is concerned. The country's location, natural resources, cities and broad cultural heritage place Tanzania in a more competitive position than other countries, as revealed in Tanzania Tourist Board (2009).

It has been argued by Honey (2008) that Tanzania is the richest country in the world in term of its wildlife, with more elephants, lions, zebras, antelopes, and many other large mammals than any other country in Africa. With regard to the relationship between tourism and ecotourism, Anderson (2010) argued that ecotourism accounts for about 90% of all the tourism in Tanzania, and so most tourism activities in the country depend on ecotourism's attractions. The literature also shown that economically, ecotourism provides employment and trade opportunities (Jusko, 1994); socially, it stimulates people's education and income levels; and helps local communities revive their ancient festivals and restore their cultural landmarks (Wright, 1993).

In view of the benefits brought by ecotourism and its associated risks, ecotourism stakeholders around the world have voiced their concern on what should be done to make tourism more environmentally friendly for both current and future consumption without affecting the indigenous environment. In view of this, several authors have tried to work on different means believed to be tried and tested for ensuring the sustainability of ecotourism. For example, Anderson (2009) depicted that for an attraction to be regarded as ecotourism-oriented it should primarily involve the natural environment, with associated cultural elements constituting secondary components. In addition, the interaction between tourists and the environmental attraction should be based on their being educated, so that they learn and appreciate that ecotourism should be environmentally, socio-culturally and economically sustainable. However, despite these recommendations, there is still a substantial gap in the literature, especially on how best stakeholders can be involved in sustaining ecotourism. This study therefore looks at strategies that involve stakeholders, with an emphasis on how to empower community members and other stakeholders in an effort to sustain ecotourism in the country. Among many issues in the empowerment context, the study gave special consideration to education programmes, access to information and use of language, on the assumption that, for ecotourism projects and plans to be successfully implemented, the community has to be empowered so that they can make decisions and contribute to protecting their environment. The study is absolutely crucial, particularly at this time when there is a great need for more strategies that involve stakeholders in the whole business of making ecotourism sustainable in Tanzania so as to sustain all the benefits associated with it.

## Literature Review

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■ Ecotourism, which is believed to be the fastest growing sub-sector of tourism, (Wally, 2001) originates from the ethics of conservation and sustainable development (Miller, 2007), following the legalizing of

hunting, which stimulates the need to protect national parks and game reserves (Dodds, 2008), with the aim of conserving biodiversity and maintaining the wellbeing of local people. This includes providing them with learning experiences, responsible action being taken by the tourism industry, and requiring the least possible consumption of non-renewable resources and reducing the stress on them Anderson (2009). To make ecotourism sustainable from the stakeholders' point of view, this study assumed that more emphasize needs to be placed on community empowerment.

To empower is to give an employee, an organization or a community the power or authority that will enable them to be strong enough to make certain decisions or to access certain services or resources. There are a number of definitions for the term empowerment. For instance, Napier (2009) defines empowerment as the process by which individuals and groups gain power, access to resources and control over their own lives. In so doing, they gain the ability to achieve their highest personal and collective aspirations and goals. Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland (2006) argued that empowerment enhances an individual's or group's capacity to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. The same authors revealed that empowerment can be measured indirectly via asset endowments, such as psychological assets (capacity to envisage change), informational assets (access to different media sources), organizational assets (membership of an organization), material assets (ownership of productive assets such as land), financial assets (value of household savings) and human assets (literacy level). Osborne (1994) suggested four possible societal settings for empowerment, known as the marketplace, the community, the public sector and the political system. The Department of Communities and Local Government (2008) considers community empowerment as the process of enabling people to shape and choose the services they use on a personal basis so that they can influence the way those services are delivered. Community empowerment is aimed at making people strong spiritually, politically, socially and economically, so as to increase their capacity and confidence level to influence decision making, to tackle their problems, challenge discrimination, strengthen community unity and build sustainable communities.

Over the years various studies have been conducted on community empowerment and some theories developed. Napier (2009) presented an empowerment theory with the argument that empowerment resides in a person, not a helper or social worker, and it addresses oppression, stratification and inequality as social barriers, with an emphasis on the fact that problems do not develop because of personal deficiencies. The theory pointed out that empowerment is a process of increasing intrapersonal, interpersonal and political power. Intrapersonal power, which is gained at the micro level, is the foundation on which other empowerment levels are built. It builds

self-efficacy and personal consciousness, while reducing self-blame and assuming personal responsibility. On top of that, interpersonal power, which is gained at the mezzo level, enables the empowered person to work with others at changing oppression on a broader level, it increases group consciousness and develops skills for mobilizing resources and it enables a commonality to develop between group members. On the other hand, political power in a community is usually gained at the macro level and it enables the empowered person to advocate for a change in policies, as well as educating and informing the public about opportunities and inequality in their community.

Moreover, one well-known empowerment model for social work practice was that presented by Anderson, Wilson, Mwansa and Osei-Hwedie (1994), with the argument that empowerment in society means personal, social, educational, economic and political empowerment. The model is useful to this study as it recognizes the five dimensions of empowerment, as previously depicted in Osborne (1994) and Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland (2006), and is used by this study to lay the foundation for the development of various stakeholder empowerment strategies for the sustainability of ecotourism in Tanzania. In addition, this study makes reference to the empowerment framework of Scheyven (1999), which emphasizes signs of empowerment and disempowerment in terms of economic, psychological, political and social empowerment (table 1).

For quite a long time most empirical research on tourism has emphasized its economic, social-cultural and environmental impact. In recent years, the world has observed a significant increase in the number of studies relating to ecotourism. For instance, John and Pang (2012) summarized the ecotourism literature and found that past studies have mainly concentrated on evaluating ecotourism at different destinations and on discussing whether the specific conservation and development principles of ecotourism have been adhered to (Ross & Wall 1999; Wallace & Pierce 1996). Some have emphasized the definitions and/or impacts of ecotourism (Blamey 1997; Walker 1996; Obua & Harding 1997; Sirakaya et al. 1999; Scheyvens 1999; Bjork 2000; Chin et al. 2000; Doan 2000), while others have examined the roles and responsibilities of different players in the planning or promotion of ecotourism destinations (Inskeep 1991; Walker 1996; Campbell 1999; Ross & Wall 1999b; Hjalager 1999; Sindiga 1999). Except for a few studies that profile and examine the motivations of ecotourists (Eagles 1992; Eagles & Cascagnette 1995; Wight 1996), most studies focus on the supply side of ecotourism.

Because few of those studies covered East African countries, Ofosu-Amaah (2007) conducted a study to examine the global concept of ecotourism, to analyze how ecotourism has been applied in the national and

**Table 1 Framework for Community Empowerment**

Signs of Empowerment	Signs of Disempowerment
<b>1. Economic empowerment</b>	
<p>Ecotourism brings lasting economic gains to a local community. Cash earned is shared between many households in the community. There are visible signs of improvements from the cash that is earned (e.g. improved water systems, houses made of more permanent materials).</p>	<p>Ecotourism merely results in small, spasmodic cash gains for a local community. Most profits go to local elites, outside operators, government agencies, etc. Only a few individuals or families gain direct financial benefits from ecotourism, while others cannot find a way to share in these economic benefits because they lack capital, appropriate skills or negotiation power.</p>
<b>2. Psychological empowerment</b>	
<p>The self-esteem of many community members is enhanced because of outside recognition of the uniqueness and value of their culture, their natural resources and their traditional knowledge. The increasing confidence of community members leads them to seek out further education and training opportunities on ecotourism and other developmental matters. Access to employment and cash leads to an increase in status for traditionally low-status sectors of society, e.g. women and youths.</p>	<p>Many people have not shared in the benefits of ecotourism, yet they may face hardships because of reduced access to the resources of a protected area and their inability to comment on various issues especially when required to use a foreign language which is unfamiliar and they don't have full control. They are thus confused, frustrated, uninterested or disillusioned with the initiative.</p>
<b>3. Political empowerment</b>	
<p>The community or political structure, which fairly represents the needs and interests of all community groups, provides a forum through which people can raise questions relating to the ecotourism venture and have their concerns dealt with. Agencies initiating or implementing the ecotourism venture seek out the opinions of community groups (including the special interest groups of women, youths and other socially disadvantaged groups) and provide opportunities for them to be represented on decision-making bodies, e.g. the Wildlife Park Board. Before, during and after the discussion and collecting their opinions, relevant information will be shared with stakeholders through the medium of communication and publications they understand.</p>	<p>The community has an autocratic and/or self-interested leadership. Agencies initiating or implementing the ecotourism venture treat communities as passive beneficiaries, failing to involve them in decision-making. Thus the majority of community members feel they have little or no say over whether the ecotourism initiative operates or the way in which it operates. Besides, some of them don't comment because they are less knowledgeable on ecotourism matters as they lack proper education and access to relevant information</p>
<b>4. Social empowerment</b>	
<p>Ecotourism maintains or enhances the local community's equilibrium. Community cohesion is improved as individuals and families work together to build a successful ecotourism venture. Community members participate fully in various discussions within their community using a familiar language, hence making informed decisions regarding ecotourism and community development projects. Likewise, community members will continue to embrace their traditional and cultural values to the extent that they may incorporate ecotourism conservation stories in various themes of their poetry and tales and pass them down from one generation to another.</p>	<p>Disharmony and social decay. Many in the community take on outside values and lose respect for traditional culture and for elders. Disadvantaged groups (e.g. women) bear the brunt of problems associated with the ecotourism initiative and fail to share equitably in its benefits. Rather than cooperating, individuals, families, ethnic or socio-economic groups compete with each other for the perceived benefits of ecotourism. Resentment and jealousy are commonplace. Most people do not participate fully in various ecotourism-related discussions because they fail to understand the language used as the medium of communication.</p>

Source: Modified from Scheyven (1999)



local context in Tanzania, and to ascertain how and under what conditions ecotourism functions as a sustainable development tool. The finding reveals that walking safaris and campsites are concrete examples of the various manifestations of ecotourism in Tanzania. The study was found to be relevant as it provided background information on ecotourism in Tanzania that gave a better understanding, enabling the present study to be well grounded. However, the study discusses mostly the cultural aspect of ecotourism, which is why the present study sought to fill the gap by examining both the natural and cultural aspects of ecotourism, as well as working on the author's recommendation of increasing the involvement of local communities in the planning and implementation of projects through empowering them.

Another empirical study was conducted by Scheyvens (1999) to show how ecotourism ventures impact the lives of people living in and around the environments ecotourists frequently visit. The findings revealed that from the development perspective, ecotourism ventures should only be considered successful if local communities have some measure of control over them and if they share equitably in the benefits emerging from ecotourism activities. The study also proposed an empowerment framework (Table 1) as a suitable mechanism for aiding

analysis of the social, economic, psychological and political impacts of ecotourism on local communities. The rationale for the framework is that ecotourism should promote both conservation and development at the local level. The framework could be applied in both western and developing country contexts but, because it takes as its central concern the concept of empowerment, it is perhaps particularly pertinent when examining the extent to which indigenous people, or other disadvantaged groups, are benefiting from ecotourism.

On top of that, Osborne (1994) examined the concept of empowerment and suggested that, rather than being a unitary concept, it is in fact an umbrella term, which encompasses four possible modes of empowerment, which are the market place, the community, the public sector and the political system (Table 2). The study shows that empowerment is not a single process but a cluster of processes that are not consensual, since different stakeholders could have conflicting needs, which is why care must be taken to make sure that stakeholders' interests are taken into account. In addition, in terms of both its pursuit and analysis, it is essential to be clear about the type of empowerment being sought and ensure that the correct process is taken (ibid).

**Table 2 A typology of empowerment**

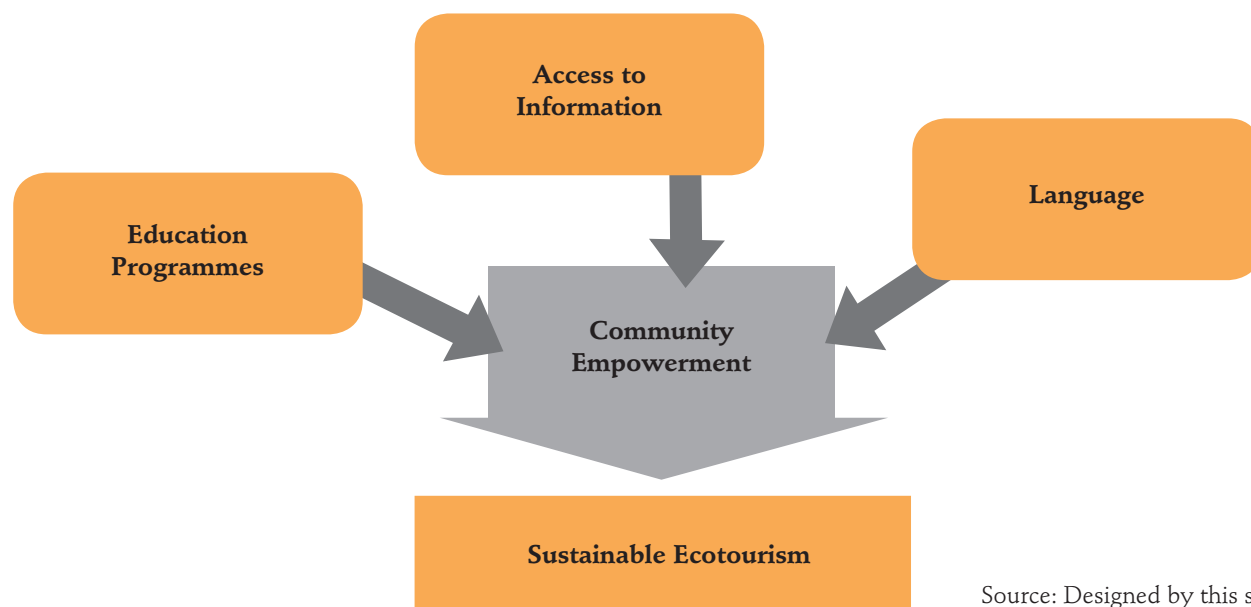
Societal Setting	Institutional Basis	Process	Key Mechanism	Main Dangers
Marketplace	Community/ Commercial/ Tourist organization	Selling and buying ecotourism products	Communication and use of familiar language	Market inefficiency and lack of communication between community members, tourists and other stakeholders
Community	Self-help/mutual aid organizations	Community development and organization	Action	Inadequate knowledge and skills for conserving ecotourism and other resources
Political system	Central / local government	Formulation and implementation of relevant policies, laws and procedures on ecotourism	Decision making	Local communities lack access to relevant information and proper educational materials to enable them to fully understood ecotourism, its implementation and respective policies for their protection
Public sector	Service organization	Service delivery/ therapy	Professional intervention	De-skilling, clashes of clients and professionals

Source: Modified from Osborne (1994)

The present study therefore went further to establish relevant strategies for community empowerment with the null hypothesis that community empowerment through education, access to information and use of language has no significant influence on sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania. The assumption underlying this hypothesis lies in the fact that once stakeholders are empowered, they will be in a good position to effectively

and efficiently participate in the decision-making process, protect ecotourism's attractions and also educate their colleagues, which will in turn ensure the sustainability of ecotourism-related projects. The conceptual framework (Figure 1) guided the authors in formulating and assessing what strategies would be best for empowering ecotourism stakeholders in Tanzania to ensure that there will be sustainable ecotourism from their perspective.

**Figure 1 Conceptual Framework**



Source: Designed by this study

## Methodology

■ This study explores the contribution of community empowerment to the sustainability of ecotourism in Tanzania through education programmes, access to information and use of language. The study adopted the quantitative methodology to study the key components of community empowerment and the relationship that exists between community empowerment strategies and the sustainability of ecotourism. The sample population comprised Tanzania's tourism stakeholders located in tourism's eastern circuit (Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Morogoro, Tanga and Zanzibar) and the northern circuit (Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Manyara). The choice of these two circuits was based on the fact that most cultural and natural tourism takes place in the eastern and northern circuits, respectively. In this study the sample was selected randomly to make a total of 250 from both the eastern and northern tourism circuits in Tanzania. Sixty percent of the sample population originated from the northern circuit, because the bulk of investment in tourism in Tanzania has been concentrated in a small number of globally famous National Parks in the northern part of

the country, comprising the famous Serengeti, Tarangire, Lake Manyara and Mount Kilimanjaro National Parks, as revealed by Nelson (2004). The questionnaire used to collect the primary data comprised nine questions, the first five of which sought to establish the respondents' characteristics, such as gender, age, location in tourism's circuits, education level and occupation. These were later used to assess to what extent they influence respondents as to whether to agree or not with the effect of the independent variables or predictors on the dependent variable. Questions six, seven and eight covered the general issues of community empowerment, such as the importance of ecotourism education for empowering community members, the significance of collective decision making in terms of empowering community members and the contribution of local languages to the management of ecotourism. The last question, which comprised fourteen statements (Box 1), was aimed at testing the proposed empowerment strategies for ensuring sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania, whereby statements one to six cover education programmes, statements seven to ten cover access to information and statements eleven to fourteen focus on language.

## Box 1 Community Empowerment Strategies for Ensuring Sustainable Ecotourism

1. Offer basic ecotourism education to community members surrounding the ecotourism sites.
2. Train all stakeholders groups and networks in ecotourism management
3. Provide capacity building programmes for local community leaders.
4. Increase the awareness of ecotourism of decision makers.
5. Use a common curriculum in tourism and hospitality colleges.
6. Make use of non-governmental and community-based organizations offering ecotourism education
7. Enhance access to ecotourism publications.
8. Improve access to tourism information.
9. Make use of reliable mechanisms for communicating with stakeholders.
10. Make use of local leaders to receive and disseminate ecotourism information.
11. Avoid using foreign languages when communicating with the local community.
12. Use both Kiswahili and the local vernacular when communicating with community members
13. Use both Kiswahili and foreign languages such as English when communicating with community members about ecotourism matters.
14. Make use of poetry and tales to educate stakeholders.

This study also made use of relevant secondary data from various sources, mostly from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT), the Tanzania Tourist Board, Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority, Tanzania National Parks, Confederation of Tourism Associations, Tanzania Association of Tour Operators and related ones so as to collect information on the trend of tourism's performance, its challenges and opportunities, and it also used planned and ongoing strategies. The filled in questionnaires were examined to detect errors and to ensure that the raw data were complete and consistent and the information had been correctly entered. After editing the data, the responses were coded by assigning numerals for efficient data analysis. The numerals used were one to twelve, while zero '0' was used for a non-response to a question or a missing value. In addition, when coding the data, their names, labels and values were described. For statistical analysis, discrete choice models were used to predict the factors influencing respondents' decisions on which strategy stakeholders would choose from among the given set of predictors. The responses to the questions in the questionnaire were coded so that the lower values indicated a stronger response and vice versa, as follows: "totally agree" 1, "agree" 2, "neither agree nor disagree" 3, "disagree" 4 and "totally disagree" 5 to make five groups, which qualify for multinomial regression analysis originating from the formulae,

$$P(\text{AGREE}=i) = \exp(x_i\beta) / 1 + \exp(x_i\beta) \dots \dots \dots \text{Equation (1)}$$

Where:

$$x_i\beta = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ education} + \beta_2 \text{ information} + \beta_3 \text{ language} \sum_j^f B_j z_{ij}$$

Hereafter AGREE<sub>i</sub> denotes the i<sup>th</sup> individual agreeing (AGREE<sub>i</sub>=1) or disagreeing (AGREE<sub>i</sub>=0) with the community empowerment strategies, z<sub>ij</sub> denotes the dummy variables, and β<sub>1</sub>, β<sub>2</sub> and β<sub>3</sub> denote the regression

coefficients with respect to education programmes, access to information and use of language, respectively. One variable in each factor was left out of the model to form a reference group for the sake of interpreting the estimated groups. This reference group comprised male respondents aged between 26 and 35, resident in Kilimanjaro, educated to the level of college certificate, who were local community members. The issue of the validity and reliability of the study was taken into account through the use of a pre-tested questionnaire, the findings and context of previous similar studies, the adoption of data collection instruments from the literature and the conceptual framework.

## Results and Discussion

### Respondent's Characteristics

■ The respondents' population comprised ecotourism stakeholders in Tanzania, the country that resulted from the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar (which comprises the two main islands of Unguja and Pemba, plus about 50 smaller islets). Geographically, Tanzania is bordered by Kenya and Uganda to the North, Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi to the South, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the West and the Indian Ocean to the East. From about forty million people who reside in all regions of the country, the sample population comprised 250 respondents from the eight selected regions of Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Morogoro, Zanzibar and Tanga (in the eastern ecotourism circuit) and Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Manyara (in the northern ecotourism circuit). Residents of the eastern circuit are rich in culture and traditions from almost every region of the country (it can also be considered multicultural) although the coastal culture dominates in all the regions

except Morogoro. On the contrary, the population of stakeholders in the northern tourism circuit are more involved in and informed about ecotourism as it the most active tourism circuit in the country. They possess a substantial number of cultures, based on the existing major tribes such as the 'wamasai', 'waarusha', 'wamburu', 'wamang'hati', 'wahadzabe', 'wachaga' and the 'wapare'. The response rate was a hundred percent as all issued questionnaires were returned. The finding on the respondents' characteristics (Table 3) reveals that the sample population comprised 65.2 percent of males and 34.8 percent of females, whereby more males were recorded in the northern circuit than in the eastern circuit, as revealed by the percentage of 62.6 and 37.4 for the northern and eastern circuits, respectively. With regard to female respondents, the percentage was 55.2 and 44.8 for the northern and eastern circuits, respectively. The majority of respondents (30.8 percent) were between 36 and 46 years old, while other respondents' ages were as follows: 28.8 percent were between 26 and 36, 24.0 percent were between 46 and 55, 9.6 percent were under 25 and 7.2 percent were over 55. The findings also revealed that 60 percent of the respondents were found in Tanzania's northern circuit and 40 percent were found in the eastern circuit of tourism. This is due to the sampling arrangement of the ratio of the respondents in the two circuits being 2:1, since more ecotourism activities take place in the northern circuit than in the eastern circuit, according to the MNRT (2009). Furthermore, the study findings revealed that respondents have different levels of education, ranging from primary to PhD, with 34.4 percent of the respondents reaching at least the advanced level of secondary education. The majority of respondents (51.2 percent) possess an undergraduate qualification of a certificate, diploma or first degree, while those with a post-graduate qualification comprised 14.2 percent of the respondents.

Apart from the above respondents' characteristics, this study assessed the country's empowerment initiatives and examined the respondents' general knowledge and perception of the broad community empowerment issues regarding sustainable ecotourism, such as collective decision making for the empowerment of community members, the collective management of ecotourism by players in both the public and private sector and the contribution of local languages to the communication process for community empowerment. The findings are as follows:

### Community Empowerment in Tanzania

■ Empowerment is not a new phenomenon in Tanzania as the government has been working to empower its society via a number of initiatives for political, social and economic empowerment. However, in most cases, efforts have been directed at economic empowerment, on the assumption that, when citizens are economically

**Table 3 Respondents' Characteristics**

Variable	N=250 (Percent)
<b>Gender</b>	
1. Male	65.2
2. Female	34.8
<b>Age</b>	
1. <25 years	9.6
2. 26-35	28.4
3. 36- 45	30.8
4. 46-55	24.0
5. >55 years	7.0
<b>Residency</b>	
1. Dar es Salaam	8.0
2. Pwani	8.0
3. Morogoro	8.0
4. Zanzibar	8.0
5. Tanga	8.0
6. Kilimanjaro	20.0
7. Arusha	20.0
8. Manyara	20.0
<b>Education</b>	
1. uneducated	0.8
2. primary education	8.0
3. form four	15.6
4. form six	10.8
5. college certificate	20.4
6. college diploma	15.2
7. first degree	15.6
8. masters	10.0
9. PhD	3.6
<b>Occupation</b>	
1. local community member	10.8
2. central government officer	8.4
3. local government officer	10.4
4. community-based organization member	8.0
5. non-governmental organization member	12.0
6. governmental organization member	4.8
7. researcher	7.2
8. academician in private institution	3.2
9. academician in public institution	4.8
10. tour operator	8.0
11. hotel and restaurants	8.0
12. transporter	4.8

Source: Obtained from this study

empowered, they will be able to handle political, psychological or social areas as well. According to Kweka, (2006), since 2000, the government of Tanzania has utilized various studies on how the country can develop



and strengthen itself economically in order to formulate policies and strategies that will be used to economically empower Tanzanians so that they can own, run and benefit from their economy. In line with this, the National Economic Empowerment Policy and National Economic Empowerment Act have been in place since 2004. In order to operationalize this Policy, various programmes have been established and initiatives taken to enhance facilitation of economic actors in the country. In relation to these initiatives, it is gratifying to note that efforts are being made by institutions like the Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) to provide a forum for policy dialogue and enhancing knowledge on how best economic actors in both the public and private sector can be empowered to better contribute to economic development. These initiatives act as a catalyst to speed up the implementation of various national strategies and programmes geared towards economic empowerment. The challenges faced and the objectives and strategies underlined in the Empowerment Policy are succinct and as already observed a good number of strategies outlined in the policy document are being implemented, as shown below:

- i. Business Environment Strengthening for Tanzania (BEST Programme – MKUMBITA),
- ii. Property and Business Formalization Programme (MKURABITA),
- iii. Programme for Development of Primary Education (MMEM);
- iv. Programme for Development of Secondary Education (MMES);
- v. Community Development Fund (TASAF),
- vi. Revision of Public Procurement Act to give preference to Tanzanian firms and individuals,
- vii. Programme for Empowering Tanzanian Entrepreneurs Through Provision of Soft Loans,
- viii. Project for Recognizing Ownership of Unplanned Settlements and Issuing Residential Licences,
- ix. Tanzania Mini-Tiger Plan 2020 and National Strategy for Growth and Reduction in Poverty (NSGRP-MKUKUTA).

The Tanzanian government under the Prime Minister's Office has also launched a Ministry to deal only with the Empowerment and Investment issues of the country. This ministry together with other stakeholders, such as the MNRT, the Ministry of Industry Trade and Marketing, the Ministry of Law and Legal Affairs and others, have joined hands to ensure that the Tanzanian community is empowered. Following the enactment of the Public Private Partnership Act number 18 of 2010 and the Public Private Partnership Regulation of 2011 made from section 28 of the Act, private and public players are now officially allowed to participate in community empowerment activities. Among the associations supporting the government in empowering ecotourism stakeholders and the general public is Empower Tanzania Inc. (ETI). This organization works in partnership with

rural Tanzanians to improve their quality of life. Through its mandate, ETI is addressing underlying issues, such as health care, education, agricultural practices, markets for products and increasing the supply and quality of water, which hinder resilience in rural areas. (ETI, 2012). By improving the health, education and economy of rural communities, the environment will be conducive enough to attract both domestic and foreign tourists. Likewise, other ecotourism stakeholders see the need to join in these efforts in order to empower their colleagues in the sector, such as, for example, the Association of Women in Tourism in Tanzania (AWOTTA), which aims to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and to take proactive steps to mainstream gender in tourism policies, planning and operations. AWOTTA is also promoting sustainable ecotourism and propagating this agenda to relevant organizations in Tanzania (AWOTTA, 2012).

In addition, the government of Tanzania is paying special attention to empowerment, especially in relation to ecotourism. For instance, at the summit to celebrate the international year of ecotourism in Quebec, Canada, Luhanjo (2002) reported that, in recognition of the significance of eco-tourism to the national development agenda, Tanzania has embarked on some major policy reforms aimed at promoting economic empowerment and local community participation in eco-tourism activities. Eco-tourism planning is now taking place at various levels in the country and Tanzania has started implementing ecotourism development strategies on various fronts, particularly natural, marine and cultural-based tourism. This has helped to forge links with local communities to enable them to make more informed choices, such as cultural tourism and community/private sector partnerships. In addition, the establishment of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) adjacent to wildlife protected areas is a triumph for local ecotourism initiatives of empowering communities to plan and manage their own natural resources in a more holistic way for their own economic emancipation (ibid).

### Community Empowerment Strategies for Sustainable Ecotourism

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■ In addition to the above community empowerment information concerning Tanzania, the general findings from this study on community empowerment strategies revealed that, while assessing the impact of a number of factors on the likelihood that respondents would comment on the relationship between ecotourism education and sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania, the model as a whole incorporate between 56.4 % (Cox and Snell R Square) and 61.3 % (Nagelkerke R Square). The study results revealed that about 80 % of the respondents agreed that the collective management of ecotourism by players from both the public and private sector has a greater chance of making ecotourism sustainable, 12.6 % where not sure about the effect and about 5 % had

a negative opinion on the matter. These results were supported by Minj and Kumar (2008), who initiated a directed discussion and critical thinking on community involvement in social development projects, and their findings show that communities or beneficiaries can be empowered by ensuring their participation in programme development, assessment and outreach. Pertaining to the impact of a number of factors on the likelihood that respondents would agree that the contribution of local languages to the communication process would ensure sustainable ecotourism, 43 % of the respondents agreed to the highest level, 6 % disagreed to the highest level and neutral respondents comprised 14.8 %. As stipulated earlier, community empowerment was viewed by this study in terms of education programmes, access to information and the use of language. In addition to the general findings, the specific results in these three key areas are as follows:

### Education Programmes

■ Education has been projected as key to a successful life and its associated development and so stakeholders both in the public and private sector are participating willingly in the process of offering education and building the capacity of various players in the tourism industry worldwide. Although, the education offered comprised both formal and informal programmes, the former has been emphasized more than the latter. In view of this, the Ecotourism Society compiled a list of universities that offer programmes and courses specializing in ecotourism (Hawkins and Lamoureux, 2001). As the demand for ecotourism education and the smooth offering of programmes has risen, the government of Tanzania has also increased its emphasis on this area, as evidenced by the establishment of the Tanzania Tourism Training Programme under the supervision of the MNRT to raise the standard of tourism education and the level of training, as well as increasing training capacity to meet the current and future needs of the sector. In an effort to achieve this, the following academic and training centres have been established:

i. **National College of Tourism (NCT):** It originated from the Hotel and Tourism Training Institute, established in 1969, under a British firm called "Hallmark Hotels Ltd". The objective of the college was to provide basic skills in Front Office Operations, Housekeeping and Laundry, Food Production and Food & Beverage Service. The Institute was first handed over to the Tanzania Tourist Corporation and then in 1977 to the MNRT. Due to the emerging need to improve service delivery and because of the growing demands of the tourism industry, NCT was launched as an Executive Agency under the MNRT in 2003, in accordance with Executive Agency Act No. 30 of 1997. As a result of its establishment, there is great potential for growth of both the hospitality and tourism sector in the country.

ii. **College of African Wildlife Management – Mweka, Moshi:** This was established in 1963 as a pioneer institution in the field of technical wildlife management. Despite the fact that the college operates as a parastatal organization under the MNRT, it serves all people in both the public and private sector with the vision of becoming a centre of excellence, providing professional and technical training, and research and consultancy services in African wildlife management. The enhancement of capacity is achieved through a number of activities, such as the provision of a relevant and diverse range of practical wildlife management training courses, as well as research and consultancy services.

iii. **Forestry Training Institute – Olmotonyi, Arusha (FTI):** This Institute was established in 1937 with the objective of providing a two-year training course for Forest Rangers at certificate and diploma level. The government conferred powers on FTI to perform its duties after receiving accreditation from the National Council for Technical Education in 2005. The FTI is responsible for delivering adequate knowledge, skills and attitudes to clients, who are expected to be involved in sustainable development and the management of trees, forests, bee resources and the environment and hence ecotourism and natural resources.

iv. **Forestry Industries Training Institute – Moshi:** This Institute was established in 1975 with the aim of providing technical knowledge on sawmills, logging and other wood-processing systems. From 1994 to 2003 it was not fully operational in the provision of long courses but instead offered short courses. The certificate level course in mechanical wood industries resumed in 2004. The Institute operates under the auspices of the MNRT.

v. **Community-Based Conservation Training Centre (CBCTC):** This training centre was established in July 1995 as a result of joint efforts between The United Republic of Tanzania and the Federal Republic of Germany, with the aim of aiding implementation of the National Wildlife Policy, which emphasizes Community participation in the Conservation and Utilization of Wildlife for Sustainable Development. The specific objectives of the CBCTC include the following: to equip villagers with appropriate knowledge and skills for controlling ravaging and dangerous game; to impress on them the importance of wildlife conservation for sustainable development and the importance of community participation in the conservation of natural resources; to set up community enterprises/projects, which are not destructive of the environment; and to teach them about behaviour, ecology and the movement of wildlife in their WMAs.

Tanzania has also established and coordinates other education centres serving related roles, such as the

Pasiansi Wildlife Training Institute in Mwanza, and the Beekeeping Training Institute in Tabora. In Zanzibar, under the Zanzibar Commission of Tourism, the Zanzibar Hotel and Tourism Institute operates mainly to develop human resources in the areas of front office management, food production, food and beverages and housekeeping, as well as offering short courses in being a tour guide, secretarial duties and small business management (Zanzibar Ecotourism Study, 2006). Moreover, most universities in the country, such as Sokoine University of Agriculture, University of Dar es Salaam, Saint Augustine University and the National College of Tourism, are now offering ecotourism-related courses. In spite of that, to date, the National College of Tourism is offering only courses at Diploma level as compared to its counterpart in Kenya (Utalii College) which is more competitive, offering both low and higher-level courses.

The integration of ecotourism education in some Tanzanian curricula demonstrates the value the country places on ecotourism. Despite these initiatives, with the exception of those offered at degree level, most of the tourism education provided in the training programmes of other colleges (which are the majority and are found all over the country) focus on producing human resources to serve in tourist hotels. In view of this fact, this study sees the need to diversify the education currently provided to cover all levels, from certificate to postgraduate. Such education programmes need to be offered to various parties, such as local communities, the government, non-governmental organizations, industry and tourists, as also supported by Wight (1994).

The response on the degree of agreement or disagreement with the link between offering basic ecotourism education and sustainable ecotourism shows that the most acceptable strategies are those offering basic ecotourism education to community members living in areas surrounding the ecotourism sites, which was agreed on by 56.7 %, followed by training all stakeholder groups and networks in ecotourism management (by 53.6 %) and increasing the awareness of ecotourism of decision makers (by 49.6 %). Although 14.5 % of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed on the effect of education on community empowerment and sustainable ecotourism, less than 2 % strongly disagreed with the linkage between the variables.

These findings could have resulted from the fact that community members residing in areas surrounding the ecotourism sites have a greater chance of protecting or destroying the attractions, and so if one is thinking of building the capacity of ecotourism stakeholders, the local community must be given first priority, followed by ecotourism networks and decision makers at the local government, due to the fact that these groups of stakeholders represent the majority of people. Most of the time, they are required to make certain decisions on behalf of the people in their areas or networks. In view

of this, network leaders and decision makers need to be informed so as to make sound decisions for the benefit of the majority and the sustainability of the sector. In line with this argument, the provision of capacity building and training for local communities, as well as technical support, was identified as key to the proper development of ecotourism in the region, as supported by the World Ecotourism Summit, (2002). Another targeted group that in general needs to be educated about ecotourism is the media, which often covers ecotourism without properly reflecting its real essence (ibid).

In assessing the probability of the respondents agreeing with the community empowerment strategies and their statistical significance as regards sustainable ecotourism, the findings on education (Table 4) revealed that the five predictors have different significance levels for the six selected education programme strategies, for instance that of strategy 1, offering basic ecotourism education to community members living in areas surrounding ecotourism sites. With the exception of education and the role of respondents in ecotourism, all other predictors in the model were statistically significant  $\chi^2$  (4, N=250),  $P < 0.05$ .

#### Notes. Refer to box 1 for strategies number 1-6

Although as regards strategy 2 on the need to train all stakeholder groups and networks in ecotourism management, the age and role of respondents were statistically insignificant, as regards strategy 3 on the provision of capacity building programmes for local community leaders, only residence and education level were significant. A different situation was observed in relation to strategy 6, in which the degree of agreement with the utilisation of non-governmental and community organizations in offering ecotourism education decreased in line with all the characteristics of the respondents (gender age, education, location, role of respondents). Details reflecting these strategies are presented in Box 1.

To ensure sustainable ecotourism, basic ecotourism education has to be offered to community members living in areas surrounding ecotourism sites, because indigenous people often lack the skills, resources and ability to get involved in, and maximize the benefits of, the tourism development process, as also evidenced by Sinclair, (2003) and Hinch and Butler, (2007). Ecotourism education will therefore ensure that stakeholders are aware of what is going on in their communities and how to act responsibly to meet their current and future needs as far as cultural and natural tourism's resources are concerned. Hence, all stakeholder groups and members of networks have to be trained in ecotourism management so that they can handle the management of ecotourism projects even in the absence of responsible officials from the government or non-governmental organizations. Moreover, local governments, with aid of other stakeholders and partners, should ensure that

**Table 4 Effect of Education on Sustainable Ecotourism**

Response		Degree of Agreement of the Education in Sustainable Ecotourism					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Case Processing Summary (%)</b>	Very high	57.6	53.6	46.4	49.6	47.6	47.2
	High	26.6	29.2	35.7	36.8	33.2	34.4
	Moderate	12.4	12.0	13.6	11.2	14.4	23.2
	Low	3.6	4.0	3.2	2.0	3.6	4.4
	Very low	0.4	1.2	1.6	0.4	1.2	0.8
<b>Pseudo R-Square (%)</b>	Cox&Snell	46	53.4	54.5	44.6	50.1	42.6
	Negelkerke	52.2	59.6	60.3	50.7	55.4	47.2
<b>Model Fit Information</b>	$\chi^2$ (N=250)						
	• Gender	(4 = 0.02)	(4 = 0.011)	(4 = 0.429)	(4 = 0.171)	(4 = 0.214)	(4, = 0.936)
	• Age	(16 = 0.029)	(16 = 0.145)	(16 = 0.093)	(16 = 0.340)	(16 = 0.001)	(16, = 0.820)
	• Residence	(28 = 0.001)	(28 = 0.003)	(28 = 0.002)	(28 = 0.010)	(28 = 0.000)	(28, = 0.008)
	• Education	(32 = 0.339)	(32 = 0.003)	(32 = 0.000)	(32 = 0.004)	(32 = 0.138)	(32, = 0.085)
	• Role	(44 = 0.071)	(44 = 0.007)	(44 = 0.148)	(44 = 0.005)	(44 = 0.000)	(44, = 0.398)

Source: Obtained from this study

capacity building programmes are provided for local community leaders with the aim of increasing their awareness of ecotourism matters and their enhancing their decision-making ability. Similar issues were emphasized at the World Ecotourism Summit (2002) in that, because capacity building and training programmes have been identified as key to the proper development of ecotourism, there is a need to build the capacity of local communities through training and technical support.

Furthermore, Byrd, (2007) argued that educating and informing the local community will strengthen the tourism industry and give a greater understanding of the tourism impacts the community perceives and the actual impacts that result from tourism. Educational institutions (such as schools, colleges and universities) have an important role to play in educating and providing ecotourism knowledge, through both formal and informal educational systems. The concept of ecotourism should be incorporated in related courses at schools, such as the environment, nature and its surroundings and sustainable development. At college level, relevant tourism or natural resources departments could offer special courses in ecotourism or sustainable tourism development that could be the foundation for elective courses for students. To provide real experience, schools should organize educational trips to natural sites. They may also consider organizing ecotourism activities/events on campus to increase students' awareness and provide ecotourism

information. In addition, schools could encourage and support the establishment of ecotourism clubs/ organizations, as also supported in Sangpikul and Batra (2007). Furthermore, regarding tourism and hospitality colleges, the study findings revealed that there should be a common curriculum in tourism and hospitality colleges and, since it will not be possible for all community members and other stakeholders to attend formal tourism and hospitality colleges, non-governmental and community organizations could be used to help provide ecotourism education. In addition to formal education, communities that have lived close to nature for centuries usually have wide environmental knowledge about the ecosystem and plant and animal species inhabiting it, which should not only be incorporated into community efforts at ensuring the viability of the ecosystem, but the knowledge should also be maintained. Avenues through which environmental and cultural knowledge can be passed to the next generation should be established (Michaelidou et al, 2002 and McNeely, 1992).

#### Access to Information

■ Tanzania, like other developing countries, aims at attaining high economic growth and poverty reduction. This can be achieved by implementing sound macroeconomic reforms, which include creating a conducive investment environment for attracting both domestic and foreign investors. So far, achievements have

been recorded in sectors like tourism, where increased investment in accommodation establishments has been registered. The improved performance of the tourism industry is also attributed to the joint efforts made by the Government and the private sector to develop the industry and market the country as a unique tourist destination. The sustainable development of the tourism industry depends on the availability of reliable tourism information for policy formulation and decision making (Tanzania Tourism Sector Survey, 2010). To ensure that information on tourism continues to be available, the multi-institutional committee, which consists of the MNRT, the Bank of Tanzania, the National Bureau of Statistics, the Immigration Department and the Zanzibar Commission for Tourism, conducted an International Visitors' Exit Survey in 2008. The key objective of the survey was to collect up-to-date information on tourist expenditure to be used in the "Tourist Expenditure Model" for estimating international tourism receipts in order to compile National Accounts and Balance of Payments statistics. The survey also aimed at obtaining information to be used for strategic planning, the promotion of tourism and macroeconomic policy formulation (ibid). In addition, various organizations are currently involved in providing information to tourists and other stakeholders. These are tour operators, hotel owners, investors and other private individuals, both in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar. These stakeholders operate in terms of networks and associations, such as the Tourism Confederation of Tanzania, the Tanzania Association of Tour Operators, the Hotel Association of Tanzania, the Tanzania Hunting Operators Association, the Tanzania Society of Travel Agents, the Tanzania Air Operators Association, the Intra-Africa Tourism & Travel Association, the Tanzania Professional Hunters Association, the Zanzibar Tourism Investors Association, the Tanzania Tour Guides Association and the Tourism & Hotel Professionals Association of Tanzania.

In addition to those organizations, the government through MNRT has established an Information, Education and Communication Unit, also named the Government Communication Unit, with the main objective of communicating the Ministry's policies and other relevant information to all internal and external stakeholders. This information is communicated through both print and electronic media, such as brochures, posters, books, stickers and calendars, as well as the radio, television and mobile video vans. The print media are then distributed during seminars, meetings and special events like exhibitions. To encourage effective communication with the media, the Unit also organizes press conferences, press briefings and field trips to various natural resource sites in the country so as to make the media well informed about all the activities going on concerning the Natural Resources Sector, as depicted in MNRT (2012).

Another key organ in relation to tourism information in the country is the Tanzania Tourism Board (TTB),

which was established by the Act of Parliament known as the Tanzania National Tourism Board (Amendment) Act of 1992 to promote Tanzania in both the local and international market. In executing this function, the TTB works in close collaboration with the private sector, which comprises all operators and agents from the various sub-sectors of the industry, using a number of techniques, such as participating in local and international trade fairs and road shows, being involved in media/public relations and advertising in local and international media. Access to information has been established as one of the vital tools for empowering community members. Various strategies were put forward with regard to access to information, such as access to ecotourism publications and tourism information, having a reliable mechanism for communicating with stakeholders and making use of local leaders to receive and disseminate ecotourism information. When comparing the information and communication situation of other countries, the report of Sangpikul and Batra (2007) revealed that Thai youths received ecotourism information through government agencies and television programmes relating to ecotourism. Programmes like travel documentaries give audiences both an insight into the travel experience and knowledge of ecotourism. Another feasible option considered is using a popular celebrity to act as an anchor to encourage wider interest. Frequent access to information gives various alternatives, thereby helping people to make sound decisions, because psychological research shows that people make better decisions when they are able to compare alternatives (Pearce, 1997). The study findings (summarized in Table 5.) show that, regarding strategy 7 on enhancement of access to ecotourism publications, the full model containing only residence predictors was found to be statistically significant, resulting to between 48 (Cox and Snell R square) and 53 (Nagelkerke R square) of the variance. However, as regards strategy 9 on making use of reliable mechanisms for communicating with stakeholders, the full model containing only residence, education and role was statistically significant at 5% and 10% confidence interval, as revealed by  $\chi^2$  (21, N=250),  $p < 0.000$ ,  $\chi^2$  (24, N=250),  $p < 0.009$ , and  $\chi^2$  (33, N=250),  $p < 0.006$ , respectively. The model explained between 50 (Cox and Snell R square) and 56 (Nagelkerke R square).

#### Notes. Refer to box 1 for strategies number 7-10

Moreover strategy 10, regarding 'to make use of local leaders to receive and disseminate ecotourism information' happened to be statistically insignificant due to having the highest significance value ( $p > 0.05$ ) of all predictors, possibly because in some communities a number of the local leaders have shown various weaknesses when managing several developmental projects at the village or local governmental level, and so ecotourism stakeholders find it difficult to give them the full mandate to manage these issues. This was also supported by the findings that the model on making use of local leaders to receive and disseminate ecotourism

**Table 5 Effect of Access to Information on Sustainable Ecotourism**

Response		Degree of Agreement with Access to Information for Sustainable Ecotourism			
		7	8	9	10
<b>Case Processing Summary (%)</b>	Very high	39.6	48.4	46.8	42.0
	High	36.8	33.6	34.8	32.0
	Moderate	19.2	10.9	13.2	20.0
	Low	3.2	5.2	5.2	4.0
	Very low	1.2	1.6	0.0	2.0
<b>Pseudo R-Square (%)</b>	Cox&Snell	47.9	36.1	49.9	15
	Negelkerke	52.6	39.8	55.6	16.9
<b>Model Fit Information</b>	$\chi^2$ (N=250)				
	• Gender	(df 4 = 0.924)	(df 4 = N/A)	(df 3 = 0.149)	(df 4, = 0.193)
	• Age	(df 16 = 0.096)	(df 16 = N/A)	(df 12 = 0.142)	(df 16, = N/A)
	• Residence	(df 28 = 0.000)	(df 28 = 0.616)	(df 21 = 0.000)	(df 28, = 0.252)
	• Education	(df 32 = 0.437)	(df 32 = N/A)	(df 24 = 0.009)	(df 32, = N/A)
• Role	(df 44 = 0.397)	(df 44 = 0.487)	(df 33 = 0.006)	(df 44, = 1.0)	

Source: Obtained from this study

information gave a poor reading (15 %) Cox and Snell R Square and (16.9) percent (Negelkerke R Square), while the model with a better reading was on increasing access to ecotourism publications, with (47.9 %) Cox and Snell R Square and (52.6 %) Negelkerke R Square). It is believed that access to information will personally empower stakeholders once they gain sufficient skills and knowledge to take action on ecotourism-related matters, as individuals or as a group, as well as laying the foundation for future dialogue.

### Language

■ Tanzania has more than 120 tribes, each having its own language that is understood by people of that particular society, but Kiswahili has been used as the national language since independence. English was introduced later on as the official language, mainly for schools, offices and business communications. For a number of years the ecotourism sector has used English in most of its communications, such as during the preparation of communication materials and for sign boards at tourist attractions, as well as the medium of communication at meetings and conferences. In recent years things have started to change and some stakeholders have realized that, when foreign languages such as English and French are used, large groups of people, particularly in rural areas, fail to understand what is being said. The Tanzania Tourism Sector Survey (2010) revealed that the principal

language of Tanzania is Kiswahili, but English was introduced as a second language in schools less than two decades ago, with the result that English is widely but not universally spoken and understood. Some organizations, particularly in the northern tourism circuit, are now using local languages, such as Kiswahili and Maasai, not only to enhance effective communication but also to preserve their cultural heritage.

Because language was found by the current study to make a significant contribution to the sustainability of ecotourism, foreign languages need to be avoided by communicators, especially when communicating with local community members. This was revealed by 40.8 and 28.2 % of the respondents strongly agreeing and agreeing, respectively. It is known for a fact that most local community members are not conversant with foreign languages and so there is a danger that messages will not be clearly delivered. The findings also revealed that both local vernacular and foreign languages, especially English, need to be used in some areas, as evidenced by over 70 % of the respondents (Table 6). The reason behind this is probably because in some cases both tourists and local stakeholders meet and so each one needs to understand the discussion or publication using his or her own language. In some situations, using the local vernacular might not be feasible because there are many of them, in particular at ecotourism attractions. Hence the need to use both foreign languages and Kiswahili was recommended,

**Table 6 Effect of Language on Sustainable Ecotourism**

Response		Degree of Agreement of the Language in Sustainable Ecotourism			
		11	12	13	14
<b>Case Processing Summary (%)</b>	Very high	40.8	42.4	27.2	28.8
	High	28.2	30.6	28.4	38.4
	Moderate	18.8	20.4	24.0	18.0
	Low	6.8	4.4	13.6	10.4
	Very low	6.4	2.8	6.8	4.4
<b>Pseudo R-Square (%)</b>	Cox&Snell	51.4	53.8	49.9	36.2
	Negelkerke	54.8	58.2	52.5	38.5
<b>Model Fit Information</b>	$\chi^2$ (N=250)				
	• Gender	(df 4=0.592)	(df 4 =0.83)	(df 4 = 0.000)	(df 4, =0.000)
	• Age	(df 16 = 0.000)	(df 16 =0.023)	(df 16 = 0.000)	(df 16,= 0.27)
	• Residence	(df 28 = 0.003)	(df 28 = 0.005)	(df 28 = 0.000)	(df 28, = 0.003)
	• Education	(df 32= 0.029)	(df 32 = 0.000)	(df 32= 0.88)	(df 32, = 1)
	• Role	(df 44 = 0.001)	(df 44 = 0.001)	(df 44 = 0.039)	(df 44, = 0.003)

Source: Obtained from this study

although at a low level, as evidenced by the responses, of which 20% rated the need as low and very low while about 24 % were unsure as to whether to agree or not.

#### Notes. Refer to box 1 for strategies number 11-14

The findings also show that, although over 67 % thought that using both Kiswahili and local vernaculars to communicate with local community members might make a significant contribution to the empowerment of stakeholders, this is probably because a large group of people, mainly in rural areas, are interested in other cultural tools, such as tales, songs and drama. In addition, the findings show that for strategy 11 (avoid using foreign languages when communicating with the local community) and 12 (using both Kiswahili and the local vernacular when communicating with the local community) all predictor variables were statistically significant, with the exception of the gender of the respondents ( $\chi^2$  (4, N=250),  $p > 0.05$ ). This indicates that the model was able to distinguish between respondents who agree and disagree with these strategies. The situation was different for strategy 13 on using both Kiswahili and foreign languages such as English when communicating with community members on all matters concerning ecotourism, whereby education was insignificant in the model ( $P=0.88$ ).

#### Estimating Logit Models

■ This study also estimated all fourteen logit models that deliver the estimated probability of agreeing with each concerning the proposed community empowerment strategies for ensuring sustainable ecotourism in order to establish the attributes relating to each one. The models were assessed via two options, namely, whether the effect is increasing or decreasing the probability of agreement with the model in the study, as it was not realistic for the estimated values to interpret the direct effect of each independent variable. In view of that, the significant values obtained and regression coefficients were compared with the reference group (male respondents aged between 26 and 35, resident in Kilimanjaro, educated to the level of college certificate and who were local community members).

The overall findings reveal that, although the respondents' characteristics influencing the models were mostly residency and their role in ecotourism, the influence least observed was on gender and education, but the respondents' age showed no influence in any of the models. The reason for this observation might have been because people living near ecotourism attractions and working in the sector in any of the roles would give them the ability to see, assess and hence comment on whether or not the given initiatives influence their lives more than education, gender and age.

The specific findings depicted that, in all six strategies of education programmes (statements 1-6), the respondents' characteristics had no influence on either increasing or decreasing the probability of agreement. However, the results from the estimated logit models for the four strategies on access to information (numbers 7-10) reveal that the probability that respondents would agree on strategy ten, pertaining to making use of local leaders to receive and disseminate ecotourism information, would decrease if they were resident in Tanga and Manyara. A similar situation was observed for stakeholders assuming the role of transporters in ecotourism, and so the probability of agreeing with strategy 9 on making use of reliable machinery for communicating with stakeholders decreases with gender (female). For language strategies, the study findings also show that the probability that the respondents would agree with strategy eleven on avoiding the use of foreign languages when communicating with the local community decreases with gender and respondents living in Tanga and Manyara who are female. Likewise, the probability of agreement decreases with respondents who have attained advanced secondary level education (form six) and work as transporters. These results might be attributed to the fact that it is very uncommon for females at community level (especially in the villages) to use foreign languages. This is because most of them are not conversant with such languages. Also taking into account their lifestyle, a large number of them might interact a lot less with foreigners than men.

The same scenario was observed among residents of Tanga, because this region does not receive as many foreign tourists as other regions in the eastern and northern tourism circuits. Similarly, the residents of Tanga, like most people along the coast, use Kiswahili in their daily activities much more than people in the non-coastal regions of Tanzania, which is why other citizens used to call them the 'Waswahili'. Contrary to the findings on the decreasing influence of respondents who were transporters, the study expected to find the opposite, because transporters spend most of the time with foreign tourists and communicate with them using different foreign languages, such as English, French, Spanish and Italian. In addition, although it was thought likely that respondents would agree with strategy fourteen on using poetry and tales to educate stakeholders, that was not the case in Zanzibar, Tanga and Arusha, where residents disagreed. Therefore, it was assumed that the role of local government officers there reduced the probability of agreement with the strategy of making use of cultural tools, such as tales and poetry to educate people, with the intention of increasing the level of empowerment.

These findings on few respondents agreeing to strategy fourteen may be attributed to the fact that most of the time government officers carry out their tasks and responsibilities based on a set work plan and the use of certain tools, at either regional or district level, making it potentially difficult for them to incorporate other tools.

Moreover, it is believed that some local government officers lack creativity and are unwilling to change, and so using tales and poetry would be unacceptable to them as they perceived them to be primitive tools of communication.

## Conclusion

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■ Through an assessment of community empowerment strategies for sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania, education programmes, access to information and language were examined. Using the survey approach, data were collected from Tanzania's ecotourism stakeholders (N=250) in eight selected regions in the eastern and northern tourism circuits and analyzed through multinomial logit regression. On educational strategies, the findings revealed that most tourism education and training programmes provided focused on the management of tourist hotels, with little consideration being given to other stakeholders residing within or near ecotourism attractions. The findings also revealed the need for all stakeholders groups and networks to be trained in the basics of ecotourism management so that they could handle ecotourism-related issues, even in the absence of responsible officials from the government or non-governmental organizations. Moreover, the necessity of capacity building programmes being extended to local community leaders was identified so as to raise awareness and strengthen the decision-making ability of decision makers. On tourism and hospitality colleges, the need for a common curriculum was recognized, together with the use of non-governmental and community organizations to assist in the provision of ecotourism education for various groups within the community.

With regard to the link between community empowerment and access to information, the need for extra effort was identified as a means of ensuring that various stakeholders have adequate access to ecotourism publications and tourism information through the establishment of reliable communication mechanisms and the use of local leaders for the smooth flow of ecotourism information. Pertaining to the contribution of languages to the management of ecotourism, the findings revealed that the majority of local community members were not conversant with foreign languages, and so the use of both Kiswahili and local vernaculars would enable training and discussion sessions to be understood. Apart from this, it was established that, under certain conditions, both Kiswahili and foreign languages such as English could be used at the same time, with the help of translators, particularly when communicating with community members about some ecotourism matters in the presence of tourists. Furthermore, poetry and tales could also be used to educate stakeholders as they touch on the interests of local communities directly and often reflect their own traditional practices and beliefs.



Despite the fact that the findings make a significant contribution to various stakeholders, policy makers and research centres as far as filling a gap in the literature and adding to the body of knowledge on community empowerment strategies is concerned, there are other areas that still need further research and attention, and so the following recommendations are made. First of all, ecotourism stakeholders and the general public should take the chance to invest and participate in developing infrastructural support, such as training and information centres, so that local communities and other stakeholders are provided with relevant education and information.

With respect to further research, the study wishes to see research conducted on a structural framework that would ensure that the community is empowered in terms of an ecotourism curriculum, especially for the informal education system, as well as on the dissemination and translation of ecotourism information that would be appropriate for meeting stakeholders' needs and for fitting in with both local and central government systems. Such research is needed because the local community needs to be empowered to decide on what forms of tourism facilities and wildlife conservation programmes they want to be developed in their respective communities, and how the tourism costs and benefits are to be shared among different stakeholders. This contention is also supported by Akama, (1996).

Moreover, policy and decision makers should emphasize measures for empowering the community and other stakeholders that are feasible and sustainable, such as providing basic ecotourism and conservation education, expanding access to information and ensuring regular communication. At the moment as there is great chance of ecotourism being sustainable if community members and other stakeholders are properly empowered to manage and contribute to ecotourism-related activities and projects. This is because the empowerment of individuals leads to their increasing self-efficacy, which is critical for systematically searching for opportunities for change and innovation through leadership, Drucker, (1985). In view of this, further studies are recommended on what issues should be included in the ecotourism curriculum in formal colleges and various education programmes offered to stakeholders in different areas of the country, taking into account their differences in education level and ecotourism attractions.

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