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ROLE OF FOREST DIVERSIFICATION IN PROMOTING TOURISM.A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

**Purpose:** Global Tourism destinations provide different products which satisfy tourists with different interests, needs and wants. The general objective of the study was to establish the role of forest diversification in promoting tourism.

**Methodology:** The paper used a desk study review methodology where relevant empirical literature was reviewed to identify main themes and to extract knowledge gaps.

**Findings:** The study concludes that forest tourism products were positively and significantly influenced the tourism sustainability ( $r=0.258$ ,  $p=0.001$ ). This meant that a unitary increase in the forest tourism products leads to an increase in tourism sustainability by 0.258 units.

Majority of the tourists' and destination operators agreed that cultural tourism experienced influenced tourism sustainability. Some of the cultural tourism practices experienced were visiting historical sites, tasting local food and drinks, listening to local music, witnessing local dancing, viewing local artifacts, visiting sacred sites, witnessing local basket making, sighting traditional homes, attending local cultural shows/events and local religious events and home staying in rural villages

**Recommendations:** The study recommends that forest tourism stakeholders should devise plans and ways of countering the challenges that face the forest tourism diversification These challenges included; inadequate relevant information about the forest tourism product; inadequate facilities in the forests such as rest centers, walking trails; poor quality services; unethical guiding practices such as request for tips, use of vulgar language; hostile residents; inadequate signage; unfavorable prices of forest activities; insecurity; unhealthy environment; poor communication facilities and inadequacy in tourism product diversity. These can be mitigated by building sustainable transport and communication infrastructure, encouraging community participation of the tourist resources, training tour guides, encouraging community visits to the sites and creating awareness on the importance to preserve tourist sites. The study suggested that cultural tourism practices in the indigenous forests in counties should be fully profiled and funds for its full establishment be allocated

**Keywords:** *role, forest diversification, promoting tourism*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Global Tourism destinations provide different products which satisfy tourists with different interests, needs and wants (WTTC, 2017). The size and reach of this economic sector make it basically significant from a worldwide resource point of view. From statistics, tourist sites worldwide attracted 369 million international visitors (medium-term guests) in the first quarter of the year 2016, which was 21 million more visitors than around the same duration in year 2017 (UNWTO, 2017).

Regional tourism destinations across the globe have recorded improved tourists' arrivals indicating a positive growth, however, this is with some specific cases (WTTC, 2017). A large portion of year 2016 outstanding achievers maintained trackable progress, while tourist sites that were low in earlier years rose back in the first quarter of 2017. This is particularly reflected in the outstanding outcomes of the Middle East (+10%), Africa (+8%), Europe (+6%). Asia and the Pacific (+6%) and America (+4%) kept on getting and enjoying strong growth (UNWTO, 2017). Whilst various Tourism regions in the world received positive growth, the situation in Kenya was and is almost similar despite the challenges experienced during the year 2016 such as Insecurity and political uncertainty

The importance of viability in the tourism industry has been characterized and reclassified by a few events and occasions among them the creation of the International Ecotourism Society (1990) just as the United Nations statement of 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism. Additionally, 2017 was proclaimed as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism (IYST). The optimum indication of the sustainable development was the creation of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) (Sustainable Tourism Report, 2016). Sustainability therefore is a product of diversification in the today's world. Notwithstanding, the idea of tourism diversification has been generally investigated by scholars from economic and strategic definition perspective, with little association being made to tourist visitations, (Farmakis, 2011). Diversification can be characterized as the demonstration of presenting assortment by expanding business endeavor into related or unique fields. For tourism sustainability to be enhanced, tourism products should be diversified. Tourism product diversification involves the introduction of substitute tourism products to the traditional/conventional tourism products (Benur & Bramwell, 2015). These may consist supplementing the existing tourism products with alternatives such as forest tourism product, new and unique cultures, adventure tourism and sports (Douglass, 2016).

Forested regions offer rural advancement points of view dependent on their multifunctional, which is the huge value of goods and services they give, in spite of the fact that these don't generally have an immediate market effect. Forests represents an ecological and conservative resource for any region, making it attractive for many visitors who look for the recreation as well as green and less anthropogenic spaces and scenery for a more nature-situated and outside experience (Kone, 2015). The tourism industry depends plainly on forest and trees, yet in addition creates noteworthy economic value that can profit rural settings and can be re-infused into the management of forests and common spaces for their long-term protection, reclamation and valorization (Smith, & Burr, 2011).

Forest tourism product diversification comprises of the introduction of new tourism products derived from the forests and its environs. In forest-based tourism sector, the forests and the forest

fields are the major product resources associated with it. The forest-based tourism sector can incorporate components, for example, using natural resource wealth of the forest for example health and local dishes, physical and unwinding/stress alleviation exercises in the forest, and educational events, for instance how to utilize natural resources in wealth creation through crafting, basket making and carving. If these products are diversified then forest tourism can be sustainable and the benefits accrued shall be realized (Konu, 2015).

Utilization of forest tourism products can be of great benefit. The nature-based tourism coupled with activities in the forest can make tourism adventure and experience interesting and memorable. Ranging from its diversity to recreational activities, a forest site can be an exciting tourism destination choice. This is attributed to the forest's topography and an abundant flora and fauna. Forests may have numerous rare, indigenous and endangered species in its surroundings. With this kind of products, botanical garden with specific recreation activity can be created in the forests. Whilst the nature of the forest allows creation of nature-based product, culture-based products aligned to the forests can be introduced as some of the forest tourism product (Ahtikoski, 2011). 19 Tourism diversity can result in sustainability of the sector if the products that form the diversity hold potential for tourism sustainability (Hall & Page, 2014). As explicit sustainability indicators are being created at the national and EU levels and platforms raising forest tourism related campaigns to promote the sector. Forest tourism should harvest benefits from the lucrative sector in order to provide incentives to the management of local forests, fulfill the need and take up current socio-economic difficulties.

Sustenance of the forest has been acknowledged as the fundamental standard of the forest preservation for quite a while (Munt & Mowforth, 2015). Forest resources or ecotourism planning must take numerous ecological aspects, socio-economic elements such as attributes of forest regions in the country and county. Therefore, natural forests or natural resources ought to be used as per the sustainability guideline and the awareness of these issues ought to be given to less endowed groups of people. When the information about the importance of forest tourism is living near the forest, then its protection and sustainability can be guaranteed. The defensive and ecological elements of the resources from the forest are increasingly becoming vital functions far from the common benefit of timber crude material creation of the forest. Forests house rich variety species of plants and wildlife, preserve biodiversity of forest ecological systems and genetic modification of fauna species that play critical role in the environment and tourism diversifications 20 functions for the present as well as the upcoming descendants be locally, nationally or even globally (Harris & Roach, 2013). Similarly, the amenities and recreational facilities of forest reserves have increasingly attained significance for the urban dwellers (Fry & wildlife, preserve, 2007). This is because the urban populations are expected to turn into the prime administration and usage goal of the critical forest reserves in the coming years. Population structure has been changing and portion of the population in urban is expanding. The urban populations are increasing as a result of socio-economic phenomenon and too they are becoming important target for the forest tourism diversification

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The strategies put forward to create and broaden tourism products focused majorly on eco-tourism, convention tourism, sports and culture related tourism (GoK, 2016). Diversification of tourism is targeted at circulating tourism products and accruals to different places. The diversification will

also be able to bridge the recess that is characterized during various seasons of the year. Forest tourism products can be the most appropriate tourism diversification strategy. In particular, forest tourism products such as adventure, unique flora and fauna, mountain climbing and gaming can make forests a great tourist destination. Primary tourism products such as wildlife and lodges within Taita-Taveta County are vital in attracting tourists to this destination (GoK, 2016). Forests have been forgotten and their potential not actualized which can be crucial for the competitiveness and sustainable development. This is a clear gap on the use of indigenous forest as a tool for diversifying the tourism product and enhancing sustainability. The current study will bring into light the role of forest diversification in promoting tourism.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study was to access the role of forest diversification in promoting tourism.

### **1.4 Justification and Significance of the Study**

The research results may be of great significance to different stakeholders in tourism industry. Foremost, the study results will offer insights to the ministry of tourism on their strategies for forest tourism development as a way of tourism product diversification for sustainability. Global Tourism Board may formulate policies and strategies that will lead to forest tourism product diversification. Similarly, they can increase their marketing strategies towards forest tourism as an alternative tourism attraction. Through the forest tourism product diversification, both the county and national governments can earn revenue generated via tourism services. The study would be beneficial to scholars as it would contribute to plugging knowledge gap in line with the role of forest diversification in promoting tourism.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Theoretical review**

Two theories were found to be relevant in the role of role of forest diversification in promoting tourism. The theories that were found to best inform the research constructs are the dependency theory (Argentine, 1950) sustainability theory (Rene, 1979).

#### **2.2.1 The Dependency Theory**

The theory underpinning this research is Dependency theory. According to this theory, tourism growth in peripheral societies is largely affected by phenomena in the individual countries. The flow of large mass of tourists from central to peripheral societies, and the management of hotels and resorts, are subject to different control techniques found in the former (Ferraro, 2008). The functions of forest tourism in a country can be an influential supplier of tourists due to its unique, beautiful and ambient origin. For instance, forest tourism can trigger influx of visitors who can affect the occupancy capacity of resorts and spatial dispersion of tourist flock in the host societies resembles peripheral areas (Ho, Liao, & Rosenthal, 2015). Basing on the resource dependency theory, tourism is an industry just like other sectors that are employed by the economically endowed nations to continue the dependency of the least and developing countries. As opposed to minimizing the existing socio- economic regional differences within the developing societies, tourism strengthens them via territorial structure and its inclinations along traditional settings (Arts, & Buzzer, 2009). Forest tourism product diversification can be dependent to the local

communities and countries through its terminal benefits such as revenue, employment and socio-cultural interaction. The theory is applicable to the study as it argues that tourism development depends on some factors for it to thrive well in any economy. Some of the factors that influence forest tourism product diversification include sports, culture and natural scenery. This makes forests a tourist attraction destination due to its basis for perpetual dependency by developing countries for its annual revenues. Therefore, the theory is suitable for the study on forest tourism product diversification on tourism sustainability.

### **2.2.2 Sustainability Theory**

Sustainability theory attempts to prioritize and integrate social responses to environmental and cultural problems. It is a model that focuses on sustaining natural, ecological integrity, biological diversity and social systems through proper utilization of resources and cultural changes. In this regard, sustainable tourism and diversification (Cheng, Hsun & Huery-Ren Yeh, 2010) According to Hall (2008) sustainable development and tourism present change which refers to the movement from one state or condition to another. Sustainable tourism requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving it requires monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary (Tuğba K, & Murat Ö, 2013). Proper utilization of forests and involvement of all stakeholders to enhance sustainability and diversification of tourism product has been achieved through this theory in similar studies. Therefore, the theory is suitable for the study on forest diversification on tourism sustainability. (Cheng et. al., 2010).

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

Agbu, (2019) conducted a study on examine recreational behaviour in relation to domestic tourism participating in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to profile recreation behaviour of resident, examining antecedent factors influencing residents' recreation behaviour and evaluating residents' perceptions and attitudes towards domestic tourism. Data was collected using qualitative method. The research instrument was structured questionnaire for the public servants with a stratified simple sampling procedure where 388 questionnaires were administered, 371 were filed and returned which were physically checked, coded and entered into computer and analyzed and the response rate was 96%. Descriptive statistics were used to measure intervals and tendencies – test. Ordinary least square model was used to respond to the hypothesis, Pearson correlation was used to measure the relationships between variables while multiple regression analysis was used to reflect al the independent variables. The findings from the study reviewed that the residents' high income means a positive motivation for participation in domestic tourism in Nasarawa State. The findings also revealed that participation in domestic tourism are influenced by hindrances which must be addressed as it is the case in Nasarawa State. In addition, the study provides that residents' perception and attitudes toward domestic tourism were positive and indicate that how a people perceive the concept and activities of domestic tourism has an influence on whither to participate in tourism or not. Moreso, the result shows that the participation of residents in Nasarawa State, Nigeria can bring more positive than negative to the local economy of the state.so also, the findings revealed that public servants in Nasarawa state, Nigeria engage more in business, visit friends and relatives and wine and dine out during their leisure time and preferred friends, co-workers and family as travel companions when their engage in recreation and

tourism activities. Friends and internet media were their sources of information about recreation and tourism activities. Recommendations are given on how government and policy makers in Nasarawa State, Nigeria can make contributions to develop domestic tourism. Finally, the study suggests further studies including conducting same research in Nasarawa State to involve all segment of the population as this focused in the public servants which income can be easily measured. The study concluded that recreation behaviours poses challenges in the rural and urban areas in Nigeria as in the case of Nasarawa State, Nigeria are yet to embrace the values of active recreation participation, despite knowledge of the recreation and tourism. Therefore, the only way to sustain domestic tourism participation is through the assessment of residents behaviours toward domestic tourism

Chege, (2013) conducted a study on focused on assessing slum tourism as a viable tourism option. The objectives were to: determine the main tourism attraction in Kibera slum, establish the perceptions of Kibera's slum dwellers, Kenya Tourism Board and Victoria Safaris towards slum tourism, determine the benefits of slum tourism to Kibera slum dwellers, establish measures to be taken to promote slum tourism in Kibera and to determine the viability of slum tourism as a tourism product. The exploratory and descriptive survey research design was used. The target population of the study was 800,000 residents of Kibera slum who live in a total of 12 villages, 160 employees of Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) and 38 employees of Victoria Safaris. The sample size was 472 respondents, 384 from Kibera, 50 from KTB and 38 from Victoria Safaris. Simple random sampling was used to select 6 (50%) villages in Kibera. Snowball sampling method was then used to select respondents in those six villages. The initial subjects were identified using purposive technique. The subjects from the KTB were selected using convenient sampling method while all subjects from Victoria Safaris participated. Data was collected by the use of questionnaire. A pilot study was run in Kisumu Ndogo slum village. Reliability of the instrument was determined during the pilot study using test re-test technique. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze data. Data was then presented in tables and figures. The results of the study showed that slum tourism is a viable tourism product as majority of the respondents, 435 (92.2%), affirmed this. There was a strong liking for slum tourism across all categories as majority, 396 (83.9%), view it as beneficial to the slum residents in improving their living conditions. Poor understanding of slum tourism concept and lack of involvement of residents was the major challenge while lack of policy was the second major challenge. Observing residents' life style and taking photographs were identified as major tourist activities in Kibera slum while improvement of security and involvement of residents in tourism activities were identified as key ways for promoting slum tourism. The study recommends that there should be a deeper participation of residents in running and making decisions on slum tours to increase benefits to the residents. There is also need for government to develop a policy whose aim is to guide on ways of conducting slum tours. There is also need for Ministry of Tourism to educate the residents on how to take advantage of the venture and open up businesses like tour firms and how to provide other services in order to reap the benefits of slum tourism

Muhalia, (2013) conducted a study to assess the perceptions of tourists and government officials on the development of sports tourism in selected regions of Kenya. A Survey research design was adopted for the study. The independent variables that were assessed included, sports as a pull factor that interest tourist to the Kenyan market, the extend of sports facilities, hosting of international sports event, cultural sporting activities, beach sports, high and low attitudes training centers,

sports for sports icons. The study also looked at effectiveness of marketing, the level of security and political stability. A validated self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data. The sample size of 776 respondents that were randomly selected for the study included 46 government officials from the Ministry in-charge of Sports and Ministry in-charge of Tourism in the headquarters Nairobi, and 730 both local and international tourists who resided in starred hotels and high altitude training center within the eight tourism circuit were also visited for data collection. The eight tourism circuits included central Kenya region, Nairobi, coastline, southern region, eastern region, north rift, south rift and western Kenya. Chi-square was used to analyze the data. The findings indicated that sport is a pull factor for the tourists who visit the Kenyan market 564(77.3%) tourists and 37(80.45%) government officials agreed that sports was a significant activity in attracting tourists in the Kenyan market. On average 190(26%) of the tourists were of the view that facilities and infrastructure were not adequate while 30( 65%) of the government official were of the same view. 252(34.4%) tourists were of the view that security and political stability was not fully explored for the development of sports tourism in Kenya. 24(52.2%) of the government officials were of the view that Kenya is capable of hosting major international sports events while 221(30.4%) disagreed on the same. 14( 30.4%) of the government officials did not agree on the promotion of cultural activities while 290(39.7%) of the tourist were of the view that cultural event was a viable product for the development of sports tourism. 363(46.77%) of both tourists and government officials were of the view that high altitude training centers were fully explored for sports tourism development but when-it come to low altitude 396(51.03%) of both had no opinion. 117(16%) of the tourists 'were of the view that organization of sports for Kenya's sports icons was not fully explored while 16(34.73%) of the government officials were of the view that it was fully explored. Ministries in-charge of Sports and Tourism needs to encourage sports tourism as a package in the Kenyan market. Recreational sporting facilities should be a requirement for starred hotels in Kenya. The Ministry of Youth Affairs Sports and Tourism should market sports tourism as a tourism package. Ministries in-charge of Sports and Tourism should beef up security; create more high and low altitude centers, and stadia to host cultural sporting events. Ministries in-charge of Sports and Tourism through the Ministry in-charge of Sports and Ministry in-charge of Tourism need to expand sports tourism as a package and encourage its growth in Kenya.

Muthuri,(2013) conducted a study to examines reasons why Kawiru, a local community living around Meru National Park does not play an active role in tourism development despite being a key stakeholder in the conservation and tourism agenda of MNP. Local community involvement in tourism activity is a pragmatic approach that endeavors to link the development of sustainable tourism to the cause of alleviating poverty and improvement of local community livelihoods. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development in the Local Agenda 21 maintains that if industry and government are to protect and sustain the social, cultural and environmental wealth that attracts tourists, they must build more ambitious and committed partnerships to plan, manage and invest in this wealth. In the National Tourism Policy document, the Kenya Government acknowledges that due to historical inequities in the tourism industry, local people living in tourist host communities have rarely been involved in sharing of benefits or planning of tourism activities taking place within. their community. In view of the challenges posed by poverty especially in the rural areas of Kenya, and the fact that tourism can effectively be used as a tool for fighting poverty, the objective of this study was to understand reasons why local communities living around Meru National Park are not able to take part in tourism happening in their locality with a view to



generating knowledge that could inform initiatives aimed at enhancing local community participation in tourism development. Specifically, the study found out that for local people to benefit from tourism development in their neighborhood there is great need for aggressive awareness campaigns to educate the community on the importance of tourism as a viable economic option at the local level. Therefore, the study recommends sensitization of community members by the relevant stakeholders on the benefits of conservation and tourism and the role they can play as individuals and as a community in tourism development.

### 2.3 Research gaps

Geographical gap is a knowledge gap that considers, the untapped potential or missing/limited research literature, in the geographical area that has not yet been explored or is under-explored. For instance Agbu, (2019) conducted a study on examine recreational behaviour in relation to domestic tourism participating in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Data was collected using qualitative method. The research instrument was structured questionnaire for the public servants with a stratified simple sampling procedure where 388 questionnaires were administered, 371 were filed and returned which were physically checked, coded and entered into computer and analyzed and the response rate was 96%. Descriptive statistics were used to measure intervals and tendencies – test. The study concluded that recreation behaviours poses challenges in the rural and urban areas in Nigeria as in the case of Nasarawa State, Nigeria are yet to embrace the values of active recreation participation, despite knowledge of the recreation and tourism. The studies presented a geographical gap as they were conducted in Nigeria while our current study focused on role of forest diversification in promoting tourism.

Methodological gap is the gap that is presented as a result in limitations in the methods and techniques used in the research (explains the situation as it is, avoids bias, positivism, etc.). Chege, (2013) conducted a study on focused on assessing slum tourism as a viable tourism option. The objectives were to: determine the main tourism attraction in Kibera slum, establish the perceptions of Kibera's slum dwellers, Kenya Tourism Board and Victoria Safaris towards slum tourism, determine the benefits of slum tourism to Kibera slum dwellers, establish measures to be taken to promote slum tourism in Kibera and to determine the viability of slum tourism as a tourism product. The exploratory and descriptive survey research design was used. Poor understanding of slum tourism concept and lack of involvement of residents was the major challenge while lack of policy was the second major challenge. Observing residents' life style and taking photographs were identified as major tourist activities in Kibera slum while improvement of security and involvement of residents in tourism activities were identified as key ways for promoting slum tourism. The study recommends that there should be a deeper participation of residents in running and making decisions on slum tours to increase benefits to the residents. The studies presented a methodological gap as it used exploratory and descriptive survey research design while our current study adopted a desktop literature review method

Conceptual gap arises because of some difference between the user's mental model of the application and how the application actually works. Muhalia, (2013) conducted a study to assess the perceptions of tourists and government officials on the development of sports tourism in selected regions of Kenya. A Survey research design was adopted for the study. Chi-square was used to analyze the data. The findings indicated that sport is a pull factor for the tourists who visit the Kenyan market 564(77.3%) tourists and 37(80.45%) government officials agreed that sports

was a significant activity in attracting tourists in the Kenyan market. The study presented a conceptual gap as it focused on to assess the perceptions of tourists and government officials on the development of sports tourism in selected regions of Kenya, while the current study examined the role of forest diversification in promoting tourism.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a desktop literature review method (desk study). This involved an in-depth review of studies related to the role of voter education on governance efficacy. Three sorting stages were implemented on the subject under study in order to determine the viability of the subject for research. This is the first stage that comprised the initial identification of all articles that were based on the role of forest diversification in promoting tourism from various data bases. The search was done generally by searching the articles in the article title, abstract, keywords. A second search involved fully available publications on the subject on the role of forest diversification in promoting tourism. The third step involved the selection of fully accessible publications. Reduction of the literature to only fully accessible publications yielded specificity and allowed the researcher to focus on the articles that related to the role of forest diversification in promoting tourism which was split into top key words. After an in-depth search into the top key words (role, forest diversification, promoting tourism), the researcher arrived at 4 articles that were suitable for analysis. The 4 articles were findings from Agbu, (2019) who conducted a study on examine recreational behaviour in relation to domestic tourism participating in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Data was collected using qualitative method. The research instrument was structured questionnaire for the public servants with a stratified simple sampling procedure where 388 questionnaires were administered, 371 were filed and returned which were physically checked, coded and entered into computer and analyzed and the response rate was 96%. Descriptive statistics were used to measure intervals and tendencies – test. The study concluded that recreation behaviours poses challenges in the rural and urban areas in Nigeria as in the case of Nasarawa State, Nigeria are yet to embrace the values of active recreation participation, despite knowledge of the recreation and tourism.

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#### **4.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATION FOR FURTHER STUDY**

##### **4.1 Summary**

Challenges facing diversification of forest tourism and its sustainability include inadequate relevant information about the forest product; inadequate facilities in the forests such as rest centers, walking trails; poor quality services; unethical guiding practices such as request for tips, use of vulgar language; hostile residents; inadequate signage; unfavorable prices of forest activities; insecurity; unhealthy environment; poor communication facilities and inadequacy in tourism product diversity.

##### **4.2 Conclusion**

The study concludes that forest tourism products were positively and significantly influenced the tourism sustainability ( $r=0.258$ ,  $p=0.001$ ). This meant that a unitary increase in the forest tourism products leads to an increase in tourism sustainability by 0.258 units.

Majority of the tourists' and destination operators agreed that cultural tourism experienced influenced tourism sustainability. Some of the cultural tourism practices experienced were visiting historical sites, tasting local food and drinks, listening to local music, witnessing local dancing, viewing local artifacts, visiting sacred sites, witnessing local basket making, sighting traditional homes, attending local cultural shows/events and local religious events and home staying in rural villages

##### **4.3 Recommendations**

The study recommends that forest tourism stakeholders should devise plans and ways of countering the challenges that face the forest tourism diversification These challenges included; inadequate relevant information about the forest tourism product; inadequate facilities in the forests such as rest centers, walking trails; poor quality services; unethical guiding practices such as request for tips, use of vulgar language; hostile residents; inadequate signage; unfavorable prices of forest activities; insecurity; unhealthy environment; poor communication facilities and inadequacy in tourism product diversity. These can be mitigated by building sustainable transport and communication infrastructure, encouraging community participation of the tourist resources, training tour guides, encouraging community visits to the sites and creating awareness on the

importance to preserve tourist sites. The study suggested that cultural tourism practices in the indigenous forests in counties should be fully profiled and funds for its full establishment be allocated. The investment on the cultural practices should be in terms of preferences by the tourists. Some of the cultural activities practiced in the indigenous forest that should be considered include visiting historical sites, tasting local food and drinks, listening to local music, witnessing local dancing, viewing local artifacts, visiting sacred sites, witnessing local basket making, sighting traditional homes, attending local cultural shows/events and local religious events and experiencing home staying in rural villages.

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