

Agritourism: Potential Socio-Economic Impacts In Kisumu County

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Abstract: High poverty level is one of the major developmental challenges facing Kisumu County with over 60 percent of the population being poor. The main economic activity in this region has for a long time been farming. The high incidences of poverty level is attributed to several factors ranging from the ever escalating costs of farm inputs, poor distribution and unpredictable rains, poor farming methods resulting to poor crop/livestock production hence low yields and food insecurity, lack of diversified agriculture, environmental degradation, lack of empowerment, HIV/AIDS scourge and low incomes. This calls for farmers to find alternative sources of livelihoods to generate additional income. From an exploratory survey conducted in Kisumu County in July 2014 on Agritourism as a strategy for poverty alleviation and livelihood improvement, 95.62 percent of the respondents indicated Agritourism as a viable venture for farmers in this county. This paper builds on this survey to reveal the potential socio-economic impacts of practicing Agritourism in Kisumu County. Factors to be analysed included poverty levels, education levels, land tenure systems, employment status and family incomes. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Quantitative data collection entailed a household survey through administration of questionnaires while qualitative method involved interviews and focus group discussions. Participants consisted of farmers and key informants in relevant county government offices in the study area. The paper reveals that the potential socio-economic impacts for Agritourism in Kisumu County are great and largely untapped. Potentials revealed included the possibility of generating opportunities for local farmers to increase income, revenue generation and improved food security, enhanced entrepreneurial skills and the diversification and uniqueness of traditional food crops within the county. Agritourism may reduce rural-urban migration of the young populace since it will provide incentives to preserve agricultural land in Kisumu County and create employment opportunities. More opportunities for value addition of farm produce will be created and diversification of produce for direct-marketing may stimulate economic activity. With improved infrastructural support, Agritourism programs may help capitalize on the natural, historical, and cultural resources of communities and also build community pride and improve the quality of life for local community. The study concluded that concerted effort of all stakeholders is needed to exploit the socio-economic benefits of Agritourism. To sustain Agritourism, there is need for stakeholder sensitization and strategic planning for Agritourism in Kisumu. The County government should explore public-private partnerships that are beneficial to further the pursuit and development of Agritourism in Kisumu County.

Key Words: Agritourism, livelihood, tourism, economic growth, poverty reduction.

I. Introduction

The constant instability of net farm incomes and the loss of jobs in rural areas have led to a human and financial capital drain from many rural areas, with many farming families and businesses under economic stress (Stewart, 2002). Rural-urban migration, infrastructure development, national policies, private sector forces, and other aggressive socio-economic and political processes, including globalisation, drive urbanisation across the developing world (United Nations 2007:7). Lack of employment opportunities in the rural areas is the main push factor driving this process while the main pull factor is the anticipated job availability. Isaac and Van der Sterren (2004:2) argue that tourism and its products are a possible strategy of growth for developing economies and an agent of development because of its potential to be a source of income for local economies. One of the driving forces that is becoming of great interest in the agricultural sectors to diversify their income sources is to embrace agritourism practices into their daily farming activities (Viljoen and Tlabela, 2006:15). Agritourism is emerging as an alternative form of tourism. Introduction of Agritourism can be a catalyst to both income and non-income benefits to farmers. Globally, Agritourism is gaining fame and is now considered a potential source of income. As countries that primarily focus on tourism or agriculture look for ways to enhance their activities,

Agritourism has become a primary focus. Kisumu Local Interaction Platform formed a consortium which recognizes that Agritourism as part of ecotourism can be an alternative livelihood with a focus on climate change, environment and poverty within urban agriculture and food security context within Kisumu City and its environs (KLIP, 2013).

From existing literature on Agritourism, there is no universal definition of the concept. According to Schilling et al. (2006), it is also known as 'Agrotourism'. It is the process of attracting visitors and travelers to agricultural areas, generally for educational and recreational purposes (Lamb, 2008; Veeck et al. 2006). Viljoen and Tlabela (2006) describe it as part of rural tourism which consists of leisure activities carried out in rural areas including community based tourism and cultural tourism. This paper, adapted Hsu's (2005:20) definition that Agritourism also known as farm tourism or agricultural tourism is an interaction between the agricultural producer, his/her products and services, and the tourists. The products combine agriculture- its natural setting and products with a tourism experience. Tourists are provided with opportunities to experience a broad spectrum of products and services, including farm-based bed and breakfast, farm tours to see agricultural products, culture, arts and crafts, and natural heritage thereby benefitting the local people socio-economically. Agritourism can contribute to the overall income, cash flow and profitability of a farm by providing alternative income via farm products, and farming activities (Colton and Bissix, 2005; Huybers, 2007; Keith et al. 2003; Sharply, 2002).

Agritourism activities should aim to improve the quality of life by creating jobs, have an impact on the social and economic aspects, as well as the multifunctional development of rural sustainable development (Wyporska and Mosiej, 2010). According to Kurek (2007) the needs of local communities should be given serious attention in tourism development which will in turn result in improvement of standards of living, high tourist expectations and the protection of natural and cultural environments. Governments and all stakeholders including the local communities and the relevant institutions in a country need to work together so that the utilization, development and management of tourist areas should be given serious attention (Nandi, 2008; Narayan, 2000). Economic dimensions of tourism do not only depend on the input, but also on other sectors such as the agricultural sector which complements tourism through Agritourism (Cikin, Ceken, and Ucar, 2009).

II. Literature Review

2.1 Agritourism practice in the world.

Literature has it that Agritourism started in the United States in the early 1800s (Karabati et al., 2009). A number of countries of the world have transformed their economies through agro-tourism activities. The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has been promoting Agritourism in the Caribbean since 2005 to strengthen links between tourism and agriculture (IICA, 2011). In Thailand, it has been used as one of the main medium to attract tourists from all over the world. Since the advent of Agritourism in Thailand in 2002, Agritourism has created a great impact by having a record of more than half a million tourists visiting farm areas in a national scheme (Taemsaran, 2005). In Europe, Agritourism has become a way of life for Europeans as a large percentage of Europeans take farm holidays (Frater, 1983). In Greece for instance, the Ministry of Agriculture embraced Agritourism and this is reported to have promoted the mountainous and less favoured areas to attract tourists (Aikaterini et al., 2001).

Agritourism industry is gaining ground in Malaysia as the country has a wealth of products for visiting tourists (Hamzah, 2011). Main activities involved in the area entail farm visits and home stays. It is reported that Agritourism activities are diversified and entail consumption of natural resources and the local culture as well as the development of personal relationships between visitors and the local community (Iakovidou, 1997 in Lathiras et. al., 2010) and these activities increase the economic income of the local community (Sosnowski and Ciepiela, 2011). The country has more than hundred tourist destinations that offer Agritourism activities. Hamilpurka (2012) indicated that Agritourism in Karnataka, India, has improved farmers' income and also contributed to educating the tourists and local communities on sustainable agriculture.

In Africa, Agritourism has a short history and in most countries it is at the developing stages (Maumbe, 2012; Bernardo et al., 2007). Agritourism is improving South Africa's economic performance as well as contributing to rural development and employment creation (Kepe et al., 2001). It is utilized as a means to alleviate poverty and create employment opportunities in rural areas. In Ghana, Fanteakwa District in 2007 attracted over 4,000 paying visitors who were interested in cocoa farms Cocoa (2006:7).

Kenya is an agricultural country and agriculture has been the leading government revenue earner for many years. This has been surpassed in recent years by tourism. Potential sites for Agritourism in Kenya have been found to be tea plantations in Kericho and Limuru areas, coffee plantations in central province, aquaculture around Sagana area and the Dominion farms around Lake Victoria basin where aquaculture activities are found. Dominion farms also have massive production of horticulture, rice, bee keeping, www.nicheafricaholidays.com/kenya/agro-tourism-peasant-farming.html. Kenya is gaining growth in Agritourism at an initial stage with the incorporation of home- stay vacations also coming in. The concept of

home-stays provides the tourists with a place to stay and at the same time join in the activities that are arranged by the owner of the farm. This is providing Agritourism with a wedge as it is picking up very fast especially in central Kenya. Currently, there is Agritourism in practice at Kijijimoja in Meru County where a pilot project started in 2005 (Adventure Kenya, 2011). The pilot project provides a platform for local farmers to acquire alternative tangible and intangible income benefits, protect rural landscapes and agricultural lands and educate the population about food production and environmental protection. According to the Agritourism strategic plan of 2012-2016 (GOK, 2012), the Economic pillar of Kenya’s vision 2030 which aims at moving up the value chain encompasses six key sectors with potential to deliver 10 percent economic growth per annum. Tourism and Agriculture (Agri-processing) feature as the two out of the key six sectors. Under tourism, a key product diversification strategy is to provide Niche products such as Agritourism. Both the National and county governments in Kenya are making deliberate efforts to promote the tourism sub-sector through niche products. To this effect, the criteria for homestays which is a concept in Agritourism is already in place. According to Nilsson (2002), Agritourism goes together with the concept of home-stays which also brings in opportunities for educational programs and recreational activities. Trends of visitors to Kisumu in the past years indicate a steady increase in the number of international visitors for mass tourism as shown in Table 1.0. This has provided an opportunity for Agritourism development.

Table 1.0: Trends of visitors in Kisumu National Museum and Impala Sanctuary

Year	No. of visitors in '000s (Museum)	No. of visitors in '000s (Impala sanctuary)
2008	75.3	79.8
2009	89.7	174.6
2010	104.1	195.2
2011	110.9	201.6
2012	144.9	247.0

Source: Economic review 2012

2.2 Socio-Economic indicators in development

Socio-economic impact is concerned with all issues that affect people directly or indirectly as a consequence of development or other planned interventions (Vanclay, 2003). Developmental changes affect the people, their families and their community’s poverty levels, education levels, land tenure systems, sources of family income, and household monthly incomes. Impacts are potential changes that may have an effect either directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, for better or for worse by development activities and are used to assist the planners and communities in making proper decisions that promote long-term sustainability (Socio-Economic Impact Assessment Guidelines, 2007). Sustainable development of Agritourism should emphasize economic growth together with the preservation of local culture and environment, equitable benefit sharing and community participation (Chemnasiri, 2013). Agritourism as an economic activity inherently affects the social, cultural and the economic life of a community. It is a tool that has been widely used around the world for the purpose of intensifying the socioeconomic aspects of the local community (Hamzah et. al., 2012), and as a catalyst for economic growth and income supplements (Das and Rainey, 2010). It is also a successful industry in increasing revenue (Chesky, 2009).

This study therefore focused on identifying the ways that Agritourism practice would impact on Kisumu County. Agritourism activities should aim to improve the quality of life by creating jobs, have an impact on the social and economic aspects, as well as the multifunctional development of rural sustainable development (Wyporska and Mosiej, 2010). Some of the valued socio-economic components and the issues pertaining to them are outlined in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Valued Socio-Economic Components

Components	Issues
Health and well-being	Community and cultural group cohesion Cultural maintenance
Sustainable land access and use	Traditional economy Recreational and traditional economy – access to land Value of alternative land uses
Protecting heritage and cultural resources	Aesthetic, cultural and/or spiritual value of places Maintenance of traditional language, education and laws
Equitable business and employment, opportunities	Local, regional and territorial business competitiveness Employment opportunities Training and career development for the local residents
Population sustainability & adequate services and infrastructure	In- and out-migration effects Change in social and cultural makeup of affected communities Adequate services and physical infrastructure

Adequate sustainable income and lifestyle	Adequate sustainable income and lifestyle Amount of money and its use in the community – effects of increased disposable income Local and regional cost of living Adverse lifestyle changes – increased crime rates, substance abuse
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Source: Adapted from Socio-Economic Impact Assessment Guidelines, 2007

2.3 Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework is analogous to the frame of a house. It provides a rationale for predictions about the relationships among variables of a research study, forms a frame of reference for observations, definitions of concepts, research designs, interpretations, and generalizations (LoBiondo-Wood, et.al, 2000). This particular study was anchored on systems theory.

The Systems theory was developed by Hegel in the 19th century and was used by Ludwig von Bertalanffy a biologist as a basis for the field study known as general system theory (Bertalanffy, 1968). This framework was chosen as relevant for the study because it looks at a system as an organism with elements interacting in a wholistic way and the objects being interdependent. A system recognizes interdependence of personnel, impact of environment on organizational structure and function, affects outside stakeholders on the organization and focuses on environment and how changes can impact the organization. The growth of Agritourism in the study area is recognised as a distinct economic activity in a sub-system which requires the emergence of institutions and associations that can coordinate strategic planning, event management, joint promotion, advertising campaigns and information management. This corresponds with what Griffin (2008) advocates for when he says that Agritourism is a process that requires planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling of resources to achieve goals effectively and efficiently. It also requires Public-private partnerships to create infrastructure and support systems that are needed to coordinate and build capacity in the agricultural community.

The other rational as to why Systems theory would suffice for this study is that it tends to be goal seeking and the primary goal of a system is survival. Therefore, Agritourism being a development venture seeks to alleviate poverty in the environment where it is practised. Through the Small Farm Centre at the University of California, Agritourism is one alternative for improving the incomes and potential economic viability of small farms and rural development communities (Bernardo et al, 2007:1). Systems also work well where there is synergy and for this to occur, sub-systems must not maximize, but sacrifice optimization and cooperate for the good of the overall system i.e. team work or participation. Agritourism being a new concept in Kisumu County, it calls for community participation and engagement of all types of capital (assets) they have in Agritourism development as stipulated by the Sustainable Livelihoods approach (SLA) in the conceptual framework.

It is also known that good systems tend to work towards a state of equilibrium and that any new change introduced or proposed may be received with resistance. The assumption in this study was that the introduction of the new concept of Agritourism in Kisumu County may not be well received by all since it will disturb their “state of equilibrium,” that is, their old style of livelihood.

2.4 Conceptual framework

The study was built on sustainable livelihoods framework. Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) is one way of “organising” complex issues surrounding poverty and needs to be adapted and made appropriate to local circumstances. This livelihood approach looks at a community as being favoured by the integration of the five capitals: natural, social, human, physical and financial capital (Shen et. al. 2008:4). SLA framework identifies asset levels as the main entry point for development by transforming assets, processes and institutions to give desirable outcomes Viriya (2009:10). SLA involves participation and the poor themselves are the key actors in the system to identify and address livelihood priorities. Consequently, interventions are then planned as per the relevant groups in terms of the assets owned. Livelihoods are affected by a diversity of assets, amount of assets and balance between assets. When a community (sub-system) gets involved in Agritourism activities through appropriate combination of the assets they own, taking account the vulnerability context and well supported by appropriate policies, institutions and processes, poverty reduction efforts will be achieved through better incomes and improved livelihood prospects in the system.

2.5.1 Objective

To evaluate the potential socio-economic impacts of Agritourism practice in Kisumu County.

2.5.2 Research question

What are the potential socio-economic impacts of Agritourism practice in Kisumu County?

III. Methodology

3.1 Research design

The study adopted a cross sectional design employing a survey method to administer structured questionnaires to households in the study area. Key informant interviews and Focus group discussions were also conducted among stakeholders within the relevant institutions in Kisumu County.

3.2 Target population

A study population is the totality of objects in the real world in which a study is undertaken (Gilbert, 2008). Potential Agritourism sites in this study comprised of a total of 4,818 households from the three selected sub-counties, Kisumu East, Nyando and Seme..

3.3 Sample size and sample selection

The study was carried out in three out of the six sub-counties in Kisumu County namely: Kisumu East, Nyando and Seme. Purposive sampling technique was used to target these areas as potential sites for Agritourism attraction and also for being strategically placed en route to high tourist attraction areas within Kisumu County and its environs. Anderson (2009: 202) says that purposive sampling is where a sample of participants is chosen for their experience and perspectives relating to the investigation. Israel's (2013) formula was used to get the sample size. Sample size was proportionate to number of households per site based on 95% confidence interval with a margin of error of ± 5 (Ary et al., 2002). A total of 388 households practising horticulture were randomly selected from the sample frame provided by area agricultural extension staff.

Table 3.0: Sample size distribution per site

Sub-county	Ward	Sub-location	No. of households	Sample size (proportionate to number of households per site)
Kisumu East	Kolwa East	Buoye	1230	99
Seme	East Seme	Kit Mikayi	1305	105
Nyando	Ahero	Kakola Ahero	2283	184
	Total		4818	388

Source: Households and Density by Sub-location -2009 Census

3.4 Sampling techniques

The study sub-divided the population according to sub locations. A total of 388 households practising horticulture were then randomly selected from the sample frame provided by area agricultural extension staff.

3.5 Data collection techniques and Analysis

This study used a mixed method approach combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. This enabled the researcher gain broader perspectives as a result of using the different methods for triangulation as opposed to using a predominant method alone (Creswell, 1991, 2003) and also mitigate the weakness of using one method instead of the other. Sources of data included both primary and secondary data for several variables. Primary data was obtained directly from the respondents in the field while secondary data was through review of literature from books, journals and the internet. Quantitative method entailed a survey conducted on 388 households where structured questionnaires were administered. For qualitative data, Key informant interviews were done with agricultural field extension staff of the sampled areas, senior county government officials in tourism and agriculture sectors, the hotel industry, institutions of higher learning and tourists visiting Kisumu during the time of data collection. Focus group discussions with community based groups were also conducted. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics and presented using frequencies, percentages and tables.

IV. Results And Discussions

4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

From the data collected, 61.9% (240) were males and 38.1 % (148) were females. Majority of the respondents about 45.9% were aged between 20 to 30 years, followed by 21.1% aged between 31 to 40, 19.1% aged between 41 to 50years and 13.9% for ages between 51 to 60 years. The demographic data seems to indicate that a greater percentage of the population in Kisumu County is young and energetic and below 50 years of age.

The type of land tenure system for most respondents was freehold for 76.8%. The remaining 23.2% indicated their parcels of land were leasehold. The mean land holding size in the county is 1.6 acres while the mean agricultural parcel is 1.0 acres. The population is predominantly rural with those living in rural areas depending entirely on land as the natural resource for subsistence and economic purposes.

4.2 Socio-Economic data analysis

The socio-economic factors analysed included poverty levels, education levels, land tenure systems, employment status and family incomes. The attributes listed in table 4.1 had a potential in influencing socio-economic impacts of Agritourism practice in Kisumu County. 74.49 % of the respondents were reported to be poor. This concurs with what is in literature that poverty levels in Nyanza have remained high with over 67% living below the poverty line (Ministry of Planning, 2007). With engagement of the local community in Agritourism, this may improve socio-economic status. Farmers are likely to supplement their income supplying farm products and also offer home stay services and hosting tourists on their farms. In Northern America, farmers have been making a living by having their farms divided and diversified into several operations (Govindasamy et al., 1997). This leads to multiplier effect that will impact on the entire community and county at large thereby improving on livelihoods.

Majority of the respondents (52.1%) indicated having attained only primary school level of education, 29.3 % had reached secondary school level and 9.8% had tertiary education (college education and above). The proportion of those who had not attended school at all was 8.8%. This indicates that literacy levels are still low in Kisumu County.

Table 4.1: Socio-economic variables of the respondents

Variable	Sub-variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Poverty levels	Very poor	85	21.91
	More poor	119	30.67
	Poor	85	21.91
	Less poor	60	15.46
	Least poor	39	10.05
	Total	388	100.00
Education levels,	None	34	8.8
	Primary	202	52.1
	Secondary	114	29.3
	College	34	8.8
	University	4	1.0
	Total	388	100.00
Land tenure systems	leasehold	90	23.2
	freehold	298	76.8
	Total	388	100.00
Employment status	Employed	18	4.67
	Trade	19	4.94
	Fishing	3	0.78
	Total	385	100.00
Household income	2000-3999	44	11.55
	4000-5999	73	19.16
	6000-7999	75	19.69
	8000-9999	56	14.70
	10000 -	118	30.97
	Total	381	100.00

Source: Field data

A larger proportion of households were practicing farming for a livelihood at 89.61 %, followed by 4.94 % traders, 4.67% employed and 0.78% fishing. The households that had heard about the concept of Agritourism were 56.96%. Some of the reasons given why Kisumu County had a potential for Agritourism development included the strategic geographical positioning of the county such that tourists en route to the western region pass through the county on their way to places like Kakamega, Kit Mikayi, Ndere Islands, Dominion farms in Siaya, Busia and even Uganda by road. There are also a number of tourist attractions in the study area including an animal sanctuary which is run by the Kenya Wildlife Services located a few kilometers from the city centre at Impala Park. The county has arable land suitable for farming activities and fresh water available from the Lake Victoria and several rivers traversing the county including river Nyando making irrigation very feasible. The Kisumu museum offers a very rich historical and cultural heritage, the rich indigenous products from vegetables, livestock and fish offer a variety of traditional dishes.

4.2.1 On-farm Value addition

Value addition in agriculture involves the processing of food and non-food raw materials, thus adding value to the final product. This can also be one way to preserve small farms (Progressive Farmer, 2000). Small farmers often get involved in value-added processing and marketing as a means to improve farm income and sustain farm operations by making creative combinations of products and by-products. On looking at value addition in the study area, households were grouped according to their socio-economic status and the type of value addition they did. The Table 4.2 gives a summary of the findings. Majority 96.40% (n=374) were not

doing any value addition and for those who did, 2.57% did Jams and 1.03% juices. The statistics indicates a gap which is an opportunity that can be exploited on various on-farm value addition techniques to promote growth of Agritourism and also improve on household incomes.

Table 4.2: Value addition and socio-economic status of respondents

Type of value addition	Socio-Economic Status					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
None	84(22.34)	115(30.59)	84(22.34)	57(15.16)	36(9.57)	374(100)
Jam	0(0.00)	1(25.00)	0(0.00)	2(50.00)	1(25.00)	10(100)
Juices	1(12.50)	3(37.50)	1(12.50)	1(12.50)	2(25.00)	4(100)
Total	85(21.91)	119(30.67)	85(21.91)	60(15.46)	39(10.05)	388(100)

1= very poor, 2=more poor, 3=poor, 4=less poor and 5=least poor.

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Reports from household baseline done in Kisumu County in the recent past (ASDSP household baseline survey, 2014), indicated that the type of value addition done by most households varied with crop categories. Grading and/or packaging were the single most practiced type of value addition for most of the crops, especially for vegetables. Milling was commonly practiced in cereals and roots and tubers (Figure 4.1).

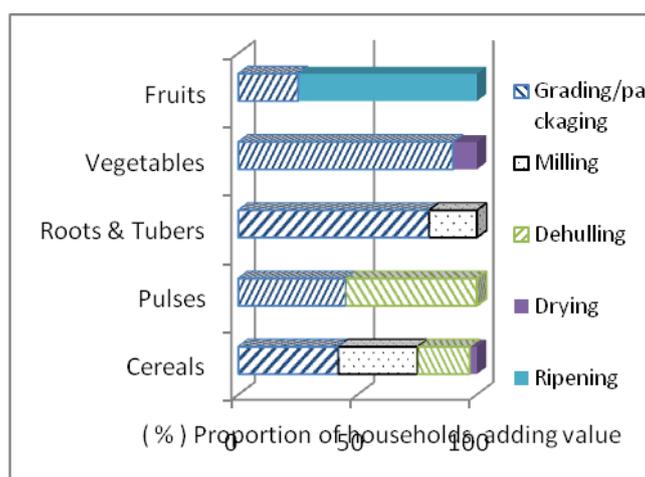


Figure 4.1: Value addition of crops , **Source:** (ASDSP household baseline survey, 2014)

Household incomes were low with 69.03%, reported to have an average monthly income of less Kshs10, 000.00. This was indicative of low household incomes and high poverty levels. The main source of income for respondents was indicated as farming at 89.61%. The fact that the majority of the respondents took farming as an economic activity shows that this can blend very well with tourism as a mechanism for poverty alleviation and help create job opportunities. According to Valenzuela (2000), unemployment and underemployment are some of the problems that rural populations face due to decline in earnings from agriculture.

4.2.2 Potential socio-economic impacts of Agritourism practice in Kisumu County

About 95.62% of the respondents were positive that Agritourism would be a viable venture for Kisumu County. This is very good baseline information to build on and very positive for potential stakeholders interested in investing in Agritourism in Kisumu County. Nevertheless further revelations indicated that only 1.03% (n=4) of sampled households practised what is close to Agritourism. In as much as not all farmers would engage in Agritourism and that Agritourism will not offer a solution to all the agricultural problems in Kisumu County, the study revealed that there is a possibility of creating opportunities for diversification of income and provision of social and economic incentives for both the farmers and local community to remain in agriculture. Kisumu County being a hub of tourist industry and the fact that it is very close to the equator, makes the county favourable all year round for planting of various agricultural produce due to the amount of daily sunshine hours it receives in a year. The rural landscapes, locally grown products and authentic experiences provided by the regions agricultural heritage and culture that attracts visitors and can enhance the exceptional quality of life that the County is known for. These clearly enhance the potential for successful Agritourism activities.

4.2.3 Potential Social Impacts

Social impacts are changes in the quality of lives of residents of a destination that are a consequence of tourism (Wall & Mathiason, 2006:7). Agritourism programs help capitalize on the natural, historical, and cultural resources of communities and can also help to build community pride and improve the quality of life for local community (Karabati et al., 2009). Schlimm (2005:2) also argues that when the economy recovers it promotes changes in the society. Poverty reduction is one such positive change in the society. From the responses given in this study on the potential income changes through increased employment opportunities, there is bound to be change in standard of living. Participants in the focus group discussions believed that agritourism could serve as mitigation to some of the challenges facing the local people in rural areas. "If well developed, agritourism products would not only be utilized by tourists but also the local people," said a participant from one of the community based organisations. In this context, the local communities may benefit as the supplier of the agritourism products and artefacts. This will impact on the entire community. Tourism economy and ecology, as theory and practice, naturally helps develop rural areas based on local natural, social and cultural resources (Katarzyna, 2101). The figure 1.0 illustrates some of the products of activities found on-going in some of the sites visited.



Artefacts



Artefacts



Herbal plants



local vegetables

Figure 1.0: Some Agritourism based products, Source: Field data

Despite the positive social benefits, the respondents expressed fear of negative impacts which may also come as a result of the interaction between tourists and the local communities. Social problems like crime and prostitution were highlighted as the main fears.

4.2.4 Potential Economic impacts

Agritourism is considered as a means to maintain agricultural activities and promote economic diversification activities (Van der Ploeg and Renting, 2004). The study revealed that Agritourism may generate opportunities for local farmers to increase income and generate revenue to the community through linkages with county hotels and other tourism-based companies such as tour operators. The respondents indicated a possibility of improved food security in the study area by improving food production at the local levels. Inadequate skills in Agritourism were cited as a challenge by the local ministry of agriculture staff. It is envisaged that through

Agritourism, more learning opportunities and entrepreneurial skills will be enhanced through capacity building for extension staff and skills training for the farmers hence development of human capital. Agritourism will also showcase the diversity and uniqueness of traditional food crops of the county. Due to its geographic location the county has a very big potential for establishing both local and regional markets and formation of public-private partnerships that can support sustainable agriculture and the economic diversity for Kisumu County. Young people (67%) who are energetic and are running to urban centres to search for employment opportunities may be encouraged to stay in the farms. This will not only reduce rural-urban migration but also provide incentives to preserve agricultural land in Kisumu County and increase crop production. More opportunities for value addition of farm produce will be created and diversification for produce for direct-marketing may stimulate economic activity (Williams et al., 2001). Both National and county government would improve support to infrastructural investment. Currently infrastructure support from both National and county government to the community stands at -20 per cent; sanitation (county government)-14 percent; electrification (national) and capital/loans (county)-6 percent each (ASDSP household baseline survey, 2014).

Infrastructural challenges such as water and poor roads were cited as a hindrance to economic development in most parts of the study area. Most of the respondents gave an affirmative response that With the county government facilitating infrastructural development Agritourism would be of benefit for both domestic use and hotels to ensure smooth operations and quality services for the. Other services that were suggested by respondents as of economic benefit that would come up as a result of the multiplier effect were banking services. However, Focus groups also noted that credit facilities are limiting and suggested that county government could offer soft loans and subsidies to the local community in order to get involved in touristic type of businesses.

Responses from tourist hotels indicated that the hoteliers depended on supplies of fresh produce such as local vegetables and fresh fruits from vendors in the nearby municipal market who in turn got the produce from farmers around. However, the results established that these linkages with hotels were weak and sometimes unreliable. More economic activities may be created by multiplier effect if these linkages were strengthened to allow the community to earn income and improve their livelihoods.

V. Conclusion And Recommendations

It is evident from the preceding discussion that socio-economic impact assessment is important and the potential for Agritourism in Kisumu County is great and largely untapped. This is evidenced by the proportion of respondents currently engaged in Agritourism which is almost negligible at 1.03 percent. The demographic details of the respondents are very promising since a greater portion fall in the youth full to middle age bracket. With proper capacity building and sensitization, there is great positive potential of socio-economic impact in Agritourism. This requires a concerted effort of all stakeholders to exploit the opportunities available. According to (Wang et al., 2012), Agritourism development requires the involvement and coordination of various parties, including government operators, communities and tourism for sustainability. The information gathered from the study suggests that the local community is willing to participate in Agritourism activities. Most of the rural communities practise subsistence farming and need to be encouraged to practice commercialised agriculture. Majority are still dependent on rain fed agriculture and considering the effects of climate change and weather, a lot still needs to be done in order to make Agritourism a niche market for the county and enjoy the socio-economic benefits.

Some recommendations to further the growth of Agritourism in Kisumu County include sensitization through barazas, workshops and capacity building for both agricultural staff and the community on Agritourism concept. Promotion can also be done through advertising campaigns, exhibitions and agricultural shows. This corresponds with what Griffin (2008) advocates for when he says that Agritourism development is a process that requires planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling of resources to achieve goals effectively and efficiently.

Contract farming to supply hotels directly would be an opportunity that needs to be exploited for revenue generation to the local community. As mentioned by Viriya (2009:10) in the SLA framework, identification of asset levels is the main entry point for development by transforming assets, processes and institutions to give desirable outcomes. The county government through the relevant state departments needs to do an inventory of the actors along the potential Agritourism value chain and plan for public-private partnerships to find a way of strengthening these linkages. This may create a big socio-economic impact through a multiplier effect right from the agro-input suppliers, producers, transporters, traders, service industries (hotels) and the homestays. Financial support is also crucial for Agritourism development in the study area. Kisumu Local Interaction Platform under the umbrella of the Kisumu Action Team (KAT), KLIP (2013) can also assist in identification of relevant partners for co-funding. Deliberate efforts to diversify tourism promotional efforts, destinations and attractions to include Agritourism may help preserve agricultural land and spread the benefits of tourism.

Finally small scale Agritourism could be initiated on an experimental basis through demonstration farms at strategic sites. Due to synergetic characteristics in a system, the total output will have an impact in the county. More research on Agritourism needs to be conducted on the management, planning, and policy implications.

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