

**ASSESSING THE COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF TOURISM AS AN
ALTERNATIVE TO EFFECTIVE NATURAL RESOURCE USE
THE CASE STUDY BUNYARUGURU SUB-COUNTY RUBIRIZI
DISTRICT IN WESTERN UGANDA**

BY
TWESIGYE NABOTH
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SUPERVISOR; MR. TAAKO EDEMA GEORGE

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Declaration

I, Twesigye Naboth, do hereby declare that this is my original especial project report and has not been published or submitted for any other degree award to any university.

Signed



Twesigye Naboth


Date.. 27/6/2014

Approval

This is to certify that this special project report by Twesigye Naboth has been successfully completed under my supervision and i recommend it for submission to the faculty of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences of Busitema University with my approval

Taako Edema George

Signed.....

Date.....

Dedication

I dedicate this report to my dearest brother Mr Kiconco Adonia who helped me financially plus all my friends especially Kyarisiime Ruth and Turinawe Dickson that helped me in one way or another. May God bless you all.

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List of abbreviations

UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MWTA	Ministry of Wildlife Tourism and Antiquities
QENP	Queen Elizabeth National Park
MTI	Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science

Abstract

The study was conducted in Bunyaruguru sub-county in Rubirizi district with the objectives of finding out the Community perception of using the key natural resources to provide tourism services relative to other uses, establishing the different ways in which the community participate in promoting the tourism sector and identifying the best practices to enhance or maintain the current level of community participation in the tourism sector.

Using purposive sampling respondents were chosen from different categories that is business persons, professionals and peasants. 50 questionnaires containing closed and open-ended questions were used to obtain data information concerning the natural resources, benefits derived from tourism by the community, how the community can participate in tourism and the relationship between the community and the district authority. Face to face interviews especially for the illiterate respondents were conducted using the questionnaire.

The findings indicated that the most tourist attracting natural resources were wild animals, lakes and rivers. The community preferred to use rivers and lakes for fishing, swimming and getting water for domestic use, rocks for extraction of stones for construction and vegetation for fuel wood, timber and for creating space for agriculture while wild animals and the rift valley were preferred for tourism than other uses. The findings further indicate that the community participates in tourism by being hospitable and conserving the natural resources for tourism. In addition collaborative management, education and sensitisation on best practices to enhance or maintain the current level of community participation in the tourism sector.

There is still need for community involvement in the tourism sector especially through collaborative management, sensitisation and education of the community on the tourism benefits and natural resource conservation.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction.

This section covers background of the study, the research problem, objectives, scope of the study area, research questions, conceptual and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Understanding community perception of tourism as an alternative to effective natural resource use in local communities is important in order to maintain sustainability and long-term success of the tourism industry (Diedrich & Garcí'a-Buades, 2008).

Without the community positive perception of tourism, effective use of natural resources will never be achieved. Whether it is a national park, game reserve or any other attraction, unless you have the community's blessing tourism will never succeed. A community needs to maintain the Natural resources therefore community members make the best guides; they are ones who really know the areas and the local attractions. They need to be a part of the tourism enterprise to make it better.

Bunyaruguru sub-county is well endowed with Tourist attraction, biotic and a biotic resource. For instance biotic resources include the flora and fauna. Flora encompasses forests, grass and fauna are animals such as elephants, lion's, hippo etc while a biotic include climate, rocks among others therefore, the research is to find out how the community perceive tourism as an effective alternative use of the natural resources.

1.3 Problem statement

Bunyaruguru Sub County is found in Rubirizi district. The Sub-county is endowed with Tourism resources which include; 52 crater Lakes, Rivers, artificial forests, culture and tradition. It is also adjacent to Queen Elizabeth National Park; the most visited National Park in the country. The park is famous for many species, including hippopotamuses, elephants, leopards, lions and chimpanzees; it is now home to 95 species of mammal and over 500 species of birds. Tree-climbing lions, volcanic features, comprising volcanic cones and deep craters, such as Lake Katwe, from which salt is extracted. The resources have been preserved for tourism others than providing other immediate material needs for example food construction materials etc the research therefore is to investigate the community perception of the use of these natural resources for the promotion of tourism

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