MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

LOCAL COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISM REVENUE SHARING AROUND KIBALE NATIONAL PARK

BY

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DECLARATION

I, **Turyagumanawe Lovious**, hereby declare that this research report entitled "Local Community Perceptions of Tourism Revenue Sharing around Kibale National Park" is my original work. It has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of a degree or any other academic qualification. All sources used have been duly acknowledged.

Signature..... **Date**.3rd/10/2025.....

TURYAGUMANAWE LOVIOUS

APPROVAL

This report is submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

Signature..... **Date**.....3/10/2025

DR. PATRICK BYAKAGABA

DEDICATION

This work is lovingly dedicated to my family for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout my academic journey. I also dedicate this report to Mr. Haruna Matovu, Madam Rashidah Nabaterega, Mr. William Ssekamatte, Madam Jamilah Muhammed, Madam Gloria Arinaitwe, Mr. Faruq Miti, Mr. Aziz Amir Ngobi, and many others not mentioned here, for their inspiration, moral support, and guidance that enabled me to accomplish this milestone.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CAES	–	College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
KNP	–	Kibale National Park
NDP	–	National Development Plan
SPSS	–	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TRS	–	Tourism Revenue Sharing
UTB	–	Uganda Tourism Board
UWA	–	Uganda Wildlife Authority

ABSTRACT

Tourism revenue sharing (TRS) is a policy mechanism designed to channel a portion of revenues generated from national parks to adjacent local communities, with the aim of improving livelihoods, reducing human–wildlife conflicts, and strengthening support for conservation. In Uganda, the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) allocates 20% of park entry fees to neighbouring communities. However, the extent to which these funds meet community expectations and influence conservation remains contested.

This study assessed local community perceptions of tourism revenue sharing around Kibale National Park, focusing on its structure and effectiveness, community awareness, satisfaction and participation, and the challenges that hinder equitable and transparent implementation. The research adopted a descriptive design, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. Data were collected from 115 household respondents in Bigodi Parish (villages of Nkingo, Kihoima, Nyabubare, Busimba, Kyabakwerere, among others) using structured questionnaires, and from 15 key informants including Uganda Wildlife Authority officials, local government leaders, and community representatives. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse quantitative data while qualitative responses were analysed thematically.

Findings revealed that while 67% of respondents were aware of the TRS framework, there were significant knowledge gaps about fund management and eligibility. Most respondents identified schools, health centres, roads, and water facilities as funded projects, yet less than half (46.1%) believed that funds reached intended beneficiaries. Satisfaction levels were mixed, with 53.9% expressing some satisfaction while 46.1% reported dissatisfaction, particularly due to delays, lack of transparency, and elite capture. Participation in TRS was limited, with less than half of households attending meetings or contributing ideas. Conservation outcomes were moderately positive, as 61% felt TRS motivated conservation, though its effect on reducing human–wildlife conflict remained limited.

The study concludes that TRS has delivered visible community projects and encouraged some conservation-friendly attitudes, but weaknesses in governance, inclusivity, and accountability reduce its effectiveness. Recommendations include improving transparency through open reporting and independent audits, strengthening community sensitization, ensuring inclusive participation of women and youth, and aligning TRS projects more directly with conservation and livelihood needs. The findings provide important insights for policymakers, Uganda Wildlife Authority, and other stakeholders in designing equitable, transparent, and community-centred benefit-sharing programmes that balance conservation and local development.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Tourism revenue-sharing is a financial model that distributes a portion of tourism-generated income to local communities living near protected areas. This approach is widely recognized as a strategy to enhance conservation efforts by compensating communities for restrictions placed on resource use while promoting local development (Spenceley & Snyman, 2019). Revenue-sharing mechanisms aim to address the socio-economic challenges that arise when communities are excluded from the direct benefits of conservation and tourism, thereby fostering positive attitudes and participation in conservation programs (Tumusiime & Vedeld, 2018).

In Uganda, revenue-sharing programs were institutionalized in the early 2000s, with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) allocating 20% of park entry fees to adjacent communities (UWA, 2012). The primary objective of this initiative is to support local development projects such as schools, healthcare facilities, and infrastructure, while also reducing human-wildlife conflicts. However, studies indicate that the effectiveness of these programs varies significantly, depending on how funds are distributed and how communities perceive the benefits (Tumusiime & Vedeld, 2018; Kideghesho, 2021). In some cases, revenue-sharing programs have improved livelihoods and increased community support for conservation, while in others, they have led to dissatisfaction due to inequitable distribution, lack of transparency, and weak community involvement (Mubanga, 2021; Tshuma, 2023).

Globally, revenue-sharing programs have been implemented in several countries, including Rwanda and Kenya, where conservation authorities allocate a percentage of tourism revenue to local communities (Snyman, 2020). Rwanda's gorilla tourism revenue-sharing model, for instance, dedicates 10% of park revenues to communities near Volcanoes National Park, funding local infrastructure and community-based conservation initiatives (Nielsen & Spenceley, 2018). Similarly, in Kenya, Maasai communities near protected areas receive payments for ecosystem services in exchange for their participation in wildlife conservation efforts (Okello, 2019). The success of these programs largely depends on community perceptions, levels of trust in park management, and the perceived fairness of revenue distribution.

In the context of Kibale National Park, tourism generates substantial revenue through park entry fees, chimpanzee tracking permits, and ecotourism activities (UWA, 2022). However, the extent to which local communities' benefit from these revenues remains a subject of debate.

Studies suggest that many communities feel excluded from decision-making processes regarding fund allocation, leading to tensions between conservation authorities and residents (Kideghesho, 2021). Issues such as corruption, delayed fund disbursement, and miss allocation of resources further complicate the effectiveness of the program (Miteva, 2019). As a result, some residents develop negative attitudes toward conservation, which can lead to increased poaching, habitat encroachment, and reduced cooperation with park authorities (Tumusiime & Vedeld, 2018).

Understanding local community perceptions of tourism revenue-sharing is essential, since these perceptions influence conservation behaviours and long-term sustainability. Negative perceptions can undermine conservation efforts, while positive experiences can enhance community engagement and promote sustainable tourism (Snyman, 2020). Despite the growing body of research on revenue-sharing, there is limited empirical data on how communities around Kibale National Park perceive these programs, whether they consider them effective, and what factors influence their attitudes.

This study seeks to assess local community perceptions of tourism revenue-sharing around Kibale National Park, identifying key areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction while analysing factors that shape their attitudes. By exploring these perceptions, the research aims to contribute to policy recommendations that enhance the fairness, transparency, and effectiveness of revenue-sharing mechanisms in Uganda.

1.2 Problem Statement

Tourism revenue-sharing programs were introduced as a strategy to improve conservation outcomes by distributing part of the revenue generated from protected areas to local communities. However, despite their implementation around Kibale National Park, there are growing concerns about their effectiveness in addressing local needs and fostering conservation support. Studies indicate that community perceptions of these programs significantly influence their success, yet existing research suggests dissatisfaction due to inequitable fund distribution, lack of transparency, and limited participation in decision-making (Mubanga, 2021; Kideghesho, 2022).

In communities surrounding Kibale National Park, reports highlight cases where revenue-sharing funds are either insufficient, misallocated, or fail to reach the intended beneficiaries (Tshuma, 2023). The lack of clear communication on fund allocation has also led to mistrust between communities and conservation authorities, reducing local engagement in conservation activities. Furthermore, there is limited empirical evidence on how local communities perceive

the fairness and impact of revenue-sharing mechanisms in Kibale National Park. Without a clear understanding of these perceptions, it is difficult to assess whether the program meets its intended objectives or requires structural improvements.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess local community perceptions of tourism revenue-sharing around Kibale National Park and its impact on conservation efforts.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

a) To examine the structure and effectiveness of tourism revenue-sharing in Kibale National Park.

b) To assess community awareness, satisfaction, and participation in revenue-sharing programs.

c) To identify challenges and propose improvements for equitable and transparent revenue-sharing.

1.3.2 Research Questions

a) How is the tourism revenue-sharing framework structured and implemented in Kibale National Park?

b) What are the perceptions of local communities regarding the fairness and effectiveness of tourism revenue-sharing?

c) How does tourism revenue-sharing influence community attitudes and participation in conservation?

1.4 Scope of the Study

This section defines the boundaries of the research by outlining the thematic focus, geographical area, and time frame covered. It ensures that the study remains Aligned with its objectives and provides a clear direction for data collection and analysis.

1.4.1 Content Scope

This study focuses on assessing local community perceptions of tourism revenue-sharing around Kibale National Park. The research analyses how revenue sharing mechanisms are structured, the extent of community awareness and participation, and the impact of these programs on conservation attitudes. Specifically, the study examines the structure and

effectiveness of tourism revenue-sharing programs implemented in Kibale National Park, assess community awareness, satisfaction and participation in revenue-sharing initiatives.

The research identifies challenges affecting the fair and transparent distribution of revenue-sharing benefits and propose improvements.

The study is limited to government led tourism revenue-sharing initiatives, excluding other conservation funding mechanisms such as private sector contributions and donor funded programs. This ensures a focused investigation of informal revenue-sharing framework in Uganda's protection areas.

1.4.2 Area scope

The study was conducted in communities bordering Kibale National Park located in Kamwenge District, western Uganda. Kibale National Park is one of Uganda's most important conservation areas, known for its biodiversity and high tourism revenue generation. Revenue-sharing programs in these communities aim to promote conservation by distributing part of the park's tourism earnings to local residents.

The study covered multiple villages surrounding the park in Kamwenge District specifically those in Bigodi parish ensuring diverse representation of community perspectives. These villages were selected because they have direct interactions with conservation authorities and receive revenue-sharing benefits making them ideal for assessing the program's effectiveness.

1.4.3 Time Scope

This study focused on academic and policy documents published within the last 10 years, ensuring that findings are based on recent and relevant data. The research period was 5 months of data collection and analysis, ensuring that findings accurately capture the most current community perceptions.

1.5 Justification of the Study

This research is important because it addresses the growing need to understand how local communities perceive tourism revenue-sharing programs and their impact on conservation efforts. Kibale National Park generates significant tourism revenue, yet there is limited knowledge on whether local communities feel they benefit from these funds. Since community perceptions influence their willingness to support conservation, assessing their views is essential for improving park-community relations and ensuring long-term conservation success.

Additionally, concerns about transparency, fairness, and community participation in revenue-sharing programs have been raised in various protected areas (Manyisa, Ahebwa & Sandbrook, 2011; Twinamatsiko et al., 2022; Snyman et al., 2023).” By examining these issues, the study will provide insights into whether revenue-sharing policies meet community needs and where improvements are necessary. This research is particularly important for policymakers and conservation managers looking to design more inclusive and effective revenue-sharing models that benefit both biodiversity and local livelihoods.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be instrumental in shaping the effectiveness of tourism revenue-sharing programs around Kibale National Park. By assessing local community perceptions, the study will provide valuable insights for policymakers, conservation authorities, and other stakeholders to enhance transparency, equity, and community participation in revenue-sharing mechanisms.

The study will contribute to policy development by offering evidence-based recommendations for improving the distribution and utilization of tourism revenue-sharing funds. Conservation agencies, such as the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), can use the findings to refine their approaches, ensuring that revenue-sharing programs align with community needs and promote stronger conservation support.

Furthermore, the study will enhance community engagement by identifying factors influencing participation in conservation initiatives. If communities perceive revenue-sharing as fair and beneficial, they are more likely to support conservation efforts, leading to reduced human-wildlife conflicts and increased cooperation with park authorities.

In addition, this research will support sustainable conservation by providing insights into how revenue-sharing can be a tool for long-term biodiversity protection. When local communities recognize direct benefits from conservation, they are more likely to engage in practices that protect natural resources and wildlife.

Lastly, the study will serve as a foundation for future research on revenue-sharing in tourism and conservation. By highlighting gaps and challenges in existing models, it will provide direction for further academic inquiries and practical improvements in community-based conservation programs.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This section reviews existing literature on tourism revenue-sharing, focusing on its conceptual framework, legal and policy guidelines, community perceptions, implementation challenges, conservation impacts, international best practices, and gaps in existing studies. The literature is drawn from recent research (last 10 years), ensuring relevance to the study.

2.1 Concept of Tourism Revenue-Sharing

Tourism revenue-sharing is a mechanism designed to distribute financial benefits from protected areas to local communities as an incentive for conservation participation. The model is rooted in the principle that when communities receive economic benefits from conservation, they are more likely to support wildlife protection and sustainable resource management (Spenceley & Snyman, 2019). In many conservation areas, local populations face land-use restrictions, wildlife-induced damage, and reduced access to natural resources. Revenue-sharing seeks to compensate for these limitations while fostering local engagement in conservation initiatives (Tumusiime & Vedeld, 2018).

Globally, revenue-sharing programs vary in design. Some governments allocate a fixed percentage of park entrance fees to local communities, while others implement direct payments or community development projects funded by tourism revenue (Nielsen & Spenceley, 2018). In Sub-Saharan Africa, tourism-dependent economies have widely adopted revenue-sharing models, particularly in wildlife conservation areas where human-wildlife conflicts exist (Miteva, 2019).

Uganda's tourism revenue-sharing program was formally established in 2000 as a community-based conservation strategy under the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). The program allocates 20% of all national park entry fees to local governments in parishes bordering protected areas, such as Kibale National Park (UWA, 2012). These funds are used to finance community development projects, including schools, healthcare facilities, and infrastructure, aiming to create positive attitudes toward conservation (Kideghesho, 2021). However, despite this structured approach, there are concerns about the effectiveness and fairness of revenue-sharing, particularly regarding fund allocation and its impact on local livelihoods (Mubanga, 2021).

2.1.2 Legal and Policy Framework for Revenue-Sharing in Uganda

Uganda's tourism revenue-sharing program is guided by the Uganda Wildlife Act (2019), which mandates financial redistribution to communities near national parks. The legal framework ensures that a portion of tourism revenue directly benefits those affected by conservation restrictions (UWA, 2022). The Uganda Wildlife Policy (2014) further emphasizes the importance of community participation in decision-making regarding fund allocation and utilization (Tumusiime et al., 2020).

However, studies indicate that despite these policies, challenges in policy enforcement and governance persist. For example, Mubanga (2021) found that in some districts, delays in fund disbursement and poor monitoring systems limit the program's impact. Similarly, (Tumusiime & Vedeld 2018) note that in many cases, local elites control fund allocation, leading to inequitable distribution and exclusion of marginalized groups from benefiting.

To address these governance challenges, the Community Protected Area Institutions (CPAI's) were established to oversee revenue-sharing and act as a link between communities and UWA. However, research suggests that CPAIs often lack financial and technical capacity, limiting their ability to ensure transparency and accountability (Tshuma, 2023).

2.1.3 Community Perceptions of Tourism Revenue-Sharing

Local community perceptions of tourism revenue-sharing play a critical role in determining the success or failure of these programs. When communities view the program as fair, transparent, and beneficial, they are more likely to engage in conservation efforts (Spenceley & Snyman, 2019). However, when revenue-sharing is perceived as inequitable, mismanaged, or exclusionary, communities may become hostile toward conservation initiatives (Miteva, 2019).

Research conducted in Kibale National Park and other Ugandan protected areas has highlighted significant dissatisfaction among communities regarding how funds are allocated. According to Kideghesho (2021), many residents feel that revenue-sharing funds do not reach the intended beneficiaries, and there is limited community involvement in decision-making. Tumusiime et al. (2020) found that some communities lack awareness of how funds are allocated, creating mistrust between residents and conservation authorities.

2.1.4 Challenges in the Implementation of Revenue-Sharing Programs

Despite its potential benefits, revenue-sharing faces multiple challenges in Uganda and other conservation areas.

One of the most frequently cited challenges is the lack of transparency in fund allocation (Miteva, 2019). Community members often do not have access to clear reports on how revenue-sharing funds are distributed and used.

Additionally, there is Inequitable Distribution of Funds. In some areas, a few powerful individuals control decision-making regarding revenue-sharing projects, leaving out marginalized groups such as women, youth, and poorer households (Mubanga, 2021).

Furthermore, there is delayed Fund Disbursement. Research shows that bureaucratic delays in fund release reduce the intended impact of revenue-sharing programs. Tumusiime et al. (2020) found that in some cases, funds are released years after they were collected, making it difficult to implement projects effectively.

2.1.5 Impact of Revenue-Sharing on Conservation Efforts

When revenue-sharing programs function effectively, they promote conservation by incentivizing local communities to protect wildlife (Kideghesho, 2021). Communities that receive tangible benefits from conservation revenue report illegal activities such as poaching and actively participate in habitat restoration (Spenceley & Snyman, 2019).

Conversely, when communities feel excluded from revenue-sharing, they are less likely to cooperate with park authorities and more likely to engage in resource extraction from protected areas (Miteva, 2019).

Research from Kenya's Maasai Mara indicates that improving transparency in revenue-sharing leads to stronger conservation commitments from communities (Okello, 2019).

2.1.6 Best Practices and Lessons from Other Countries

Lessons from international conservation programs show that community-driven decision-making enhances revenue-sharing effectiveness.

Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park uses a community voting system to decide how tourism revenue is spent, increasing trust and engagement (Nielsen & Spenceley, 2018).

Kenya's Maasai Mara implements a direct household payment system, reducing fund mismanagement and ensuring community benefits (Okello, 2019).

Namibia's Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Program empowers communities to manage their own conservation areas, leading to higher conservation participation rates (Snyman, 2020).

2.1.7 Identified Gaps in Literature

While various studies have explored tourism revenue-sharing, the following key gaps remain.

Limited focus on Kibale National Park. Most Ugandan studies examine broader conservation programs, not community-specific perceptions.

Insufficient empirical data on fund utilization. Few studies provide a clear breakdown of how revenue-sharing funds are spent.

There is Lack of longitudinal research. There is little data on the long-term effects of revenue-sharing on conservation and community welfare.

2.1.8 Conclusion

The reviewed literature highlights the potential and challenges of tourism revenue-sharing as a conservation tool. While well-implemented programs foster positive community attitudes and strong conservation support, poor governance and lack of transparency can lead to dissatisfaction and disengagement. Addressing these challenges requires policy adjustments, stronger accountability mechanisms and increased community involvement in decision-making.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter details the research methodology that was used to assess local community perceptions of tourism revenue-sharing around Kibale National Park. It describes the research design, study area, target population, sampling strategies, data collection methods, and analysis techniques.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design, which is suitable for analysing people's perceptions without manipulating variables. The design allows for an in-depth assessment of existing tourism revenue-sharing models, their perceived impacts, and the distribution of funds. By using this approach, the study systematically documented how local communities understand and respond to revenue-sharing programs.

3.2 Study Area

Kibale National Park, located in western Uganda, is a well-known protected area celebrated for its rich biodiversity, particularly its primate population. The Park spans approximately 766 square kilometres, with elevations ranging from 1,100 to 1,600 meters above sea level. Geographically, it is situated between latitudes 0°12 to 0°40 North and longitudes 30°20 to 30°35 East.

The Park is bordered by several districts, including Kamwenge District to the southeast. Within Kamwenge District lies Bigodi Parish, a community adjacent to the park's boundary. Bigodi Parish is part of Kabarole Subcounty and encompasses several villages, Nkingo Village, Kihoima, Nyabubare, Busimba Village, Kyabakwerere Village.

These cells are situated near the park's periphery, making them integral to studies focusing on community interactions with park resources. The geographical coordinates for Bigodi Parish are approximately 0°24' North latitude and 30°24'East longitude.

The proximity of these communities to Kibale National Park has fostered a dynamic relationship centred around conservation and resource utilization. Understanding the socio-economic dynamics of Bigodi Parish, including interactions with park resources, was essential for mapping out the impacts of tourism revenue-sharing initiatives and community perceptions.

The study was conducted in communities or Cells bordering Kibale National Park which included (Nkingo Village (0.570° N, 30.330° E) along the main access route to the park, Kihoima Village (0.600° N, 30.350° E) lies slightly north-east of Nkingo, Kyabakwerere Village (0.620° N, 30.380° E) situated further inland, Busimba Village (0.580° N, 30.400° E) lies towards the eastern boundary of the park, Nyabubare Village (0.550° N, 30.360° E) located in the southern part of Bigodi Parish in Kamwenge District, western Uganda. Kibale National Park is one of Uganda's key conservation areas, generating substantial revenue through park entrance fees. The surrounding communities are direct beneficiaries of tourism revenue-sharing programs making them ideal for assessing the effectiveness of these initiatives.

The selected villages within Kamwenge District, Bigodi parish were identified based on their proximity to the park and interest involvement in conservation programs. These communities have been recipients of revenue-sharing funds, and their perceptions provide crucial insights into the successes and challenges of the program.

3.3 Target Population

This study targeted two key groups:

1. Community Members – This included households benefiting from revenue-sharing programs, local leaders and conservation volunteers who interact directly with these initiatives.

2. Key Stakeholders in Revenue-Sharing Implementation – Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) officials, local government representatives, and members of community conservation committees involved in fund allocation and program management.

By including both beneficiaries and implementers, the study ensured a well-rounded assessment of revenue-sharing effectiveness and challenges.

3.4 Sample Size

Four villages by 29 respondents per village averagely which equalled to 130 respondents.

The informants (UWA Officials, local leaders, government representatives) = 15 Respondents.

Total Adjusted Sample Size = 130 respondents.

3.4.1 Sampling Strategy

A stratified random sampling technique was used to select participants for surveys. The population was stratified based on factors such as geographical location and economic activity to ensure a diverse and representative sample. Within each stratum, households were randomly selected to participate in the study.

For key informant interviews, purposive sampling was used to identify individuals with direct knowledge of revenue-sharing policies, such as UWA officials, local leaders, and government representatives. This approach ensured that data collection captures both general community perspectives and expert insights from policymakers.

The final sample size was determined using established sampling techniques to ensure statistical validity and broad representation of perspectives.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

To obtain reliable and valid information, the study used both primary and secondary data sources:

3.5.1 Primary Data Collection

Structured Questionnaires – These were administered to selected community members to assess their awareness, satisfaction, and perceived impact of tourism revenue-sharing.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) – was Conducted with UWA officials, local government representatives, and community leaders to gain insights into the implementation, challenges, and effectiveness of revenue-sharing programs.

3.5.2 Secondary Data Collection

A review of UWA reports, government policy documents, and previous research studies on tourism revenue-sharing provided background context and validate the findings.

3.5.3 Data collection Tools

1. Questionnaire. This is a structured set of questions that was administered to 115 community members across four villages in Bigodi parish of Nkingo, Nyabubare, Kihoima and Kyabakwerere, Kamwenge district. It collected qualitative and quantitative data on awareness, satisfaction and perceived impacts of tourism revenue sharing, its structure knowledge and how effectively it is plus challenges and proposed improvements by the respondents. This tool ensured standardized responses, allowing for statistical analysis.

2. Interview guide. A structured set of open-ended questions that was used in face-to-face interviews with 15 key informants including UWA Officials, Local government representatives and community leaders. This allowed for detailed exploration of revenue sharing challenges, transparency and policy effectiveness. It provided deeper insights that complemented the questionnaire finds.

3.5.4 Data collection procedure

The data collection process for this study followed a structured approach to ensure accuracy, reliability, and ethical compliance. Prior to fieldwork, ethical approval was obtained from relevant authorities such as university and LC I Chairmen of the selected villages, and research assistants were trained to ensure consistency in data collection. A pilot study was also conducted to pretest the questionnaire and interview guide for clarity and effectiveness. The study utilized two primary data collection tools: structured questionnaires for 115 community members across four villages in Bigodi Parish, Kamwenge District, and key informant interviews with 15 stakeholders, including Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) officials, local government representatives, and community leaders. The questionnaires captured quantitative data on awareness, satisfaction, and participation in revenue-sharing programs, while the interviews provided qualitative insights into the challenges, transparency, and effectiveness of these programs.

To ensure data quality, a triangulation method was used, where responses from questionnaire, interviews, and secondary sources (such as UWA reports and policy document) was compared for consistency. The collected data was cross-checked for completeness and accuracy before analysis. Survey responses were entered into SPSS for statistical processing, while interview transcripts were coded and analyzed thematically to identify common patterns. All data was stored securely to maintain confidentiality and ethical compliance. This structured process ensured that the research gathered comprehensive and reliable information on community perceptions of tourism revenue sharing in Kibale national park

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the mixed-methods approach, ensuring that both quantitative and qualitative insights were well-integrated to support the study's conclusions.

3.6.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Data from structured questionnaires was entered and analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Descriptive statistics (such as frequencies, percentages, and means) summarized community responses.

Inferential statistical tests, such as correlation analysis, examined relationships between revenue-sharing and community engagement in conservation.

3.6.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Data from interviews was analysed using thematic analysis, where key themes such as transparency, benefit distribution, and community engagement were identified.

Responses were coded and categorized to highlight major concerns and recommendations for improving revenue-sharing implementation.

This combined approach ensured that the study captured both numerical trends and in-depth community perspectives.

3.7 Data Quality Control

To ensure data reliability and accuracy, pretesting and questioners were conducted in a pilot study before full data collection begun. Feedback from the pilot phase was used to refine questions for clarity. Additionally, triangulation was applied by comparing survey responses with interview findings to enhance the credibility of the research

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were upheld throughout the research process to protect participants' rights and ensure integrity in data collection.

Informed Consent – All participants were briefed on the purpose of the study, and their consent was obtained before participation.

Confidentiality – Participants' personal information was kept private, and all data was anonymized to protect identities.

3.9 Conclusion

This study employed a descriptive research design that integrated both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess community perceptions of tourism revenue-sharing. The selected data collection and analysis methods ensured that findings provide a well-rounded, evidence-based assessment of revenue-sharing effectiveness and community engagement. The methodology aligned with the study objectives, ensuring that the research generated valuable insights for policymakers, conservation managers, and local stakeholders.

3.10 Limitations / Anticipated Problems

This section highlights the potential challenges that were encountered during the study and outlines strategies to mitigate them. Identifying these limitations in advance ensured that their impact was minimized, allowing for reliable data collection and analysis.

3.10.1 Limited Awareness of Revenue-Sharing Policies

Some community members had limited knowledge of how tourism revenue-sharing programs work or how funds are allocated. This would result in incomplete or unclear responses during surveys and interviews. To address this, the study used simple and clear language in questionnaires and interviews, and brief explanations was provided where necessary to ensure respondents understand the topic.

3.10.2 Reluctance to Participate in the Study

Some respondents were hesitant to share their views due to scepticism or fear of repercussions from authorities. This could lead to biased responses or low participation rates. To mitigate this, the researcher emphasized confidentiality and anonymity, reassuring participants that their responses were used solely for academic purposes and did not affect their access to revenue-sharing benefits.

3.10.3 Limited Access to Official Data

Government agencies and conservation organizations restricted access to financial records and reports on revenue-sharing fund allocation and utilization. This somehow would limit the study's ability to verify certain claims made by respondents. To overcome this, the study employed data triangulation, comparing information from community members, Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) officials, and local government representatives to enhance the credibility of findings.

3.10.4 Logistical Challenges in Data Collection

Certain villages around Kibale National Park were difficult to access due to poor road networks, especially during the rainy season. This could delay fieldwork and limit engagement with respondents. To mitigate this, the study planned visits during favourable weather conditions and work with local guides or community leaders to reach remote areas efficiently.

3.10.5 Time Constraints

The study required extensive data collection, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. Given the available time for research, conducting all these activities within the set time-frame would be challenging. To address this, the study used a structured data collection schedule, ensuring that all research activities were well-coordinated and efficiently completed.

3.10.6 Conclusion

While these challenges would pose obstacles to data collection and analysis, the strategies outlined above helped minimize their impact. By implementing these measures, the study aimed to ensure that the findings provide a comprehensive and reliable assessment of local community perceptions toward tourism revenue-sharing around Kibale National Park.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS (RESULTS)

This chapter presents the results of the study on tourism revenue-sharing (TRS) around Kibale National Park. It provides an analysis and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data, guided by the study objectives. Data were obtained from **115 respondents** through questionnaires, supported by **interviews (15)** with Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) officials, local government officers, and community leaders.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Understanding the socio-demographic profile of respondents is crucial in interpreting their perceptions of tourism revenue-sharing (TRS). Table 1 below presents a consolidated summary of respondents' background characteristics, including age, gender, education level, occupation, household size, years of residence, and main sources of income.

Table 1**: **Demographic characteristics of respondents (N=115)

Variable	**Category**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Age	18–25	28	24.3
	26–35	41	35.7
	36–45	25	21.7
	46 and above	21	18.3
Gender	Male	65	56.5
	Female	50	43.5
Education level	No formal education	16	13.9
	Primary	35	30.4
	Secondary	36	31.3
	Tertiary	15	13.0

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	University	13	11.3
Occupation	Farmer	48	41.7
	Business person	24	20.9
	Tourism-related	23	20.0
	Other	20	17.4
Household size	1–3	29	25.2
	4–6	61	53.0
	7 and above	25	21.7
Years in village	Less than 1	5	4.3
	1–5	26	22.6
	6–10	36	31.3
	Over 10	48	41.7
Main source of income	Farming	49	42.6
	Tourism-related	31	27.0
	Employment	18	15.7
	Other	17	14.7

The demographic characteristics show that the largest proportion of respondents were youth and young adults aged 26–35 years (35.7%**)**, followed by those aged 18–25 years (24.3%). This indicates that the study primarily captured the perspectives of younger generations, who are often more economically active and directly engaged in livelihood activities. However, older

groups (36–45 years and 46+ years) together contributed 40%, ensuring a balanced representation of mature voices.

In terms of gender, men (56.5%) slightly outnumbered women (43.5%)**,** suggesting that male respondents were either more accessible or more willing to participate. This imbalance is notable because women often play central roles in household welfare yet remain underrepresented in community decision-making processes.

The education profile shows that most respondents had at least some formal education, with secondary education (31.3%) and primary education (30.4%) being the most common. A further 24.3% had attained tertiary or university education, while 13.9% had no formal schooling. This demonstrates a moderate literacy level, which influences community ability to engage with TRS processes, interpret project benefits, and demand accountability.

Regarding occupation, the majority of respondents were farmers (41.7%)**,** reflecting the agrarian nature of the local economy. However, a notable share was involved in business (20.9%) or tourism-related activities (20.0%)**,** underlining the importance of tourism as both a direct and indirect livelihood source. The remaining 17.4% were engaged in other forms of work such as teaching, casual labour, or artisanal activities.

Household size data revealed that over half (53.0%) lived in medium-sized households of 4–6 members, while 21.7% belonged to large households of 7 or more. Such larger family units tend to rely heavily on community support systems such as education, healthcare, and shared infrastructure, making TRS investments in public goods particularly relevant.

On residence patterns, the majority were long-term residents, with 41.7% having lived in their villages for more than 10 years and 31.3% for 6–10 years. Only 4.3% were relatively new residents (less than one year). This longevity provides confidence that respondents were well-informed about the TRS programme and its impacts on their communities.

Finally, farming was the dominant source of income (42.6%), followed by tourism-related activities (27.0%). Employment (15.7%) and other sources such as casual labour (14.7%) also played a role. The significant proportion depending on tourism underscores the relevance of TRS in supporting livelihoods and promoting positive community–conservation relations.

Overall, the demographic profile suggests that the study respondents were fairly representative of the Kibale community context, with a balance of age groups, educational attainment, and livelihood sources. This diversity strengthens the reliability of the findings by capturing a wide range of perspectives on tourism revenue-sharing.

4.2 Findings in Relation to the structure and effectiveness of tourism revenue-sharing sharing in Kibale National Park.

4.2.1 Awareness of Programme Structure

Findings show that 77 respondents (67.0%) were aware of how the TRS programme is structured in their area, while 38 (33.0%) were not. This means that although two-thirds of the respondents have some level of awareness, a significant one-third remain uninformed. The lack of complete community-wide awareness suggests that communication channels about TRS structures are not fully effective. This gap in knowledge may limit meaningful participation and monitoring of the programme

Table 2: Showing whether respondents know about TRS programme structure

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	77	67.0
No	38	33.0
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.2.2 Management of TRS Funds

Management of TRS funds is perceived differently among community members. The largest proportion (42 respondents, 36.5%) believe funds are managed by UWA, while 31 (27.0%) attribute it to the local government. Another 24 respondents (20.9%) pointed to community committees, and 18 (15.7%) were not sure. These varied responses reveal some confusion and lack of clarity in fund management. Ideally, communities should clearly know the authority responsible, but the divided views imply that communication and transparency around fund governance need strengthening.

Table 3: Showing whether community members know the managers of TRS funds in their areas

Manager	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UWA	42	36.5
Local Government	31	27.0
Community Committee	24	20.9
Not sure	18	15.7
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.2.3 Knowledge of Qualification Criteria

Just over half of the respondents (53.0%) reported knowing how communities qualify for TRS funds, while 47.0% did not. This split shows that the criteria for accessing funds are not well understood by nearly half the population. Limited awareness of eligibility criteria reduces inclusiveness and may cause perceptions of unfairness in project selection.

Table 4: Showing those who knew about communities who qualify for the TRS funds

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	61	53.0
No	54	47.0
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.2.4 Types of Projects Funded

The projects supported by TRS funds varied, with the highest number of mentions being schools (39), followed by health centres (30). Roads were reported by 24 respondents, water projects by 18, and other initiatives such as community halls or income-generating projects by 13. The emphasis on schools and health centres shows that TRS has been channelled into essential social services, directly addressing education and health needs of communities.

However, fewer mentions of water projects and other initiatives highlight gaps in addressing diverse community priorities.

Table 5: Showing some of the projects that are funded by TRS according to respondents

Project Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
School	39	31.5
Health centre	30	24.2
Road	24	19.4
Water project	18	14.5
Other	13	10.5

Note: Multiple responses and mentions were allowed; totals may exceed 115.

4.2.5 Reflection of Projects on Community Needs

Seventy respondents (60.9%) felt that projects funded under TRS reflected real community needs. However, 25 respondents (21.7%) disagreed, and 20 (17.4%) were not sure. While a majority appreciate the relevance of the funded projects, more than one-third either disagreed or were uncertain, suggesting gaps in participatory planning. This means that while TRS has addressed some priorities, not all community voices are considered in decision-making.

Table 6: Showing numbers of respondents who felt funded projects reflected community needs

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	70	60.9
No	25	21.7
Not sure	20	17.4
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.2.6 Rating of Programme Effectiveness

A combined 63.4% rated the TRS programme as either very effective (19.1%) or effective (44.3%). However, 27 respondents (23.5%) said it was not effective, and 15 (13.0%) were not sure. This mix shows moderate success of TRS but also reflects significant dissatisfaction. The findings suggest that although the programme delivers some tangible results, its effectiveness is uneven across different communities.

Table 7: Showing effectiveness of the TRS program according to the respondents

Rating	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Very effective	22	19.1
Effective	51	44.3
Not effective	27	23.5
Not sure	15	13.0
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.2.7 Access of Funds Reach to Intended Beneficiaries

Less than half of respondents (46.1%) believed TRS funds reached intended beneficiaries or projects. On the other hand, 38 respondents (33.0%) said funds did not reach the targets, while 24 (20.9%) were not sure. This divided perception indicates issues of leakage, diversion, or limited community involvement in implementation. Concerns of non-beneficiaries point to accountability challenges in TRS.

Table 8: Shows responses on whether funds reach intended beneficiaries

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	53	46.1
No	38	33.0
Not sure	24	20.9
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.2.8 Perspectives from Interviews

During interviews, UWA officials explained that TRS funds are disbursed based on established guidelines and procedures, with projects focused on communities neighbouring the park. They stressed that UWA prioritizes transparency but admitted that communication to local communities is sometimes inadequate.

Local government officers highlighted delays in fund transfers and the influence of political actors in project selection. They confirmed that TRS has supported schools and health centres but admitted that some communities feel left out due to limited resources.

Community leaders (LC chairpersons**)** argued that while some projects are visible, ordinary villagers rarely participate in deciding priorities. They felt that elite capture and lack of transparency in fund management explain why not all communities see tangible benefits.

4.2.9 Synthesis of Findings under structure and effectiveness

The findings under this objective reveal that while awareness of TRS is relatively high (67%), knowledge gaps remain regarding management and eligibility criteria. Communities report that projects such as schools and health centres have been implemented, with 60.9% affirming that these reflect real needs. However, effectiveness is only moderately rated, with 23.5% calling the programme ineffective. Importantly, less than half (46.1%) believe funds reach intended beneficiaries, which undermines community trust. Perspectives from interviews reinforced these concerns, pointing to issues of elite capture, poor communication, and delays.

4.3 Community awareness, satisfaction and participation in TRS around Kibale National Park.

4.3.1 First Source of Information about Revenue Sharing

The most common first source of information about TRS was community meetings, mentioned by 36 respondents (31.3%). Local leaders were also an important channel, informing 24 respondents (20.9%). Media outlets such as radio or television informed 21 (18.3%), while friends and peers accounted for 18 (15.7%). A concerning 10 respondents (8.7%) had never heard of TRS, and 6 (5.2%) relied on other sources like friends.

This distribution shows that interpersonal and community-based channels remain central for awareness creation. However, the presence of nearly 9% who had never heard of the programme highlights persistent communication gaps.

Table 9: Shows the sources of information about TRS by the Respondents

Source	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Community meeting	36	31.3
Radio/TV	21	18.3
Local leader	24	20.9
Friends	18	15.7
Never heard	10	8.7
Other	6	5.2
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.3.2 Attendance in TRS Meetings or Activities

Less than half of respondents (45.2%) had attended a TRS-related meeting or activity, while the majority (54.8%) had never attended. This indicates limited community involvement in decision-making forums, which may explain why many feel disconnected from the programme.

Lack of participation weakens ownership of TRS projects, as communities are not fully engaged in shaping priorities.

4.3.3 Satisfaction with Information Provided

Only 14 respondents (12.2%) were very satisfied with the information provided about TRS, while 49 (42.6%) were satisfied. On the other hand, 32 (27.8%) were dissatisfied, and 20 (17.4%) were very dissatisfied. While a majority (54.8%) expressed satisfaction to some extent, a large share (45.2%) was dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This indicates that information dissemination is uneven and not meeting expectations for nearly half the community. Poor information flows undermine trust and may fuel suspicions of mismanagement.

Table 10: Shows satisfaction levels with TRS information provided

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Very satisfied	14	12.2
Satisfied	49	42.6
Dissatisfied	32	27.8
Very dissatisfied	20	17.4
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.3.4 Satisfaction with Selection and Implementation of Projects

Satisfaction with project selection and implementation was mixed. Sixteen respondents (13.9%) were very satisfied, and 50 (43.5%) were satisfied, showing that more than half (57.4%) acknowledged some satisfaction. However, 30 respondents (26.1%) were dissatisfied and 19 (16.5%) very dissatisfied, meaning 42.6% felt negatively. The near balance between satisfaction and dissatisfaction suggests that while some projects are appropriate and well implemented, others are poorly handled or fail to meet expectations.

Table 11: Shows satisfaction levels with Selection of projects funded by Funds and implementation

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very satisfied	16	13.9
Satisfied	50	43.5
Dissatisfied	30	26.1
Very dissatisfied	19	16.5
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.3.5 Participation in TRS Projects

Only 50 respondents (43.5%) said they had participated in TRS projects, while the majority (56.5%) had not. Among those who participated, their roles included attending meetings, offering labour, donating resources, and monitoring activities. This finding reinforces earlier results on limited involvement, showing that most community members are passive beneficiaries rather than active contributors. Low participation may hinder the sustainability of projects as ownership is lacking

4.3.6 Contribution of Ideas about Projects

Forty-eight respondents (41.7%) reported that ordinary community members were allowed to contribute ideas about which projects should be funded. However, 44 (38.3%) said they were not, while 23 (20.0%) were unsure. This mixed perception demonstrates that community participation in project planning is inconsistent. Where inclusiveness is weak, communities may feel alienated, leading to dissatisfaction even when projects are delivered.

Table 12: Showing whether ordinary community members contribute ideas about Projects to be funded.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	48	41.7
No	44	38.3
Not sure	23	20.0
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.3.7 Perspectives from Interviews

Interviews with **local government officials** revealed that TRS meetings are sometimes dominated by political leaders and elites, limiting wider community engagement. They admitted that while meetings are held, not all community members are informed or able to attend.

Community leaders pointed out that project selection is often done by a few committee members, and ordinary villagers are invited only at later stages. They emphasized that many community members have little knowledge about how funds are allocated, which explains dissatisfaction.

UWA officers acknowledged that sensitization has improved but agreed that more effort is needed to ensure communities are fully informed and participate in shaping priorities.

4.3.8 Synthesis of Findings under community awareness, satisfaction and participation in TRS

The findings reveal limited awareness and participation in TRS activities. While 67% were aware of the programme's structure, only 45.2% had ever attended meetings. Satisfaction levels were divided, with about half satisfied and the other half dissatisfied with both information dissemination and project implementation. Less than half of respondents participated in TRS projects, and only 41.7% confirmed that community members contribute ideas in project planning. Interview perspectives reinforced these findings, highlighting that elite capture and poor communication constrain broader involvement.

4.4 Impact of Revenue Sharing on Conservation

This section presents findings on how the tourism revenue-sharing (TRS) programme has influenced conservation outcomes among communities around Kibale National Park. The analysis focused on whether TRS motivates conservation, the extent of personal participation in conservation activities, its effect on reducing human–wildlife conflicts, and the perceived importance of community involvement in conservation.

4.4.1 Conservation Motivation due to Revenue Sharing

A majority of respondents (70, representing 60.9%) reported that revenue sharing had encouraged them to conserve natural resources and wildlife. This suggests that TRS is playing a role in shaping positive conservation attitudes by linking park benefits to community welfare. On the other hand, 25 respondents (21.7%) said TRS had not motivated conservation, indicating that some segments of the population remain unconvinced of its value. Additionally, 20 respondents (17.4%) were unsure, pointing to gaps in sensitization and understanding of how revenue sharing supports conservation objectives. Overall, the findings suggest that while TRS has had a positive conservation influence on most households, there is still a significant minority that has not embraced or connected with the conservation message.

Table 13: Shows whether respondents are motivated to conserve the environment due to revenue sharing

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	70	60.9
No	25	21.7
Not sure	20	17.4
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.4.2 Personal Participation in Conservation Activities

Participation in conservation activities such as tree planting, anti-poaching patrols, and awareness campaigns was evenly split. Just over half of respondents (58, or 50.4%) said they had personally participated in conservation, while 57 (49.6%) had not. This almost equal balance demonstrates that despite TRS support, not all community members are actively

engaging in conservation practices. The limited participation may be due to lack of incentives, inadequate mobilization, or competing livelihood demands that make conservation a lower priority. Nonetheless, the 50.4% who did engage show that TRS has managed to mobilize a sizeable portion of the population into practical conservation efforts.

4.4.3 Reduction in Human–Wildlife Conflict

The impact of TRS on reducing human–wildlife conflict appears limited. Only 56 respondents (48.7%) agreed that revenue sharing had contributed to reducing conflicts, while 38 (33.0%) felt it had not, and 21 (18.3%) were unsure. This shows that although nearly half perceive some improvement, a substantial portion still experiences or perceives persistent human–wildlife conflicts. The findings highlight that while TRS has improved community–park relations for some, the funds have not been sufficient or effectively targeted to fully address the longstanding challenge of crop raiding and other forms of conflict with wildlife.

Table 14: Shows responses on the impact of TRS on reducing human wildlife conflicts

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	56	48.7
No	38	33.0
Not sure	21	18.3
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.4.4 Importance of Community Involvement in Conservation

Most respondents (68, or 59.1%) said that community involvement in conservation is *very important*, while 28 (24.3%) described it as *important*. Together, this represents 83.4% of the respondents emphasizing the centrality of community engagement in conservation. Only 11 (9.6%) felt that community involvement was not important, and 8 (7.0%) were unsure. These results strongly affirm the notion that conservation initiatives cannot succeed without grassroots participation. It also underscores the need to empower communities with both decision-making roles and tangible benefits, to make conservation efforts more sustainable.

Table 15: Showing community responses on how important community involvement in conservation is.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very important	68	59.1
Important	28	24.3
Not important	11	9.6
Not sure	8	7.0
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.4.5 Perspectives from Interviews

Interviews provided deeper insights into the conservation outcomes of TRS. UWA officials emphasized that linking conservation to community benefits has helped to reduce hostility toward the park. They reported that when communities see tangible benefits such as schools or health centres, they are more willing to tolerate restrictions associated with protected areas.

Local government officials noted that TRS has encouraged some households to adopt alternative livelihoods, reducing dependence on illegal resource extraction. However, they admitted that limited funds and uneven distribution weaken the overall conservation impact.

Community leaders pointed out that while some individuals actively engage in tree planting and other conservation activities, others remain indifferent because they do not feel directly connected to TRS benefits. They emphasized that unless revenue-sharing projects reach more households, it will be difficult to sustain conservation motivation across the board.

4.4.6 Consolidated Presentation of Conservation Findings

In general, TRS has had a positive, though uneven, impact on conservation. A majority (60.9%) acknowledged that TRS encouraged conservation, and just over half (50.4%) reported personal participation in conservation activities. However, the effect on reducing human–wildlife conflict remains limited, with only 48.7% agreeing that improvements have been made. Nearly all respondents recognized the critical importance of community involvement in conservation, confirming that sustainable conservation requires direct participation and benefits for local people. Insights from interviews reinforced these findings, stressing that while TRS has

improved attitudes toward conservation, stronger outreach, inclusivity, and fairer distribution of benefits are needed to deepen its impact.

4.5 Challenges and proposed improvements for equitable and transparent TRS

4.5.1 Challenges Affecting Revenue Sharing

The most frequently reported challenge was lack of transparency, mentioned by 54 respondents. Corruption followed closely, cited by 46, while delays in disbursement were noted by 42. Poor monitoring was reported by 40 respondents, unequal benefits by 35, and political interference by 33. Low community involvement was cited by 30, while 13 highlighted other issues such as inadequate sensitization or misallocation of resources.

These results show that communities face multiple interlinked challenges in TRS. Transparency and corruption concerns dominate, reflecting perceptions of mismanagement. Delays and poor monitoring suggest institutional weaknesses, while unequal benefits and low involvement reveal deeper structural issues of exclusion. Together, these challenges undermine community trust in the programme and reduce its potential impact.

Table 16: Showing challenges affecting revenue sharing as identified by the respondents

Challenge	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Lack of transparency	54	18.4
Corruption	46	15.7
Delays	42	14.3
Politics	33	11.3
Poor monitoring	40	13.3
Unequal benefits	35	11.9
Low community involvement	30	10.2
Other	13	4.4

4.5.2 Equal Access for Women and Youth

Views were almost evenly split on whether women and youth have equal access to TRS opportunities. Forty-nine respondents (42.6%) said yes, while 47 (40.9%) said no, and 19 (16.5%) were not sure. The near balance suggests that inclusivity is inconsistent across villages. While some areas may practice gender-sensitive and youth-inclusive approaches, others still marginalize these groups. The uncertainty of 16.5% further suggests that programme communication does not clearly highlight equity measures.

Table 17: Showing the responses on whether both women and youth have equal access to TRS opportunities

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	49	42.6
No	47	40.9
Not sure	19	16.5
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.5.3 Raised Community Concerns

Over half of the respondents (53.0%) confirmed that members of their community had raised concerns about TRS. Forty (34.8%) said no concerns had been raised, while 14 (12.2%) were unsure. This indicates that dissatisfaction and grievances are common. The issues raised likely reflect challenges earlier mentioned, such as delays, corruption, and lack of transparency. The presence of a third who reported no concerns suggests uneven experiences, where some communities benefit more satisfactorily than others

Table 18: Shows whether there are community members who raise concerns about TRS

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	61	53.0
No	40	34.8
Not sure	14	12.2
Total	**115**	**100.0**

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4.5.4 Overall Satisfaction with the Programme

Only 11 respondents (9.6%) were very satisfied with TRS, while 51 (44.3%) were satisfied. However, 33 (28.7%) were dissatisfied, and 20 (17.4%) were very dissatisfied. This means that while just over half (53.9%) felt some satisfactions, nearly half (46.1%) were discontent. This balance again underscores that TRS is appreciated in some respects but faces significant gaps in meeting expectations. High levels of dissatisfaction point to persistent concerns about inclusivity, fairness, and project sustainability.

Table 19: Showing community overall satisfaction with TRS program

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very satisfied	11	9.6
Satisfied	51	44.3
Dissatisfied	33	28.7
Very dissatisfied	20	17.4
Total	**115**	**100.0**

4.5.5 Suggestions for Improvement

Respondents proposed several ways to improve TRS in their communities;

The most frequently mentioned suggestion for improving tourism revenue-sharing was the need to increase transparency in the allocation and management of funds (52 mentions, 20.4%). This reflects widespread community concern that the current system is not open enough, and that greater clarity in how funds are distributed would enhance accountability.

The second most common proposal was to reduce corruption and political interference in project selection (48 mentions, 18.8%). This indicates that respondents see political influence and misuse of funds as serious barriers to the success of the programme.

A considerable number of mentions also focused on the importance of ensuring timely disbursement of funds (42 mentions, 16.5%). Delays in receiving revenue-sharing funds were seen as a key weakness, undermining the timely implementation of community projects.

Similarly, strengthening monitoring and feedback mechanisms was highlighted in 40 mentions (15.7%). This shows that communities want stronger systems for tracking how funds are used and for holding managers accountable.

The call to promote broader community engagement, including grassroots participation in planning, received 38 mentions (14.9%). This demonstrates the desire for more inclusive decision-making processes so that projects genuinely reflect the needs of the wider community.

Lastly, enhancing gender and youth inclusion was mentioned 35 times (13.7%), reflecting concerns that these groups are not benefiting equally from the programme and should be deliberately targeted for inclusion.

Taken together, these suggestions underline that while the TRS programme is valued, communities want it to be more transparent, fair, timely, accountable, and inclusive in order to achieve its full potential.

Table 20: Showing suggestions for improvement of TRS in their communities

Suggestions for improvements	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Increase transparency in allocation and management	52	20.4
Reduce corruption and political interference	48	18.8
Address delays by ensuring timely disbursement	42	16.5
Strengthen monitoring and feedback mechanisms	40	15.7
Promote broader community engagement	38	14.9
Enhance gender and youth inclusion	35	13.7

Note; multiple mentions and responses were allowed

4.5.6 Perspectives from Interviews

From the interviews, community leaders highlighted corruption and lack of transparency as the most damaging challenges. They noted that community members often lack clear information about how much money is received and how it is spent.

Local government officials admitted that delays in fund transfers are common due to bureaucratic procedures, and monitoring is often underfunded, limiting oversight.

UWA officials emphasized that while transparency has improved over time, challenges remain due to limited resources and the high expectations of communities. They confirmed that efforts are underway to promote inclusivity and better communication.

4.5.7 Synthesis of Findings under challenges and proposed improvements for equitable TRS

Overall, findings under this objective show that TRS in Kibale is hindered by significant challenges including lack of transparency, corruption, delays, and poor monitoring. These concerns have fuelled grievances, with over half of the respondents acknowledging that their communities have raised complaints. Satisfaction levels remain divided, with nearly half of respondents expressing dissatisfaction. Inclusivity for women and youth is inconsistent, and a considerable number remain unsure about their opportunities. Respondents proposed practical improvements, including better transparency, reduced corruption, timely disbursement, and

stronger community participation. Interview perspectives reinforced these findings, emphasizing that addressing governance weaknesses is key to building trust in TRS.

4.6 Conclusion of Findings

The study revealed that respondents represented diverse age groups, education levels, occupations, and household sizes, with the majority being youthful, moderately educated, and primarily dependent on farming. On the structure and effectiveness findings showed that while most respondents were aware of TRS and recognized some effective projects, challenges of transparency, inclusivity, and effectiveness persisted. Objective Two highlighted limited satisfaction, uneven participation, and mixed levels of awareness, with community members calling for more involvement and transparency. The conservation section confirmed that TRS has encouraged positive conservation attitudes and some participation, but has had limited success in addressing human–wildlife conflict. Finally, Objective Three identified major challenges of corruption, delays, and poor monitoring, alongside divided satisfaction levels, with respondents proposing more inclusive, transparent, and accountable management.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study in light of the research objectives and existing literature on tourism revenue-sharing (TRS) in protected areas specifically Kibale National Park. The purpose is to interpret the results presented in Chapter Four and to examine their broader implications for community development, equity, and conservation around Kibale National Park. The discussion is organised according to the study objectives: (I) to examine the structure and effectiveness of TRS, (ii) to assess community awareness, satisfaction, and participation in revenue-sharing programmes, and (iii) to identify challenges and propose improvements for equitable and transparent TRS. In addition, the chapter reflects on the impact of TRS on conservation outcomes, since this dimension emerged strongly in the findings.

5.2 Structure and Effectiveness of Tourism Revenue-Sharing

The study revealed that while a majority of respondents were aware of the TRS framework, a significant proportion of households lacked clarity about its structure and governance. Although 67% of respondents had knowledge of TRS, one-third remained unaware, indicating information gaps in programme dissemination. The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) guidelines (2022) stress the importance of transparency in TRS operations, yet the findings suggest that this principle is not fully realised in practice.

A notable issue concerned fund management. Respondents identified UWA, local governments, and community committees as fund managers, reflecting divergent perceptions and limited clarity. This mirrors Namara's (2021) observation that communities in western Uganda are often uncertain about who controls TRS allocations, leading to mistrust and suspicions of elite capture. Lack of clarity not only erodes confidence but also weakens accountability systems.

The results also showed that the majority of TRS-funded projects were schools, health centres, roads, and water projects. These align with urgent community needs, echoing Kakuru et al. (2020) who noted that TRS often supports basic service delivery in rural Uganda. However, while such projects are valued, their scattered and small-scale nature reduces transformative impact. Similarly, Gannon et al. (2021) argue that when benefits are spread too thinly, TRS risks being perceived as symbolic rather than substantive.

Regarding effectiveness**,** 44.3% of respondents rated TRS as effective, but nearly a quarter considered it ineffective and 13% were unsure. Only 46.1% believed funds reached intended beneficiaries**,** highlighting persistent accountability issues. These concerns are substantiated by the Auditor General's 2024 report, which documented a backlog of UGX 16.6 billion in unpaid TRS funds**.** Such delays undermine the programme's credibility and weaken community trust.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that TRS in Kibale National Park has delivered tangible benefits through social infrastructure but is hampered by governance ambiguities, delayed disbursements, and weak accountability mechanisms. This aligns with recent studies such as Twinamatsiko et al. (2022), who found that TRS has potential to improve community welfare but requires stronger transparency frameworks to achieve its intended conservation-development balance.

5.3 Community Awareness, Satisfaction, and Participation

Awareness of TRS was uneven across households. While many respondents learned about TRS through meetings and local leaders, others reported limited or no knowledge. Alarmingly, 8.7% had never heard of TRS**,** underscoring significant information gaps. Similar trends were documented by Namukobe (2021), who noted that poor sensitisation undermines community support for conservation initiatives in Uganda.

Participation was also limited. Less than half of respondents reported attending TRS-related meetings, meaning that the majority were excluded from decision-making. This finding reflects the persistent challenge of elite capture, where only a small proportion of community members are invited or able to participate. Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017) emphasise that community participation is not only a right but also a prerequisite for sustainable tourism governance. Exclusion weakens local ownership and erodes the legitimacy of funded projects.

Levels of satisfaction with TRS were mixed. While around 42% were satisfied with the information provided and project selection, nearly the same proportion were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. These results echo the World Bank's (2021) evaluation of conservation programmes in Uganda, which found that limited information access and consultation often lead to distrust and apathy among local residents.

Participation in actual project implementation was also weak. Only 43.5% of households reported contributing through labour, meetings, or monitoring. The majority (56.5%) had no role at all. This undermines the sense of ownership, which is crucial for sustainability. Jaafar

et al. (2017) argue that without inclusive participation, even well-intentioned TRS projects risk alienating the very communities they are meant to benefit.

Interestingly, while 41.7% of respondents believed they could contribute ideas, 38.3% disagreed and 20% were unsure. This suggests that participation opportunities are unevenly distributed and often dependent on proximity to local leaders or power structures. The Ministry of Tourism (2022) similarly observed that elite capture and politicisation remain obstacles to community-driven conservation.

Taken together, the findings reveal that while awareness and satisfaction exist among certain groups**,** the majority of households are excluded from meaningful participation in TRS. This undermines the empowerment principle that the programme was designed to achieve.

5.4 Challenges and Suggested Improvements

The findings revealed multiple challenges affecting TRS implementation. The most frequently cited were lack of transparency, corruption, delays in fund release, poor monitoring, political interference, and unequal distribution of benefits. Such challenges resonate with broader governance concerns in Uganda's conservation sector.

For instance, the issue of delayed disbursements highlighted in this study reflects a systemic problem identified in the Auditor General's 2024 report, where several parks, including Kibale, experienced significant payment backlogs. Similarly, respondents' concerns about corruption and political interference align with Lekaota's (2015) view that weak governance structures create space for elite capture and misallocation of resources in community-based tourism.

Equity also emerged as a concern. While some respondents felt women and youth were included, others perceived exclusion. Inclusivity remains partial, echoing findings by Namukobe (2021), who stressed that TRS must be deliberately gender- and youth-responsive to avoid reproducing social inequalities.

To address these challenges, respondents suggested increasing transparency, reducing corruption, speeding up fund disbursement, improving monitoring mechanisms, and broadening community involvement. These recommendations mirror those of Gannon et al. (2021), who argue that strengthening feedback loops and accountability frameworks is essential for building trust in community-conservation partnerships.

5.5 Reflections on Conservation Impact

Although not a formal objective, the study revealed that TRS influences conservation behaviour. A majority of respondents (60.9%) believed TRS encouraged conservation, and half

reported active involvement in conservation activities. Nearly half also felt that TRS reduced human–wildlife conflict. These findings suggest that TRS can positively shape conservation attitudes when benefits are visible and timely.

However, scepticism persists. About 21.7% said TRS does not encourage conservation, and 33% reported no reduction in human–wildlife conflict. This highlights the unevenness of conservation outcomes. Twinamatsiko et al. (2022) similarly found that TRS fosters positive conservation behaviours only where funds are disbursed on time and project benefits are locally relevant.

The implication is that while TRS has potential to incentivise conservation in Kibale, inconsistent implementation and inequities limit its effectiveness. Strengthening benefit-sharing and addressing governance gaps are therefore critical not only for community welfare but also for biodiversity protection.

5.6 Summary of Discussion

The discussion highlights that TRS has delivered tangible benefits around Kibale National Park, particularly through investment in social infrastructure. However, effectiveness is undermined by delayed disbursements, unclear governance, weak monitoring, and limited community participation. Awareness and satisfaction exist in pockets, but exclusion and elite capture reduce programme legitimacy. Importantly, TRS has shown potential to encourage conservation behaviour, though its impact is inconsistent.

In line with recent scholarship (for example, Gannon et al., 2021; Twinamatsiko et al., 2022; Namara, 2021), the study concludes that the effectiveness of TRS depends on strengthening transparency, inclusivity, and accountability mechanisms. Only then can TRS fully achieve its dual goal of promoting community development and fostering biodiversity conservation.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

Based on the study findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The study concludes that the tourism revenue-sharing programme around Kibale National Park has created visible projects such as schools, health centres, roads, and water facilities. However, the structure and effectiveness of the programme remain weak and contested. Although 67% of respondents reported being aware of how the programme is structured, there was no uniform understanding of who manages the funds. Some believed Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) was solely in charge, others mentioned local government, while some felt community committees played a central role. About 15% of respondents were completely unsure of who controls the programme. This confusion shows a lack of clarity in governance and weak information flows. Although 44% of respondents rated the programme as effective, a considerable proportion (about 24%) viewed it as not effective, and another group was unsure. This mix of perceptions demonstrates that the programme has yet to achieve full community confidence. A clear, transparent, and accountable structure is therefore necessary if effectiveness is to be strengthened.

The study concludes that awareness of TRS exists but remains inconsistent. The main sources of information were community meetings, local leaders, and radio announcements. Despite this, less than half of the respondents had ever attended meetings directly linked to revenue-sharing. The majority relied on second-hand information, which weakened their understanding of how the programme operates. In terms of satisfaction, only a small number expressed that they were “very satisfied” with the way TRS information and projects were managed. A significant percentage (over 40%) said they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, especially concerning delays, lack of updates, and unclear processes in project selection. Community participation was also limited. Only 43% had participated in one way or another, mostly through casual labour or attending meetings. Many respondents reported that their ideas and voices were not fully considered in decision-making. This conclusion highlights a disconnect between programme planners and the intended beneficiaries.

The findings show that TRS has had some influence on conservation attitudes among communities, even though it was not one of the original objectives of the study. About 61% of respondents said TRS motivated them to support conservation activities. Many felt that

receiving community projects in exchange for wildlife conservation encouraged tolerance of park restrictions. Almost half of the respondents also indicated that TRS helped to reduce human-wildlife conflicts, particularly through projects that improved livelihoods. However, a notable percentage reported that they were either not motivated or not sure if TRS truly influenced their conservation behaviours. This suggests that while TRS is helping to build a conservation ethic, the linkage is not yet strong enough. Many households still feel the costs of living near the park outweigh the benefits received. Therefore, unless TRS benefits are more visible and consistent, its ability to fully promote conservation remains limited.

The study concludes that the TRS programme is seriously constrained by multiple challenges. The most pressing issues identified include lack of transparency in fund management (18.4%), corruption (15.7%), long delays in releasing funds (14.3%), and political interference in project selection (11.3%). Communities also reported poor monitoring (13.7%) and supervision of projects, which led to incomplete or substandard works. Another major concern was unequal distribution of benefits (11.9%). Some villages or groups appeared to benefit repeatedly while others received little or nothing, creating tensions within the community. Women and youth were also said to be marginalized in accessing TRS benefits and in decision-making spaces. Moreover, although over half of the respondents reported raising concerns, many said their issues were not acted upon, which weakened their trust in the programme. These challenges collectively erode the credibility of TRS and risk turning a potentially empowering programme into a source of frustration.

In summary, the study concludes that TRS around Kibale National Park has contributed positively through community development projects and some conservation incentives. However, weaknesses in programme structure, uneven awareness, limited participation, and persistent challenges hinder its full potential to deliver equitable, transparent, and motivating benefits for the local communities.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are made to strengthen TRS around Kibale National Park:

Enhance Transparency and Accountability

Transparency is central to the success of TRS. It is recommended that UWA and local government jointly publish detailed reports on fund allocation, disbursement, and completed projects. These reports should be made available during community meetings and also shared through local radio for wider reach. Independent monitoring committees should be formed at the community level, involving representatives from women, youth, and marginalized groups. Such committees would provide oversight on project selection and implementation, thereby increasing accountability and reducing corruption. Regular audits should also be undertaken and results shared openly with the public.

Strengthen Awareness and Sensitization

It is recommended that UWA, in collaboration with local leaders and NGOs, implement consistent sensitization campaigns to ensure every household understands TRS and its benefits. These campaigns should be conducted through radio programs, posters, and village meetings. Special attention should be given to demystifying the processes of fund allocation and project selection so that people no longer feel confused about who manages the programme. Regular feedback sessions should also be institutionalized where communities can ask questions and receive updates about ongoing projects. Improved awareness will strengthen community ownership of TRS and reduce suspicion.

Promote Inclusive Participation

For TRS to be equitable, deliberate steps must be taken to include women and youth in decision-making and benefit-sharing. The programme should set minimum quotas for their representation on TRS committees. Additionally, targeted training in leadership, entrepreneurship, and conservation should be offered to empower these groups to actively engage in the programme. Inclusive participation will help ensure that projects address the diverse needs of the community, not only those of dominant groups. It will also reduce internal tensions and foster a sense of fairness in benefit distribution.

Improve Project Relevance and Implementation

Projects financed through TRS must reflect real community needs. This calls for a participatory needs' assessment at the beginning of each funding cycle, ensuring that local voices directly shape project priorities. Implementation should also be timely, with funds released promptly to avoid delays. Mechanisms for monitoring the quality of project execution should be strengthened, and communities should have the power to demand rectification of substandard work. Strengthening project relevance and implementation will restore trust and demonstrate that TRS directly improves people's lives.

Link TRS More Directly to Conservation

It is recommended that all TRS projects integrate conservation education and awareness. For instance, schools built with TRS funds should incorporate wildlife conservation clubs, while water or agricultural projects should include training on sustainable practices. Greater investment should also be directed to projects that directly reduce human-wildlife conflicts, such as supporting fencing, alternative livelihoods, and compensation schemes. By making the conservation benefits of TRS more visible, communities will better appreciate the connection between protecting wildlife and receiving development benefits.

Address Corruption and Political Interference

Corruption and political manipulation undermine TRS credibility. It is recommended that strict anti-corruption measures be applied, including mandatory independent audits, penalties for mismanagement, and transparent public reporting of funds. Political leaders should not be allowed to dominate project selection processes. Instead, project choices should be community-driven and ratified by representative committees. This will reduce perceptions of favouritism and restore community trust in TRS.

6.3 Areas for Further Research

To build on this study, the following areas are suggested for future research:

An in-depth study on the long-term impacts of TRS on conservation and household livelihoods around Kibale National Park.

A comparative study of TRS implementation across multiple national parks in Uganda to identify best practices and lessons for improvement.

Research focusing on gender and youth dimensions in TRS, particularly on barriers to participation and opportunities for empowerment.

An assessment of whether current TRS funds are adequate relative to community expectations and the actual socio-economic costs of living adjacent to wildlife parks.

Exploration of alternative benefit-sharing models, such as community eco-enterprises or co-management ventures that could complement or strengthen TRSTRS

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APPENDICES

Sample of my Questionnaire used in the field.

STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

Research Title: **Assessing Local Community Perceptions of Tourism Revenue-Sharing Around Kibale National Park**

Instructions to Respondents:

This questionnaire is part of a study on tourism revenue-sharing in Bigodi Parish, Kamwenge District.

Your responses are confidential and only used for academic purposes. Please tick (✓) where appropriate or write in the space provided.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. Age: ☐ 18–25 ☐ 26–35 ☐ 36–45 ☐ 46 and above

2. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other: _____

3. Education Level: ☐ No formal education ☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary □ University

4. Occupation: ☐ Farmer ☐ Businessperson ☐ Tourism-related ☐ Other: _____

5. Household Size: ☐ 1–3 ☐ 4–6 ☐ 7 and above, _____

6. Years in this village: ☐ Less than 1 ☐ 1–5 ☐ 6–10 ☐ Over 10

7. Main Source of Income: ☐ Farming ☐ Tourism-related ☐ Employment ☐ Other: _____

SECTION B: Structure and Effectiveness of Revenue-Sharing

1. Are you aware of how the tourism revenue-sharing program is structured in your area?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Who manages the tourism revenue-sharing funds in your area?

☐ UWA ☐ Local Government ☐ Community Committee ☐ Not sure

3. Do you know how communities qualify for revenue-sharing funds?

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. What kind of projects has your community received from revenue-sharing funds?

☐ School ☐ Health Centre ☐ Road ☐ Water project ☐ Other: _____

5. Do you think the funded projects reflect your community's real needs?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

6. How would you rate the program's overall effectiveness?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Not effective ☐ Not sure

7. Do the funds reach the intended community members or projects?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

SECTION C: Awareness, Satisfaction & Participation

1. How did you first hear about revenue-sharing?

☐ Community meeting ☐ Radio/TV ☐ Local leader ☐ Friends ☐ Never heard

Any other specify; _____

2. Have you attended any revenue-sharing related meetings or activities?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If not why, _____

3. Are you satisfied with the information provided about the funds?

☐ Very satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Very dissatisfied

4. Are you satisfied with how projects funded are selected and implemented?

☐ Very satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Very dissatisfied

5. Have you or your household participated in a revenue-sharing project?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what was your role? _____

6. Are ordinary community members allowed to contribute ideas about which projects should be funded?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

SECTION D: Impact on Conservation

1. Has revenue-sharing encouraged people to conserve natural resources/wildlife?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

If yes in which way, _____

2. Have you personally taken part in conservation activities (e.g., tree planting, anti-poaching)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, why not?

☐ No invitation ☐ No interest ☐ No information ☐ Other: _____

3. Has revenue-sharing helped reduce human-wildlife conflict?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

If yes in what way; _____

4. How important is community involvement in conservation?

☐ Very important ☐ Important ☐ Not important ☐ Not sure

SECTION E: Challenges and Suggestions

1. What challenges affect revenue-sharing in your area? (Tick all that apply)

☐ Lack of transparency ☐ Corruption ☐ Delays ☐ Politics

☐ Poor monitoring ☐ Unequal benefits ☐ Low community involvement ☐ Other: _____

2. Do women and youth have equal access to participate in revenue-sharing programs?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

3. Has anyone in your community ever raised a concern about the program?

☐ Yes ☐ No □ Not sure

4. Overall, how satisfied are you with the tourism revenue-sharing program?

☐ Very satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Very dissatisfied

5.Any additional comments on how revenue-sharing could be improved in your community?

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION! Your responses are highly valued and will contribute to improving tourism revenue-sharing around Kibale National Park.