

Determining the Potential of Universities as Holiday Destinations: A Case Study of Chepkoilel University College, Kenya

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Abstract

As a response to government spending cuts in higher education, institutions of higher education have sought ways of diversifying their sources of income. This has made institutions of higher learning attract holidaymakers to exploit under-utilized campus buildings during student vacations. This is a well-established practice in the western world, United Kingdom, for example. This qualitative research was conducted in Chepkoilel University College to determine how well campus-based tourism (CBT) enterprise is known among the *Chepkoilelian* fraternity. Descriptive survey research design was adopted, and semi-structured interviews and focus- group discussions were used to collect data. Sixty (60) respondents were selected using stratified random sampling, of strata including students, academic, subordinate and administrative staff. Data was analyzed thematically where related topics were categorized into major themes identified through developing a coding system based on collected data, classifying major topics covered, re-reading the text and highlighting key quotations and finally placing the coded materials under the major themes identified. Apart from the need to determine the popularity of CBT, the study also sought to find out whether the University College has the potential for the development of this form of tourism. An opinion on the appropriateness of CBT enterprise was also examined. From the findings, it became evident that there are diverse attractions which can enhance the promotion of tourism such as the annual agricultural business fair, the annual cross-country and the farming activities as key attractions drawing visitors to the campus. If the information contained in this paper is anything to go by, then it can be argued that universities need not be wholly dependent on governments and donor agencies for research funding, instead they should set about floating small enterprises to help generate finances for their research projects, more particularly, utilizing otherwise idle resources during long vacations to provide additional income. The study provides crucial information that might be useful to decision makers in the Kenyan tourism industry, as well as institutions of higher education to develop alternative ways of generating income to support their mainstream educational activities.

Keywords: Campus-Based Tourism (CBT); Holiday, Destination

1. Introduction

Campus-based tourism (CBT) is beginning to develop as a significant market for the tourism industry in the western world. In an attempt to adapt to more stringent financial circumstances, many universities and higher education colleges have developed the habit of using accommodation facilities which often lie idle during long vacations. Murphy (1985) supports this idea by arguing that universities have almost been forced into becoming tourism destinations in order to supplement revenues. In addition, it is often suggested that the public should be allowed the opportunity to use facilities to which they have financially contributed through paying taxes. It has been argued that leasing accommodation is a more suitable, 'less dislocated', use for campus facilities: since the promotion of computing suites, laboratories or libraries would in reality show an inadequate demand (Lockwood *et al.*, 1985).

More significantly, the idea of maximizing plant utilization to generate a supplementary income is attractive, if not necessary to university administrators. Following the cuts in university grants from the 1980s, a major objective of universities has been to remain financially solvent. Walford (1987) supports this by asserting that "Adapt or perish" is the key message inherent in which there is need for universities to diversify into alternative activities in order to supplement their sources of revenue. In addition, universities are now required to be more accountable since mission statement, quality assessment and annual appraisals are now as much a part of university administration as of mainstream business. The business of using campus facilities for conferences, social events and holidays is now a well-established practice in the United Kingdom as mentioned early on. Many organizations employ professional

coordinators to manage the commercial elements of the work. It must be ensured that on site facilities, management and promotions are effective, providing an acceptable standard at competitive rates. Coordination of university accommodation available for holiday use by the public is achieved on a national level through a consortium. Although most institutions tend to organize their own promotional literature, many find it useful to be included in the national registers of this consortium, which give information on residential availability, accommodation type, facilities, prices and a contact at each institution.

In Kenya, very little is known about CBT, hence limited research has been undertaken, signifying inadequate reliable data available on this theme. This does not only deny Kenyan institutions of higher learning an opportunity to diversify their income sources, but makes them also dependent on the government and donors for research funds. Through literature study, it is apparent that this form of tourism has gained root in the western countries- more specifically in the United Kingdom. In this country there are two strands to the use of campus accommodation facilities. The first one is the traditional use which is associated with education-based holidays, often recognized as special-interest tourism. The growth of this form of tourism has been attributed to societal changes, characterized by greater desire for the realization of human needs and natural relationships. An historical perspective on tourism growth indicates that the origin of modern-tourism dates way back to the 17th-century (WTO, 1999), ‘Grand Tour era’ which was an educational experience for young aristocrats, encompassing an enrichment of cultural consciousness and knowledge. Under, education-based holidays the range of study often falls into two categories: either based on study tours, perhaps learning a foreign language or brushing up on academic subjects; or more leisure based, such as pottery or photography courses. The boundary between study tours and leisure tours is rather blurred, but there is middle-ground. For example, a study tour based on learning about a specific area of the country could comprise both leisure and academic reasons. Nevertheless, whatever the focus, the end result of any vacation in this sector tends to be gaining knowledge.

Secondly, a more recent move to using the accommodation and catering services of a university has just developed. In this case, the traditional link between campus-based holidays and education is absent. Herein, Holiday bookings are made purely on the use of university accommodation, and holiday makers are free to plan their own time. This has been shown by studies of demand. For instance, a study by Connell (1995) on a college in the south Wales of England shows that the college offered two types of holiday: course-based (holiday comprising of accommodation and studies) and non-course-based (accommodation-for pure holiday makers). In 1992, it was found that only 10% of bookings were made for the course-based holidays and in the subsequent year no bookings were made for this type of holiday. However, there was a significant increase in demand for the non-course-based holidays. This resulted in the college dropping the course-based tours and concentrating on non course-based tours, where they sold university accommodation facilities to pure holiday makers.

Though the question whether universities can be used for tourism is being asked, developed countries like United Kingdom are reaping considerable benefits from CBT. There has been much discussion about this form of tourism. In fact, some authors have noted that there might be conflicts between the university’s entrepreneurial and academic mandate, when these institutions take on a multiple-goal organization status. Some even ask whether entrepreneurship is a suitable objective for an institution whose main mandate is provision of education. So far, CBT concept has been tested and proved to be beneficial. Couldn’t it therefore, be tried in The campus, given its wide range of available resources? To respond to this question, a qualitative research was conducted in Moi University –Chepkoilel campus to determine how well CBT is known among the *Chepkoilean* fraternity: students, academic staff, subordinate staff and administrative staff. Apart from the need to determine the popularity of CBT, the study also sought to find out whether the campus has the potential for development of this alternative form of tourism.

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher asked probing questions to get in-depth information. This was further complemented with pictorial references in the form of plates which were used to reinforce the findings from focus group discussions and interviews. In addition, the researcher ensured response saturation whereby the researcher asked questions till he realized that no new information was forthcoming. In the study, seven main areas were examined; first, the awareness of CBT enterprises; second, the perceived role of the university as a provider of alternative forms of tourism; third, the potential of the campus in providing CBT; fourth, the existing

role of the university; fifth, the other usage of university facilities for tourism apart from accommodation and catering facilities and finally, the opinions on the CBT enterprise and its appropriateness in a contextual setting.

2. Research Methodology

The study was conducted in The University College, Eldoret town that adopted a qualitative methodology to obtain study participants' opinions and thoughts on the diverse issues related to the establishment and development of CBT. The study used descriptive survey research design. Sample size was 60 respondents drawn from four different strata of students (STDS), academic (ACAC), subordinate (SUPT) and administrative (ADMN) staff. Stratified sampling was used to classify the students into strata of departments and further strata of year of study. The campus was purposively selected as the study site since it hosts internationally recognized farms (fish farm and animal farm) and sport grounds ideal for both agro-tourism and sports tourism. Snow ball sampling was utilized to recruit respondents from other stratum whereby key informants were selected. Data was collected using focus group discussions and semi-structured interview schedules validated using pilot test. The data analysis used in this study was thematic analysis. In the context of this study, themes refer to the major subjects that the researcher came up with in discussions. This form of analysis categorized related topics into major themes identified through developing a coding system based on samples of collected data, classifying major topics covered, re-reading the text and highlighting key quotations and finally placing the coded materials under the major themes identified.

2.1 Chepkoilel Campus

The campus is located approximately a kilometer north east of Eldoret town on the Eldoret-Ziwa road. The campus which was formerly Moi Teachers College established in 1990, is 3 kilometers away from the Eldoret-Iten road. It is founded on a 150 acre piece of land which provides academic facilities. The land is divided mainly into the old and new sites, the old is used mainly for farming purposes while the new site has facilities for academic activities, these include the administration building, the library, students' hostels and offices of various departments. The area surrounding the campus boasts of large-scale wheat and maize farms with potential to sustain agro-tourism, the area has enough infrastructure to support tourism industry given proximity to Eldoret town. These include hotels, like Sirikwa Hotel and the presence of Eldoret International Airport. Other attractive sites include the Selby falls of River Sosiani, various bird species, rich cultural heritage among the Kalenjin ethnic group, athletic camps, and attractive countryside sceneries.

3. Discussion of Findings

3.1 Awareness of Campus-Based Tourism

There are a number of definitions of tourism but according to World Tourism Organization (1999), tourism refers to the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of people away from their normal home environments for a variety of purposes for a period of at least 24 hours and a maximum of one year and the purposes are not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated at the destination (WTO, 1999). On the contrary, there is no clear definition of CBT. But for the purpose of this report, the definition used for CBT is the business of using university resources more particularly during long vacations for tourism activities. These may include; pleasure (including holidays and sports), professional (especially meetings) and special interest (for instance study tours). Consequently, majority (70%) of the respondents expressed lack of awareness of this form of tourism. For instance, the findings revealed that academic staff and students were less knowledgeable about CBT than other grades of staff.

3.2. The Role of the University as a Provider of Alternative Forms of Tourism

Diverse opinions were expressed on the perceived role of the university as a provider of alternative forms of tourism. From studying existing information it was evident that university facilities have over the years been used for tourism activities. For instance, Moi University (2001) states that, the 2001 Kenya secondary schools heads association

annual conference was held in the University from 18th to 22nd June 2001. The conference that brought together three thousand and one hundred head teachers for the annual gathering for the first time was held outside the traditional venues of Mombasa, Nairobi, Nakuru and Kisumu. Further, study results revealed that the campus as depicted in (plate 1) is a training ground for many Kenyan athletes most of whom have participated in international events and won numerous medals.



Plate 1: A section of athletes training at the Chepkoilel campus grounds

Chepkoilel track has served athletics fraternity as the nursery where champions are nurtured. For example, the campus has over the years successfully hosted the Chepkoilel annual cross-country which draws hundred of participants from all over the country (ADMN 1).



Plate 2: Some of the athletes who have participated in Chepkoilel cross country (Gitau, 2006)

Moreover, study results disclosed that the Chepkoilel nature reserve which doubles as a botanic garden, though currently underdeveloped, its original plan was to build a complex with camping facilities and grow both indigenous and exotic trees.

Overall, educational and special-interest tourism were identified by study findings as key forms of tourism appropriate for adoption during vacation time. Educational tourism in the context of this study implies, offering an educational experience for elites and scholars. In essence, it encompasses an enrichment of cultural consciousness and knowledge. The range of study can fall into two categories either based on academic style, perhaps hosting conferences, workshops or training farmers at the fish farm or more leisure based, such as photography or touring the farm during the Agri-business fair. Nevertheless, the main aim of any vacation in this sector tends to be gaining knowledge.



Plate 3: Guest from Oklahoma State University at Chepkoilel fish farm (Mutai, 2009)

Chepkoilel fish farm has not only been drawing high profile visitors and researchers including Indiana University Chancellor but also it has been used for training over 1500 fish farmers from rift and western Kenya on basic fish farming technologies. Key among the visitors to the fish farm includes the minister of industrialization, former Agriculture Minister and Indiana University Chancellor (Kusimba, 2007).

The campus has immense potential for the development of sports tourism and agro-tourism bearing in mind that the farms are recognized countrywide and even internationally for their quality products in livestock, horticulture and cereals.



Plate 4: Minister for Agriculture Hon. William Ruto tours Chepkoilel farm during the Agri-business fair

This points out that, the Chepkoilel farm has immense opportunities as a farmers training centre for not only farmers, students and researchers but also for farm managers and agricultural extension workers from within Kenya and beyond. Currently, it serves as a tuition facility for the School of Agriculture and Biotechnology.

On another note, it was established that the university can use its accommodation and catering services for tourism. Herein, holiday bookings can be made purely on the use of university accommodation and holiday makers will be free to plan their own time. A typical example of this category is whereby a church meeting or sporting event is held in the campus during the long vacation.



Plate 5: Friesian cows in Chepkoilel farm

Friesian and Ayrshire dairy cows in the region producing up to 50 litres of milk per day. It also supplies the farming community with good quality cereal and extension services. The farm has strong links with the local farmers through its annual farmers' exhibition and is a centre of excellence in providing services in production, demonstration and dissemination of agricultural technology for development allied to agricultural institutions such as Kenya Seed, Kenya

us

From the findings gathered, it became evident that there are diverse attractions in the campus which can enhance the promotion of tourism. A majority (60%) cited the following as key attractions drawing visitors to the campus; the annual agricultural business fair, the annual cross-country and the farming activities. In addition, the findings advocated for the usage of on-campus buildings for holidays during student vacations. This is consistent with past research by Connell (1995) who found the usage of under-utilized on-campus buildings for holidays during student vacations to be a well established practice in the United Kingdom. This points out that, the university can play a key role in not only using accommodation resources which often lie idle during long vacations for tourism but also can provide educational and special-interest tourism. Educational tourism, in the context of this report implies offering an educational experience to elites and scholars. In this sense, it encompasses an enrichment of cultural consciousness and knowledge. The range of study can either fall into two categories either based on academic style or more leisure-based with aim of gaining knowledge. Special-interest tourism, on the other hand, means travelers being motivated by the desire to pursue a particular interest, hobby or activity be it sports, such as athletics, outdoor activity, or educational pursuit (Weiler 1992). Travellers under this category choose a destination that somehow offers a better or unique way of enjoying that special-interest and they choose a tourism experience that facilitates the enjoyment of something they are passionate about. For The campus, this can encompass meetings, visits to the farm or participation in sports.

3.3 The Potential of Chepkoilel Campus as a Provider of Campus-Based Tourism

The potential of the campus in providing CBT was examined in two related but separate discussions based on; opportunities in the campus which can be tapped for tourism and the factors which will favor the development of CBT in The campus. Herein, opportunities referred to situations which make it possible to develop CBT. Views on the opportunities in the campus which could be tapped for tourism were wide-ranging. First, it was established that the farming activities (which encompass farming activities at both the animal farm and fish farm) and sports' ground were the major pull factors drawing visitors to the university. This is evident in the following statement provided by one of the study participants: "Chepkoilel fish farm which is the only one existing among Kenyan Universities is the centre of attraction for many high profile visitors to the campus because of the modern technology applied in fish farming and its beautiful scenery" (SUPT 1).

The findings disclosed the existence of a fish hatchery in the campus which serves not only as a laboratory for undergraduate class practical in fish seed and larval courses but also as a training centre in fish propagation. More significantly, over 1500 fish farmers from north rift and western Kenya have been trained on basic fish farming technologies. Results further indicated that the university farm has great potential for the development of Agro-tourism. Agro-tourism in this context refers to the provision of touristic opportunities on working farms. Chepkoilel has 1,050 acres of land, most of which is set aside for agricultural purposes. Its highly mechanized farm is recognized countrywide and even internationally for its quality products in livestock, horticulture and cereals. As a result, the farm is the current champion of the Uasin-Gishu District Agricultural Society of Kenya (ASK) show. It is out of such recognition that the Namibian Minister for Agriculture three years ago visited the campus to establish possible links that would enable Namibian agricultural personnel train in the campus or visit for exchange programme (SUPT 2).

On another note, the information gathered revealed that the campus is a training ground for many Kenyan athletes most of whom have participated in international events and won numerous medals, particularly long distance runners since it is a high altitude area, conducive for athletics training. One respondent commented: Chepkoilel track has served athletics fraternity as the nursery where champions are nurtured. In addition, the campus' sports facilities have been utilized by world-class athletes for training. More particularly, international runners from Uganda, Qatar, Bahrain and Guyana have been frequently training at Chepkoilel grounds. Finally, the campus has annually hosted national cross-country events (ADMN 2). The results imply that the Chepkoilel sport facilities are endowed with huge potential which can be tapped for the development of sports tourism. Sports tourism in this context refers to travel to play sports, watch sports or to visit or venerate famous sports-related attractions (Higham 2005). Though it is currently underdeveloped, the Chepkoilel nature reserve had its initial plan to be used as a recreational centre to

not only promote public education and awareness of the need for environmental conservation and management but also to provide a base for research training. The ultimate objective is to develop the reserve so that it would be a major tourist attraction within western Kenya (ACAC 2).

Besides that, focus-group discussions and interviews indicated that the study area and its adjacent lands have a rich natural resource base ideal for tourism development. Specific resources that were identified include: large-scale wheat and maize farms with potential to sustain agro-tourism, rich cultural heritage among the Kalenjin ethnic group, attractive countryside sceneries and various bird species. These attractions make the study area and its surroundings ideal for CBT activities like sporting events, conventions, ornithological studies and agro-tourism. In addition, the study area has geographical features such as the vegetation ideal for sightseeing and photographing. In spite of this, most of the respondents (65%) reported that existing tourism potential is still untapped and underdeveloped. In case of promotion of educational tours, the study findings established that, the university library has enormous potential with over 16,082 books and 14,300 journals. In addition, the campus library is the second largest of the Moi University library branches (Chepkoilel, 2007). It is automated through the library database management system (OPAC) that supports circulation, cataloguing, serials and acquisition models. More significantly, internet services are provided within the library. The university management has also plans to incorporate it on local area network (LAN) and finally wide area network (WAN) toward being a useful facility in the global village. This will be through the provision, acquisition and dissemination of information.

In the study, the potential of the campus in providing CBT was examined in two related but separate ways based on: opportunities in the campus which can be tapped for tourism and the factors which favor the development of CBT in The campus. Herein, opportunities reflected on situations which make it possible to develop CBT. The study results revealed that the farming and sporting activities, were the main tourism attractions. This implies that the campus has immense potential for the development of educational, sports and agro-tourism. In the context of this report, agro-tourism refers to the provision of touristic opportunities in working farms. This is vividly captured by Bowen *et al.* (1991: 43) who defined agricultural based leisure attraction as: “An enterprise that produces and processes plants or animals and which also strives to attract visitors to enjoy the agricultural attributes of the operation and its site, and/or to purchase agricultural products produced by the enterprise. Common to all of agricultural-based leisure attractions is the desire of the visitor to learn more about or experience aesthetic pleasure from agriculture”.

From the findings, Chepkoilel farm has immense opportunities as a farmers’ training centre not only for farmers, students and researchers but also for farm managers and agricultural extension workers from within Kenya and beyond. Further, results revealed that Chepkoilel sporting facilities are endowed with huge potential which can be tapped for the development of sports tourism. Sports tourism in this context refers to travelling to play sports, watch sports, or to visit or venerate famous sports-related attractions (Higham, 2005).

3.4 Factors that Favor the Development of Campus-Based Tourism in Chepkoilel Campus

The study focused on the existing conditions which are crucial for the development of CBT. This was based on the premise that for a place to be developed for tourism there are key elements which need to be in place. These include attractions, facilities, infrastructure, transportation and hospitality (Mill and Morrison, 1998). These elements are interdependent because in order to produce satisfying vacation experience, all elements must be present. For instance, attractions draw visitors to an area; facilities serve the needs of the visitors while away from home; infrastructure and transportation are necessary to help ensure accessibility of the destination to the visitor and finally hospitality is concerned with the way in which services are delivered to the visitor.

From findings, it was evident that there are a number of elements in the campus which support the development of CBT. These were found to include availability of attractions, facilities and infrastructure. The study findings disclosed a number of attractions in the campus. These are farming activities, the high altitude climate, the nature reserve and the vegetation. For instance, the farm is renowned nationally as a centre of excellence in agriculture and

technology due to its reputation in production of quality products in livestock, horticulture and cereals. Further the fish farm was discovered as part of the prime attractions to the campus due to its beautiful scenery and usage of modern technology in fish farming. As a result, it has over the years attracted high profile visitors including researchers from within the nation and even internationally.

The results also disclosed that Chepkoilel region is a high altitude area with equatorial climate conducive for athletics training. As a result it is credited of producing world-class athletes, particularly long distance athletes. This is consistent with (GoK, 2007) which asserts that: “Rift valley is home of some of Kenya’s famed runners. The area is a sporting hub that comes alive throughout the year with a host of road races organized by the various institutions including various marathon races. On a visit to Eldoret, one comes across many renowned Kenyan athletes training and running throughout the year (Gok, 2007)”. Therefore, in case of the campus establishing a modern training camp, the campus could have a potential of hosting both local and international athletes. In addition, the study findings indicated that the nature reserve is an ideal excursion site for picnicking because of its serene and comfortable environment suitable for sightseeing and photography. Availability of facilities was also noted as crucial for the development of CBT. These included accommodation and catering facilities of which are under-utilized during long vacations. Finally, the infrastructure which was identified has having potential to support tourism development includes; clean drinking water, electricity, communication facilities, sewage, healthcare and security. This was further complemented by the fact that The campus is accessible to a large population base via road and air transport because of its close proximity to Eldoret International Airport

3.4.1 Attractions

It was established that there are a number of attractions in the campus which can be tapped for tourism this is best illustrated by (figure 4.6 below). Attractions by definition have the ability to draw people to them. The characteristics that were found to attract visitors are: natural resources, climate and accessibility. A majority of respondents (70%) revealed that the farming activities (the fish farm and animal farm), sports facilities, the nature reserve, the high altitude climate, the vegetation and the location of the campus are the main attractions. To start with the farming activities, the study revealed that Chepkoilel farm is renowned nationally as a centre of excellence in agriculture and technology due to its reputation in production of quality products in livestock, horticulture and cereals. As a result, it is a research centre allied to famous agricultural institutions such as Kenya Seed, Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, Kenya Dairy Development Program and Cereal Growers Association. Concerning the fish farm, it was established from the study that due to its beautiful scenery and modern technology in fish farming, the Chepkoilel fish farm has over the years received high profile visitors and researchers both from within Kenya and beyond.

Second, a majority (70%) commented that the university sports facilities have for a long time been used for training both fledging and seasoned athletes. This is because of its high equatorial climate conducive for athletics training. As a result, International athletes from Uganda, Qatar, Bahrain and Guyana have been frequently training at the campus. Third, it was discovered that the nature reserve is an excursion site more especially during the weekends drawing a significant number of nature-lovers. As commented by one respondent: “The nature reserve is an important recreational centre intended to not only promote public education on awareness of the need for environmental conservation and management but also provide a base for research and training. Thus, as per its development plan it is aimed that it will be developed to the point where it will be a major attraction within western Kenya” (ACAC 2). Concerning the location and vegetation of the campus it was found that the campus has a serene and comfortable environment (away from the hustle and bustle of Eldoret town) which is ideal for sightseeing and photographing.

3.4.2 Facilities

Facilities are necessary to serve visitors while away from home. These include accommodation, food and beverage and supporting industries. To begin with accommodation; while the visitor is away from home he will need to eat and sleep. From the study findings, it became evident that the campus has the necessary accommodation facilities for the development of tourism. A majority of study participants (65%) advocated for the promotion and usage of university hostels which lie idle during long holiday vacations. A typical comment from one study participant was: “The University must strategize to optimize revenue from its hostels which lie idle during long holidays. These

hostels are the best for budget visitors and provide the university with an opportunity to develop as a specialist tourism provider at suitable times of the academic year” (ADMN 3).

Second, on food and beverage, the study results revealed that the university can optimize revenue from the Hotel Academia and the catering unit (mess) which usually operates below their normal capacities during holidays. But it was emphasized that both the hostels and catering units have to be used with regard to visitor needs. This is vividly captured in the following remark by one of the academic staff respondents: “In the case where The campus, introduces CBT, the university management has to be guided by the principle that The campus cannot be everything for everyone meaning that it is not all visitors who will be satisfied by the level of accommodation and catering services they will receive from the campus. This is because for the budget visitors the hostels may seem excellent, which might not be the case with up-scale market clientele” (ACAC 3).

3.4.3 Infrastructure, Transportation and Hospitality Resources

From the focus group discussions and interviews, the following were identified as the important parts of Chepkoilel tourist infrastructure; water, electricity, communication, drainage system, healthcare and security. Based on these, 70% of the respondents agreed that there are sufficient quantities of pure water. Second, there is adequate power supply. Third, there is a health clinic which is well equipped with drugs and has competent personnel to ensure visitors’ health. And finally, at Chepkoilel, visitors are guaranteed their security courtesy of its disciplined and well trained security team. It was evident that the campus is accessible to a large population base via road, rail and air transport. This is because of the availability of good road network, rail network and air transport network. This is supported by the following statement: “Because of Chepkoilel’s geographical location and proximity to Eldoret town, Chepkoilel and its surroundings are supported by immense tourism infrastructure. These include the road network, rail network and even the presence of Eldoret International Airport” (ACAC 4). In addition, the findings indicated that it is currently not possible to assess the receptiveness of local communities to tourists since tourism has not yet been developed in the campus. Though it was stressed by majority of the participants (65%) that: “A well trained tourism work force and a citizenry that is aware of the benefits and responsibilities of tourism growth are indispensable elements of a tourism destination” (ACAC 5).

3.5 Appropriateness of Campus-Based Tourism

The results revealed there were divergent opinions on the appropriateness of CBT. 50% respondents advocated for an on-campus tourism enterprise which should be viewed as entirely functional in terms of using the resource base of the university to generate additional income. This is vividly captured on the following statement by one of the administrative staff: “CBT should be established only if its revenues are meant to support educational activities of the university” (ADMN 4).

Thus for this group of study participants, they deemed it acceptable to operate a business within a university setting as long as the profits from that business are ploughed back into the overall structure which supports it, that is, the university. In addition, it was revealed by a quarter of study participants (25%) that tourism is an unsuitable use for campus facilities. Further, they asserted that enterprise and revenue generation should not be part of university administration. One participant commented that: “I strongly believe in the idea of free public education. Hence there is need for greater state commitment in higher education because it will compromise education, if educational institutions turn into commercial enterprises driven by profit optimization. And, in case of the development of CBT, it is due to ineffective government policy as pertains to supporting higher education. But more importantly, we need research funding and if CBT can deliver that I am of its full support” (ACAC 6).

Furthermore, it was also established that a non-educationally based enterprise operating within an educational institution is bound to stir debate due to the nature of its very existence. 25% of the respondents argued that any business operating within a university setting should reflect its position. This is best illustrated by the following statement by one respondent who asserted that: “If holidays are to be offered as a means of generating revenue, then these holidays should have an educational element” (ACAC 7).

The findings indicated that an on-campus tourism enterprise is appropriate. But it was emphasized that it should be viewed entirely functional in terms of using the resource base of the institution to maximize revenue. These results are related to (Connell *op. cit*), who argued that optimizing university resources to provide an additional revenue is attractive provided that it supports the university in its endeavor to promote research and extension. Currently, due to stringent economic conditions faced by universities, CBT is desirable and every institution has to be flexible and more competitive in terms of maximizing university resources to provide a supplementary income. Thus it is acceptable to operate a business within a university setting as long as the profits from that business are ploughed back into the university treasury. More significantly, students should be prioritized and income generation should not interfere with student needs. Therefore, tourism is a good idea for a university as long as there is no conflict with its main function as a place of academic excellence meaning that educational aims must be the paramount consideration of universities over income generation.

3.6 The Existing Role of the University

The findings indicated that the university is meant to introduce new areas of learning which would help meet the high level of man-power requirements of a modern and increasingly technological society (Bogonko, 1992). Thus, the main responsibility of the university is not only to provide knowledge but also generate, preserve, transmit and pursue knowledge and truth. Second, the university should stimulate and promote the intellectual and cultural growth of the countries. Finally, it should carry out research. This was echoed by a respondent who said: “Traditionally, the university is accredited to transmit, create and classify knowledge through teaching, research and publication programmes. Hence, apart from its role as a universal centre for learning and research the university is part and parcel of the planned integral contribution to national development” (ACAC 8).

3.7 The Suitability of Entrepreneurship in an Educational Institution

The research findings indicated that, there was mixed opinion on the issue of whether entrepreneurship is a suitable objective in an educational institution. A majority (70%) interviewed were supportive of the entrepreneurial role to be taken by the university administrators. They based their argument on the issue that tertiary education is faced with shortage of research money, leading to shelving of research proposals. Further, they asserted that many university lecturers tend to let research take a back seat mainly because research money is hard to come by. Hence, the creation and development of knowledge cannot be said to be taking place at the pace expected of the university. This is vividly illustrated by the following statement by one of the respondents: “A major problem facing university education is the lack of research money. Thus, despite the fact that research is a key function of the university, it has over the years been hampered by financial constraints. Government research grants exist but they are not enough and yearly research proposals are shelved for this reason. Even where projects are funded, the allocations are so little that they hardly take the recipients even a quarter of the way through their endeavors. In addition, such foreign donor agencies as such DAAD, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation and UNESCO have been giving research grants to university researchers; but although these are usually fairly generous, their general utility is limited partly by the criteria used to evaluate project proposals. It simply is not possible to satisfy every individual or department or school of a university on this basis” (ACAC 9).

This was also supported by another respondent who said that: “Although research is widely regarded as a key tool in improving teaching, there is very little the universities can do in this area without money consequently, I am aware of the financial situation facing higher education providers and CBT would assist in generating extra cash” (ACAC 9).

The findings revealed that universities are experiencing shortage of research money. Therefore, the creation and development of knowledge cannot be said to be taking place at the pace expected of the university. In an attempt to adapt to this, universities should set about floating small enterprises which can help them generate the necessary finances for their research projects. This statement is further supported by Bogonko (*op. cit*) who argued that higher education institutions should avoid depending on the government allocations for their research projects, instead they should come up with innovative ways of generating extra revenue. Further, the findings revealed that it is attractive to maximize university resources in order to provide a supplementary income since a major objective of universities

is to remain financially solvent. This is consistent with Walford (1987) who argues that universities need to diversify into alternative activities to supplement their sources of income. Overall, the findings disclosed that universities should not be wholly dependent on governments and donor agencies for research funding rather they should use the resource base of the university in order to optimize revenue to support its mainstream educational activities. Thus, entrepreneurship can make sensible use of university facilities in terms of utilizing otherwise idle resources during long vacations to generate additional income.

From a different perspective, 30% of respondents expressed the idea that educational institutions should never execute non-educational campus-based holidays and argued for a stronger element of liaison between academics and holiday organizers in terms of developing tour packages. A more useful suggestion was to have sensitive management at the site level to minimize any conflicts that may arise in the case of the introduction of CBT. This is because the study findings expressed some wide-ranging policy implications relating to the development of CBT, notably the strong element of planning and management required to balance the needs of all the stakeholders in a multiple-goal organization.

3.8 Challenges which might be faced in case of Campus-Based Tourism Development

Various problems and challenges facing CBT in its effort to develop were enumerated by respondents. Among these are: low CBT awareness levels, financial constraints, poor governance and lack of goodwill from university management. Focus group discussions and interviews with a cross section of people revealed that the main challenges that may face the development of CBT are conflict of interests in a multi-goal organization, in this case a higher education establishment; shortage of funds to jumpstart the enterprise and expand its promotional campaigns to the target market and lack of conference facilities that meet international standards. This situation can further be complicated by lack of goodwill and management support.

Various problems were anticipated in case of CBT development. Those enumerated include: low awareness levels of this form of tourism, financial constraints, rigorous checks and balances by the management and conflict of interests. Study results exposed that a majority of study participants (70%) were not aware of CBT. This is probably because very little research has been undertaken with regard to this form of tourism. Financial constraints were also anticipated. This is due to the fact that during the stage of jumpstarting CBT enterprise, a huge capital outlay will be required to refurbish the current facilities to meet tourists' demand, a part from incurring a huge marketing budget in an attempt to promote CBT product to the target market. But more significantly, conflict of interests was anticipated. This might result, if CBT interferes with educational goals of the university. This will further be complicated if university becomes similar in objectives to a private company which is after profit maximization at the expense of student needs.

To address the challenges outlined, respondents recommended that universities should not be wholly dependent on governments and donor agencies for research funding. They should instead set about floating small enterprises which can help them to generate the necessary finances for some of their research projects. Thus entrepreneurship was viewed as a sensible use of university facilities in terms of utilizing otherwise idle resources to provide additional income. In spite of the foregoing contribution, it was evident from the responses given that, an on-campus tourism enterprise should be viewed as entirely functional in terms of using the resource base of the institution in order to maximize revenue. In other words, one informant asserted the need to support its mainstream educational activities (STDS 2).

3.9 Measures to Adopt In the Development of Campus-Based Tourism

To address the problems and challenges outlined, respondents enumerated various measures. Key among these are soliciting for funds from alternative sources including donor agencies, raising campaigns and inclusive participatory process in the planning, designing and execution of campus-based enterprise. Information gathered through interviews and focus group discussions revealed that, educational aims must be the paramount consideration of universities over income generation.

Further, the findings suggested that it is vital for managers to ensure there is a strategic plan to assist in the operational elements of the transition from student to holiday accommodation. For instance, it is impossible for a set of rooms to be fully booked by students and tourists every week of the year as maintenance teams must be allowed access to carry out essential maintenance, redecoration or in some cases refurbishment. These issues must be taken into account by any institution to be involved in this enterprise. In addition, respondents stressed the importance of good planning and management. They also suggested that students should be prioritized and that income generation should not interfere with student needs. This idea is further reinforced by the following statement: "Tourism is a good idea for a university as long as there is no conflict with its main function as a place of academic excellence" (STD 3). Finally, 70% of the respondents emphasized that there are some potentially wide-ranging policy implications relating to the development of CBT, notably the strong element of planning and management required to balance the needs of all the stakeholders in a multiple-goal organization.

4. Recommendations

To address the problems highlighted, respondents enumerated various measures. Key among these is intensifying education and awareness, strategic planning of CBT and soliciting for funds from other sources to jumpstart CBT enterprise. On strategic planning, it is vital for university administrators to ensure that there is a strategic plan to assist in the operational elements of the transition from student to holiday accommodation which might be a problematic journey. For example, it is impossible for a set of accommodation rooms to be fully booked by students and tourists every week of the year as maintenance teams must be allowed access to carry out essential maintenance, redecoration or in some cases refurbish the facilities to be utilized for CBT.

For CBT to be viable, institutions of higher education need to employ professional coordinators to manage the commercial elements of the work. Further, they must ensure that on-site facilities, management and promotion are effective, providing an acceptable standard at competitive rates. In addition, these coordinators should organize not only promotional literature, but also give information on residential availability, accommodation type, facilities, prices and a contact of the institution. It is also important to note that while out of semester lettings assist in the financial aspects of university management, such activities require the continued employment of support staff. As a result, increased entrepreneurship can have a direct and positive outcome for employees. In addition, a key note identified is that there is need for a strong element of planning and management to balance the needs of all the stakeholders in a multiple-goal organization. Hence, sensitive management at the site level is required to minimize any conflicts arising. Finally, good planning and management is crucial.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study set out to establish opinions on the potential and appropriateness of CBT. This was achieved through establishing the awareness of CBT; the role of the university as a provider of alternative forms of tourism and CBT attractions and facilities. Study participants expressed diverse opinions with respect to the five themes that emerged from this study; the awareness of CBT, the potential of The campus in providing CBT, the appropriateness of using university campus sites for tourism and the suitability of entrepreneurship in an educational institution. As a whole, a majority of respondents were not aware of CBT. Those who were aware cited farming activities, sporting activities, the high altitude climate and vegetation as the tourism attractions available in the campus. The study results revealed that educational, agro- and sport tourism are potential forms of tourism for adoption in the campus during long vacations. All these forms of tourism are encapsulated in special-interest tourism.

The findings on the usage of accommodation and catering services for campus-based holidays, appropriateness of using campus sites for tourism and the suitability of entrepreneurship in an educational institution were consistent with past research. However, there were new additions to the concept of special-interest tourism which were established. These included; usage of sporting and farming facilities for tourism. It is thus, suggested that future studies should investigate all possible uses of university facilities for tourism. The most important finding, however, had to do with the idea that universities should not be wholly dependent on governments and donor agencies for research funding rather they should set about floating small enterprises to help them generate the necessary finances for their research projects. More particularly, utilizing otherwise idle resources during long vacations to provide additional income. Finally, it was established that the development of universities as holiday destinations at suitable

times of an academic year (for example during long holidays) is a good idea for universities as long as there is no conflict with its main function as ‘a place of academic excellence’.

In summary, this study makes several unique contributions to CBT research. First, the study not only stimulates awareness and interest for further research in CBT but also provides an insight to university management on the significance of CBT in generating alternative sources of income while utilizing otherwise idle resources during long vacations in order to support its mainstream educational activities. Further, it provides crucial information to tourism policy makers on the emergence of CBT as a niche product away from wild bush tourism as entrenched in Vision 2030 so that they can come up with strategies to optimize the benefits accruing from this type of tourism development while minimizing its negative impacts. Finally, one of the limitations of this study is, due to its adoption of qualitative research, its inability to ensure representativeness and generalizability of the sample population. Future research may use the issues identified for the construction of qualitative or quantitative research instruments and use larger and more diverse populations for further examination of CBT.

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