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Effects of integrated rural tourism planning on communities' employment in Makueni County Kenya

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Abstract
One of the important tools for economic development in developing countries is rural tourism. In many developing nations, rural tourism is seen as a strategy for economic development. In Kenya, tourism is primarily practiced in established cities and towns, ignoring regional locations with the potential to develop tourist-related products. The economic benefits of tourism are hampered by a lack of sectoral cooperation and community involvement in rural places like Makueni. Adoption of an integrated rural tourism development plan can help the marginalized rural communities to benefit more from tourism industry. This research sought to ascertain how integrated rural tourist planning in Makueni County affected local employment. The target population of this study, which used a cross-sectional survey approach, was 182, 000 residents, and a sample size of 385 respondents was considered to be representative. While respondents were chosen using stratified random, the study sites were determined using purposeful sampling. Structured questionnaires that were sent to the local populations in the chosen sub-Counties were used to collect primary data. In order to establish the impact of integrated rural tourism on communities' employment, data were analyzed using SPSS software and significant levels were sought at $p \leq 0.05$. According to the findings, seasonal employment (p=0.01), contract employment (p=0.01), and permanent employment (p=0.05) were all statistically significant. The findings demonstrate that integrated rural tourist planning positively impacts local communities' ability to create jobs. The study came to the conclusion that community participation in planning for the growth of rural tourism in Makueni County has a significant impact on the generation of jobs for local residents.

Keywords: Integrated rural tourism, planning, employment, host community, tourism units, Makueni County

Introduction
One of the rapidly growing industries in the world is tourism. Rural Tourism is any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture, and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially (Sawada & Takasaki, 2017) [48]. Rural tourism is therefore an important activity in enhancing economic empowerment for the rural communities. (Tolkach & King, 2015) [53].

The leading rural tourism destinations, especially in developing countries, include national parks, game reserves, mountains and cultural centers. This clearly shows that tourism is an important pillar in determining the economy of the rural people (Holland, *et al*., 2003) [24]. According to Chaudhry and Gupta (2010) [10], more than one-third of rural areas are located in arid and semiarid regions, and 75% of the world's poor reside in rural settings. Rural tourism is recognized as a tool for rural revitalization as a result of this.

Development and promotion of tourism in rural destinations improves the social-economic welfare of marginalized communities (Milhailovic & Moric, 2012) [61]. In many places around the world, including America and Asia, rural tourism has helped to advance social and cultural benefits (Mabey, 2010) [31]. Murray and Kline (2015) [41] in their study on rural tourism in North Carolina, USA observed that there is an increased demand in the consumption of rural tourism products and services in the developed countries. This is due to various reasons such as; increased intermodal connectivity to the rural areas, provision of unique rural tourism products and services as well as increased satisfaction from the tourists who consume the rural tourism products .

Leisure and recreation is the major motivation of travel to rural destinations (Sharpley, 2002) [49]. Study done recently by Chi and Lee (2020) [11] indicates a positive relationship between rural tourism development and the increase in income rates for the local communities. Rural tourism has been regarded as a major aspect towards creation of wealth to the marginalized

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communities through employment of local residents to the rural tourism attraction sites (Malek ., 2017) [33].

Rural destinations offer various tourism products such as mountains and wild-life based attractions which are consumed by various categories of tourists (McGehee and Andereck., 2004) [36].

Tourism in rural areas is comprised of a wide range of components such as attractions, accommodation, support facilities and transportation services (Kohl, 2006) [28]. Tourism stakeholders have considered visitation to rural destinations as a meaningful activity that generates benefits to the local communities and encounters less challenges. This is because it requires re-using of available tourism facilities as tourist accommodation and attraction (McDonagh, 2007) [59]

Most of the developing countries have not considered the adoption of rural tourism as an economic activity for improving the welfare of the local communities. In developing countries, tourism is highly practiced in coastal destinations and urban settings (Cabrini, 2002) [8]. However, developing countries such as Kenya have adopted rural tourism as a tool for economic empowerment for the local communities (Cabrini, 2015) [9]. Rural tourism has been adopted by local communities especially in utilizing their leisure time through showcasing their cultural way of life (Bessette, 2016) [5].

Literature Review
Integrated Rural Tourism Planning and Communities' Employment
Developed countries have considered rural tourism as an alternative form of economic activity for the local communities especially during the decline in Agricultural activities (Khartishvili, 2019) [26]. Asia for instance, has majorly practiced rural tourism especially in Malaysia with home stays being one of their major products. Nair *et al.* (2015) [42] noted that the adoption rural tourism as an economic activity has fully boosted the economic growth of Malaysia. He further noted that rural tourism has created employment opportunities for host communities residing within rural tourism destinations. The evolution and development of rural tourism in marginalized areas has been successful especially in rural tourism promotion zones in the developed and developing countries. However, the success of rural tourism development requires an integrative plan that involves the participation of local communities in the planning process for rural tourism activities (Kavita, 2014) [25]. In addition, Chin (2019) [12] observes that tourism in local settings is an integrated part of the tourism service industry and has highly been considered as a pillar for economic empowerment in rural areas

More than 200 million people are employed globally by rural tourism, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). According to figures from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), rural tourism directly supports 6%-7% of all jobs worldwide and generates millions of more jobs through a multiplier effect. Numerous studies document the positive social, cultural, and economic effects of rural travel (Hall & Brown, 2000; Viljoen & Tlabela, 2007) [19, 57]. For instance, Hall and Brown (2000) [20] illustrate how rural tourism adds to social and economic advantages that help rural communities maintain their economic stability. According to the findings

mentioned above, developing rural tourism can undoubtedly offer communities with significant advantages.

Sustainability of rural tourism can be achieved through joint ventures, cooperation and partnership between local communities and tourism developers (World Tourism Organization [WTO], 1997, p. 15). According to a research done by WTO (1997), indicates that tourism in rural settings performs well especially in areas where local communities are less territorial and more focused on the future of tourism. Therefore, integrated planning approach to rural tourism development is the most appropriate for the success of tourism in rural settings. Integrated rural tourism planning approach considers sectoral interests, frontiers, public and private sectors as well as local communities

A study done by Aronson, (2000) [4] indicates that sustainable rural tourism planning integrates tourists, Local community and tourism destination as the major operational environmental aspects. (Fig 1)
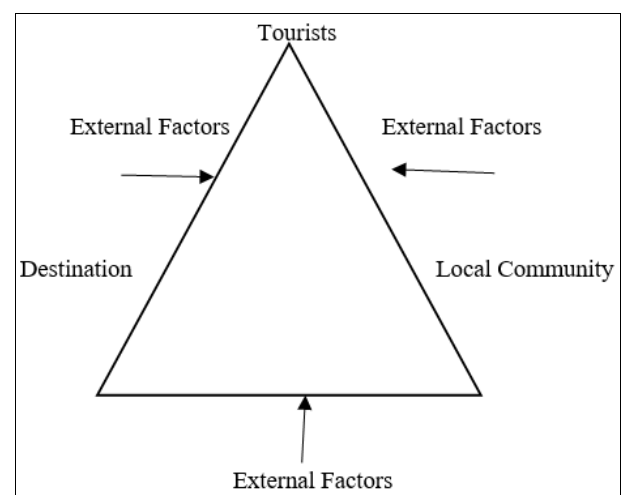

Fig 1: Components of sustainable rural tourism development (Aronson, 2000) [4]

Sustainable rural tourism planning and development requires the tourism developers to maintain a balance between demand and supply in the tourism destination (Aronson, 2000) [4]. He further noted that sustainability tenets are violated when local communities and the environment are put above visitor satisfaction. Local communities can participate in rural tourism planning through the provision of labor in the rural tourism destination and engagement in educational programs which empower community members on sustainable rural tourism development.

Challenges facing the conservation of rural tourism resources and unemployment among the local communities can only be mitigated through integrated rural tourism planning. (Bushell & Eagles, 2007) [7]. Community involvement in rural tourism planning is considered as a paramount way to sustainable rural tourism development as well as improved living standards to the local communities (Adeleke & Nzama, 2013) [1]. The empowerment of local communities through rural tourism planning initiatives enables them to fully participate in decision making process for rural tourism development. (Tosun &Timothy, 2001) [60] Li (2006) [30] and Tosun (2000) [54] indicated that the applicability of integrated rural tourism planning approach is highly suitable for developing countries. They further justified their observation by indicating that developing

countries are attributed by high population growth rate, poverty and unemployment among the host communities. For a rural tourism destination to remain unique, integrated planning approach is required in order to attract increased numbers of tourists and tourism investors (Pansiri, 2013) [55]. Rural tourism development has been successful in many countries as a result of adoption of integrated planning approach .In Canada for instance, MacDonald and Lee (2003) [32] observe that integrated rural tourism planning approach has enhanced the success of tourism in the country. They further indicated that the adoption of integrated planning approach enhances efficiency in rural tourism practices, creates employment for the local communities and sustainable utilization of rural tourism resources.

Ross and Reid (2001) [47] conducted a research in Tequile Island, Peru which indicated that integrated rural tourism planning results to creation of employment among the local communities and enables them to get full ownership of the rural tourism projects.

Development of rural tourism in Africa has boosted the local communities economically through the revenues accrued from rural tourism activities (Ezeuduji, 2013) [16]. Tourism benefits have also motivated local communities in Africa to participate in planning for rural tourism development.

According to Spenceley (2008) [50], the effects of rural tourism projects in Africa include the improvement of local populations' living conditions, the development of infrastructure, the provision of employment possibilities for the local population and the preservation of rural tourism resources.

Rural tourism in Africa is challenged by improper planning strategies which could result to sustainable utilization and management of the rural tourism resources (Ezeuduji & Rid 2011) [17]. Akyeampong (2011) [2] also noted that misunderstanding among community members and tourism developers is also another challenge facing the development of rural tourism in Africa.

Rural tourism has been embraced as a strategy for economic empowerment in South Africa especially by the people of Kwazulu (Binns & Etienne, 2002) [6]. Its primary goal was to boost local communities' revenue through job creation, which made a substantial contribution to the realization of effective planning (Rezvani, 2005) [44].

The degree of integration between the local communities and the local tourist developers, according to Dieke (2013) [15], determines the success of rural tourism development. Integration can be accomplished by establishing initiatives that benefit the neighborhood and give residents plenty of job prospects. Effective planning for rural tourism development enhances the integration of the local population in tourism and guarantees them more benefits from rural tourism projects (Rogerson, 2006) [45].

In order to determine the economic sustainability of developing rural tourism, Manyara and Eleri (2009) conducted a study in Kenya. In their research, they indicated that planning has a significance contribution on the development of rural tourism. They also outlined that integrated planning approach to tourism results to creation of jobs and achievement of equity in revenue sharing among the tourism stakeholders. The integration of rural tourism planning and advantages to communities, though, may depend on the niche. Therefore, the purpose of this study

was to investigate how Makueni County's integrated rural tourist strategy has affected local employment.

Materials and Methods
Study Area Characteristics
The 8034.7 km^2 Makueni County served as the study's geographic study region. Latitude 1035' and 30 00' South and Longitude 37010' and 380 30' East are its coordinates in the lower Eastern region. With temperatures ranging from 210C to 350C, the county has a hot, dry climate. Rainfall varies from 300 to 1200 millimeters annually on average. According to the Makueni County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017, there are 922,183 people living in the county.

The primary economic activities carried out in the County include dairy farming, small-scale trade, ecotourism, subsistence agriculture and beekeeping. Most of the Tourism attraction sites are in the involvement stage of the destination cycle of destination based on butlers (1980). Chyulu Hills National Park, Amboseli National Park, Kamba Culture, Mangelete Ecotourism Center, Peterson Camp Ruins, and Silk Temple in Makindu are the top tourist destinations. Tourism promotion and packaging in the county has not been fully developed as a result of few tour operators (Makueni County tourism report 2016). The County has a considerable amount of infrastructure and tourist amenities.

Research Design
This research used descriptive cross-sectional survey design. The research design was used in describing the relationships among the key study variables (Kothari, 2004) [29]. In order to accurately capture the population's features in connection to the research issue, the cross sectional research design included selecting parameters just once at a specified period (Cooper & Schindler, 2003) [14]. This study's approach made it possible to collect quantitative and qualitative data to examine the relationship between integrated rural tourist planning and local employment in Makueni County (Kothari, 2004) [29]. The research design has also been applied in previous studies done by Munyoki (2007) [40], Kinoti (2012) [27] and Njeru (2013) [43].

Target population
182,000 people who reside in the rural tourist promotion zones of Makueni County were the study's study population. 50,299 people came from Makindu Sub-County, 80,236 from Kibwezi East Sub-County, and 51,465 from Mukaa Sub-County, according to the distribution of this population.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size
Makindu, Kibwezi East, and Mukaa sub-counties were chosen as the study site using Purposive sampling, which was utilized to choose areas with high, moderate, and low levels of rural tourism. The respondents from the local community were then chosen using stratified random sampling. According to Mugenda (2003), sample sizes for the nearby communities were determined using the following formulas:

$$n = Z2pq/d2$$

Where: n = Required Sample Size when the population is >10,000

Z = the standard normal deviate at the required confidence level. In this research z=1.96 at 95% confidence level
p = Population Proportion estimated with desired the characteristic being measured. P is taken in this research as 0.5
q = 1-p
d = the level of significance set. In this research it is 0.05

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025}$$

$$n = 385$$

The sample size for the study was 385 respondents. The number of respondents from the local community in the three sub-counties; Makindu, Kibwezi East and Mukaa were distributed proportionately in the ratio of 6: 4: 3. This was done using the number of tourism units in the three sub-counties which resulted to 178 respondents from Makindu, 118 from Kibwezi East and 89 from Mukaa (Table 1)

Table 1: Summary of sampling and sample size

Sub- County	Number of Tourism units (A)	Respondents from the Local Community (B) = (385 to the ratio of 6:4:3)
Makindu	30	178
Kibwezi East	20	118
Mukaa	15	89
Total	65	385

Data Collection
Using closed-ended questionnaires with a Likert scale as the format, data for this study was gathered. The host communities themselves provided the information for this study. Surveys looked at the social-economic makeup of respondents and the impact of integrated rural tourism planning on local employment in Makueni County.

Data Analysis
Analysis of data was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Software. For the descriptive analysis, data was analysed using frequencies and percentages. Data on the respondents' socioeconomic factors were examined in particular using frequencies and percentages. Following that, the data was shown in the proper figures and tables. The correlations between the different variables were ascertained using inferential analysis. This was done using Categorical regression analysis to determine the relationship between integrated rural tourism planning and communities employment and significant levels were sought at p≤0.05.

Results and Discussions
Introduction
The aim of this research was to determine the effects of integrated rural tourism planning on communities' employment in Makueni County. This chapter outlines the research findings and discussions of the study. The results and discussions are based on the research objectives. The hypotheses of the study were tested using categorical regression analysis and significant levels sought at p≤ 0.05

Sub-County of Residence of the Respondents
The questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate their residence's sub-county. The results showed that 38% of respondents were from Makindu sub-county, 32% were from Kibwezi sub-county and 30% were from Mukaa sub-county.

Gender of the Respondents from the Host Communities
According to the findings, men made up 49% of the total respondents while women made up a slightly greater

percentage with 51%. The results suggest that both men and women are important contributors towards the growth of rural tourism in Makueni County.

Age of Host Community Respondents
According to the specified age brackets, the respondents were asked to specify their age. The outcome showed that the bulk of respondents were between the ages of 36 and 50 (43%), followed by those between 20 and 35 (39%), those under 20 (10%), and those beyond 50 (8%)

Average Income of Host Community Respondents
Fig 2 below shows that the majority of respondents (37%) have an average monthly income of more than ksh 30,000, followed by those who earn between ksh 1500 and 30,000 (33%) and those who earn between ksh 0 and 5,000 (30%)
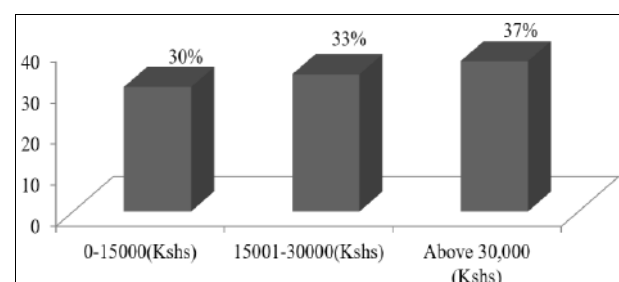

Fig 2: Average income of host community respondents

Organisational Length of Operation of the Tourism Developers
According to the research, 68% of Makueni County's tourist developers have been in business for less than ten years, with the remaining (32%) having been in business for between ten and twenty years.

Mandate of Tourism Developers in Kenyans Tourism Development
According to figure 3's findings, the bulk of tourism developers are responsible for building infrastructure (62%), followed by those who are in charge of offering tours (15%), those who offer travel advice (14%) and finally those who are responsible for marketing tourism (9%)
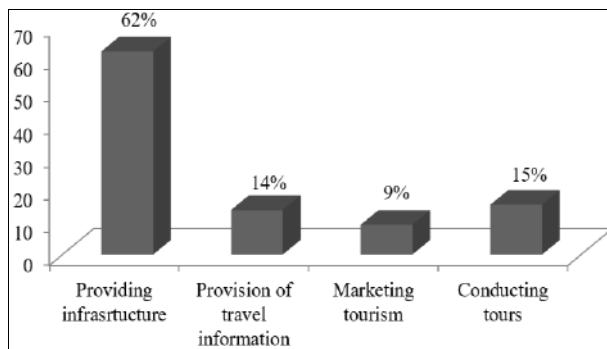
Fig 3: Mandate of the tourism developers

Effect of Integrated Rural Tourism Planning on Communities' Employment in Makueni County

i) Community involvement in Rural Tourism planning

Part (A) of the questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate whether the communities were involved in the planning of rural tourism in Makueni County. Results outlined that the majority of respondents gave a positive response of Yes (94%) while the minority indicated a negative reaction of No (6%).

ii) Roles of Host Community in Rural Tourism Planning

The roles that the host community played in the planning of rural tourism were rated by the respondents. The rating was in the range of $\mu=3.2361$ to $\mu=3.6667$, as shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Ratings on the Roles of Host Community in Rural Tourism Planning

Roles	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Idea generation	306	3.6667	1.4508
Choice of program	306	3.6328	1.1710
Investment in tourism	306	3.5049	1.4261
Decision on revenues	306	3.3344	1.3620
Evaluation of programs	306	3.2361	1.3414
Average Mean	306	3.4750	1.3503

According to the research, the host community's contribution to rural tourist planning received an overall rating of ($\mu=3.4750$, $\sigma=1.3503$). The concept creation component of Makueni County's rural tourist planning had the highest rating ($\mu=3.6667$, $\sigma=1.4508$), while the evaluation of programs for the development of rural tourism received the lowest rating ($\mu=3.2361$, $\sigma=1.3414$)

Two of the five items that were rated had an average score, while three of the five items that were scored showed excellent scores. These results demonstrate that the host community should play key roles in the planning process of rural tourism development in Makueni County, including idea generation, program selection and investment in tourism.

iii) Participation roles and creation of employment

The respondents were questioned about if the roles they play in the planning of rural tourism help them find jobs in the County. The majority of respondents gave a positive response of Yes (83%) and the remaining respondents gave a negative reaction of No (17%).

iv) Types of employment created for the host community

The types of jobs that are anticipated to be developed as a result of integrated rural tourism planning in Makueni County were appraised by the respondents. The table 3

below shows that the rating fell between $\mu=3.6905$ to $\mu=4.0748$

Table 3: Rating on the Types of Employment

Employment Types	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Contract	270	4.0748	.9207
Permanent	270	3.9966	1.1373
Seasonal	270	3.7912	1.1523
Part-time	270	3.6905	1.0753
Average Mean	270	3.8883	1.0714

According to the results, the average rating for the employment categories that integrated rural planning is anticipated to produce was ($\mu=3.8883$, $\sigma=1.0714$). Contract employment received the highest rating ($\mu=4.0748$, $\sigma=0.9207$), while part-time employment received the lowest rating ($\mu=3.6905$, $\sigma=1.0753$). Having a high rate of ($\mu=3.9966$, $\sigma=1.1373$) for permanent employment and ($\mu=3.7912$, $\sigma=1.1523$) for seasonal employment, respectively.

On the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to indicate whether their villages were involved in the planning of rural tourism in Makueni County. In contrast to the 6% of respondents who said they don't participate, 94% of respondents said they participate in organizing for rural tourism.

The researcher used categorical regression to do inferential analysis. Significant levels were sought at $p\leq0.05$ in order to assess the impact of integrated rural tourist planning on community employment. The model was statistically significant, according to the results (f=12.18, adjusted R2 = 0.15, and p=0.00). This suggests that factors related to integrated rural tourism can account for 10% of the variation in the amount of employment generated in the neighbourhood. This is indicated in tables 4 and 5

Table 4: Regression Model Summary [1]

Multiple R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
.39	.15	.15

a. Dependent Variable: permanent employment
b. Predictors: Community participation, Developmental planning, Sectoral coordination and Destination Conservation approaches

According to Table 4 above, there is a favorable association between integrated rural tourism planning and long-term employment of the host community in the County, with an R value of 0.39.
The table also shows a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.15, indicating that elements included in integrated rural tourist planning can account for 15% of the variation in permanent employment.

Table 1: Regression ANOVA[1]

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	42.25	4	10.56	12.18	.00
Residual	242.75	280	.87		
Total	285.00	284			

a. Dependent Variable: permanent employment
b. Predictors: Community participation, Developmental planning, Sectoral coordination, and Destination Conservation approaches

If a statistically significant part of the variation is explained by the regression model, it is shown in the ANOVA table 5 above. The model's *p*-value is 0.00, making it statistically significant ($p\leq0.05$).
The impact of four independent variables on local employment was examined. These included destination

conservation strategies, sectoral coordination, community involvement and elements of developmental planning. Community involvement (p=0.04) and sectoral coordination (p=0.01) were among those that were significant. The other two values were not significant (*p*>0.05). The following table 6 displays this.

Table 6: Regression coefficients showing effect of integrated rural tourism planning on communities' employment

	Standardized Coefficients		df	F	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error			
Community participation	0.13	0.06	1	4.46	0.04*
Developmental planning	0.01	0.08	1	0.02	0.89
Sectoral coordination	0.22	0.08	1	7.56	0.01**
Destination Conservation approaches	0.06	0.07	1	0.94	0.33

Dependent Variable: Communities' employment

To assess the significant levels of the permanent, contract, part-time, and seasonal employments, further logistic regression analysis was carried out. Permanent employment (p=0.05), contract employment (p=0.01), and seasonal employment (p=0.01) all stood out as statistically significant among them. Part-time employment was not significant (p=0.73). The following table 7 displays this.

Table 7: Regression coefficients indicating the significance levels of communities' employment

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Permanent employment	-0.51	0.27	3.56	1	0.05*	0.60
Contract employment	-0.88	0.35	6.13	1	0.01**	0.42
Part-time employment	-0.07	0.22	0.12	1	0.73	0.93
Seasonal employment	0.44	0.18	6.07	1	0.01**	1.55

Dependent Variable: Employment Opportunities

The findings are in line with those of MacDolnald and Lee (2003), who found that integrated planning that involves local communities in planning for the development of rural tourism increases local employment rates and other economic advantages from local resources. The findings support Figgis' (2007) assertion that the degree to which local communities participate in the design of rural tourism determines the benefits that local communities derive from it. The findings indicated that community involvement in rural tourism planning and development is very important for ensuring local communities have jobs in the rural tourism destination. Rural tourism planning benefits are achieved from the full involvement of local communities since it gives them the opportunity to create jobs and raise local tax revenues.

The majority of Kenya's tourist attractions are located in rural areas and therefore, tourists' visits to these places generate jobs for underprivileged populations. The educational level of the community members, the sort of business, the availability of resources, the demand for labor, and the season all affect employment in permanent, contract, and seasonal positions. Therefore, equal chances for communities to find dependable sources of employment are provided by integrated rural tourism planning. As a result, rural towns adopt a favourable viewpoint toward rural tourism and encourage its expansion.

Conclusions: The level of community involvement in planning for the growth of rural tourism has a significant impact on the creation of jobs for the local communities in Makueni County. The main roles that the host community should play in the planning phase of rural tourism development in Makueni County are idea generation, program selection, and local community investment in tourism. Compared to part-time employment in the host villages in the County, integrated rural tourism planning is more likely to produce permanent, contract, and seasonal employment.

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