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Towards Sustainable Ecotourism through Stakeholder Collaborations in Tanzania

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Abstract

This paper aims to assess the stakeholders' strategies towards sustainable ecotourism, with specific focus on networks and public private partnership strategies. A qualitative method through exploratory research design was applied to gather in-depth information about the existing networks and their roles towards promoting sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania. Thereafter, 23 common strategies in promoting sustainable ecotourism through collaborations were established from literature review, followed by a survey involving tourism stakeholders (n=250) which was conducted in the eastern and northern tourist circuits of Tanzania. The influence of respondent's attributes on their perception towards sustainability of ecotourism was analyzed on each of the identified 23 collaboration strategies by specifying and estimating binary logistic model to understand the attributes associated with the identified strategies. The study results show that despite of the number of the stakeholder's networks available, the level of their involvement in the management of ecotourism is still very low. There is also statistical evidence supporting that, the extent of public private partnerships in ecotourism activities is neither renowned nor formalized. To a large extent, this leads to inadequate seriousness and sense of ownership among stakeholders which jeopardizes both the development and promotion of sustainable ecotourism in the country. It is concluded therefore that, there is greater potential of sustaining ecotourism at any destination if all stakeholders will be represented via networks and public private partnerships within and between sectors.

Keywords

Stakeholder collaboration; Strategy; Sustainable ecotourism

Introduction

Despite the general consensus that, tourism can be successfully used as a powerful tool for economic development worldwide, there is still a gap on developing specific strategies on the sustainability principles that could make tourists better-off without leaving the destination communities worse-off. In view of that, the world is facing a global crisis due to man-made disasters and other natural phenomena affecting the quality of life on different sides of the globe. Unfortunately, the remaining question that goes unanswered till today is how to make tourism more environmental friendly and at the same time preserve it as an interesting vacationing experience for the tourists, especially in developing economies that embrace tourism as the panacea to their economic woes. The answer usually is found in ecotourism which primarily focuses on experiencing natural areas, which fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation. By definition, ecotourism is the traveling 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 [1-3]. In order for attraction to be regarded as ecotourism-oriented, it should primarily involve the natural environment, with associated cultural elements constituting secondary components; also the interaction between the tourists and the environment attraction should be based on education, learning and appreciating; ecotourism should be environmentally, social-culturally and economically sustainable [1]. Ecotourism, likewise, involves travel to a natural place that conserves the environment and improves the well being of local people as also revealed in The International Ecotourism Society (2002) cited in Sangpikul and Batra [4].

Tanzania is not unique in this, as most of its visitors come for ecotourism attractions. It is estimated that at least 90% of tourists visiting Tanzania follow nature-based tourism [5]. Various reports reveal that Tanzania has more competitive advantage than other countries when comes to ecotourism. According to Anderson [5] and Honey [6], Tanzania ranks second in the world for its natural resources; is a home to approximately fourteen national parks, thirty three game reserves, forty four game controlled areas, one conservation area and two marine parks. Moreover, it has been reported that Tanzania is the only country in the world which has allocated more than twenty five percent of its total area to wildlife national parks and protected area compared to the world average of 4% only [7]. That is equally saying that, most of tourism activities in the country depend on ecotourism's attractions.

The economic contribution of ecotourism in Tanzania's economy is significant. According to Carlson [8] and SNV [9], tourism contributes to 17.2 percent of the Tanzania GDP and supports over 400,000 direct jobs, nearly one job for every additional tourist. In an effort to increase the country's ecotourism achievement the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (2005) stipulated that Tanzania focuses on developing a sustainable tourism quality which is friendly to the conservation and restoration of environment and its people's culture as well as seek to maximizing benefits to be shared by the indigenous community for poverty alleviation. These initiatives among others featured in National Tourism Policy 1999 and being incorporated in the country's Integrated Tourism Master Plan 2002 [10,11].

According to Murphy [12], as the world experiences shifts in social values that affect the way people act as individual, business and government, most countries recognize the impact of those changes on the environments. This creates attention to the issues of sustainable ecotourism activities as they play a vital role in ensuring economic, ecological and cultural sustainability. In lieu of that, various principles of sustainable ecotourism were presented. Mwamwaja

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[13], for example, argues that sustainable ecotourism involves using tourism resources sustainably; reducing over-consumption and waste; maintaining diversity; integrating tourism into national and local planning; supporting and involving local communities; consulting stakeholders; skills development, training and marketing tourism responsibly. Anderson [1] shows how network theory has been used in different settings when exploring the roles of networks in promoting ecotourism in the Balearic Islands. The study concludes that network theory provides a prescriptive approach for facilitating community-based tourism planning using stakeholder involvement and proposes five steps for a successful collaboration process: a high degree of interdependence, the recognition of mutual benefits that decisions arrived at will be implemented and therefore legitimised, that all stakeholder groups need to be involved, and the introduction of a formal strategic planning process.

Although there are numerous principles of sustainable ecotourism in the ecotourism literature, there is still a gap to be filled on developing specific strategies on each of the presented principles, particularly in emerging destinations like Tanzania. This study therefore focuses on principles of local community involvement and stakeholders' consultation by assessing the role of stakeholders' collaboration strategies towards sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania concretely focusing on stakeholders' networks and public private partnerships. Specifically the study intends to identify and describe the ecotourism networks in Tanzania and examine the roles played by the identified networks on promoting sustainable ecotourism in the country. The assumptions underlying the study's objective recline on the argument that in order for any project to be successfully implemented, community has to be involved. In line with that assumption, Vernon et al. [14] depicted that successful implementation of sustainable tourism requires cooperation by a wide range of different stakeholders (the public sector, accommodation businesses, transport operators, attractions, restaurants, food suppliers, utility companies, host communities and tourists.

The study findings are expected to be useful to ecotourism stakeholders since it increases public awareness on various stakeholders' collaboration strategies for sustainable ecotourism. The study also contributes towards fulfilment of ecotourism strategies presented in Tanzania Tourism Policy of 1999 on the aspects of community participation, human resources and skills development. In addition to that, the findings contribute substantially towards development and strengthening of stakeholders' networks and various partnerships between public and private players which in turn will ensure the incorporation of many stakeholders' interests and enhance smooth operation of ecotourism activities as argued by Pearce [15] that control of tourism facilities through ownership by community groups as well as substantial community representation and committees may limit the negative social impacts. Vernon et al. [14] depicted that successful implementation of sustainable tourism requires cooperation by a wide range of different stakeholders (the public sector, accommodation businesses, transport operators, attractions, restaurants, food suppliers, utility companies, host communities and tourists). Finally it contributes to the general knowledge on ecotourism and sustainable development strategies, which is lacking in tourism emerging destinations like Tanzania.

Theoretical Framework

Ecotourism is the fastest growing sub sector of the tourism which emphasizes on protection of the environment and natural habitats. It originates from ethics of conservation and sustainable development [16]. According to Anderson [1], ecotourism is the part of sustainable tourism which is made up of cultural, rural and natural tourism aimed to conserve biodiversity, sustain the well-being of local people, includes learning experience, involves responsible actions on the tourism industry, and requires lowest possible consumption on non-renewable resources and stresses. Ecotourism like other developmental initiatives, adhere to guiding principles. Various studies on ecotourism [6,13,17-24] propose some of the guiding principles. According to these authors, ecotourism should: (i) not leading degradation of the resource and should be developed in an environmentally sound manner; (ii) be able to provide long-term benefits to the resource, to the local community and industry; (iii) involve education among all parties, local corn mutinies, government, non-government organizations, industry and tourists (before, during and after the trip); (iv) provide first-hand, participatory and enlightening experiences; (v) encourage all-parts recognition of the intrinsic value of resources; (vi) involve acceptance of the resource in its own terms, and in recognition of its limits, which involve supply-oriented management; (vii) promote understanding and involve partnerships between many players, which could involve government, non-governmental organizations industries, scientists and local (both before and during operations); (viii) promote moral and ethical responsibilities and behaviour towards the natural and cultural environment by all players.

Most studies agree in principle that for sustainable tourism development to be successful, stakeholders must be involved in the process. A stakeholder is identified by Freeman [25] as any group of individual who effect or is affected by tourism development in an area; hence their participation is very crucial. According to Arnstein [26] and Cohen and Uphoff [27], stakeholders' participation can be grouped into three categories, non-participation (stakeholders who have no input); degree of tokenism (stakeholders voice their interest but can't influence the decision making) and degree of citizen power (stakeholders voice their interest and influence decision making). Stakeholders' collaboration is important in the community as it empowers community members, generate new ideas to the community, reduce conflicts, increase sharing of responsibilities and leads to an informed community [28]. Generally, stakeholder collaboration is regarded as a process of ensuring that there is interaction of various stakeholders with common or related goals during planning, learning, decision making and empowerment mainly for the sake of enabling smooth management, collectively decision and innovation when tackling challenges, opportunities and plans for current and future well-being of a particular society. The current study is determined to examine efficient ways of collaborating stakeholders such as networks and public private partnership. Anderson [1] defined network as a mechanisms for the pooling of resources among two or more stakeholders to solve a problem or create an opportunity that neither can address individually. Moreover, Dredge cited in Anderson [1] interprets the sense of network theory as relationships between government, business and civil society in such that those relationships shape issue identification, communication, resource sharing and collective actions among stakeholders.

Various theories on stakeholders' collaboration exist worldwide. For example, Donaldson and Preston [29] state that every legitimate person or groups participating in the activities of a firm

do so to obtain benefits and that the priority of the interests of all legitimate stakeholders is not self-evident. The theory is composed of three interrelated but different aspects known as: descriptive/empirical aspect (describes some characteristics and behavior of an organization or development); the instrumental aspect (identifies the connection or misconnection between stakeholder management and the organization achievement or development goals) and the normative aspect (interpret function of moral or philosophical corporation whether is right thing to do or due to certain interest). The stakeholders' theory is relevant to this study as it help the understanding of stakeholders and their interest or motives in the tourism industry as well as the consequences of connections of various organizations in tourism industry.

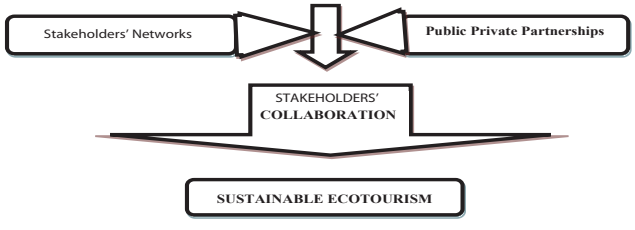
In addition to stakeholders' theories, some authors presented various models on stakeholders' collaboration. Rowley [30], for instance, integrated stakeholder theory and social network analysis to construct a theory of stakeholders influence with an argument that stakeholder relationship do not occur in vacuum or dynastic ties but are influenced by a network among stakeholders. Due to its relevance on stakeholders' collaboration aspect, the stakeholders' model is applicable in the present study with some modification so as to include local communities, service providers, community and nongovernmental organizations, academician and researchers as well as government officials. These were regarded as primary stakeholder group with an argument that without their continuing participation, the ecotourism will not be sustainable as evidenced to their importance in ecotourism's development. Clarkson [31] argued that if a primary stakeholder group became unsatisfied and withdraw from the corporation system in the whole or in part the corporate will be seriously damaged or unable to continue as gain concern.

On the same views, Bramwell and Sharman [32] presented collaboration analytical framework to assess the extent to which a local arrangement is inclusive, has collective learning and consensus-building, and provides a mechanism for evaluating the power relations between stakeholders. In this framework, three sets of issues were proposed to measure the collaboration process encompassing the scope of the collaboration, intensity of the collaboration, and the degree to which consensus emerges among actors. Besides that, Harisson et al. [33] conducted a study on sustainable ecotourism development in the Caribbean with main focus on practical challenges. A key challenge towards sustainable ecotourism identified by Harisson and colleague is the exclusive nature of tourism which inhibits participation of local people in development of tourism. For sustaining tourism in Caribbean, their study recommend establishing more dialogue and collaboration between industry practitioners, government policy makers, academicians, researchers and students; emphasizing on policy oriented and actionable research as well as providing stakeholders with access to information that are found within academic institutions. Moreover, their study is relevant as it discusses various important principles of sustainable tourism and in view of that, the present research worked upon the study's recommendations on stakeholders' collaboration by examining further on how best various stakeholders can collaborate to sustain ecotourism.

Moreover, Byrd [17] held a study on stakeholders in sustainable tourism development and their roles to investigate the roots of stakeholders' involvement and public participation and how they have been applied in the tourism. The findings show that in the process of sustaining tourism development four groups of stakeholders are supposed to involved, including the actual and future visitors, as well as the present and future host community. The study also depicted that the extent of stakeholder involvement in sustainable development process depend much on time, available resources and leadership of that particular society. The current study acknowledged the four groups of stakeholders presented and work further on involvement of various players in the group of present host community in Tanzanian context particularly on various ways to enhance their collaboration. Above all, the current study acted upon study's recommendation on identifying methods and strategies which will enhance not only god community participation but also widening community knowledge and empowerment.

Anderson's [1] study on promoting ecotourism through networks in the Balearics takes us a mile further to understand the nature and context of various actor networks and the way they are utilized to promote ecotourism. The study reveals that as Balearic Archipelago was experiencing pressure from tourism activities on its resources, different stakeholders recognized the power of networking and came up with three networks, namely Alcudia Network (which offers environmental education and training programmes); Sustainable Hotels Network (that promotes green environments in the hotel establishments) and Calvia Network (which mainly focuses on individual development through ensuring active participation of hosts, control of tourism quality and sustainable use of resources). The study is pertinent as it provides in-depth discussion of stakeholders' networks and gives five vital characteristics to networking process which are interdependence; joint ownership of decision; stakeholders' assumption of collective responsibility for the future direction of the domain; and network as an emerging process.

Based on literatures the present study conceptualizes stakeholders' collaboration, Strategies influence sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania as revealed in the null hypothesis that "Stakeholder networks and public private partnership have significant impact on sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania". The assumption underlying the hypothesis lies on the fact that stakeholders in partnerships and networks are more likely to promote sustainable ecotourism than otherwise. The argument is widely supported in Anderson [1] and Ladkin and Bertramini [34] that stakeholder collaboration acts as a tool to enhance stakeholders' understanding of common goals and to help these stakeholders solve problems in the sector development processes. The conceptual framework which guides the study in formulating and assessing the strategies on how best ecotourism stakeholders can collaborate for ensuring that there will be sustainable ecotourism is given in Figure 1; where the study methods are described in the next section.



Source: Designed in this study

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.

Materials and Methods

This paper aims to assess the stakeholders' collaboration strategies towards sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania through stakeholders' networks and public private partnerships. The study adapted both qualitative and quantitative methods as in the former it involves gathering in-depth the factual data based on explorative design; while quantitative design was applied in the assessment of the existing relationships between dependent (in this case sustainable ecotourism) and independent variables (in this case networks and public private partnerships). The study population comprised of Tanzania's tourism stakeholders within the main tourist circuits of Tanzania in the east (Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Morogoro, Tanga and Zanzibar) and north (Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Manyara). It is estimated that about 700 tourism businesses were registered in 2008; 66% of them in the northern tourist circuits [5].

Through simple random sampling, 250 respondents were selected to form a sample population and distributed at the ratio of 2:3 for eastern and northern circuit respectively as most of ecotourism activities take place in the northern circuit as compared to the eastern circuit. The response rate was 100%. The study adopted a survey approach to collect data where preliminary version of questionnaire was pre tested to few respondents for its validity, relevancy and clarity. The relevant secondary data mainly on the available stakeholders' networks and collaboration strategies, challenges, opportunities and performance of tourism industry was collected from Tanzania Tourist Board and research institutions in order to analyze previous and current trend of ecotourism and tourism industry in general.

The influence of respondent's characteristics (gender, age, residency, education level and role) on their perception towards issues of sustainability of ecotourism in Tanzania was analyzed on each of the stakeholders' collaboration strategies by specifying and estimating binary logit models. The used questionnaire comprised of two general questions intended to assess the respondent's opinion on importance of stakeholders' networks in management of ecotourism together with the need for allowing private players to manage ecotourism. From the literature review section above, 23 common attributes or strategies in promoting sustainable ecotourism through collaborations were established. Then, respondents were asked 'How do you agree or disagree with the contribution of the 23 stakeholders collaboration strategies towards sustainability of ecotourism in Tanzania?, the mentioned 23 statements (Box 1) were grouped into two groups of stakeholders network and public private partnership (PPP).The responses to these questions were coded so that the lower values indicated stronger response, as follows: "totally agree" 1, "agree" 2, "neither agree nor disagree" 3, "disagree" 4 and "totally disagree" 5. Furthermore, those response options were grouped into two groups of either 'agree' (option 1 and 2) and 'disagree' for option 3, 4 and 5 and hence qualify for the binary discrete choice model. The analysis was aided by Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), when estimating the degree of agreement on the influence of various variables (such as networking and public-private partnerships strategies) on sustainable ecotourism. The estimated binary logit model was as follows:

$$P(AGREE=i)=\exp(xi\beta)/1+\exp(xi\beta)$$

Where: $xi\beta=\beta_0\beta net+\beta_2 ppp+\sum_j^i \beta_j z_{ij}$

Hence $AGREE_i$ denotes the i^{th} individual agree ($AGREE_i=1$) or not agree ($AGREE_i=0$) with the stakeholders collaboration strategies, z_{ij} denotes the dummy variables, β_1 and β_2 denotes the regression coefficients. For the purpose of interpreting the model, the reference group related to the following variables was defined: a male respondents aged between 36 and 35, residence of Kilimanjaro, educated at the level of college certificate and local community members.

The characteristics of the respondents are summarized in Table 1. The respondents comprised of 65.2 and 34.8 percent for male and females respectively. When comparing the gender variation from the two sampled tourism circuits, the percentage of males was 62.6 and 37.4 for northern and eastern circuit respectively while those of female was 55.2 and 44.8 percentage for northern and eastern circuit respectively. With regard to age, the majority of respondents fall between 36 and 46 years old. The result implied that approximately 60 percent of all respondents were aged between 26 and 46 years old probably because this age group forms the majority of work force in Tanzania. The findings also revealed that 60 percent of total respondents were found in the northern circuit and 40 percent were found in the eastern circuit of tourism. This is due to the sampling layout that the respondent's ratio between the two circuits to be 2:1as many of ecotourism's activities take place in the northern as compared to eastern circuit [35]. Moreover, it was disclosed that,

Box 1: Stakeholders collaboration strategies towards sustainability of ecotourism in Tanzania as developed and tested in this study.

1) Involving local community members; business and service providers; government agencies; researchers and academician in managing ecotourism.
2) Incorporating the contribution from people with disabilities.
3) Stakeholders' networks formed by people with common goals and interests.
4) Stakeholders' networks formed by people with different goals and interests.
5) Establishing networks for stakeholders' interest.
6) Establishing networks involved in conflict resolutions
7) Forming more advocacy groups in the community.
8) Grooming educated society on ecotourism issues.
9) Involving stakeholders voluntarily in ecotourism management.
10) Ensuring stakeholders are forced by laws to participate in ecotourism management.
11) Involving stakeholders at local level.
12) Consulting stakeholders before making any ecotourism decisions.
13) Formalization of all partnerships between public and private.
14) Allowing informal public private partnerships.
15) Promoting partnerships in the infrastructure development.
16) Involving private players to be involved in capacity building of local community.
17) Permitting public and private partnerships in information and communication.
18) Enhancing more public and private partnerships in research and development activities.
19) Increasing private partnerships in the management of ecotourism related projects.
20) Allowing partnership between public and local private partners.
21) Establishing partnership with foreign private partners.
22) Ensuring that public have the majority shares and says than private partners in the partnership.
23) Ensuring equal shares for both public and private in the partnership.

respondents have different level of education ranging from primary to PhD. whereby 34 percent of total respondents reached at least advanced level of secondary education.

The majority of respondents (51.2 percent) possess the undergraduate qualifications at different levels of certificate, diploma and first degree while those with post graduate qualification (Masters and PhD.) comprised of 14.2 percent of the total respondents.

Respondents play different roles in the society as far as ecotourism is concerned. The majority group (23.4 percent) comprised of stakeholders from government organizations while local community members and players from private sector and nongovernmental organizations form 20.4 and 20.0 percent respectively. On other side researcher and academicians from various institutions forms 15.2 percent and service providers' group (comprised of tour operators, transporters, hotel and restaurants) form 20.8 percent of total respondents. The selected respondents' roles represented the major group of ecotourism stakeholders in the community as evidenced in Navruzov [36] with an argument that the word of community is widely used with varying meanings, within these, five factors are perhaps more important for clarification are individuals, social groups, nongovernmental organizations, community sector and local population.

Table 1: Respondent's Characteristics.

SN	Variable	N=250 (Percent)
1.	**Gender**	
	Male	65.2
	Female	34.8
2.	**Age**	
	<25 years	9.6
	26-35	28.4
	36- 45	30.8
	46-55	24.0
	>55 years	7.0
3.	**Residency**	
	Eastern Tourist Circuit (Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Pwani, Tanga & Zanzibar)	40.0
	Northern Tourist Circuit (Arusha, Kilimanjaro, Manyara, Tanga)	60.0
4.	**Education**	
	≤ primary education	8.8
	Secondary school education	26.4
	Vocational education	35.6
	University bachelor degree	15.6
	Masters and PhD education	13.6
5.	**Occupation**	
	Local community member (unemployed)	10.8
	Employees in non-governmental organizations	20.0
	Employees in governmental organizations	23.6
	Academics and/or researchers	15.0
	Tourism providers (tour operator, hotel and restaurants, transporters, etc)	20.8

Results

The study started by investigating the available networks and partnerships that support the sustainability of the ecotourism activities in the country. It was revealed that the tourism networks in Tanzania consist of individual businesses collaborating between themselves within specific sectors in one hand, and on the other hand there are collaborations between sector networks. Among the key networks available in the country include the following:

i. *Networks among sector networks:* This is the union of almost ten Tanzania's tourism associations and networks representing various private business sectors in the travel and tourism sector, also known as Tourism Confederation of Tanzania (TCT). This broad network includes Tanzania Association of Tour Operators (TATO), Hotel Association of Tanzania (HAT), Tanzania Hunting Operators Association (TAHOA) and Tanzania Society of Travel Agents (TASOTA), Tanzania Air Operators Association (TAOA), Intra-Africa Tourism & Travel Association (ITTA), Tanzania Professional Hunters Association (TPHA) and Zanzibar Tourism Investors Association (ZATI), Tanzania Tour Guides Association (TTGA) and Tourism & Hotel Professionals Association of Tanzania (THPAT). By this nature and mixture of members TCT is considered as the apex body in travel and tourism in the country. The main roles of the confederation is to ensure that through national representation, appropriate macro policies and strategies are adopted for developing and maintaining an environment for protecting natural and cultural heritage for the sake of both domestic and international communities as well as for growth and development of the country at large. In ensuring that the confederation achieves its goals, various efforts are undertaken to improve competitiveness, expand tourism investment and addressing operational challenges mainly in the areas of hospitality, quality and infrastructure through membership contributions, holding series of meetings by its members and sustainability-sensitization workshops for tourism players at the destination.

ii. *Tanzania Association of Tour Operators* (TATO) was established in 1983 to represent the licensed tour operators in Tanzania with the mission of uniting, promoting and giving tools to local and international individual tour operators as well as placing the country in the world map, as most unique place for tourist destination globally. With about 256 members from both Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar, TATO endeavours in carrying out advocacy for and on behalf of its members, provide a complete and comprehensive position for the tour industry in its relations with the Government and its institutions in matters pertaining to the formulation of tourism policy, plans and programmes as well as maintain high quality and standards amongst its members. This network also plays a major role in linking its members with the government in the view of PPP in order to create enabling working environment and promotion of tourism in Tanzania. Furthermore, the association undertakes feasibility study, research, and appraisal, managing and executing programs and projects for the economic and community development in areas where tourism activities are carried out as well as disseminates information to its members and

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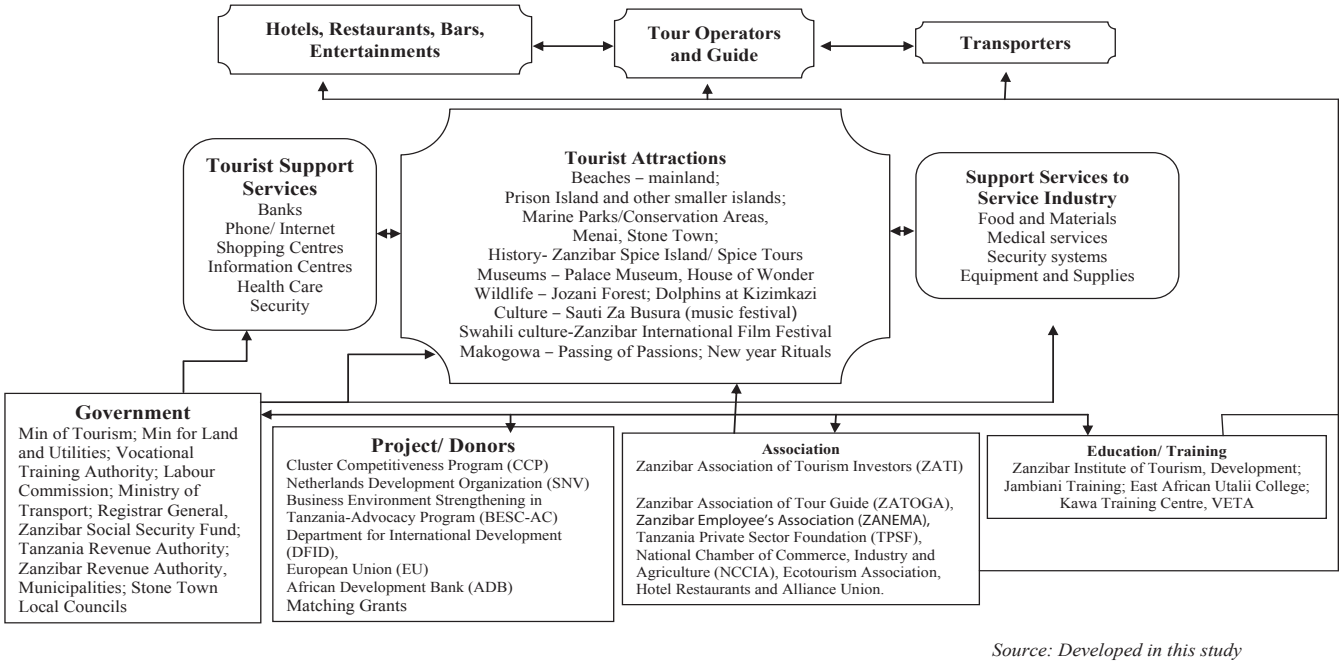
relevant institutions and offers capacity building programs to its members.

iii. *Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors* (ZATI) is non-governmental, non-religious, and non-political organization formed and established in 2003 to represent the interests of all tourism investors in Zanzibar. The main aim of its operation is to ensure that there is a sustainable and professional tourism industry of the highest standard as well as working with all stakeholders including government institutions. The association has about 106 members from various sectors such as hotels (60), tour operators (10), suppliers (8), water space (8), restaurants (5), shops (3), consultant (1) and health (1). One among the key achievement of the association is creating and implementing the PPP for enabling best tourism environment for both investors and tourists. ZATI also emphasizes in excellence in hospitality, management, marketing together with sustainable growth and development of the sector for benefit of majority of stakeholders, local community being one of them.

iv. *Hotels Association of Tanzania* (HAT) is a forum to connect society and tourists with the hotel community in Tanzania, with the core objectives to: advocate on behalf of its members to strengthen, promote and protect tourism and hospitality industry; provide value-added services that help members deliver on their financial, social, and environmental sustainability goals; and assist members in pursuing world-class service and hospitality standards. The association has about fifty common members and five affiliated ones including Bagamoyo Beach, Hotel Sea Cliff Limited, Kibo Palace, Kipepeo Village, Mafia Island Lodge, Mount Meru Hotel, Saadan River Lodge, Serena Hotels, Zara Adventures, Friends of Serengeti and Acorn Tourism Development Consultants. Despite of the fact that the association link and represents its members, it also strives to ensure quality and best practices among its members by stipulating and monitoring code of conduct for all members in the areas of standards, guest and employee management, promotion, information sharing and accounting.

v. *Tanzania Air Operators Association* (TAOA) was established and being operational in October 10th, 2002 as a platform for positive dialogue between licensed air operators and other stakeholders in the aviation industry and air transport sector. With approximately 30 members, TAOA operate to ensure development and expansion of sustainable Aviation services with much emphasis on safety, efficiency, smooth, regular and economic operations through involvement of all key stakeholders both in private and public sectors. The eight founding members of the TAOA comprised of Air Excel, Air Tanzania Corporation, Coastal Travels Limited, Desert Locust Control East Africa, Flight Link Limited, General Aviation Services, Northern Air and Tanzania Air Services.

In Zanzibar, there are several networks of stakeholders who offer several supports to tourists and service industry, with the major intention to stimulate sustainable tourism in the archipelago. These collaborations in Zanzibar are made up of various stakeholders' networks involving hotels, transporters, training institutions, government agencies, trade and sectorial associations as well as investors and multilateral donors as presented in Figure 2. From the Figure the interconnection of players is clearly shown which in turn ensure best environment for tourists visiting variety of tourist attractions due to availability of support services such as accommodation, transport, financial, health, information and internet. While hotels, restaurants, bars and entertainment serve as major services for tourists visiting Zanzibar to experience sun and



Source: Developed in this study

Figure 2: Ecotourism Networks in Zanzibar.

sand attractions; the trade facilitations are enhanced by the tourism providers including tour operators and transporters. As most of the actor networks aim at sustainable tourist expenditure, they routinely spearhead the process of making destination competitive in terms of training the tourism workers (education and training actors and donor-funded projects). Several associations and projects promote pro-poor tourism strategies (e.g. Eco-Association, SNV, EU programs, etc); while the government supports the efforts geared towards sustainable culture in all the tourism activities in Zanzibar considering that, at least 54% of this Archipelago's GDP comes from tourism industry [7].

The implications of the findings on the ecotourism networks recline on the fact that the local communities should be considered as key stakeholders to encourage integrated efforts and inclusiveness when promoting sustainable ecotourism at tourism destinations. Besides, various associations dealing with ecotourism should form the networks of players which add value to the ecotourism chain as found in the case of Balearics islands [1], which share some similar characteristics as Zanzibar in terms of land and population sizes. In the same way, there is a need for supporting services such as bankers, insurers, health, security and communication to be incorporated through public private partnerships.

A range of community-private tourism ventures have emerged in Tanzania, starting in the early 1990s mainly in the northern part of the country, where tour operators have entered into legal contracts with Village Councils. These contracts generally provide for tour operators to be able to access village lands in exchange for set payments by the operator, and villages agreeing to set aside a concession area where they will not farm or settle. Such agreements serve to maintain natural vegetation and prevent land use changes in these ecotourism concessions, while villages maintain full land rights and authority over the areas [37]. As a way of encouraging residents to visit the national parks, museums' and antiquities' entrance fees have remained low. Ecotourism in the country remains largely one of the tools for poverty alleviation, economic growth, empowerment of the communities, improvement of resource utilization and employment opportunities. Unfortunately, there is still no real official policy framework or support from government agencies involved particularly in developing notions for how a private sector entrepreneur can carry out effective community involvement with ecotourism.

The study findings reveal that most of key people in the management of ecotourism are from the public sector and respondents express their need for increasing the participation of stakeholders from private sector into the management of ecotourism. This has been evidenced by the fact that while 80 percent of all respondents do agree that there is a need for allowing private players to manage ecotourism in Tanzania. These findings resemble the agreement of ecotourism stakeholder in World Ecotourism Summit [38] about the significance of strengthening small and medium enterprises and particularly micro enterprises to enable them to successfully engage with the tourism industry in Africa.

Collaboration strategies towards sustainable ecotourism

In order to examine the roles played by the networks in promoting ecotourism in the country, 23 items representing stakeholders' collaboration strategies (box 1) were developed and grouped into two groups on the basis of stakeholders' network (statement 1-12) and public private partnership (statement 13-23). Each of these two groups contains specific strategies under study whereby respondents were required to agree or disagree on the proposed strategies towards stakeholders' collaboration and sustainable ecotourism. All strategies were compared with five respondent's characteristics namely as gender, age, location, education and role of respondents in ecotourism. The general findings reveal that in Tanzania's northern and eastern ecotourism zones, stakeholder's networks and public private partnerships are not much emphasized and so respondents extend their concern on need for extra efforts to incorporate more stakeholders in various forms such as using their representative groups, associations and networks as well as partnerships with public sector for sake of sustainability of ecotourism as follows:

Stakeholders networks: The main stakeholders' networks strategies revealed in the study were: forming more advocacy groups in the community, involving local community members (which accounted for 95.6% of all responses) followed by business and service providers; government agencies; researchers and academician in managing ecotourism (93.4%), involving stakeholders at local level (92%) and establishing networks for stakeholders' interest(90.4%). The overall responses for "agree" and "disagree" were skewed percentage-wise with an insignificant number of respondents disagreed with the strategies ranging from 4.4 to 18.8 percent as revealed in Table 2.

On the same context, the results show that despite of the minimum number of the stakeholder's networks, the level of their involvement in the management of ecotourism is also low and hence in order to ensure better and sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania, all key stakeholders such as local community members; business and service providers; government agencies; researchers and academician in both public and private institutions have to be involved in its management using different roles. The findings get support from Gunn [39] who argued that one main key to success and implementation of sustainable tourism development in a community is the support of stakeholders such as citizens, entrepreneurs and community leaders. Also it is assumed that the increased contributions of communities to locally managed ecotourism create viable economic opportunities and reduce environmental issues associated with poverty and unemployment. Various advantages of stakeholder's involvement were reported in previous related studies, these include: generation of new ideas, reduction of conflicts and sharing of responsibilities informed community [28].

Likewise, the participation of people with disabilities within the networks is low in such that respondents demanded for their fully involvement so as to safeguard their interests. With regard to various functions of stakeholders' networks, for sake of sustainability of ecotourism and community benefits, networks should stand for stakeholders' interests always and involved in conflict resolution as well as advocacy. Additionally, the formation of the stakeholders networks should not be forced by laws instead be voluntarily formed and managed at local or grass route levels. This has also been supported and evidenced in Chanan [40] who suggests two types of residents' involvement which are participation or active citizenship as a general constructive voluntary activity among individuals or social groups, and partnership between community sector and other local actors. So, the differences between these two types of social activity could be clarified in two aspects of participation and partnership. Still, results depicted low level of educated people in most of the society and the issue of stakeholders' consultation is also not very much impressive.

Table 2: Stakeholders' Network Strategies for Stakeholders Collaboration.

Stakeholders Networks Strategies	N=250 (%)			
	Agree	Disagree	R^2 (%)	B
1) Involving local community members; business and service providers; government agencies; researchers and academician in managing ecotourism.	93.6	6.4	87	0.8
2) Incorporating the contribution from people with disabilities.	81.2	18.8	29	1.4
3) Stakeholders' networks formed by people with common goals and interests.	85.2	14.8	46	1.0
4) Stakeholders' networks formed by people with different goals and interests.	72	18	56	0.7
5) Establishing networks for stakeholders' interest.	90.4	9.6	71	1.4
6) Establishing networks involved in conflict resolutions	84.8	15.2	33	2.4
7) Forming more advocacy groups in the community.	95.6	4.4	42	2.7
8) Grooming educated society on ecotourism issues.	88.8	11.2	61	1.7
9) Involving stakeholders voluntarily in ecotourism management.	82.4	17.6	23	1.3
10) Ensuring stakeholders are forced by laws to participate in ecotourism management.	87.2	12.8	121	1.0
11) Involving stakeholders at local level.	92	8	67	1.5
12) Consulting stakeholders before making any ecotourism decisions.	82.4	17.6	47	0.5

In lieu of that it was proposed that in addition of having educated society members who can protect the eco attractions sites and use for their own societal benefits, stakeholders involved in ecotourism have to be consulted before authority making huge ecotourism decision which has substantial impact on their day to day activities socially, economically and culturally. By so doing, community may have a feeling of being part of these projects which in turn will make them more responsible over ecotourism attractions and resources. Hence, this ensures current and future use of ecotourism attractions and resources in their areas.

The study findings on stakeholders' networks provide the contribution of new knowledge, particularly on network theory, that it added to the knowledge of how networks can be used to sustain ecotourism in emerging destinations like Tanzania. Like in Jamal and Getz [41], this study provides a prescriptive approach for facilitating community-based tourism planning using stakeholder involvement and propose five steps for a successful collaboration process including: a high degree of interdependence, the recognition of mutual benefits, that decisions arrived at will be implemented and therefore legitimized, that all stakeholder groups need to be involved, and the introduction of a formal strategic planning process. Explicitly, the findings stipulate that networks function well if majority of the involved actors reside on that particular location and are given equal opportunities in sharing the tourism benefits as given to other stakeholders from outside the area. Moreover, care must be taken to ensure their interests are prioritized first. If one achieves that, the interdependence among them in decision making process and sharing of benefits will undoubtedly, have impact in development and sustainability of ecotourism.

Public Private Partnerships (PPP): The main strategies agreed by respondents as the most effective in promoting sustainable ecotourism include involving private players in capacity building of community (87.6%), increasing private partnerships in the management of projects (85.6%) as well as permitting PPP in infrastructure development, information and communication (84.8%). However, the most disagreed strategies were: formalization of all PPP (51.6 %) and ensuring that public have the majority shares than private partners in the partnership (40.4% of all respondents). The details of the respondents' decisions are summarized in Table 3. Despite of the substantial value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) for most of the proposed strategies, the poor explanation was observed on establishing partnership with foreign private partners (16%) and formalization of all PPP (12%) implying that, formalization of all partnerships with foreigners will not guarantee fully stakeholders collaboration and commitment for sustaining ecotourism.

Concerning the extent of influence of predictors, negative influence have been recorded in three of them which are formalization of all PPP; enhancing more PPP in research and development activities; and ensuring that public have the majority shares than private partners as reflected in their negative values of regression coefficient (β). Furthermore, regardless of the fact that respondents were in dilemma on structure of the partnerships if should be formalized or not, majority of them depicted that, for effective and efficiency of PPP in ecotourism, system should allow both formal and informal PPP because they will in turn brought significant impact to the management of ecotourism due to room for both flexibility and enforcement by laws hence leads to efficient communication and facilitation. The importance of PPP in sustainability of ecotourism has been also supported by World Ecotourism Summit [38] with argument that PPP should be seen as a key facilitating mechanism, particularly for informing and educating the traveling public about the consequences of their travels as well as their potential for beneficial action. Partnerships could also be used to educate community members and other stakeholders on effective and efficient use of ecotourism resources for the both current and future use.

Areas for partnerships and role of each partner are other key areas to be taken care of as far as sustainability of ecotourism is concerned. The findings show that partnership between private and public should base on six key areas of infrastructure development, capacity building of community, information and communication, research and development activities as well as in the management of projects. The findings have been supported and clarified further by Eagles [42] with argument that while the public sector role in ecotourism have to focus on providing environmental protection (the natural area itself); infrastructure, such as roads and airports; provide security and enforcement; monitor and control impacts; allocate access;

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Table 3: PPP strategies for stakeholders collaboration.

Public Private Partnership Strategies	N=250 (%)			
	Agee	Disagree	R^2 (%)	B
1) Formalization of all public and private partnerships	48.4	51.6	12	-0.12
2) Allowing informal public private partnerships.	84.4	15.6	31	1.0
3) Promoting partnerships in the infrastructure development.	84.8	15.2	43	1.8
4) Involving private players in capacity building of community.	87.6	12.4	25	1.9
5) Permitting public and private partnerships in information and communication sector.	84.8	15.2	33	1.0
6) Enhancing more public and private partnerships in research and development activities.	76	24	119	-0.1
7) Increasing private partnerships in the management of projects.	85.6	14.4	67	1.0
8) Allowing partnership between public and local private partners.	60	40	66	0.04
9) Establishing partnership with foreign private partners.	61.2	38.8	16	0.3
10) Ensuring that public have the majority shares than private partners in the partnership.	59.6	40.4	41	-0.2
11) Ensuring equal shares for both public and private in the partnership.	70	30	61	0.7

information, such as through interpretive programmes; and resolve conflicts; the private sector role in ecotourism typically have to be in providing accommodation and food; provide transportation, such as busses and airlines; information, such as guides and brochures, promoting sites to potential visitors; and providing consumer products, such as souvenirs.

On top of that, modality of the partnerships should be open in such that the system to allow partnership between public, community sector and other local actors as well as with foreign private partners, where by local partners have to be given higher priorities during the formation of the partnerships for enhancing and strengthening community involvement also supported in Chanan [40]. Even though, some of the respondents had an opinion that there should be equal shares for public and private, majority have advised that efforts should be taken to ensure public remains with majority shares for ensuring sustainability of ecotourism activities. When comparing these findings on ownership mode to previous related studies and actual practice in different areas around the world, literature reveals that while Tuohino and Hynonen [43] argued that most forms of ecotourism are owned by foreign investors and corporations that provide few benefits to local communities as majority of profits are put into the pockets of investors instead of reinvestment into the local economy or environmental protection, the evidence from Senegal during the World Ecotourism Summit [38] show that, the issue of foreign ownership draining many of the benefits at the local level.

The findings on public private partnership provide the contribution of new knowledge on how these PPP should be handled within the stakeholder's networks. Studies such as Anderson [1] suggest that, stakeholders networks can be utilized in offering environmental education and training programmes; promoting green environments in the hotel establishments and ensuring active participation of hosts, control of tourism quality and sustainable use of resources. This study adds on the need to allow stakeholders networks and partnerships in key areas of project management, capacity building, infrastructure development and management of ICT. Literature shows the existence of limited market awareness, accommodation supply, and high destination prices. Moreover, the most recognized challenges facing the tourism industry, particularly in developing economies include poor infrastructure, poor product development and management, poor marketing, poor linkages within local economy, poor institutional and technical capabilities, and shortage of appropriate and specialized core and skilled personnel as evidenced in Mitchell [44] and Acorn [45]. Therefore, study findings solidifies the areas of PPP for promoting sustainable ecotourism.

The need for joining forces between private and public sectors cannot be overemphasized. Likewise the local community eventually carries the burden of negative impact on the ecotourism resources than most strangers to the destination. These findings will contribute significantly in a number of decisions making towards implementing ongoing national initiatives of public private partnerships in tourism industry with intention of safeguarding the interests of the local community. These initiatives are echoed by the recent action of the Tanzania's tourism sector, both the public and private sectors, joining hands to develop and launch the 2012 International Marketing Strategy for Tanzania (for the first time in the country's tourism history). In this landmark, the country's community witnessed the public-private partnership to improve the tourism business environment, with both Tanzania Tourist Board (which is the public sector body mandated to promote) and Tourism Confederation of Tanzania (representing the private sector in the industry) promoting the five year strategy to work together, as well as with other bodies which have stakes in the industry.

Estimating logit models: All 23 logit models that deliver the estimated probability of agreement with each of the proposed stakeholders' collaboration strategies through stakeholder's networks and PPP strategies towards sustainable ecotourism were estimated to ascertain the attributes related to each strategy. Table 4 presents a summary of each model's results in the forms of signs either positive (+) or negative (-) expressing the effect of predictors on dependent variables due to the fact that it is not possible and realistic for the estimated values to interpret the direct effect of each independent variable on the probability of the agreement of the models under study. Hence, positive sign (+) express the increasing probability of agreement and negative sign (-) articulate the decreasing probability of agreement with the network or partnership strategies with respect to the reference groups.

The general findings show that the probability of agreement with network strategies increases much with residency of respondents

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Table 4: Summary of the 23 logit Models on stakeholders collaboration.

	Stakeholder's Network												Public Private Partnership										
Gender	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**
1. Female						-		-			-							+	-				-
Age																							
1. <25 years																							-
2. Between 26-35																							-
3. Between 46- 55										-	-												
4. >55 years																							-
Residency																							
1. Dar es Salaam	+		+	-	+	+		+	-	+													+
2. Pwani	+				+				-	+													+
3. Morogoro			+		+			+		+													
4. Zanzibar					+				-	+													+
5. Tanga									-	+													+
6. Arusha	+		+																				
7. Manyara										+													+
Education																							
1. Un educated						+																	
2. Primary Education						+								+	+								
3. Form Four										+				+									
4. Form Six		+												+									
5. College Diploma											+				+								
6. First Degree											+		+	+									
7. Masters Degree			+								+			+									
8. PhD														+	+								
Occupation																							
1. CGO																			+				
2. LGO								+															
3. CBO																							
4. NGO				+																			
5. Governmental Organization																							
6. Researcher									-			+											
7. Academician in Private Institution																							
8. Academician in Public Institution		+												+									
9. Tour Operator																							
10. Hotel and Restaurant																			-		+		
11. Transporter											-												

Notes:
(+) denotes increasing probability of AGREEMENT with stakeholders' collaboration strategy
(-) denotes decreasing probability of AGREEMENT with stakeholders' collaboration strategy
CGO represent Central Government Officer
LGO represent Local Government Officer
CBO represent Cmmunity Based Organization
NGO represent Non Government Officer

followed by education level and occupation. Specifically, the likelihood of agreement, on "ensuring that stakeholders are forced by laws to participate in ecotourism management", increases with the respondent's residency except for the ones residing in Manyara. Besides, staying in eastern tourism circuits mainly in Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Morogoro, Zanzibar and Tanga) increases agreement of need for people establishing networks as a result of common goals and interests. The reasons towards these observations could be due to the argument that the more the stakeholders are educated and closely living in ecotourism attraction site, the more they see the need and importance of protecting those areas as well as joining effort to safeguard and enjoy the expected benefit. The findings also support the work of Zia [46] which evaluated the potential for stakeholders' collaboration for community based coastal ecotourism in Pakistan as a key factor in the prospects for Community Based Ecotourism (CBE) in coastal areas of Pakistan. In order to successfully establish stakeholders' collaboration for CBE in coastal areas of Pakistan the collaboration model that suggests optimum conditions needed, including, the inclusion of broad range of stakeholders; identification of a suitable convenor; application of a 'search conference'; strategic repositioning of stakeholders and finally, establishing a collaborative organisation structure. This study does not deviate much from Zia's one, as it contributes to a stakeholder's model by considering broad range of stakeholders, combined with their organization and involvement of various structures in terms of networks and public private partnerships.

Regarding the occupation categories, the study reveals that, if the respondent is researchers or academicians, living in the eastern tourism circuit, it decreases the probability of agreeing with the 'need for involving stakeholders voluntarily in ecotourism management'. The possible explanation to this point of view is that, such kinds of respondents find the need for government to set up machinery which will clearly stipulate modalities for stakeholders involvement in the ecotourism management rather than the practice of stakeholders forming their associations and decide whether to or not to commit themselves in ecotourism. If left unaddressed, the stakeholders will involve themselves in the areas where they will benefit directly socially or economically hence left other ecotourism areas unattended which in turn might affect their growth and sustainability.

The contribution and implication of these findings recline along the dimension of regulation in ecotourism in line with the study of Zhou and McLaughlin [47] which sets out to understand perspective on collaboration held by stakeholders such as governments, nature reserve administrations, local communities, tourism business and conservation non- governmental organizations. Specifically, this study aids one in understanding of types and roles of different stakeholders and their role towards sustaining ecotourism.

Moreover, the degree of agreement with the variable that 'stakeholders should be forced by laws to participate in ecotourism management' and 'involving stakeholders at local level' was decreasing when it comes to the respondents who were female, aged between 46 and 55 years. Perhaps, the main explanation to this was the fact that matured ladies and in most cases are managers of multiple setups ranging from family, community to professional levels hence tend to assign importance of involving players voluntarily through bottom up models as evidenced in Gunn [39]. Likewise, the findings can be linked with the position of women in most of African societies which don't allow them to make decision instead their men decide on their behalf and later on are supposed to implement whatever agreed, but as society views on this matters start changing, females are now realizing the need for them to be involved voluntarily in ecotourism and other development matters in the society.

Furthermore, it was revealed that being a female decreases probability of agreement with the 'establishing networks involved in conflict resolutions', 'grooming educated society on ecotourism issues' and 'involving stakeholders at local level' possibly due to the fact that in most of African societies it is not common for women to be involved in decision making especially in conflict management and train or lead other members in the society, mainly men. According to Timoth, 2001 cited in Wearing and Neil [48], most of women and ethnic minorities in the past have had little voice in policy mattes, particularly in the developing world and most of their work has been relegated to the economic periphery since it is either domestic in nature or undesirable to those in positions of power. The political right of women and ethnic groups diversely residents and their entitlement to participate in tourism planning and decision making are ill defined in tourism policy practice.

When these people, particularly in the informal sector are not given opportunities to participate in decision making, their positions becomes even more tangential, for with every regulation, their work becomes progressively marginalized. These findings calls for deliberate efforts to increase awareness and empowerment of females to enable them participate in discussions and decision making of various developmental matters, ecotourism being one of them. Additionally, the degree of agreement with 'incorporating the contribution from people with disabilities', 'stakeholders' networks formed by people with different goals and interests', 'grooming educated society on ecotourism issues' and 'consulting stakeholders before making any ecotourism decisions' increases with occupation of respondents especially for academician in public universities, nongovernment organization, local government officer and researchers because these groups of stakeholders usually have higher education level and hence their understanding in most of development issues is higher than others hence know the benefit and impact of consultation, multi-disciplinarity, educated society for sustainable development.

Like in stakeholder's networks, generally the degree of agreement with public private partnerships with higher number of locals than foreign partners increases more with influence of residency of respondents and occupation in most of the strategies. It is assumed that community residing within or near the ecotourism attraction sites engage much in various profit making activities and therefore they are in high chance to experience several challenges and so might see the need for extra effort to support the sector through PPP with local partners being the majority possibly because for long period of time mostly in African countries, foreigners benefited more than locals. According to Tuohino and Hynonem [43], most forms of ecotourism are owned by foreign investors and corporations that provide few benefits to local communities and hence majority of profits are put into the pockets of investors instead of reinvestment into the local economy or environmental protection. It has also established from the findings that being uneducated decreases the probability of agreement with formalization of all partnerships between public and private', 'allowing informal public private partnerships' and 'promoting partnerships in the infrastructure development since awareness level on benefits of PPP and sense of responsibility, accountability and consequences between players is believed to be

low in this group of people and also some of them might believe that only government is mandated to build and support infrastructure.

Bhuiyan et al. [49] indicated that in order to ensure ecotourism development governments must focus on ecotourism action plan, building institutional capacity; invest in ecotourism projects, creation of protected areas, image and branding, linkage to other types' tourism, advertising and publication, human resource development and SME operation as well as ensure participation of the local people. This study makes one believe that all those focus areas will flourish if governments involves private sector in the implementation plan.

Furthermore, age was another influencing factor in the possibility of agreement with 'ensuring equal shares for both public and private in the partnership' since the likelihood of agreement decreases with age below 25 , between 25-35and above 55. The reason behind this finding is probably because most of people below 25 years were not engaged fully in the economic activities due to educational commitment and hence not see much need and consequences of PPP while those above 55 years are reaching retirement age hence are in better position of self-employment and commit themselves fully in ecotourism related activities hence might need more chance and shares for private rather than being equally with public sector. The contrary, the findings was not expected for stakeholders between 25 and 35 years to have decreasing possibility of agreement because they were believed to be most active groups with high chance of engage themselves in economic activities and partnerships. The findings contributed to the existing knowledge, particularly on Sangpikul and Batra's [4] study that assesses the knowledge and attitude of Thai youth towards ecotourism as well as to survey their travel experiences relating to ecotourism. The findings revealed that most of the Thai youths had a moderate level of ecotourism knowledge. Their attitudes appeared to be positive to the concept of ecotourism and majority of them had ecotourism experiences Moreover, their study recommended that related parties should create more awareness by providing information regarding ecotourism concepts to encourage Thai youths to realise the importance of ecotourism in helping conserve natural tourism resources and the local economy of the country. The current study goes beyond the youth category and shows that not only the youth (aged below 25 and between 25 and 35) are less knowledgeable in ownership levels but also older stakeholders (above 55 years old). Therefore appropriate interventions of increasing awareness on ecotourism should be planned to all groups.

Also of the interested findings was that of Bramwell and Sharman's [32] proposal on the three sets of issues to measure the collaboration process encompassing the scope of the collaboration, intensity of the collaboration, and the degree to which consensus emerges among actors. This study went further to map out the scope and intensity of collaboration as far as composition, level and shares of partners within the partnerships is concerned, with the view to highlight the key challenges which inhibits participation of local people in development and sustainability of ecotourism. Likewise the study findings contribute largely to the National Tourism Policy [10]. In this policy, the importance of conserving the country's naturals resources are emphasized.

Likewise, on its efforts to secure the success implementation of the ecotourism strategies in the tourism policy, the government of Tanzania prepares an Integrated Tourism Master Plan [11] which outlines strategies and programmes for the sector. The primary focus of this plan is to obtain sustainable benefits for people of Tanzania by generating additional economic activity from available resources. The six primary areas addressed by the ITMP include: awareness creation in the source markets; expanding tourism products; securing a more competitive position; maximizing the necessary service skills, and establishing the necessary structures and controls to underpin tourism development. However more efforts are still required in research and academics to address several issues on how stakeholders can be involved in the whole process to sustain ecotourism in the country. The current study emphasizes the importance of ecotourism as one of promising tourism products. It also presents issues to be dealt with by stakeholder's networks and public private partnerships in order to achieve the country's developmental goals.

Conclusion

This paper assesses the stakeholders' collaboration strategies towards sustainable ecotourism in Tanzania through stakeholders' networks and public private partnerships. Surveys involving 250 stakeholders were conducted in the northern (Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Manyara) and eastern (Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Morogoro, Tanga and Zanzibar) Tanzania tourism circuits. A qualitative method through exploratory research design was applied to gather in-depth information about the existing networks and their roles towards promoting sustainable ecotourism. Thereafter, 23 common strategies in promoting sustainable ecotourism through collaborations were established from literature review, followed by a survey involving tourism stakeholders (n=250) which was conducted in the eastern and northern tourist circuits of Tanzania. The influence of respondent's attributes on their perception towards sustainability of ecotourism was analyzed on each of the identified 23 collaboration strategies by specifying and estimating binary logistic model to understand the attributes associated with the identified strategies. The study results show that despite of the number of the stakeholder's networks available, the level of their involvement in the management of ecotourism is still very low. There is also statistical evidence supporting that, the extent of public private partnerships in ecotourism activities is neither renowned nor formalized. To a large extent, this leads to inadequate seriousness and sense of ownership among stakeholders which jeopardizes both the development and promotion of sustainable ecotourism in the country.

Pertaining to specific studies on stakeholders network, it was revealed that the main agreed strategy were: forming more ecotourism advocacy groups , involving local community members business and service providers; government agencies; researchers and academician in managing ecotourism, involving stakeholders at local level and establishing networks for the interest of stakeholders'. Most of the proposed strategies in the research show positive influence in sustainability of ecotourism, according to the respondents. Moreover, with regard to probability estimates, it was established that the probability of the agreement with stakeholders' network strategies increases much with residency, education level and occupation of respondents. It is concluded therefore that, there is greater potential of sustaining ecotourism if most stakeholders at the destinations get involved via networks and public private partnerships within and between their sectors.

The findings are significant to policymakers and the industry in ensuring appropriate decision and measures are taken for stakeholders' involvement. In view of that, effective and efficient stakeholders'

collaborations are needed when carrying out ecotourism programs. Moreover, the role of the private sector in the partnership with public for sake of development and sustainable ecotourism must be specific and clear in line with government rules, regulations and public private partnership policy. There is a strong need for stakeholders and general public to organize them and establish networks as well as strengthen the existing networks so as to join efforts in safeguarding their interest and aid joint decision making hence ensuring one voice for their stand. They should also invest and participate in developmental processes of ecotourism particularly in the areas of management, infrastructure support, capacity building and conservation of both natural and cultural attractions in local communities. Despite the fact that study's findings will add up to the existing literature and general knowledge on ecotourism and sustainable development around the globe which is one of the major concern for most of countries particularly in Sub Saharan Africa, further research is needed to address the structures, composition and extent of involvement of the networks and public private partnerships towards achieving the sustainable ecotourism goals. Stakeholders' collaboration strategies may not be the only cure for sustainability challenges in ecotourism. Thus, we wish to see future research exploring other variables that are important for sustainability of the industry.

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