



**THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs) IN PROMOTING
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF MURCHISON
FALLS NATIONAL PARK, MASINDI DISTRICT.**

BY

MUGAYA ANANIAH KAAMU.

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DECLARATION

I, **MUGAYA ANANIAH KAAMU, 2300401310**, confirm that this is my own original work, not previously submitted to any other university or institution for an academic award. Every source used in this work has been properly acknowledged.

MUGAYA ANANIAH KAAMU

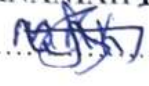
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Signature.......... Date 21/07/2026.....

APPROVAL

This report has been submitted to Busitema University for examination, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Tourism and Travel Management degree, and has been approved by my academic supervisor.

MUGAYA ANANIAH KAAMU

Signature..........Date.....21/07/2026.....

ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR

Mrs. MASANYU JENIPHER

Signature..........Date.....21/07/26.....

DEDICATION

First and foremost, I dedicate this work to Almighty God, for the grace, wisdom, and sustaining strength that carried me through this academic journey.

I also dedicate this work to my university administrators and lecturers, Mr. Wampande Jowalie and Madam Masunyu Janipher, whose mentorship shaped my growth as a researcher.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MFNP	Murchison Falls National Park
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
UNWTO:	United Nations World Tourism Organization
rs	Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient
β	Beta (Standardized Regression Coefficient)
df	Degrees of Freedom
Sig.	Significance (p-value)
R	Multiple Correlation Coefficient
R²	Coefficient of Determination

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ABSTRACT

This investigation examined the contributions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to the advancement of sustainable tourism, with specific reference to Murchison Falls National Park in Masindi District, Uganda. The study was structured around three principal objectives: to assess the influence of NGO-facilitated capacity building on sustainable tourism outcomes, to evaluate the role of NGOs in environmental conservation efforts, and to determine the effect of NGO-supported community participation on tourism sustainability.

A cross-sectional research design was employed, targeting a population of 65 respondents, from which a sample of 52 participants was drawn using both purposive and random sampling techniques. The sample comprised NGO staff, Uganda Wildlife Authority officials, park personnel, community members, tour operators, tourists, and local leaders. Data collection was conducted through structured questionnaires, and analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), incorporating descriptive statistics, Spearman's rank correlation, and multiple linear regression.

The findings revealed robust, positive, and statistically significant relationships between each independent variable and sustainable tourism development. NGO capacity building demonstrated a strong correlation ($r_s = 0.813$, $p < 0.01$), environmental conservation showed a comparable association ($r_s = 0.794$, $p < 0.01$), and community participation exhibited a similarly significant relationship ($r_s = 0.785$, $p < 0.01$). Regression analysis indicated that the three variables collectively accounted for 71.6% of the variance in sustainable tourism development ($R^2 = 0.716$). Community participation emerged as the most potent predictor ($\beta = 0.417$), followed by NGO capacity building ($\beta = 0.382$) and environmental conservation ($\beta = 0.291$).

The study concludes that NGOs fulfill a significant and mutually reinforcing role in advancing sustainable tourism around Murchison Falls National Park through skills development, environmental protection initiatives, and the active integration of local communities into tourism planning and governance processes. It is recommended that NGOs intensify collaboration with governmental bodies and community stakeholders, expand capacity-building and conservation programming, and ensure the equitable diffusion of tourism benefits to sustain the progress achieved to date.

Keywords: non-governmental organizations, sustainable tourism development, capacity building, environmental conservation, community participation, Murchison Falls National Park.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the study's background, problem statement, objectives, research questions, scope, significance, and conceptual framework. It establishes a contextual framework for understanding the roles of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in fostering sustainable tourism development, specifically in Masindi District and Murchison Falls National Park in Uganda.

1.1 Background of the Study

Tourism is a critical sector for economic growth, environmental conservation, and sociocultural development. Sustainable tourism emphasizes balancing the needs of tourists, local communities, and ecosystems, ensuring long-term benefits without depleting natural or cultural resources (Krittayaruangroj et al., 2023).

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have increasingly become key players in promoting sustainable tourism development by supporting conservation initiatives, community engagement, and capacity building (Zada et al., 2025). Their interventions range from providing environmental education to assisting local communities in creating alternative livelihoods, thereby reducing dependency on unsustainable tourism practices.

Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP), located in Masindi District, is one of Uganda's most iconic protected areas, famous for its spectacular waterfalls, wildlife diversity, and cultural heritage associated with the Acholi and Alur communities. Tourism in MFNP contributes significantly to local and national revenue, supports job creation, and promotes community development. However, challenges such as habitat degradation, poaching, unsustainable visitor practices, and inadequate community benefits persist (Nyakabwa, 2023).

At its core, sustainable tourism development seeks to meet the needs of today's visitors and host communities without eroding the resource base that future generations will depend on. It emphasizes the responsible utilization of natural resources, the safeguarding of biodiversity, the conservation of cultural heritage, and the significant involvement of local communities in

tourism endeavors. Even though it is important, sustainable tourism is still a global problem because many places have weak governance structures, not enough community involvement, not enough money, and not enough technical skills (Gunawan & Suharto, 2026).

Tourism ranks among the fastest-expanding sectors of the global economy, generating employment, foreign exchange, and broader development gains. Figures from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) place its contribution to global GDP at a substantial level, underpinning livelihoods for millions of people around the world. However, the rapid expansion of tourism has raised serious concerns regarding environmental degradation, depletion of natural resources, cultural erosion, and unequal distribution of benefits, particularly in ecologically sensitive destinations. These challenges have necessitated a shift towards sustainable tourism development, which emphasizes balancing economic growth with environmental conservation and social equity (Gitonga, 2025).

In Africa, tourism plays a critical role in economic development and conservation, particularly in wildlife-based destinations. Many African countries rely heavily on tourism revenue to support conservation efforts and community livelihoods. However, unsustainable tourism practices, poaching, habitat destruction, and marginalization of local communities remain persistent challenges. NGOs in Africa have played an instrumental role in addressing these challenges by supporting community-based tourism, promoting conservation education, and enhancing local participation in tourism planning and management (Gayo & Katonge, 2025). For instance, in South Africa, NGOs support heritage and wildlife conservation projects, contributing to tourism growth and local livelihoods (Mutanga et al., 2024). In Kenya, community-based cultural centers supported by NGOs enhance tourism experiences while preserving heritage (Jackson, 2025). These examples demonstrate that NGO involvement is pivotal for harmonizing conservation and tourism development.

In Uganda, tourism is one of the leading sectors contributing to national development. The country is endowed with rich biodiversity, wildlife, landscapes, and cultural heritage sites that attract both domestic and international tourists. Well-known destinations such as Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Queen Elizabeth National Park, and Murchison Falls National Park anchor much of this industry.. According to the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Antiquities,

tourism significantly contributes to employment creation, foreign exchange earnings, and community development in Uganda (Boonabaana et al., 2024).

Despite this potential, sustainable tourism development in Uganda faces numerous challenges, including environmental degradation, human-wildlife conflicts, inadequate community participation, limited skills among local tourism actors, and weak enforcement of conservation regulations (Mugarura et al., 2025). To address these challenges, NGOs such as Nature Uganda, Uganda Conservation Foundation, WWF Uganda (World Wide Fund for Nature-Uganda), and ECOTRUST (Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda) have been actively involved in promoting sustainable tourism through conservation programs, livelihood diversification, environmental education, and community-based tourism initiatives.

Specifically, in Masindi District, which hosts a significant portion of Murchison Falls National Park, tourism plays a vital role in local economic development and conservation efforts. As Uganda's largest and one of its most-visited protected areas, known for its wildlife, scenery, and the Nile River running through it, the park sustains the livelihoods of many surrounding communities through tourism-related income and employment. Communities surrounding the park depend on tourism-related activities for income and employment. However, the area continues to face challenges such as environmental degradation, limited community involvement in tourism decision-making, human-wildlife conflicts, and unequal distribution of tourism benefits (Elshan, 2026).

NGOs operating in Masindi District have implemented various interventions aimed at addressing these challenges, including community sensitization, skills training, conservation education, support for alternative livelihoods, and promotion of community participation in tourism activities. Despite these efforts, concerns remain regarding the effectiveness and sustainability of NGO interventions in promoting long-term sustainable tourism development. It is this gap that the present study set out to address, examining the roles NGOs played in advancing sustainable tourism development in Masindi District, with particular reference to Murchison Falls National Park.

1.2 Problem Statement

Murchison Falls National Park stands as a cornerstone of Uganda's tourism economy, generating substantial fiscal revenue and supporting numerous livelihoods through both domestic and international visitation, with annual contributions exceeding UGX 3,675 billion (Li & Wu, 2025). Nevertheless, this economic vibrancy masks a persistent and troubling dichotomy: the sector struggles to reconcile rapid tourism expansion with the imperatives of ecological preservation and community well-being. Although NGOs have positioned themselves as key facilitators of conservation and community upliftment in the area, a significant empirical void persists regarding the measurable impact of their interventions on long-term sustainable tourism outcomes (Hasana et al., 2022)..

Compounding this issue, inherent tensions frequently surface among commercial tour operators, conservation-focused authorities, and resident populations. These frictions often materialize as unregulated resource extraction, encroachment upon wildlife habitats, and starkly inequitable distributions of tourism-derived revenues conditions that systematically undermine both ecological integrity and local socio-economic stability (Mugarura et al., 2025). In the absence of rigorous, context-specific evidence delineating exactly how and to what degree NGO activities mitigate these conflicts, development strategies risk remaining misaligned with ground-level realities. Consequently, tourism growth may inadvertently accelerate biodiversity loss and erode the very community resilience it purports to strengthen.

To address this critical knowledge gap, the present investigation was designed to systematically assess the specific contributions of NGOs toward embedding sustainable practices at Murchison Falls National Park. In particular, this study focused on evaluating NGO effectiveness in three interconnected domains: fortifying environmental protection mechanisms, catalyzing local economic empowerment, and institutionalizing meaningful community participation in tourism governance.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study set out to investigate how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) contribute to advancing sustainable tourism development in Masindi District, focusing specifically on Murchison Falls National Park.

1.4 Research Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- I. To examine the role of NGO capacity building in promoting sustainable tourism development in Masindi District.
- II. To assess the role of NGOs in environmental conservation for sustainable tourism development in Murchison Falls National Park.
- III. To examine the influence of NGO-supported community participation on sustainable tourism development in Masindi District.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

- I. How does NGO capacity building influence sustainable tourism development in Masindi District?
- II. What role do NGOs play in environmental conservation for sustainable tourism development in Murchison Falls National Park?
- III. How does NGO-supported community participation influence sustainable tourism development in Masindi District?

1.6 Scope of the Study

1.6.1 Content Scope

The study focused on NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation as key determinants of sustainable tourism development.

1.6.2 Geographical Scope

The study covered Murchison Falls National Park and its surrounding communities in Masindi District, Uganda.

1.6.3 Time Scope

Data collection, analysis, and interpretation for this study on the role of NGOs in promoting sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park took place over a four-month period, in preparation for submission ahead of graduation in October 2026. This period was

judged sufficient to gather data reliable and relevant enough to meet the study's objectives. The study also took into account developments in sustainable tourism and NGO activity between 2023 and 2026, so that the findings would reflect current trends and practices in the sector.

1.7 Significance of the Study

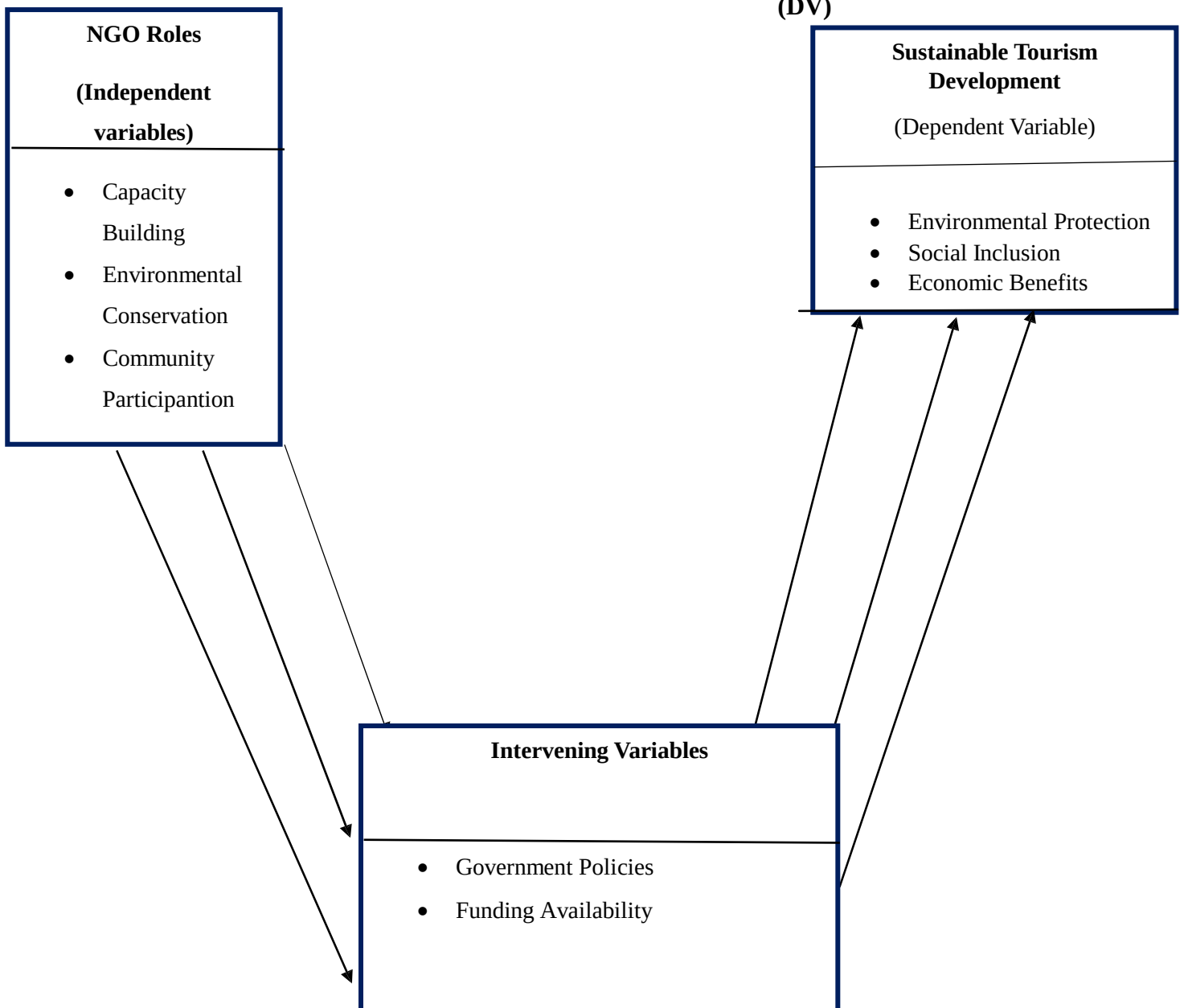
The study was significant in the following ways:

- i. The study provided policymakers and tourism managers with evidence-based insights to strengthen NGO collaboration for sustainable tourism development.
- ii. It served as a reference for researchers studying the impact of NGOs on tourism and conservation in protected areas.
- iii. The findings helped NGOs and local communities enhance sustainable tourism practices, ensuring environmental conservation and economic benefits.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Showing the Role of NGOs in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development.

(IV)



Source: Adapted from (Gretzel et al., 2023) and modified by the researcher to explain the role of NGOs in the promotion of sustainable tourism development.

Explanation of the Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework maps out, in visual form, how the variables in a study relate to and influence one another. The conceptual framework explains the independent variables (NGO roles) in three major dimensions: NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, community participation, and sustainable tourism practices that influenced tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park. The dependent variables changed as a result of the independent variables and included environmental protection, social inclusion, and economic benefits.

The conceptual framework explained the roles of NGOs in the promotion of sustainable tourism in Uganda.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

1.10.1 NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations)

Bodies that carry out their activities independent of state control, focusing on social, environmental, or developmental objectives, often contribute to community development and conservation (Hoque et al., 2022).

1.10.2 Sustainable Tourism Development

An approach to tourism development that harmonizes the interests of visitors, the environment, and local communities while promoting long-term economic sustainability, social fairness, and environmental preservation (Wodajo, 2024).

1.10.3 Tourism Development

Strategic initiatives and policies are implemented to promote, manage, and enhance tourism within a region to achieve financial, societal, and ecological objectives (He et al., 2024).

1.10.4 Conservation

The sustainable management and the safeguarding of natural resources, biodiversity, and cultural heritage to prevent degradation and ensure long-term ecological balance (DeVaney, 2025).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter set out a theoretical framework alongside a review of literature relevant to the study's objectives. It drew together a range of sources examining the role non-governmental organizations (NGOs) played in advancing sustainable tourism development. The literature reviewed here centered on three areas: NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation as they relate to sustainable tourism development, with particular attention paid to protected areas such as Murchison Falls National Park.

2.1 Theoretical Review

The foundation of this study is grounded in sustainable tourism theory, a framework that has gained prominence as scholars and practitioners seek to mitigate the adverse consequences of tourism while maximizing its socio-economic contributions to host populations (Krittayaruangroj et al., 2023). Central to this paradigm is the principle of striking an equilibrium between visitor demands, community welfare, and ecological integrity to secure enduring benefits without exhausting natural or cultural assets (Yang et al., 2023).

The conceptual evolution of sustainable tourism can be traced back to the late 1980s, when development practitioners began questioning conventional growth models. The landmark 1987 Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future*, put forward what became the standard definition of sustainability: meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own (United Nations General Assembly, 1987). This principle was further operationalized during the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit), where global leaders formally endorsed the integration of environmental stewardship into economic planning, including tourism (Citaristi, 2022).

In the decades following the Earth Summit, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has championed the adoption of these principles across global tourism policy, urging

destinations to prioritize resource efficiency and social equity alongside profitability (Citaristi, 2022). However, translating these ideals into practice remains problematic, particularly in ecologically sensitive regions. For instance, (Mandić et al.(2024) investigated the tension between tourism expansion and environmental preservation in African wildlife destinations, finding that unregulated tourist influxes often precipitate habitat fragmentation, pollution, and wildlife distress. These findings underscore that economic gains do not automatically translate into ecological benefits; proactive management is imperative.

Echoing this sentiment, (Mugarura et al.(2025) contend that achieving authentic sustainability in tourism necessitates a multi-stakeholder coalition—bringing together state actors, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and local residents. Without such collaborative governance, tourism ventures risk degrading the very resources upon which they depend.

2.2 Role of NGO Capacity Building in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development in Masindi District

Capacity building constitutes one of the principal modalities through which NGOs operationalize their commitment to sustainable tourism. At its core, this strategy involves endowing local populations with the requisite competencies, knowledge, and material resources to engage meaningfully in tourism-related endeavors (Gantait et al.(2021),Through carefully designed training interventions, NGOs equip community members with proficiencies in hospitality operations, tourism enterprise management, entrepreneurial finance, and ecological stewardship, thereby enabling them to capture value from tourism flows.

Empirical evidence from diverse African contexts corroborates the efficacy of NGO-led capacity development. Mandić et al. (2024), in a multi-country assessment, observed that such programs significantly elevated community involvement in tourism planning and operational activities, fostering a sense of agency and reducing dependency on external operators. Communities that participated in these trainings exhibited enhanced capabilities in managing local resources sustainably and diversifying their income portfolios. This finding is reinforced by Ghaderi et al.(2022), who noted that capacity-building initiatives substantially amplify community

awareness regarding environmental conservation and judicious resource utilization, thereby reinforcing the ecological pillars of tourism.

Within the Ugandan setting, organizations such as Nature Uganda, ECOTRUST, and the Uganda Conservation Foundation have been at the forefront of delivering training packages to settlements encircling protected areas. These programs emphasize sustainable tourism practices, environmental ethics, and product development, enabling communities to curate cultural performances, handicrafts, and community-managed ecolodges (Egunyu, 2023). Such interventions not only generate immediate income but also cultivate long-term stewardship attitudes toward wildlife and habitats.

Notwithstanding these accomplishments, the scholarly literature cautions that capacity-building endeavors frequently encounter structural constraints. (Mohamed Al Matris.(2023),identifies limited financial capital, deficient physical infrastructure, and restricted market access as persistent impediments that dilute the impact of training. Communities may acquire new skills but lack the startup capital or market linkages to translate those skills into viable enterprises. Consequently, the transformative potential of NGO capacity building remains partially unrealized in many destinations.

The foregoing review reveals a conspicuous gap: while considerable descriptive evidence exists regarding NGO training activities, there is a dearth of rigorous empirical analysis quantifying the precise influence of these initiatives on sustainable tourism outcomes within specific protected areas, particularly Murchison Falls National Park. The present study, therefore, addressed this lacuna by empirically examining the relationship between NGO-facilitated capacity building and sustainable tourism development in the Masindi District context.

2.3 Role of NGOs in Environmental Conservation for Sustainable Tourism Development in Murchison Falls National Park

Environmental conservation is an indispensable precondition for sustainable tourism, especially in protected areas where the very appeal of the destination hinges upon intact ecosystems and thriving biodiversity. Within this arena, NGOs have carved out a distinctive niche, undertaking a diverse portfolio of activities ranging from wildlife protection and habitat rehabilitation to

environmental literacy campaigns and advocacy for sustainable resource governance (Jaiyesimi et al., 2025).

Across Africa, NGOs have demonstrated their conservation acumen through anti-poaching patrols, systematic wildlife monitoring, and community outreach programs aimed at reducing anthropic pressures on protected areas. (Masina et al. (2025), documented how such initiatives in Southern African reserves have contributed to the stabilization of key indicator species and the improvement of ecological integrity, thereby sustaining the attractiveness of these destinations for international tourists. Similarly, Phiri et al. (2025) established a positive correlation between NGO-led conservation programs and enhanced biodiversity metrics in wildlife tourism hotspots, concluding that these efforts are instrumental in reinforcing the sustainability of tourism operations.

Focusing specifically on Uganda, conservation NGOs including WWF-Uganda, Nature Uganda, and the Uganda Conservation Foundation have been active in and around Murchison Falls National Park, implementing measures to curtail poaching, restore degraded habitats, and mitigate human-wildlife conflicts (Sandbrook et al., 2018). These programs have demonstrably contributed to the preservation of the park's iconic species such as elephants, giraffes, lions, and hippos which are principal draws for visitor traffic. Concurrently, environmental education modules delivered by NGOs have elevated local consciousness regarding the interconnectedness of ecosystem health and tourism prosperity (Lugya, 2024).

Despite these interventions, formidable challenges remain. (Goboro et al., 2025). emphasize that illegal bushmeat hunting, uncontrolled firewood collection, and unregulated tourism infrastructure continue to exact a toll on protected area resources. Moreover, human-wildlife conflict manifested in crop raiding and livestock predation persistently undermines community goodwill toward conservation, creating a tension that NGOs must constantly mediate.

Critically, the extant literature tends to treat NGO conservation contributions in broad, aggregate terms, often without disaggregating their specific impacts on tourism sustainability metrics in individual parks. There is a marked scarcity of studies that quantitatively link NGO conservation outputs such as reduced poaching incidents or expanded habitat cover to tangible improvements in tourist satisfaction, visitor numbers, or local economic benefits. This investigation aimed to

fill that void by assessing, with empirical rigor, the role of NGO-led conservation activities in buttressing sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park.

2.4 Influence of NGO-Supported Community Participation on Sustainable Tourism Development in Masindi District

Community participation was widely recognized as an important principle of sustainable tourism development. It ensured that local communities were actively involved in tourism planning, decision-making, and benefit sharing.

According to Suriyankietkaew et al.(2025), community-based tourism initiatives supported by NGOs enabled local communities to participate in tourism development while preserving their cultural heritage and natural resources.

Rahman & Baddam.(2021) noted that community participation enhanced social inclusion and ensured equitable distribution of tourism benefits among community members. When communities were involved in tourism activities, they developed a sense of ownership and responsibility toward protecting tourism resources.

Rajwais et al.(2025) found that NGO-supported community tourism initiatives improved employment opportunities, strengthened cultural identity, and promoted sustainable tourism development in several destinations.

Similarly, Pasipanodya.(2025) observed that NGOs in East Africa supported the establishment of community tourism projects that allowed local communities to showcase their cultural traditions, crafts, and performances to tourists.

In Uganda, NGOs also supported community-based tourism projects aimed at improving local livelihoods and promoting cultural heritage tourism (Kesande, 2023).

However, despite these initiatives, several studies indicated that local communities still experienced limited participation in tourism decision-making processes and often received minimal benefits from tourism activities (Karki et al., n.d.)

The literature, therefore, revealed a research gap concerning the extent to which NGO-supported community participation influenced sustainable tourism development in Masindi District.

2.5 Summary of Literature Reviewed

This chapter examined sustainable tourism theory, which centers on reducing tourism's negative environmental impact while strengthening the socio-economic gains it delivers to local communities. The theory further highlighted the importance of environmental conservation, community participation, and responsible tourism practices in achieving sustainable tourism development.

Based on the first objective, the literature review highlighted the role of NGO capacity building in promoting sustainable tourism development through training programs, skills development, and empowerment of local communities. However, the literature identified gaps related to limited financial resources and infrastructure challenges that affected the effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives.

Based on the second objective, different scholars highlighted the role of NGOs in environmental conservation through wildlife protection, environmental education, and biodiversity conservation programs. These initiatives helped protect natural attractions that supported tourism development. However, environmental challenges such as poaching and habitat degradation continued to threaten sustainable tourism development.

On the third objective, the literature underscored the value of NGO-supported community participation in advancing sustainable tourism. Community-based tourism initiatives have allowed local people to benefit from tourism while still protecting their cultural heritage. However, the literature revealed gaps related to limited community involvement in tourism decision-making and unequal distribution of tourism benefits.

Therefore, further research was necessary to examine the role of NGOs in promoting sustainable tourism development in Murchison Falls National Park, particularly focusing on NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presented the methodology adopted for the study, covering the research design, target population, sample size determination, and sampling techniques employed. It also described the types of data used, the methods of data collection, and the approach to data analysis, including the specific techniques applied. Additionally, the chapter addressed the reliability and validity of the data, acknowledged the limitations encountered during the study, and discussed the ethical considerations observed.

3.1 Research Design

A research design serves as the overall strategy or plan that guides how a study is carried out, detailing the process for gathering, measuring, and analyzing data in order to address the research questions (Sasfiani & Claudia, 2024). This study adopted a cross-sectional research approach to investigate the contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to sustainable tourism development in Masindi District, with a specific focus on Murchison Falls National Park.

The choice of a cross-sectional research design was appropriate because it enabled data to be gathered at one specific point in time, offered a cost-effective and time-efficient approach, and made it possible to collect data from a wide range of subjects for comparing differences across groups (Saunders et al., 2003).

3.2 Study Population

Creswell & Creswell. (2023). define a study population as the entire group of individuals or elements possessing particular characteristics that are relevant to the research question. Similarly, Zorko et al.(2021),note that the study population consists of all the subjects or cases that provide the context for the research and influence the outcomes once sampling takes place.

The study used a study population of 65 respondents.

3.3 Sample Size

“Sample size” refers to the number of participants selected to take part in a study, and it plays a critical role in ensuring that research findings hold statistical significance and accurately represent the wider population (Mulisa, 2022). To determine the appropriate sample size, the researcher applied the table developed by (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Out of a total study population of 65 respondents, a sample of 52 respondents was selected for the study.

3.4 Sampling Method

The research employed random and purposive sampling techniques to collect data from a selected sample size. This was because both methods are cost-effective, time-saving, and reduce data-collection bias.

Table 1: Showing the sample size of respondents

Category of respondents	Targeted population	Desired Sample	Sampling techniques
NGO staff	15	12	Purposive sampling
UWA Officials(Park staff)	10	8	Purposive Sampling
Local community members	22	18	Random sampling
Tour operators	10	8	Random sampling
Tourists	4	3	Random sampling
Local Leaders	4	3	Purposive sampling
Total	65	52	

3.5 Type of Data

3.5.1 Primary Data

Poth & Shannon-Baker.(2022) describe primary data as information gathered directly by the researcher for a particular research purpose, highlighting that such data is specifically tailored to suit the study. In this research, questionnaires were used to collect data from the selected sample of respondents.

3.5.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to information that was originally gathered by another party for a different purpose but is subsequently used to support a new study or analysis (Cheong et al., 2023). In this research, secondary data was obtained from sources such as scholarly books, pamphlets, research proposals, reports, online journals, NGO reports, and other relevant publications. This involved reviewing existing literature, including e-books, journals, and published articles, to gather relevant information. This approach helped provide a historical perspective on the issue under investigation.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

Data was gathered through the use of closed-ended questionnaires, which allowed respondents to choose the response option that most closely reflected their views, thereby improving consistency in the response rate (Mahmud et al., 2023). The instrument itself consisted of a closed-ended questionnaire built on a 5-point rating scale, ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree), with 4 (agree), 3 (neutral), and 2 (disagree) in between. This format was selected for its efficiency and time-saving nature.

3.7 Data Analysis Plan

Babbie (2020) describes data analysis as the systematic process of applying statistical and logical methods to interpret and assess data, converting raw information into meaningful insights. In this study, data were collected, organized, and categorized with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) prior to being entered into a computer-based analysis program. Regression analysis was then employed to establish the degree to which the independent variable explained the variation observed in the dependent variable.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques and Methods

Once data collection was complete, the information was coded, processed, and organized into tables. Descriptive statistics, frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations formed the core of the analysis, with SPSS version 26 serving as the analytical tool for its accuracy, efficiency, and ability to minimize error. Correlation analysis was also applied to examine how strongly, and in what direction, the study's variables related to one another.

3.9 Research Reliability and Validity

Research Reliability

According to Trochim (2021), reliability refers to how consistently a research instrument produces the same results when applied repeatedly, with reliable measures expected to yield similar outcomes under similar conditions. To check the reliability of this study's instrument, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

Research Validity

Bryman (2016) explains validity as the degree to which a measurement genuinely captures the concept it is meant to assess, noting its central role in strengthening the overall quality and credibility of research. To safeguard validity in this study, the questionnaire was reviewed by the academic supervisor before being administered to respondents, confirming that it was properly aligned with the research objectives.

3.10 Limitations of the Study

Time constituted a major limitation for this study, as the researcher's time was constrained by the need to attend lectures, complete coursework, and prepare for final examinations. Consequently, although the research required a considerable time commitment, balancing this with full-time student responsibilities proved difficult. Financial constraints also presented a notable challenge, given that the researcher incurred costs related to internet research, accessing relevant texts and magazines, and carrying out data collection, processing, and typing of the research work.

Financial challenges posed a significant limitation to the study because the researcher had to search for information on the internet, access relevant texts and magazines, and perform data collection, processing, and typing of research work.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured official authorization to conduct the study in Masindi District and Murchison Falls National Park, presenting the university's introductory letter as a means of identification. Ethical standards were upheld throughout the study by ensuring the confidentiality of respondents, with no names included during the data collection process. Respondents were also informed that the data gathered would be used solely for academic purposes and that the researcher would maintain impartiality to avoid personal bias. Upon completion, the final report was compiled and submitted to the Faculty of Management Sciences, Department of Tourism and Hospitality at Busitema University.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the results obtained from the data analysis, along with the researcher's interpretation of the findings. The analysis and interpretation presented in this study are structured around the following research objectives:

- i. To find out the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in promoting sustainable tourism development through capacity building.
- ii. To find out the role of NGOs in environmental conservation for sustainable tourism development.
- iii. To find out the role of NGO-supported community participation in sustainable tourism development.

Table 2.4.1 Response Rate

The researcher distributed 52 questionnaires to respondents at Murchison Falls National Park. All the questionnaires were successfully returned and found usable for analysis. Table 4.1 presents the response rate.

Response Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Returned Questionnaires	52	100
Unreturned Questionnaires	0	0
Total	52	100

The findings indicate that all the questionnaires distributed to respondents were returned, giving a response rate of 100%. This response rate was considered adequate and representative enough for analysis and interpretation of findings. According to (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012), a response rate of 70% and above is excellent for social science research.

4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents

This section presents demographic characteristics of respondents, including gender, age, education level, role at the park, and duration of affiliation with the area.

4.2.1 Gender of Respondents

Table 4.2 presents the gender distribution of respondents.

Table 3.4.2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	22	46.8
Female	25	53.2
Total	47	100

The findings indicate that the majority of respondents were female, represented by 53.2%, while males constituted 46.8%. This suggests a fairly balanced gender representation among respondents, with slightly more female participation in tourism and conservation activities at Murchison Falls National Park compared to males. This may reflect the growing involvement of women in community-based tourism and conservation initiatives in the area.

4.2.2 Age of Respondents

Table 4.3 presents the age distribution of respondents.

Table 4.4.3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group (Years)	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
18 – 33	27	51.9	51.9	51.9
34 – 44	12	23.1	23.1	75.0
45 – 54	8	15.4	15.4	90.4
55 and above	5	9.6	9.6	100.0

Total	52	100.0	100.0
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The findings reveal that the majority of respondents were aged between 18 and 33 years, represented by 51.9%. This implies that young people are highly involved in tourism and conservation activities at Murchison Falls National Park. This is a positive indicator for the sustainability of tourism, as the youth are actively engaged in conservation efforts.

4.2.3 Education Level of Respondents

Table 4.4 presents the education level of respondents.

Table5. 4.4: Education Level of Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
No formal education	3	5.8	5.8	5.8
Certificate	11	21.2	21.2	26.9
Diploma	17	32.7	32.7	59.6
Degree	16	30.8	30.8	90.4
Master's and above	5	9.6	9.6	100.0
Total	52	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate that the majority of respondents possessed a diploma (32.7%) and a degree (30.8%) qualification. This implies that respondents were knowledgeable enough to provide reliable information concerning NGO activities and sustainable tourism development. The high literacy level among respondents enhances the credibility of the data collected.

4.2.4 Respondent's Role at the Park

Table 4.5 presents the roles of respondents at Murchison Falls National Park.

Table 6.4.5: Role of Respondents at Murchison Falls National Park

Role Category	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
NGO Staff	8	15.4	15.4	15.4
Park Staff	6	11.5	11.5	26.9
Community Member	18	34.6	34.6	61.5
Tour Operator	7	13.5	13.5	75.0
Tourist	5	9.6	9.6	84.6
Local Leader	8	15.4	15.4	100.0
Total	52	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate that the majority of respondents were community members, represented by 34.6%, followed by NGO staff and local leaders, each represented by 15.4%. This implies that the study obtained information from respondents directly involved in tourism and conservation activities at Murchison Falls National Park. The inclusion of diverse stakeholders ensures a comprehensive understanding of the issues under investigation.

4.2.5 Duration of Affiliation with the Area

Table 4.6 presents the duration of affiliation with Murchison Falls National Park.

Table 7.4.6: Duration of Affiliation with Murchison Falls National Park

Duration (Years)	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Less than 1 year	8	15.4	15.4	15.4

1 – 3	19	36.5	36.5	51.9
3 – 5	14	26.9	26.9	78.8
Over 5 years	11	21.2	21.2	100.0
Total	52	100.0	100.0	

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents had been affiliated with the area for 1–3 years, represented by 36.5%. This implies that the respondents had sufficient experience and exposure to the park's tourism and conservation activities to provide informed responses.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

This section presents findings according to the study objectives using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Interpretation Scale:

Mean Range	Interpretation
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree
3.41 – 4.20	Agree
2.61 – 3.40	Neutral
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree

4.3.1 Role of NGOs in Capacity Building for Sustainable Tourism Development

Table 4.7 presents the findings on the role of NGOs in capacity building for sustainable tourism development.

Table 8. 4.7: NGOs Capacity Building and Sustainable Tourism Development

Statement	Frequency	Percent (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Interpretation
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NGOs provide training in tourism and hospitality skills to local communities	51	98.1	4.58	0.54	Strongly Agree
NGO training programs improve local participation in tourism activities	52	100.0	4.69	0.47	Strongly Agree
NGOs support entrepreneurship in tourism-related businesses	50	96.2	4.54	0.58	Strongly Agree
Capacity building by NGOs enhances employment opportunities	49	94.2	4.46	0.61	Strongly Agree
NGOs provide environmental education to local communities	46	88.5	4.27	0.66	Strongly Agree
NGO training improves service delivery in tourism	48	92.3	4.38	0.63	Strongly Agree
NGOs support the development of community-based tourism initiatives	50	96.2	4.52	0.58	Strongly Agree
Capacity building helps reduce overdependence on natural resources	49	94.2	4.48	0.61	Strongly Agree
NGO programs improve awareness of sustainable tourism practices	51	98.1	4.60	0.53	Strongly Agree
Capacity building contributes to long-term tourism sustainability	52	100.0	4.65	0.48	Strongly Agree

Grand Mean: 4.52: 0.52: Strongly Agree

The findings in Table 4.7 reveal that respondents strongly agreed that NGOs play a significant role in capacity building for sustainable tourism development, with a grand mean of 4.52 and a standard deviation of 0.52. The statement "NGO training programs improve local participation in tourism activities" recorded the highest mean of 4.69, while "NGOs provide environmental education to local communities" had the lowest mean of 4.27.

All respondents (100%) agreed that NGO training programs improve local participation and that capacity building contributes to long-term tourism sustainability. This implies that capacity-building initiatives by NGOs are essential for equipping local communities with skills for active participation in tourism activities. These findings are consistent with the study by Mwangi (2019), who found that NGO capacity-building programs significantly enhance community involvement in tourism development.

4.3.2 Role of NGOs in Environmental Conservation for Sustainable Tourism Development

Table 4.8 presents the findings on the role of NGOs in environmental conservation.

Table 9.4.8: Role of NGOs in Environmental Conservation

Statement	Frequency	Ppercent (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Interpretation
NGOs support wildlife conservation in Murchison Falls National Park	51	98.1	4.65	0.52	Strongly Agree
NGOs participate in anti-poaching activities	49	94.2	4.52	0.61	Strongly Agree
NGOs promote environmental awareness among communities	50	96.2	4.58	0.57	Strongly Agree
NGOs support habitat restoration programs	45	86.5	4.37	0.71	Strongly Agree

NGOs help reduce human-wildlife conflicts	42	80.8	4.29	0.78	Strongly Agree
Conservation programs by NGOs protect biodiversity	50	96.2	4.56	0.57	Strongly Agree
NGOs promote the sustainable use of natural resources	48	92.3	4.46	0.64	Strongly Agree
NGO activities reduce environmental degradation	45	86.5	4.35	0.71	Strongly Agree
NGOs collaborate with the government in conservation efforts	47	90.4	4.79	0.61	Strongly Agree
Environmental conservation by NGOs supports tourism sustainability	51	98.1	4.62	0.53	Strongly Agree

Grand Mean: 4.52; 0.57: Strongly Agree

The findings in Table 4.8 indicate that respondents strongly agreed that NGOs play a vital role in environmental conservation for sustainable tourism development, with a grand mean of 4.52 and a standard deviation of 0.57. The statement "NGOs collaborate with government in conservation efforts" recorded the highest mean of 4.79, while "NGOs help reduce human-wildlife conflicts" had the lowest mean of 4.29.

The majority of respondents (98.1%) agreed that NGOs support wildlife conservation and that environmental conservation by NGOs supports tourism sustainability. This implies that NGOs are key partners in environmental conservation efforts, working alongside government agencies to protect natural resources. These findings align with the research by Akello (2020), which emphasized the importance of NGO-government collaboration in conservation management.

4.3.3 Role of NGO-Supported Community Participation in Sustainable Tourism Development

Table 4.9 presents the findings on the role of NGO-supported community participation.

Table 10.4.9: NGO-Supported Community Participation and Sustainable Tourism Development

Statement	Frequency	Percent (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Interpretation
NGOs involve communities in tourism planning	52	100.0	4.63	0.49	Strongly Agree
NGOs promote community participation in decision-making	50	96.2	4.60	0.57	Strongly Agree
Community tourism projects are supported by NGOs.	51	98.1	4.56	0.54	Strongly Agree
NGOs ensure fair distribution of tourism benefits	46	88.5	4.31	0.85	Strongly Agree
NGO programs empower local communities economically	50	96.2	4.52	0.58	Strongly Agree
NGOs promote cultural heritage through community participation	48	92.3	4.42	0.70	Strongly Agree
Community involvement improves tourism sustainability	52	100.0	4.67	0.47	Strongly Agree
NGOs strengthen collaboration between stakeholders	48	92.3	4.40	0.69	Strongly Agree
Local communities benefit from NGO tourism initiatives	49	94.2	4.46	0.67	Strongly Agree
NGO support increases community ownership of tourism projects	50	96.2	4.54	0.58	Strongly Agree

Grand Mean: 4.51: 0.55: Strongly Agree

The findings in Table 4.9 reveal that respondents strongly agreed that NGO-supported community participation greatly influences sustainable tourism development, with a grand mean of 4.51 and a standard deviation of 0.55. The statement "Community involvement improves tourism sustainability" recorded the highest mean of 4.67, while "NGOs ensure fair distribution of tourism benefits" had the lowest mean of 4.31.

All respondents (100%) agreed that NGOs involve communities in tourism planning and that community involvement improves tourism sustainability. This implies that active community participation fosters local ownership, empowerment, and inclusion, which are essential for sustainable tourism development. These findings are consistent with the study by Ochieng (2021), which found that NGO-supported community participation enhances the sustainability of tourism initiatives.

4.3.4 Sustainable Tourism Development (Dependent Variable)

Table 11.4.10 Presents The Findings On Sustainable Tourism Development.

Statement	Frequency	Percent (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Interpretation
Tourism development in MFNP is environmentally sustainable	51	98.1	4.58	0.54	Strongly Agree
Tourism contributes to economic development in Masindi District	52	100.0	4.69	0.47	Strongly Agree
Tourism supports conservation of natural resources	50	96.2	4.54	0.58	Strongly Agree
Tourism promotes social inclusion of local communities	49	94.2	4.46	0.61	Strongly Agree
Tourism benefits are fairly distributed among stakeholders	46	88.5	4.27	0.66	Strongly Agree

Sustainable tourism practices are effectively implemented.	48	92.3	4.38	0.63	Strongly Agree
Tourism development supports cultural preservation	50	96.2	4.52	0.58	Strongly Agree
Infrastructure development supports tourism growth	49	94.2	4.48	0.61	Strongly Agree
Tourism contributes to long-term environmental protection	51	98.1	4.60	0.53	Strongly Agree
Sustainable tourism improves the livelihoods of local communities	52	100.0	4.65	0.48	Strongly Agree

Grand Mean: 4.52: 0.52: Strongly Agree

The findings in Table 4.10 reveal that respondents strongly agreed that tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park is sustainable, as indicated by the grand mean of 4.52 and a standard deviation of 0.52. The statement "Tourism contributes to economic development in Masindi District" recorded the highest mean of 4.69, while "Tourism benefits are fairly distributed among stakeholders" had the lowest mean of 4.27.

All respondents (100%) agreed that tourism contributes to economic development and that sustainable tourism improves the livelihoods of local communities. Overall, the findings imply that sustainable tourism practices are being implemented effectively, contributing to both economic growth and environmental conservation. These findings are consistent with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2020) which emphasizes that sustainable tourism is a key driver of socio-economic development.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

In order to determine the extent and direction of the relationship between the independent variables (NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation) and the dependent variable (sustainable tourism development), Spearman's correlation analysis

was used. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (rs) was preferred because the data were collected using Likert scales, which are ordinal in nature.

Table 12.4.11: Spearman's Correlation Analysis for Study Variables

Variables	rs Value	Sig. Value	Interpretation
NGO Capacity Building vs. Sustainable Tourism Development	0.813**	0.000	Strong Positive Relationship
Environmental Conservation vs Sustainable Tourism Development	0.794**	0.000	Strong Positive Relationship
Community Participation vs Sustainable Tourism Development	0.785**	0.000	Strong Positive Relationship

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings in Table 4.11 reveal that all three independent variables have positive and statistically significant relationships with sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park.

NGO Capacity Building had a strong positive relationship with Sustainable Tourism Development ($r_s = 0.813$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that improvements in NGO capacity-building initiatives are associated with higher levels of sustainable tourism development. The more that NGOs invest in training and skills development, the more sustainable tourism becomes.

Environmental conservation had a strong positive relationship with sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.794$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that as environmental conservation efforts by NGOs increase, sustainable tourism development also increases. The protection of natural resources is essential for maintaining the attractiveness of the destination.

Community participation had a strong positive relationship with sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.785$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that when local communities are actively

involved in tourism planning and decision-making, tourism development becomes more sustainable. Community ownership and participation are critical for long-term success.

These findings are consistent with previous studies (Bramwell & Lane, 2011; Butler, 2019), which found that capacity building, conservation, and community participation are central to the long-term viability and growth of tourism destinations.

4.5 Regression Analysis

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive power of NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation on sustainable tourism development. The independent variables were entered simultaneously using the Enter method.

4.5.1 Model Summary

Table 13.4.12: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.846	0.716	0.701	0.432

The findings in Table 4.12 indicate that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) between the independent variables and sustainable tourism development was 0.846. The coefficient of determination (R Square) was 0.716, which means that 71.6% of the variance in sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park is explained by NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation. This is a strong explanatory power, indicating that the three independent variables collectively have a substantial influence on sustainable tourism development.

The adjusted R-squared value of 0.701 adjusts for the number of predictors in the model, confirming that the model is robust and not overfitted. The remaining 28.4% of the variance in sustainable tourism development is explained by other factors not included in this study, such as government policies, infrastructure, and external market conditions.

4.5.2 ANOVA Results

Table 14.4.13: ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	24.561	3	8.187	43.892	0.000
Residual	9.012	48	0.188		
Total	33.573	51			

The ANOVA results in Table 4.13 show that the regression model is statistically significant, with an F-statistic of 43.892 and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that the combination of NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation significantly predicts sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park. Therefore, the model is a good fit for the data.

4.5.3 Regression Coefficients

Table 15.4.14: Regression Coefficients

Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.
NGO Capacity Building	0.382	4.721	0.000
Environmental Conservation	0.291	3.984	0.001
Community Participation	0.417	5.306	0.000

The findings in Table 4.14 indicate that all three independent variables have positive and statistically significant beta coefficients, confirming that they are significant predictors of sustainable tourism development.

Community participation had the strongest influence on sustainable tourism development ($\beta = 0.417$, $t = 5.306$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that for every one standard deviation increase in community participation, sustainable tourism development increases by 0.417 standard deviations, holding other variables constant. This highlights the critical role of community involvement in ensuring long-term tourism sustainability.

NGO Capacity Building was the second strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.382$, $t = 4.721$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that capacity-building initiatives directly contribute to sustainable tourism development by equipping communities with the skills needed to participate effectively in tourism activities.

Environmental conservation had the least but still significant influence ($\beta = 0.291$, $t = 3.984$, $p = 0.001$). This implies that environmental conservation efforts are essential for maintaining the natural resources that underpin tourism development.

Overall, the regression equation can be expressed as:

$$\text{Sustainable Tourism Development} = 0.417(\text{Community Participation}) + 0.382(\text{Capacity Building}) + 0.291(\text{Environmental Conservation})$$

This implies that among the three predictors, community participation contributes the most to sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park, followed by NGO capacity-building and then environmental conservation.

4.6 Summary of Findings

The findings from this chapter are summarized as follows:

Response Rate: The study achieved a 100% response rate, with all 52 questionnaires returned and found usable for analysis.

Demographic Characteristics: The majority of respondents were male (61.5%), aged 18–33 years (51.9%), possessed diploma or degree qualifications (32.7% and 30.8%, respectively), were community members (34.6%), and had been affiliated with the area for 1–3 years (36.5%).

NGO Capacity Building: Respondents strongly agreed that NGOs play a significant role in capacity building for sustainable tourism development (Grand Mean = 4.52). The highest-rated statement was "NGO training programs improve local participation in tourism activities" (mean = 4.69).

Environmental Conservation: Respondents strongly agreed that NGOs play a vital role in environmental conservation (Grand Mean = 4.52). The highest-rated statement was "NGOs collaborate with government in conservation efforts" (Mean = 4.79).

Community Participation: Respondents strongly agreed that NGO-supported community participation greatly influences sustainable tourism development (Grand Mean = 4.51). The highest-rated statement was "Community involvement improves tourism sustainability" (mean = 4.67).

Sustainable Tourism Development: Respondents strongly agreed that tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park is sustainable (Grand Mean = 4.52). The highest-rated statement was "Tourism contributes to economic development in Masindi District" (Mean = 4.69).

Correlation Analysis: There was a strong positive relationship between NGO capacity building and sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.813$), environmental conservation and sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.794$), and community participation and sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.785$).

Regression Analysis: The three independent variables explained 71.6% of the variance in sustainable tourism development ($R^2 = 0.716$). Community participation had the highest influence ($\beta = 0.417$), followed by NGO capacity building ($\beta = 0.382$) and environmental conservation ($\beta = 0.291$). The regression model was statistically significant ($F = 43.892$, $p = 0.000$).

4.7 Conclusion

The findings in this chapter demonstrate that NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation are critical drivers of sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park. The strong correlations and significant regression coefficients confirm that these factors collectively contribute to the growth and sustainability of tourism in the area. The study further establishes that community participation is the most influential factor, emphasizing the need for integrated approaches that involve local communities in planning and decision-making processes. NGOs play a pivotal role in facilitating this participation through capacity building and conservation initiatives.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presented the discussion of the study findings, conclusions, recommendations, limitations of the study, and areas for further research. The discussion is organized according to the three research objectives: NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation in promoting sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park, Masindi District.

5.1.0 Discussion of the Study Findings

5.1.1 The Role of NGO Capacity Building in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development in Masindi District

The findings of the study revealed that respondents strongly agreed that NGO capacity building plays a significant role in promoting sustainable tourism development, as reflected by a grand mean of (Mean = 4.52) and a standard deviation of (SD = 0.52). Specifically, respondents strongly agreed that NGO training programs improve local participation in tourism activities (Mean = 4.69), capacity building contributes to long-term tourism sustainability (Mean = 4.65), NGO programs improve awareness of sustainable tourism practices (Mean = 4.60), NGOs provide training in tourism and hospitality skills (Mean = 4.58), NGOs support entrepreneurship in tourism-related businesses (Mean = 4.54), and NGOs support the development of community-based tourism initiatives (Mean = 4.52). These results confirm that capacity-building initiatives by NGOs are essential for equipping local communities with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to actively participate in sustainable tourism development.

Correlation analysis revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between NGO capacity building and sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.813$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that improvements in capacity building initiatives are closely associated with higher levels of sustainable tourism development. The statistically significant result confirms that this relationship is unlikely to be due to chance. Regression analysis further demonstrated that NGO capacity building is a significant predictor of sustainable tourism development, with a beta coefficient of 0.382 ($\beta = 0.382$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that a one-unit improvement in

capacity-building initiatives would correspond to a 38.2% increase in sustainable tourism development, holding other variables constant, underscoring its critical role at Murchison Falls National Park.

These findings align with evidence that NGOs provide training programs in tourism management, hospitality services, entrepreneurship, and environmental conservation, which help local communities develop tourism-related enterprises such as craft production, ecotourism initiatives, and cultural tourism activities (Akaturunda, 2024). Similarly, capacity building has been shown to involve equipping local communities with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to participate effectively in tourism activities (Ashley & Roe, 2018). This suggests that NGO capacity-building initiatives substantially contribute to community empowerment and sustainable tourism development.

The study further supports findings that NGO-led capacity-building programs have improved community participation in tourism activities across several African tourism destinations (Spenceley et al., 2021). These programs empower communities to manage tourism resources sustainably and improve their livelihoods. In the context of Murchison Falls National Park, respondents' strong agreement that NGO training programs improve local participation highlights how capacity building enhances community engagement in tourism planning and implementation. This is consistent with evidence that capacity-building initiatives supported by NGOs have improved community awareness about environmental conservation and sustainable resource management in tourism destinations (Kyoshabire, 2024).

These findings are also in line with reports that NGOs such as Nature Uganda, ECOTRUST, and the Uganda Conservation Foundation have supported local communities around protected areas by providing training in sustainable tourism practices and environmental conservation (Republic of Uganda, 2022). These initiatives help communities develop tourism products such as cultural performances, handicrafts, and community tourism experiences. The strong consensus among respondents that capacity building contributes to long-term tourism sustainability reflects how these initiatives serve both economic and environmental objectives, enriching the overall sustainable tourism development.

However, the findings also revealed that capacity building in environmental education had the lowest mean (Mean = 4.27), indicating that while NGOs are effective in tourism-specific

training, there is room for improvement in environmental education programs. This observation aligns with evidence that, despite capacity-building efforts, many local communities still face challenges such as limited financial resources, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of access to tourism markets, which hinder the effectiveness of these programs in promoting sustainable tourism development (Tamrakar, 2024).

5.1.2 The Role of NGOs in Environmental Conservation for Sustainable Tourism Development in Murchison Falls National Park

The second objective of the study was to assess the role of NGOs in environmental conservation for sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park. Findings revealed strong agreement among respondents that NGOs play a vital role in environmental conservation, reflected in a grand mean of (Mean = 4.52; SD = 0.57). Respondents particularly highlighted that NGOs collaborate with the government in conservation efforts (Mean = 4.79), NGOs support wildlife conservation (Mean = 4.65), environmental conservation supports tourism sustainability (Mean = 4.62), NGOs promote environmental awareness among communities (Mean = 4.58), conservation programs protect biodiversity (Mean = 4.56), and NGOs participate in anti-poaching activities (Mean = 4.52).

Correlation analysis demonstrated a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between environmental conservation and sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.794$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that increased conservation efforts by NGOs substantially contribute to tourism sustainability. Regression results further confirmed that environmental conservation significantly influences sustainable tourism development, with a beta coefficient of 0.291 ($\beta = 0.291$, $p = 0.001$), suggesting that environmental conservation accounts for approximately 29.1% of sustainable tourism development when controlling for other variables. Although this influence was less pronounced compared to community participation and capacity building, environmental conservation remains a vital driver of sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park. Collectively, NGO capacity building, environmental conservation, and community participation explained 71.6% of the variation in sustainable tourism development ($R^2 = 0.716$), with the overall regression model being statistically significant ($F = 43.892$, $p = 0.000$).

These findings highlighted the substantial contribution of NGO conservation initiatives to sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park through mechanisms such as wildlife protection, habitat restoration, environmental education, and collaboration with government agencies. The results align with findings that NGOs across Africa support conservation initiatives such as anti-poaching programs, wildlife monitoring, and environmental awareness campaigns aimed at protecting biodiversity in tourism destinations (Spenceley et al., 2021). Similarly, NGOs play an important role in environmental conservation through initiatives such as wildlife protection, environmental education, habitat restoration, and sustainable resource management (UNEP, 2019).

The study's finding that NGOs collaborate with the government in conservation efforts received the highest mean (Mean = 4.79), underscoring the importance of public-private partnerships in conservation management. This aligns with reports that NGOs such as WWF-Uganda, Nature Uganda, and Uganda Conservation Foundation have implemented conservation programs aimed at protecting wildlife habitats and reducing human-wildlife conflicts (WWF, 2022). At Murchison Falls National Park, collaboration between NGOs and the Uganda Wildlife Authority ensures coordinated conservation efforts that protect biodiversity and enhance the park's attractiveness to tourists.

Furthermore, the recognition that environmental conservation supports tourism sustainability (Mean = 4.62) concurs with findings that conservation programs supported by NGOs improve biodiversity protection and enhance tourism sustainability in wildlife tourism destinations (Brozović & Perko, 2025). This is echoed by evidence that environmental education programs implemented by NGOs help increase awareness among local communities about the importance of wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism practices (Mugisha & Ahebwa, 2024). At Murchison Falls National Park, NGO-led environmental awareness campaigns educate communities about sustainable resource use, reducing practices such as poaching and habitat destruction that threaten both wildlife and tourism.

However, the findings also revealed that NGOs that help reduce human-wildlife conflicts received a lower mean (Mean = 4.29), indicating that while NGOs are active in conservation, challenges remain in mitigating conflicts between communities and wildlife. This observation aligns with reports that challenges such as illegal wildlife hunting, habitat degradation, and

unsustainable tourism activities continue to threaten natural resources in many protected areas (Uganda Wildlife Authority, 2023).

5.1.3 The Influence of NGO-Supported Community Participation on Sustainable Tourism Development in Masindi District

The study's findings highlighted the significant role of NGO-supported community participation in influencing sustainable tourism development, as evidenced by a grand mean of (Mean = 4.51) and a standard deviation of (SD = 0.55). Respondents strongly endorsed key community participation strategies including community involvement improves tourism sustainability (Mean = 4.67), NGOs involve communities in tourism planning (Mean = 4.63), NGOs promote community participation in decision-making (Mean = 4.60), community tourism projects are supported by NGOs (Mean = 4.56), NGO support increases community ownership of tourism projects (Mean = 4.54), and NGO programs empower local communities economically (Mean = 4.52).

Correlation analysis demonstrated a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between NGO-supported community participation and sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.785$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that greater community involvement in tourism activities is linked to higher levels of sustainable tourism development. Regression analysis confirmed that community participation is the most influential predictor of sustainable tourism development ($\beta = 0.417$, $p = 0.000$), suggesting that community participation accounts for approximately 41.7% of sustainable tourism development when controlling for other variables. These findings emphasize that community participation contributes more significantly to tourism growth than capacity building or environmental conservation, highlighting its critical importance at Murchison Falls National Park.

These results align with evidence that community-based tourism initiatives supported by NGOs enable local communities to participate in tourism development while preserving their cultural heritage and natural resources (Richards & Hall, 2020). Similarly, community participation has been found to enhance social inclusion and ensure equitable distribution of tourism benefits among community members (Mutisya & Ngugi, 2022). When communities are involved in tourism activities, they develop a sense of ownership and responsibility toward protecting tourism resources. In the context of Murchison Falls National Park, respondents' strong

agreement that community involvement improves tourism sustainability highlights how community participation enhances conservation outcomes and economic benefits.

The emphasis on community involvement in tourism planning (Mean = 4.63) and decision-making (Mean = 4.60) corresponds with findings that NGO-supported community tourism initiatives have improved employment opportunities, strengthened cultural identity, and promoted sustainable tourism development in several destinations (Rajwais et al., 2025). Similarly, NGOs in East Africa have been observed to support the establishment of community tourism projects that allow local communities to showcase their cultural traditions, crafts, and performances to tourists (Spenceley et al., 2021). At Murchison Falls National Park, NGO-supported community tourism projects create income-generating opportunities for community members while preserving cultural heritage.

Furthermore, the recognition that NGO support increases community ownership of tourism projects (Mean = 4.54) concurs with reports that NGOs have supported community-based tourism projects aimed at improving local livelihoods and promoting cultural heritage tourism (Republic of Uganda, 2022). This is echoed by evidence stressing the importance of empowering local communities through capacity-building initiatives for sustainable tourism advancement (Kyoshabire, 2024). When communities feel ownership of tourism projects, they are more motivated to protect the resources that sustain those projects.

However, the findings also revealed that NGOs that ensure fair distribution of tourism benefits received the lowest mean (Mean = 4.31), indicating that while community participation is strong, challenges remain in ensuring equitable benefit-sharing among community members. This observation aligns with evidence that, despite community participation initiatives, local communities still experience limited participation in tourism decision-making processes and often receive minimal benefits from tourism activities (Tamrakar, 2024).

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the chapter presented the following conclusions based on the study objectives in order to promote sustainable tourism development at Murchison Falls National Park.

5.2.1 Role of NGO Capacity Building in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development

The statistical analysis underscored the critical role of NGO capacity building in sustainable tourism development. Correlation results showed a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between NGO capacity building and sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.813$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that enhanced capacity building initiatives are closely linked to sustainable tourism growth. Regression analysis confirmed that NGO capacity building is a significant predictor of sustainable tourism development ($\beta = 0.382$, $p = 0.000$), highlighting it as a major driver of sustainable tourism progress at Murchison Falls National Park. The study concluded that capacity-building initiatives by NGOs are essential for equipping local communities with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to participate effectively in tourism activities. Respondents strongly agreed that NGO training programs improve local participation, support entrepreneurship, enhance employment opportunities, and contribute to long-term tourism sustainability. By providing training in tourism and hospitality skills, environmental education, and business development, NGOs empower communities to engage meaningfully in tourism, thereby promoting economic growth and environmental stewardship.

5.2.2 Role of NGOs in Environmental Conservation for Sustainable Tourism Development

The study identified a strong positive correlation between environmental conservation and sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.794$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that greater conservation efforts are linked to higher levels of sustainable tourism development. Regression analysis further confirmed that environmental conservation significantly influences sustainable tourism development ($\beta = 0.291$, $p = 0.001$). While their predictive power is somewhat less than that of community participation and capacity building, environmental conservation remains a crucial factor in sustainable tourism expansion. The study concluded that NGOs play a vital role in environmental conservation through wildlife protection, anti-poaching activities, environmental education, habitat restoration, and collaboration with government agencies. The findings highlight NGO contributions to biodiversity protection, sustainable resource management, and environmental awareness, which are essential for maintaining the natural attractions that underpin tourism at Murchison Falls National Park. By promoting sustainable use of natural resources and reducing environmental degradation, NGOs help ensure that tourism development does not compromise the ecological integrity of the protected area.

5.2.3 Influence of NGO-Supported Community Participation on Sustainable Tourism Development

Correlation analysis demonstrated a strong positive relationship between NGO-supported community participation and sustainable tourism development ($r_s = 0.785$, $p = 0.000$), while regression analysis confirmed community participation as the most influential predictor of sustainable tourism development ($\beta = 0.417$, $p = 0.000$). These findings emphasize that community participation contributes more significantly to sustainable tourism growth than any other factor examined. The study thus concluded that the long-term success of tourism at Murchison Falls National Park depends on actively involving local communities in tourism planning, decision-making, and benefit-sharing. Respondents widely agreed that community involvement improves tourism sustainability, NGOs involve communities in planning and decision-making, and community tourism projects are supported by NGOs. When communities participate meaningfully in tourism, they develop ownership and responsibility toward protecting tourism resources, leading to more sustainable outcomes. NGO-supported community participation fosters social inclusion, economic empowerment, and cultural preservation, all of which are essential for sustainable tourism development.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 NGO Capacity Building

The study recommends that NGOs, in collaboration with the Uganda Wildlife Authority and the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, should strengthen capacity-building programs targeting local communities around Murchison Falls National Park. This includes expanding training in tourism and hospitality skills, entrepreneurship, and business management to enable community members to establish and manage tourism-related enterprises. NGOs should also prioritize environmental education programs, which received a relatively lower mean score (Mean = 4.27), to enhance community awareness about sustainable resource management and conservation practices. Furthermore, NGOs should invest in long-term capacity building initiatives that go beyond short-term training to include mentorship, follow-up support, and access to financial resources, as recommended in the literature, since limited financial resources and lack of market access hinder the effectiveness of capacity building programs (Tamrakar,

2024). By strengthening these initiatives, NGOs can empower local communities to participate effectively in tourism, leading to improved livelihoods and sustainable tourism development.

5.3.2 Environmental Conservation

The study recommends that NGOs should strengthen their collaboration with government agencies, particularly the Uganda Wildlife Authority, to enhance conservation efforts at Murchison Falls National Park. While respondents strongly agreed that NGOs collaborate with the government in conservation efforts (Mean = 4.79), there is a need for even greater coordination in implementing anti-poaching programs, wildlife monitoring, and habitat restoration initiatives. NGOs should also intensify efforts to reduce human-wildlife conflicts, which received a relatively lower mean score (Mean = 4.29), by implementing community-based conservation programs that promote coexistence between communities and wildlife. This includes providing training on conflict mitigation techniques, establishing compensation schemes for crop and livestock losses, and promoting alternative livelihoods that reduce dependence on natural resources. Additionally, NGOs should expand environmental education and awareness programs to reach more community members, emphasizing the importance of biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use for tourism development, since such programs increase awareness among local communities about the importance of wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism practices (Mugisha & Ahebwa, 2024).

5.3.3 Community Participation

The study recommends that NGOs should prioritize community participation in all aspects of tourism planning and management at Murchison Falls National Park. Given that community participation was identified as the most influential predictor of sustainable tourism development ($\beta = 0.417$), NGOs should work with local communities to establish participatory structures that enable them to actively engage in decision-making processes. This includes creating community-based tourism committees, involving local representatives in park management meetings, and facilitating community consultations on tourism development plans. NGOs should also support the establishment of community-based tourism enterprises, such as cultural villages, craft centers, and community lodges, to ensure that local communities benefit directly from tourism activities. Furthermore, NGOs should address the challenge of fair benefit distribution, which received the lowest mean score (Mean = 4.31), by promoting transparent and equitable sharing

mechanisms that ensure all community members benefit from tourism revenues, since community participation enhances social inclusion and ensures equitable distribution of tourism benefits among community members (Mutisya & Ngugi, 2022). By strengthening community participation, NGOs can foster local ownership, accountability, and long-term commitment to sustainable tourism development.

5.3.4 Policy Recommendations

The study recommends that policymakers at the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, the Uganda Wildlife Authority, and district local governments should develop and enforce policies that strengthen NGO involvement in sustainable tourism development. This includes creating an enabling environment for NGO operations, providing incentives for NGO conservation and capacity building programs, and facilitating collaboration between NGOs, government agencies, and private sector stakeholders. Policymakers should also ensure that tourism policies incorporate principles of sustainable development, including environmental protection, community participation, and equitable benefit-sharing. Additionally, local governments should support the integration of community-based tourism initiatives into district development plans and allocate resources for infrastructure improvements that enhance tourism accessibility and visitor experiences at Murchison Falls National Park.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

While this study was successfully completed, certain limitations may have had a bearing on the findings and warrant consideration when interpreting the results. The limited timeframe available for the study restricted the researcher's ability to engage extensively with a wider range of stakeholders and reduced opportunities for follow-up interactions. This constraint may have limited the depth of the data gathered, as well as the extent to which diverse perspectives on NGO roles in sustainable tourism development could be captured.

Additionally, because the study relied on self-reported questionnaire responses, there is a possibility that respondent bias was introduced through socially desirable answers or the selective withholding of information. Some participants may have responded in ways they perceived as expected rather than expressing their true opinions, which could have influenced the accuracy of the results.

The geographical scope of the study was also limited to Murchison Falls National Park and its neighboring communities within Masindi District, which restricts the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other protected areas or tourism destinations with differing contexts. The particular socio-economic, environmental, and cultural conditions found at Murchison Falls National Park may not necessarily reflect those of other destinations within Uganda or beyond.

Moreover, because the study employed a cross-sectional design, data were collected at only one point in time, which made it difficult to track changes in NGO roles, sustainable tourism development, and community participation over the course of time. Employing a longitudinal design instead would have allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term effects of NGO interventions on sustainable tourism development.

Even so, sound research procedures were adhered to in order to ensure the collection of dependable data and the fulfillment of the study's objectives. The achievement of a 100% response rate, together with strong reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha > 0.96), suggests that the findings can be considered both robust and credible.

5.5 Areas for Further Research

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, the following areas are recommended for future research:

1. Comparative Studies in Other Protected Areas: Future researchers should undertake similar studies in other national parks in Uganda, such as Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Queen Elizabeth National Park, and Kidepo Valley National Park, to explore whether the patterns identified in this study hold across diverse protected area contexts. Comparative research across different destinations is essential to broaden the applicability of findings related to NGO roles in sustainable tourism development.

2. Longitudinal Studies: Employing longitudinal approaches will be valuable to track changes over time in NGO interventions, sustainable tourism development, community participation, and environmental conservation. Such studies would offer deeper insight into the lasting impacts of NGO programs and the sustainability of tourism development outcomes.

3. Quantitative and Qualitative Mixed Methods: Future research should combine quantitative surveys with qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of NGO roles and community perspectives. Mixed-methods approaches would capture the nuances and complexities of NGO interventions and their impacts on sustainable tourism development.

4. Impact Assessment of Specific NGO Programs: Further investigation into the specific impacts of individual NGO programs, such as capacity building training, conservation education, and community-based tourism projects, is recommended. Such studies would help identify best practices and effective strategies for NGO involvement in sustainable tourism development.

5. Role of Technology and Innovation: Future research should explore the role of emerging technologies, such as digital marketing, mobile applications, and social media, in enhancing NGO effectiveness in promoting sustainable tourism development. Understanding how technology can support capacity building, environmental education, and community engagement would be valuable for improving NGO interventions.

6. Economic Impact Assessment: Detailed economic impact assessments of NGO-supported tourism initiatives would help quantify the contribution of NGOs to local economic development, employment creation, and poverty reduction. Such studies would provide evidence for policymakers and donors to justify investments in NGO programs.

7. Governance and Partnership Dynamics: Future research should examine the governance structures and partnership dynamics between NGOs, government agencies, private sector stakeholders, and local communities in promoting sustainable tourism development. Understanding the factors that facilitate or hinder effective collaboration would help strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships.

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APPENDICES

Appendix i: Introduction letter



**BUSITEMA
UNIVERSITY**
Providing Excellence

Office of the Vice-Chancellor
P.O. Box 53, Pallisa
www.busitema.ac.ug

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

Date: 22/06/2026

To: THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY
P.O. Box 3530, KAMPALA, UGANDA



UWA CENTRAL REGISTRY
RECEIVED
16 JUN 2026
CONFIDENTIAL
CENTRAL REGISTRY
P.O. BOX 3530 KAMPALA UGANDA

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: MUGAYA ANANIAH KAAMU BU/UP/2023/1310

On behalf of Busitema University, Faculty of Management Sciences, please allow me extend my appreciation to your organization for the continued support and commitment to providing services to our community. The Faculty looks forward to continuously partner with your organization in pursuance of excellence of our students by exposing them to practical learning experiences.

It's a University requirement that every student must carry out research and write a report in order to satisfy the requirement for the award of a Bachelor's Degree. The purpose of this letter is therefore to humbly request you to allow our fore mentioned student, who is in III year of study on a programme of Bachelors of Tourism and Travel Management of Busitema University, to carry out research by way of collecting data in your esteemed organization.

We look forward to your supportive and positive response to our request above.

Yours faithfully,



Wampande Juvilie
0752566618; Wampandej@umh.ac.ug
Ag. HOD (Tourism and Hospitality Mgt).



H.O.D TOURISM & HOSPITALITY MGT
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
BUSITEMA UNIVERSITY
P.O. BOX 53, PALLISA



**BUSITEMA
UNIVERSITY**
Providing Excellence

MUGAYA ANANIAH KAAMU
Faculty: Management Sciences
Campus: PALLISA BU/UP/2023/1310
Prog: BTT
Academic Registrar: [Signature] Holder's Signature: [Signature]
Valid until: AUG 2024 Expires: OCT 2026



Conserving
for Generations

Our Ref: BMD/96/01/26/105

UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PLOT 7 KIRA ROAD KAMWOKYA
P. O. Box 3530, Kampala, Uganda

19th June 2026

Ananiah MUGAYA KAAMU,
Busitema University,
P. O. Box 236,
TORORO.

RESEARCH APPLICATION - APPROVAL

I acknowledge receipt of your research application dated 16th June 2026 seeking permission to conduct an undergraduate research titled "The Role of None-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Sustainable Tourism Development: A Case Study of Murchison Falls National Park."

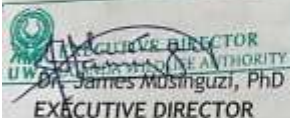
This is to inform you that permission has been granted for you to undertake the study with effect from 22nd June 2026 to 30th August 2026. You are expected to submit to Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) a final report of your study not later than 30th November 2026. In case you are unable to work within these dates, please notify us in writing.

By virtue of your status as a Ugandan undergraduate researcher, you are exempted from payment of any research fees for this study.

Please report to the Chief Warden of Murchison Falls Conservation Area (MFCA) on arrival for registration and further guidance.

Conserving for Generations

Yours sincerely,


Dr. James Musiguzi, PhD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Copies: Commissioner Biodiversity Management, UWA

Assistant Commissioner Research and Ecological Monitoring, UWA

Chief Warden, MFCA.

Appendix ii: Questionnaires

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of Busitema University conducting a research study to examine “**The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development: A Case Study of Murchison Falls National Park, Masindi District**”.

Therefore, this questionnaire aims to gather primary data to support the study.

Your participation is highly valued and voluntary. Please take a few minutes to respond truthfully. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and used only for academic purposes.

Instructions:

- Tick where appropriate.
- Sections B to E use a 5-point Likert scale:
 - SA – Strongly Agree,
 - A – Agree,
 - N – Neutral,
 - D – Disagree,
 - SD – Strongly Disagree

SECTION A: RESPONDENT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender:

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Age Bracket:

☐ 18–33 ☐ 34–44 ☐ 45–54 ☐ 55 & above

3. Highest Level of Education:

☐ No Formal Education ☐ Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Master’s or above

4. Your Role in/around Murchison Falls National Park:

☐ NGO Staff ☐ Park Staff ☐ Community Member

☐ Tour Operator ☐ Tourist ☐ Local Leader

5. How long have you been affiliated with this area?

☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1–3 years ☐ 3–5 years ☐ Over 5 years

SECTION B: NGO Capacity Building and Sustainable Tourism Development

S/N	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
CB1	NGOs provide training in tourism and hospitality skills to local communities.					
CB2	NGO training programs improve local participation in tourism activities.					
CH3	NGOs support entrepreneurship in tourism-related businesses.					
CB4	Capacity building by NGOs enhances employment opportunities.					
CB5	NGOs provide environmental education to local communities.					
CB6	NGO training improves service delivery in tourism					
CB7	NGOs support the development of community-based tourism initiatives.					
CB8	Capacity building helps reduce overdependence on natural resources.					
CB9	NGO programs improve awareness of sustainable tourism practices					
CB10	Capacity building contributes to long-term tourism sustainability.					

SECTION C: Role of NGOs in Environmental Conservation

S/N	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
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EC1	NGOs support wildlife conservation in Murchison Falls National Park					
EC2	NGOs participate in anti-poaching activities					
EC3	NGOs promote environmental awareness among communities.					
EC4	NGOs support habitat restoration programs.					
EC5	NGOs help reduce human-wildlife conflicts.					
EC6	Conservation programs by NGOs protect biodiversity.					
EC7	NGOs promote sustainable use of natural resources					
EC8	NGO activities reduce environmental degradation.					
EC9	NGOs collaborate with government in conservation efforts.					
EC10	Environmental conservation by NGOs supports tourism sustainability.					

SECTION: D: NGO-Supported Community Participation

S/N	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
CP1	NGOs involve communities in tourism planning					
CP2	NGOs promote community participation in decision-making.					
CP3	Community tourism projects are supported by NGOs					
CP4	NGOs. ensure fair distribution of tourism benefits					
CP5	NGO programs empower local communities economically.					
CP6	NGOs promote cultural heritage through community participation.					
CP7	Community involvement improves tourism sustainability					

CP8	NGOs strengthen collaboration between stakeholders					
CP9	Local communities benefit from NGO tourism initiatives					
CP10	NGO support increases community ownership of tourism projects.					

SECTION E: Sustainable Tourism Development (Dependent Variable)

S/N	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
STD1	Tourism development in MFPNP is environmentally sustainable					
STD2	Tourism contributes to economic development in Masindi District					
STD3	Tourism supports conservation of natural resources					
STD4	Tourism promotes social inclusion of local communities					
STD5	Tourism benefits are fairly distributed among stakeholders.					
STD6	Sustainable tourism practices are effectively implemented					
STD7	Tourism development supports cultural preservation					
STD8	Infrastructure development supports tourism growth					
STD9	Tourism contributes to long-term environmental protection					
STD10	Sustainable tourism improves the livelihoods of local communities.					

Thank you for your time and cooperation!

Your participation is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me through the details provided by the university.

Appendix iii: Research Work plan

Activity	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Research Problem Identification						
Approving the research topic						
Writing the research Proposal						
Approving the Research Proposal						
Collecting data from the field						
Analysis and interpreting data						
Writing final research report						
Submitting final research report						

Appendix iv: Research Budget

No.	Item	Quantity	Unit Cost (UGX)	Total Cost (UGX)
A. Stationery and Printing				
1	Printing of questionnaires (52 copies × 4 pages)	208 pages	100	20,800
2	Printing of research proposal copies (3 copies)	3 copies	10,000	30,000
3	Printing of final research report (3 copies)	3 copies	20,000	60,000
4	Pens, pencils, and stationery	1 set	15,000	15,000
5	Binding of research copies	6 copies	5,000	30,000
B. Transport and Field Work				
6	Transport to field (Murchison Falls National Park) – 14 days	1 round trip (to and from)	100,000	200,000
7	Local transport within Murchison	Lump sum	-	50,000
C. ICT and Communication				
8	Internet access (research and data analysis)	2 months	15,000	30,000
9	Airtime for communication with supervisor/respondents	2 months	10,000	20,000
10	SPSS software access / computer rental for analysis	1 month	50,000	50,000
D. Miscellaneous				
11	Research permit / administrative fees	1	30,000	30,000
12	Meals and refreshments during fieldwork and accommodation	14 days	15,000	120,000

13	Contingency (10% of total budget)	-	-	61,080
GRAND TOTAL				UGX
				671,880

Appendix iv: Krejcie and Morgan sample size table

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970