DETERMINANTS OF TOURISM DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN ELGEYO-MARAKWET COUNTY, KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by Student

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for the conferment of a degree in any other university. No part of this thesis may be produced without prior permission from the author or Moi University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my family for their endless contribution. May the Almighty God bless and uplift you.

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ABSTRACT

Located on the Western Kenya tourist circuit, Elgeyo Marakwet County is regarded as a promising prospect for adventure tourism. Nevertheless, the realization of the county's tourist growth remains incomplete. The objective of this study was to determine the factors that influence the growth of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County. More precisely, the study aimed to determine the correlation between resources, infrastructure, tourist policy, support environment, and the growth of tourism in the county. The research was based on the Theory of Tourism Competitiveness. The research design employed in this study was both explanatory and descriptive. 437 respondents were selected from a target population of 99986 individuals, including households, visitors, county government, and National Government personnel, using stratified, simple random, purposive, and systematic sampling methods. Research instruments were sent to families, and interviews were carried out with visitors, County government personnel, and National government personnel. Analysis of the obtained data included descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (multiple regression). Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Resource availability, infrastructure, tourism policy, and support environment were identified as drivers that accounted for 88.1% of the development of the tourist destination. A statistically significant positive correlation was observed between resources (β_1=0.371, p=0.001), infrastructure (β_2=0.211, p=0.001), tourist policy (β_3=0.096, p=0.001), and support environment (β_4=0.380, p=0.001) and business destination development. The research findings indicated a substantial correlation between tourist destination development and factors such as resources, infrastructure, support environment, and tourism policy. The report advised that the Ministry of Tourism and Elgeyo Marakwet County should oversee the progress of destination development by giving priority to allocating resources that would enable the destination to effectively compete on an international scale. The Elgeyo Marakwet County should guarantee that its infrastructure is in optimal shape to facilitate the future growth of the destination. These findings will help the National government in guaranteeing the safety and security of tourists in the unpredictable Elgeyo Marakwet County.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Infrastructural facilities: refer to the structures and infrastructure that meet the requirements of a holiday and enhance the enjoyment of the location as well as provide accommodation. These facilities encompass lodging, accessibility, sports, recreational, and cultural-social amenities (Buhalis, 2022).

Resources: Attractions and items among visitors in a place that exert an impact on their decision to visit. Resource attraction in this study refers to the certain natural, biological, or geographical features that clearly appeal to the tourist industry (Aall et al., 2015).

Support environment: Plays a crucial role in a destination as it enhances the overall experience of travellers when they engage in the activities offered by the tourist attractions (Dodds & Butler, 2019). Various services such as entertainment, financial services, shopping and recreation facilities, police force, information centres, health centres, tourism agents, housekeeping, internet services, printing, insurance, wholesaling, and retailing contribute to facilitating and enhancing the travel experience for visitors.

Tourism destination: Is a physical location designed for a visitor to stay for at least twenty-four hours and includes characteristics such as infrastructure, man-made attractions, and amenities that attract visitors to a specific area (Hall et al., 2015).

Tourism development: is the whole process of devising, implementing, and promoting methods to create, enhance, and stimulate tourism in a certain region or destination (Mandić et al. 2018; Ratnasari et al. 2020). This research

examines the process of establishing and maintaining a company catering to specific or a combination of tourist groups based on their motivations in a certain location.

Tourism policy: is a collection of strategies, directions, rules, guidelines, laws, and declarations that provide the foundation for choices and actions taken by institutions and individuals to achieve tourism development and intended societal outcomes (Bryant, 2015; Guo, Jiang and Shengchao, 2019). The present study examines the laws, regulations, and declarations that provide the foundation for institutional and individual decisions and activities aimed at achieving tourist growth.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KMO	Kaiser-Mayor-Oklin
NACOSTI	National Commission of Science Technology and Innovation Kenya
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
TPPD	Tourism Policy
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
TTCI	Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index
TTCR	Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
WECD	World Commission on Environment and Development
WEF	World Economic Forum
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This section presents a synopsis to the chapter which includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, general and specific objectives, research hypotheses, significance and scope of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Tourism is often recognized as one of the largest and most rapidly growing sectors globally, significantly contributing to the economic progress of a nation (Nicolaides, 2020) and functioning as a crucial factor in enhancing long-term economic growth. As per the findings of Scott et al. (2019), tourism has the potential to particularly augment the financial gains of local communities by offering employment prospects. The tourism industry offers an area a range of opportunities for leisure and renewal (Chen et al., 2016; Ohe et al., 2017). A tourist attraction refers to a location that attracts individuals due to its intrinsic or apparent natural or cultural worth, historical importance, natural or architectural attractiveness, or to offer recreational and entertaining experiences (Novais et al. 2018; Reitsamer & Brunner-Sperdin, 2017). Hence, it is crucial to ascertain the determinants that govern the growth of a tourist location.

Tourism development refers to the establishment and maintenance of a suitable company catering to certain or a combination of tourist groups, based on their motivations, in a certain region or location. Tourism development primarily refers to the whole process of devising, implementing, and promoting methods to create, enhance, and stimulate tourism in a certain region or destination (Mandić et al. 2018;

Ratnasari et al. 2020). tourist development refers to a strategic approach aimed at increasing the recognition of a product and location within the tourist industry (Andriotis, 2014). Hence, it is necessary to do a thorough analysis of the growth of tourist destinations (Mustafa et al., 2020).

In summary, Park et al. (2020) propose that a contented tourist will either return to a certain place or suggest it to other visitors. A destination may be defined as a distinctive combination of goods and services that cater to the requirements of tourists (Vittersø et al., 2017). A destination, as defined by Neupane (2021), is characterised by eight A's: attractions, accessibility, lodging, facilities, activities, affinity, actors, act, and administration.

Destination management refers to the systematic organisation and integration of all components of the destination mix within a specific geographical region, guided by a well defined tourist strategy and plan (Morrison, 2018). The necessary coordination and integration techniques are associated with a certain characteristic that is exclusive to a particular tourist industry at a precise period and stage of growth (Armenski, Dwyer and Pavluković, 2017). The use of destination management strategies has been shown to enhance the resilience of the tourism industry and have a beneficial influence on the development of tourist destinations (Fernandez, Martinez and Martin, 2022). Optimised destination management considers several elements, including local tourism policies that specifically target the environment, the presence of infrastructure that supports tourism, a thriving domestic tourism sector, inclusive community-based enterprises, leveraging technology, and the growth of the tourism and travel industry (Cronjé & Plessis, 2020; Fernandez et al, 2022; Khan et al, 2021). Destination assessment is a multifaceted process that involves a broad range of factors and

indicators (Vengesayi, Mavondo & Reisinger, 2013). These factors encompass tourist resources (attractions), tourism experience, attraction quality, visitor's length of stay, domestic and international tourism performance, as well as the safety and security of the location (Ammirato, Galla and Felicetti, 2014 & Goffi, 2013).

Indeed, it is imperative to acknowledge that resources are not only essential for a tourist destination to sustain its competitiveness, but also serve as a substantial attraction for visitors to visit it (Nunes et al., 2018). The advancement of rural tourist destinations may be attributed to the dimensions of destination attractiveness and tourism infrastructure (Manrai et al., 2018; Owiya et al., 2019). Undoubtedly, destination development plays a crucial role in the tourist sector, particularly in rural tourism.

This study employs the theoretical framework of Ritchie and Crouch's model of destination competitiveness (Kovačević et al., 2018). The competitiveness of a location may be understood as being intrinsically influenced by the strength of its core resources, the diversity of attractions, the associated resources, and the effectiveness of the management structure. Undertaking a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing the growth of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County is highly valuable.

According to data from 2018, New York City is the most frequently visited location in the United States, followed by Los Angeles, Orlando, Las Vegas, and Chicago. Furthermore, the United States ranks third in terms of tourist attraction, behind France and Spain (Pickel-Chevalier, 2015). Thus, it is evident that tourist attractions exert an impact on the volume of visitors that choose to visit a specific place or country. The countries or locations that attract the greatest number of visitors are those to which the majority of tourists are interested in visiting. According to Alessiani et al. (2019), lodging, which includes traditional amenities, is considered a crucial option for tourists.

In a same vein, the inclusion of accessibility, the unwavering emphasis on safety, and the establishment of a resilient infrastructure system were essential elements of the tourist sector.

China is now implementing timely policy measures to address air pollution and enhance environmental sustainability in around fifty-eight prominent Chinese tourist locations (Zhang et al. 2020). The study conducted by Cronjé and du Plessis (2020) in Seoul highlighted service quality, infrastructure and cars in the transit system, facilities such as conference rooms, and destination attractiveness as crucial considerations for choosing a tourist destination. Singapore, as a renowned tourist destination, is now grappling with adverse ecological impacts and advocating for a compromise between tourism growth and environmental sustainability (Khoi et al. 2021). Previous research has definitively shown that the influx of foreign visitors and the subsequent expansion driven by tourism contribute to climate change through increased energy consumption, carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, and air pollution (Aslan et al. 2021).

Furthermore, the geographical and socio-cultural environment of Pakistan serves as both a resource and an opportunity (Baloch and Rehman 2015). Consequently, the country is seeking to exploit this environment as a potential source of foreign reserves to offset its increasing trade deficit (Baloch et al., 2020). Pakistan's welcoming and diverse social fabric provides abundant traditions, rituals, and festivals for travellers to discover, honour, value, and appreciate. Pakistan is renowned in the tourist industry for its impressive mountains, which encompass the highest density of high peaks globally, picturesque landscapes, revered shrines, archaeological sites, and the Indus Valley civilisations, which include the pre-Islamic Kalasha culture (Baloch and Rehman 2015).

In recent years, Asia has become a significant player in the global economy as a provider of tourist destinations, challenging the long-standing dominance of Europe and North America. The notable diversity and uniqueness of these places have played a crucial part in this development (Hanafiah & Zulkifly, 2019). Following Asia Pacific, the African region is identified by Richards (2014) as the second most rapidly growing tourist destination globally.

The growing popularity of small economies and islands as travel destinations, such as Mauritius, the Maldives, the Dominican Republic, and other Caribbean islands, has highlighted the need of establishing robust linkages between the tourism sector and the greater economy. The links have a crucial function in enhancing the value provided via trade in tourist services and reducing the waste generated by tourism in underdeveloped countries (Hampton, 2020). The mitigation of the risk associated with depending on imported inputs for the production of products and services for both tourist and local markets may be achieved by fostering robust interconnections across the economic sectors of a nation, particularly in the tourism industry. This entails mutual procurement and sale of inputs and outputs between each firm and other local sectors.

A research conducted in Nicaragua (Ridderstaat, 2022) establishes a unidirectional causal connection between the increase of the tourist sector and economic growth, as well as between tourism and poverty eradication. In order to characterise the relationship between tourism, economic growth, and poverty reduction as being linked to the democratisation of the dollar, these authors highlight the employment, income, and participation opportunities that arise from the transfer of wealth and income from residents of wealthier countries to residents of developing countries.

As a result of intense competition among international tourism attractions, Africa has decreased its share globally. Christie et al. (2014) observed that Sub-Saharan Africa offers a plethora of tourist resources, including vast beaches, diverse animals, and many chances for sightseeing, cultural exploration, and adventure. In order to continue tourism growth, African nations should enhance their infrastructure and augment their human resources to attract a greater number of tourists (UNWTO, 2019).

Despite the importance of tourism strategic policies for the growth of tourism, Ariya et al. (2021) noted a lack of coordination between tourists and the strategic plans of key stakeholders in the African setting. The tourist industry has failed to attain sustainability mostly because of insufficient involvement of the community and inadequate implementation of appropriate tourism policies (Kimbu et al., 2018; Tamakloe & Agben, 2017). According to Njoroge (2021), the tourist industry is facing ongoing challenges in its market survival because of insufficient involvement of local communities and the deterioration of the environment and social-cultural context.

According to Amoako et al. (2022), it is indisputable that the tourism industry holds significant relevance for both the private sector and the government in Ghana. Implementing efficient policies and marketing techniques is crucial for attaining sustainable competitiveness in the tourist industry in Ghana. Akyeramfo-Sam and Nti (2017) contended that the growth of rural tourism necessitates the use of contemporary technology by tourist service providers. The research conducted by Agyeman and Asebah (2022) specifically examined tourist satisfaction in Ghana and suggested that this satisfaction is a crucial determinant of tourism sustainability.

Abdulkadir (2018) conducted a statistical analysis in Nigeria to examine the influence of cultural festivals on the development of event tourism. The research revealed that

the expansion of event tourism in Kwara State was shaped by cultural events, intensive public awareness initiatives, and their impact on travel patterns. For the purpose of appealing to a global audience, the paper also proposes the international marketing of culturally diverse events. The presence of cultural differences between Mali and its neighbouring countries provides a comparative advantage for the development of tourism in the region. Saner (2019) asserts that Mali has stimulated tourism by leveraging the fundamental role of its cultural heritage in driving social and economic progress.

Furthermore, the government has modified the rules that regulate the organisation of tour companies and guides. The potential benefits of tourist growth may be undermined if efforts are not taken to enhance economic connections with the tourism industry. Hanafiah and Zulkifly (2019) assert that South Africa possesses multifaceted attributes that render it a potentially profitable tourism destination. Particularly, it is important to highlight the level of political and economic stability, abundant prospects for developing marketing strategies, emphasis on quality, and the breadth of food variety.

As per Magical Kenya (2017), Kenya possesses a distinctive combination of tourist destinations dispersed around the country. However, not all of these attractions are sufficiently developed to attract the tourism market. Hence, it is imperative for Kenyan tourism marketers and stakeholders to proactively adopt a tourist development strategy in order to tackle the inequalities in destination development. Although Kenya values the economic impact of tourism and travel, its performance is inconsistent. According to UNWTO (2019), the administration of tourist sites is intricately linked to the policies that impact the local development and economic worth of a destination. Hence, a sustainable tourism development policy should strive to achieve equilibrium among

cultural values, natural attractions, and economic outcomes in order to provide a sustainable destination. To maintain the ongoing success of tourism, it is necessary to consistently adopt destination competitive tactics.

The National Tourism Blueprint 2030 of Kenya highlights the task of addressing the tourism gaps in destination development in counties, including Elgeyo-Marakwet. This objective is connected to the establishment of tourism institutions and the implementation of effective governance, coherent policies, and sustainable development planning in the sector (Government of Kenya, 2019). The county has not fully understood its obligations to synchronise tourism growth strategies with national tourism sector policies, maintain a cooperative approach, and promote innovative tourism development as key factors for competitive advantages based on autonomy and flexibility of devolved governance (Khan et al., 2021).

According to Magical Kenya (2017), the implementation of Kenya's new constitution in 2010 resulted in a shift in the emphasis of tourist development from the National government to the County governments. Designed as a foundation for County tourism development, the Priority Tourism County Development Master Plans (2013) aim to tackle the obstacles hindering the expansion of Kenya's tourist industry. Following the enactment of Kenya's new constitution in 2010, County governments were granted the chance to execute the County tourist development strategies of 2013 by means of the Priority tourist County Development Master Plans. In order to enhance the efficiency of the sector, the County governments must acknowledge and tackle upcoming obstacles to stimulate the country's tourist industry (Magical Kenya, 2017).

Kenya, like many other countries that have adopted decentralized government, has been confronted with several obstacles in its implementation. The devolution of government

in Kenya was implemented with the aim of strengthening the management of destinations, such as Elgeyo-Marakwet County (Ndivo & Oketch, 2019). During the transitional phase, the decentralised governance was expected to face opposition from the central government and its bureaucracy that were reluctant to disperse power. The objective of devolved governance is to enhance the administration of the public sector and facilitate economic performance (Government of Kenya, 2019; Ndivo & Oketch, 2019).

Counties have emerged as novel domains for the advancement of tourism (Ndivo & Oketch, 2019; Ong'olo & Awino, 2013). The county's strengths are based on its capacity to adjust to local requirements, encourage inclusiveness and participatory methods, maintain efficiency by reducing costs while enhancing outputs, efficiently use human resources, ensure subnational autonomy and flexibility, and uphold an accessible government (Ndivo & Oketch, 2019). Cronjé and Plessis (2020) identify these as the distinguishing characteristics and factors that influence the growth of a tourist destination.

Elgeyo Marakwet County is renowned worldwide for its exceptional athletic prowess, which has resulted in the production of award-winning athletes throughout the years. The county accommodates athletes who undergo training in the high-altitude regions of the county, as well as international paragliders who come to the county to engage in the emerging sport that has experienced a surge in popularity during the past five years (Morong et al., 2019). The escarpment of Elgeyo, with its native flora, presents an opportunity to develop rural tourism in the North Rift region (Page & Dowling, 2012).

The study by Kiprutto et al. (2012) showed that the Elgeyo escarpment is particularly suitable for parachutes because to its favourable bluff action given by the slope.

Trekking, climbing, diving, bird viewing, and racing are among the adventurous pursuits that tourists might engage in during their time in Elgeyo Marakwet County. These activities are highly important to the research as they provide valuable understanding of the processes involved in tourist development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Historically, African countries have had challenges in reaching a broader tourist market. Kenya is no exception to this trend and has recently seen a decline in its proportion of the global tourism industry, being surpassed by growing destinations like Mauritius and Seychelles (Government of Kenya, 2019). The Brand Kenya report from 2015 states that sports, culture, tourism, horticulture, development in ICT, telecommunication, education, and their heritage can significantly enhance Kenya's appeal to tourists, nature conservationists, artists, investors, and other nationals interested in establishing Kenya as their permanent residence.

Following the enactment of Kenya's new constitution in 2010, County governments were granted the chance to execute the County tourist development strategies of 2013 by means of the Priority tourist County Development Master Plans. In order to enhance the efficiency of the sector, the County governments must acknowledge and tackle upcoming obstacles to stimulate the country's tourist industry (Magical Kenya, 2017).

Although Kenya has excellent tourism goods and tourism plays a significant role in its economy, there are some factors that have influenced its reputation worldwide, and Elgeyo Marakwet County is no exception. The Kenya Tourism Board categorises Elgeyo Marakwet County as part of the western tourism circuit. Currently, this circuit remains mostly unexplored and the county is not reaping any advantages from tourism (Ndivo & Oketch, 2019; Nyamweno, Okotto and Tonui, 2016).

Nyamweno, Okotto, and Tonui (2016) identified several development indicators, including under-utilized and undeveloped tourism potential, low numbers of domestic and international visitors, suboptimal community participation, inclusion, and benefit from tourism, inadequate publicity on both domestic and international tourism fronts, and minimal tourism earnings. In order for Elgeyo Marakwet County to fully realise its potential, comparable to other counties like as Nakuru and Kakamega County, it was necessary to identify the factors that influence the growth of tourism destinations. Hence, the objective of this study was to examine the factors that influence the growth of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main and specific objectives of the study were as follows:

1.3.1 General Objective

To analyze the determinants of tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

1) To establish the relationship between resources/products and tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County.
2) To determine the relationship between infrastructure and tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County.
3) To establish the relationship between tourism policy and tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County.
4) To determine the relationship between support environment and tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested:

H_{O1}: Resources/products does not influence tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

H_{O2}: Infrastructure has no significant relationship between tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

H_{O3}: There is no significant relationship between tourism policy on tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

H_{O4}: Support environment does not influence the tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

1.5 Research Questions

1) How do resources/products influence tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County?
2) What is the influence of infrastructure on tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County?
3) What is the effect the influence of tourism policy on tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County?
4) How does support environment influence tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The research will be of great importance to the National Government in prioritizing measures for efficient inter-governmental connections to enhance the administration of the tourism industry, promote destination development in the devolved units, and benefit the country as a whole.

This research has great importance for the County Government of Elgeyo Marakwet as it illuminates the specific areas of determinants in destination development that require enhancement in order to design suitable policies.

The research will be of great importance to hospitality practitioners in enhancing their destination development strategies to maximize the advantages derived from tourism and travel.

The research will prove advantageous to travelers in comprehending the factors that influence the growth of a location.

This study contributes to the existing knowledge and research on the planning and development of tourist destinations under a decentralized governance system.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study examined the factors that influence the success of tourist destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County. More precisely, the study focused on resources, infrastructure, the sustainable environment, and tourist policy. Typically, studies in tourism research focus on the perspective of resort managers. This study specifically examined the perspectives of several stakeholders involved in tourism destinations, including travellers, tourism-related enterprises, and government tourism agencies. Hence, the research was carried out among families, visitors, Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife personnel, and county government staff, including the Tourism and Wildlife Chief Officer and Director. Data collection was conducted using a standardized questionnaire and interview schedule. The focus of study was on stakeholders in the tourism destination of Elgeyo Marakwet County who have direct involvement in providing services to tourists. Collection of data took place from September to December 2019.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Owing to the extensive size of the country, the research was confined to the tourism sites within Elgeyo Marakwet County in Kenya. Hence, it may not be feasible to apply the findings to other tourist destinations due to the lack of comparable features in the creation and administration of other destinations. Nevertheless, its generalization may be possible, albeit with prudence.

One limitation of the study was the difficulty in determining the veracity of respondents' statements while employing questionnaires. Therefore, the triangulation approach was employed to address this issue. In order to identify potential bias in the responses, the researcher employed both questionnaires and interviews.

The investigator encountered the difficulty of distributing the surveys, since certain respondents may exhibit reluctance and unwillingness to engage. In order to address this issue, the researcher clarified that the study had an academic objective and guaranteed the participants that the information they provided would be kept anonymous.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The respondents were presumed to have a comprehensive understanding of the development of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The respondents shown a high level of familiarity with the resources, infrastructural resources, tourist policy, and support environment. They provided truthful answers to the questions posed and were capable of offering valuable information crucial to the research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter conducted a comprehensive evaluation of literature pertaining to the research variables being examined, both at locally and globally levels. The text elucidated the notion of destination development and introduced the factors that influence destination development and competitive capability. The chapter presented a theoretical investigation, conceptual framework, and empirical analysis that were employed in the study to examine each variable. This led to a critical analysis of the current literature and the identification of areas where further study is needed.

2.1 Concept of Tourism Destination Development

A destination, as defined by Alhroot (2014), is a geographical entity visited by a tourist that can be a self-contained centre, village, town, city, district, region, island, country, or continent, and is capable of providing a tourism product. Having a comprehensive grasp of destination is crucial for the tourism sector, since it takes place in destinations with distinct natural and/or man-made characteristics that draw non-local visitors (or tourists) for a range of activities. In contrast, Hausteinova (2013) presents a more sophisticated notion of destination and goes so far as to distinguish between "destination" and "Tourist destination" in order to comprehend the practice of destination marketing. Specifically, Hausteinova (2013) provides a definition of a destination as a clearly delineated physical region, such as a nation, an island, or a town.

While acknowledging that a location may not always be a tourist destination, Hausteinova (2013) contends that tourist destinations include unique attributes that set them apart from general destinations. The features include a clearly defined

geographical region with identifiable boundaries and a distinct territorial identity; a tourist infrastructure including attractions and services tailored to tourists in the area; the existence of many operators with diverse viewpoints and goals that require a unified approach in promoting the offering; knowledge of the potential demand for the tourist products provided; recognition of the need to balance the exploitation of resources by tourism with ecological, environmental, and community stewardship (Hausteinova, 2013).

Unlike Hausteinova (2013) and Alhroot (2014) who mainly analyse destination as a geographic location with certain defined attributes, Pike & Page (2014) approach destination from a different perspective. Within this framework, proponents contend that a destination embodies a combination of a wide and varied array of enterprises and individuals, who may have a significant interest in the well-being of their destination community. However, studies on small and micro enterprises have shown that not all stakeholders are necessarily concerned with the sustainability of the destination, when their primary goal for creating a business is to enhance their lifestyle (Pike & Page, 2014).

In his 2015 study, Anh thoroughly analysed the notion of destination, which consists of four distinct elements: primary attractors, physical environment, supporting supply services, and social-cultural characteristics. The key attractors refer to the primary attractions that attract visitors and distinguish one location from another. These attractions might be worldwide, country-specific, or regional in nature. Conversely, the built environment refers to the geometric arrangement of a location, encompassing waterfronts, promenades, historic districts, and commercial areas. Furthermore, it

encompasses significant components of infrastructure, including road and rail networks, as well as open areas and social amenities.

The support supply services encompass vital activities like lodging, communication, transportation, food and beverage services, entertainment, and facilities. The social-cultural aspect encompasses the cultural connections between historical and contemporary contexts, providing a range of moods or atmospheres from drowsy to lively. The level of amicability and togetherness between the local community and tourism guests (Anh, 2015). Destination development refers to the deliberate efforts to strategically plan and enhance certain regions in order to facilitate the growth of attractive tourist destinations. This process primarily focusses on the supply side of tourism, aiming to provide captivating experiences, high-quality infrastructure, and exceptional services to attract visitors. Exhibiting increasing growth, the tourist industry is increasingly crucial for the prosperity of a country as it serves as a primary economic sector (Webster & Ivanov, 2014; Karalkova, 2016; Idrus, 2020).

Due to its interconnected nature, the growth of a tourist destination is influenced by its level of competitiveness (Karalkova, 2016). Andrades–Caldito, Sanchez–Rivero, and Pulido–Fernandez (2013) contend that the competitiveness of a tourist destination is of utmost importance in a country's ability to withstand challenges and achieve growth. Adequate competitiveness is essential for economic growth and development, particularly in the present economic climate.

The research conducted by Alves et al. (2018) emphasises that the current state-of-the-art literature research and bibliometric methods have not been widely used to analyse the idea of competitiveness in the tourist industry at both regional and commercial levels. Hence, it is imperative to investigate the subject of tourist competitiveness. The

dearth of understanding in this area of research on the interconnections of economic, tourist, and social factors is emphasized by Dana et al. (2014). In order to get a thorough understanding of a tourism destination, it is essential to conduct a detailed investigation in this area. Several studies have confirmed the need of identifying key elements that contribute to the development of competitiveness in tourism destinations. This is particularly relevant considering the current condition of the tourism market. Multiple definitions exist for the notion of tourist destination competitiveness (Cronje & Plessis, 2020).

According to the definition provided by Crouch & Ritchie (1999) as referenced in Dupeyras & MacCallum (2013), tourism destination competitiveness refers to the capacity of a destination to attract visitors in a successful and profitable manner. This ability ensures that visitors have memorable experiences and that the welfare, standard of living, and satisfaction of the local population are enhanced.

The methods used to assess competitiveness, such as the Tourism and Travel Competitiveness Index (TTCI), erroneously assume that all factors have equal importance (Shariffuddin, et al., 2022). Furthermore, these models have failed to effectively tackle the inequalities that exist regarding the market size, economic condition, and level of reliance in the tourism and travel industry of the locations (Shariffuddin, et al., 2022). An other matter of worry is that research on destination competitiveness have proposed several and ubiquitous factors, but there is no agreement on this matter (Shariffuddin, et al., 2022).

The universal applicability of the determinants is limited by the absence of indicators and databases that are suitable for all destinations. Hence, the factors that determine the competitiveness of a place are not always applicable. A comprehensive assessment of

competitiveness requires awareness of the many stages of the lifecycle, market segments, and the diverse purchasing environments in which travel choices are taken (Shariffuddin, et al., 2022).

Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) is a metric that quantifies the comparative effectiveness of a nation's travel and tourism sector (Rodríguez-Dñaz and Pulido-Fernandez, 2020a). This metric is employed to evaluate the success of a nation's travel and tourism sector relative to other nations. The TTCI is determined by several criteria, such as infrastructural quality, company profitability, human resource availability, safety and security standards, environmental quality, and government assistance. Historically, it has been employed to pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses within a nation's travel and tourism sector and to assess the performance of several nations (Agustin and Martini, 2022).

Moreover, the TTCI has been utilised to guide policy-making and evaluate the consequences of policy modifications on the travel and tourism sector. The existing literature on the TTCI mostly concentrates on the conceptualisation and practical implementation of the index. Scholarly investigations have analysed the determinants of the TTCI, the consequences of policy modifications on the TTCI, and the use of the TTCI to guide policy choices.

Within the literature, there are two clearly defined groups of models and studies that examine the factors that influence competitiveness in tourist destinations: those developed by reputable institutions and those produced by academics or writers (Chin et al., 2015). An integral element of the WEF model is the TTCI, which quantifies the amalgamation of policies and elements that facilitate sustainable growth in the travel

and tourism sector, therefore enhancing a country's competitiveness and development (Woyo and Slabbert, 2021).

2.2 Determinants of Destination Development

The framework of the TCCI comprises 90 indicators across 14 pillars, which are further subdivided into four sub-indexes: natural and cultural resources, infrastructure, travel rules, and favourable environment. The Travel Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) is a tool used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of a country's travel and tourism sector and to compare the performance of many nations. Furthermore, the TTCI has been used to guide policy decisions and evaluate the consequences of policy modifications on the travel and tourism sector. Tourism development encompasses all the activities associated with the establishment and operation of facilities and services that cater to the needs of tourists in and around a certain location.

2.2.1 Natural, Cultural, and Historical resources

Core resources and attractors refer to the main resources of a tourism location that attract tourists and are described as the main assets and benefits of the place. Furthermore, these elements are the primary considerations for attracting visitor arrivals, resulting in tourism spending and the growth of the tourism industry. The main resources are physiography, culture and history, market connections, variety of activities, unique events, and tourist infrastructure. The authors Dwyer and Kim (2003) propose that the overall attractiveness of a site to tourists is a key factor that significantly impacts its success.

The presence of natural resources may confer a substantial benefit to a tourist location. Nations without natural resources may face challenges in competing with those who possess them. Ritchie and Crouch (1993) established a pioneering model to elucidate

the competitiveness of tourist destinations. Optimising the utilisation of resources and implementing efficient management strategies enable natural and cultural resources to enhance the competitiveness of a tourist location (Lo et al., 2017).

Optimal coordination of natural resources, visual attractiveness, and marketing strategies can enhance the growth of tourist destinations (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Poon, 1993; Yoon et al., 2001). Moreover, Andrades and Dimanche (2017) argue that a tourist location is more likely to effectively stimulate tourism expenditure when it is renowned for its picturesque landscapes and captivating attractions. In three out of the four areas examined, a study conducted by Csapó et al. (2016) revealed that the quality and prevalence of tourist attractions were the key factors influencing the growth of a tourism destination.

Crouch and Ritchie (1999) argued that the consolidation of regional and local traditions might significantly bolster tourist growth. Based on Crouch and Ritchie's theories, Dwyer, and Kim (2003) argue that cultural and historical resources are equally significant as natural resources in influencing the competitiveness of places. The research conducted by Stetic et al. (2014) yielded findings indicating that a substantial amount of historical and cultural resources ranks as the second most influential factor in determining the status of a prosperous tourist destination, with a significance level of 4.29 out of five.

An appealing location is one that clients see as satisfying or meeting their objectives (Kai et al., 2012). For a venue to exert attraction, it must possess a unique quality or characteristic. There exist three distinct categories of attraction. Natural attractions refer to both geographical and biological features that provide specific appeal to the tourism industry. They are inherently formed by nature. Climbing, mountain biking, hill

walking, climbing, and potholing mountains are all instances of natural features that provide the setting for recreational activities-oriented attractions (Swarbrooke, 2012). Cultural attractions encompass the unique material, spiritual, intellectual, and emotional attributes of a society, including literature, music, architecture and arts, culinary heritage, creative industries, beliefs, historical and cultural heritage, value systems, traditions, and living cultures together with their lifestyles. (Bown, 2008). Man-made attractions are specifically designed and constructed for the goal of supporting tourism. The destination offers a diverse range of tourist attractions, including a theme park, zoo, and art gallery, among others (Hole & Snehal, 2019). According to Sánchez-Rivero and Pulido-Fernández (2012), tourists experience satisfaction when their requirements, including cultural monuments, natural or constructed attractions, and entertainment options, are adequately fulfilled in a particular place. Thus, an image is a crucial component that largely depends on its inherent characteristics.

Devoid of attractions, it becomes challenging to classify places as tourist entities (Pantano et al., 2017). In order for individuals or a group of people to choose a given tourist location, it must possess several attractions like landscapes, ancient and historical artefacts, and certain events, among other factors. Prior research examining the factors that contribute to the appeal of destinations have shown that the most notable attractions are both the physical characteristics and the climate. According to Boivin & Tanguay (2019), the significant factor that motivated tourists to visit a place was the outstanding natural beauty and climate.

Richards (2014) posits that tourists are attracted to a destination by several elements including culture, architecture, cuisine, infrastructure, location, and events. The

aforementioned attributes attract travellers to the destination and enhance the whole vacation experience. As to the findings of Boniface et al. (2020), tourists are drawn to a certain location due to several factors such as its geography, climate, cultural and social characteristics, events, retail and commercial amenities, pricing level, approach to visitors, and the road network reaching different places.

Boniface et al. (2020) found that tourists are drawn to a place due to its many attractions, including botanical gardens, settlement centres, marine museums, industrial archaeology, golf courses, and unique signature events. According to Matarrita-Cascante et al. (2019), tourists are drawn to a certain destination due to the variety of artistic expressions, folklore, cultural features, and ways of life. These factors determine the attractions that hold significance for many individuals. For example, residents of Chinatowns in the United States have their own customs, languages, and events that provide opportunities for social gatherings such as commemorative and spiritual events, dances, music, and cuisine, among other forms of entertainment. Indeed, this has emerged as a significant factor that motivates tourists in their selection of a place (Putra et al., 2021).

The operational measures examined in this study include the demonstrated culture, natural attractions, and architectural attractions of tourist locations. Exhibited culture or cultural tourism refers to a range of activities include paying visits to historical locations, participating in performing arts events, and visiting museums (Boniface et al., 2020b; Swarbrooke, 2012). Typically, a tourist site encompasses both cultural and natural features. Nevertheless, their impact on potential tourists' intentions to visit or revisit may not be equally significant (Boniface et al., 2020b; Matarrita-Cascante et al., 2019; Swarbrooke, 2012). Thailand boasts a wide array of natural attractions, including

mountains, seashores, and other tourism sites that capitalise on natural resources, which are highly favoured by Chinese tourists (Clarke, 2005).

Xu et al. (2013) define natural attractions as the first impression or visual representation of a tourist destination. In addition, constructed attractions enhance the appeal of a tourist site. It encompasses features such as comprehensive travel packages and facilities for sports and leisure, as well as hotel and transportation services. These attractions, together with natural attractions, are important indicators of the intention to revisit. Indeed, there is a scarcity of empirical research that have evaluated the impact of constructed attractions on the growth of tourism in Kenya, particularly in Elgeyo Marakwet County. This is why this study has chosen it as one of the indicators of attractiveness.

2.2.2 Infrastructure Facilities

Tourism and hospitality industry encompass a range of commercial operations including air travel, ground transportation, accommodation, dining establishments, and tourist sites (Szpilko 2017; Bakhrid-dinovna and Qizi 2020). A visitor's tourism experience include leisure activities, adventure, cultural or historical immersion in a certain region or ethnic group, business or health-related travel, education, or religious pilgrimage. This sequence of activities enhances the overall value of the Tourism experience. Every action serves to stimulate the economy, provide employment opportunities, generate income, and promote the growth of tourism, including the infrastructure required for all activities related to the tourist process.

Tourism growth refers to the quantitative increase in the number of visiting tourists and the duration of their visits within a specific timeframe. Tourism growth is quantified by analysing the interaction among the number of tourists visiting, the revenue generated

by tourism, and the duration of visitors' trips (Arifn et al. 2019). Infrastructure development is crucial for enhancing a tourist destination to improve visitor living circumstances and protect natural and cultural assets through the construction of new tourist facilities, administrative and supporting structures, and community living spaces.

The infrastructure of a certain country significantly impacts the destination marketing of a particular tourist attraction. According to Chi (2014), destination marketing would focus on infrastructural factors such as the development and quality of roads, airports, ports, private and public transport facilities, health services, telecommunications, and commercial infrastructure, as well as the extent of building development in museums, historical buildings, monuments, and other significant sites.

Accessibility pertains to the means by which a visitor may reach a place using various modes of transportation (Boniface et al., 2020b). The concept encompasses not just the physical cost-effectiveness in terms of transportation systems, but also the psychological effects on attitudes, motivations, and travel choices (Putra et al., 2021). Accessibility is a component of tourism that reflects the facilitation of travellers in reaching their preferred destinations. Tourism destination connectivity refers to the connection between the place of origin of the visitor and the destination (AlKahtani et al., 2015).

According to Charles and Zegarra (2014), the category of infrastructures has four essential components that significantly impact the success of a tourist destination: communication, transportation, road, and energy systems. Buhalis and Amaranggana (2013) argue that the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) industry has the potential to offer the tourist sector efficient procedures to assist hospitality

enterprises in their daily operations. Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016) propose that online social systems enable the efficient utilisation of resources and infrastructure.

Tourist locations should prioritise the provision of facilities that effectively enhance the comfort of visitors upon their arrival. It is imperative that the toilets are kept clean, particularly when the destination is designed for young families. This facility should be planned to cater to the interests and preferences of potential visitors from particular demographics, in amounts predetermined by market feasibility studies. The presence of fundamental infrastructure such as communication facilities, watercourses, ports, roads, railways, and airports, as well as secondary systems like sewerage and waste disposal, electricity and water supplies, and services at tourist destinations, is essential for enabling tourism (Boniface et al., 2020b).

This classification also include intricate infrastructural and super structural components that provide lodging options such as hostels, resorts, farms, hotels, caravan parks, vacation villages, campgrounds, residences, and guesthouses. These establishments consist of several types of restaurants, bars, and coffee shops that offer a diverse range of cuisines (Della Corte et al., 2015). In the context of tourism, the services and welcome provided at the front office, which are integral to the service delivery system and include staff interaction with consumers, are also valuable assets. The labour intensity metric is employed to ascertain the distinctive characteristics of a service (Boniface et al., 2020b).

In research conducted by Lijia (2015) on the impact of infrastructure on destination marketing in Beijing, it was observed that the local infrastructure, including roads, footbridges, and telecommunication, plays a crucial role in shaping the perception of a certain tourist destination. The report observed that Beijing has a highly developed

transport infrastructure, including well-maintained highways and a metro system for effective usage inside the city. With the exception of peak hours, the traffic was seen to flow smoothly. Nevertheless, the drivers of the local public transit, particularly the buses, were widely documented for their tendency to skip queues and disregard traffic regulations (Lijia, 2015).

Jovanović and Ilić (2016) argue that in order to achieve effective tourist growth, it is becoming increasingly evident that a more substantial investment in the modernisation of infrastructure is absolutely essential. Greater degree of tourism infrastructure development can enhance the effectiveness of producing and distributing tourist services, and, in certain instances, such as in distant locations, expand the availability of tourism services. Given the increasing dynamism and demands of the tourist industry, the issue of enhancing competitiveness rises to paramount importance. Consequently, the allocation of resources towards the enhancement of tourist infrastructure is increasingly recognised as a crucial element in building tourism competitiveness.

In a research on the accessibility of indigenous Australians as a tourist product, Simonsen (2015) underscored the significance of the road infrastructure. The indigenous Australians are predominantly situated in the geographically isolated regions of Australia, particularly in the southern region, namely in places like Cairns and other similar locations. According to Simonsen (2015), the roughness, geographical expanse, and infrastructure of this wilderness area limit the accessibility for tourists. The road infrastructure in the region frequently falls into an inaccessible condition during the wet season, which discourages prospective visitors from visiting the area.

Baričević, Marušić, and Malovrh (2017) argue that external transit accessibility significantly influences tourist development. In other words, poor accessibility represents a hindrance to the intended tourism growth. To mitigate the impact of poor transport accessibility on destination development, it is often necessary to invest in innovative transport solutions. These solutions include constructing new traffic infrastructure, introducing new traffic lines for all types of vehicles, expanding parking facilities in tourist destinations, and enhancing traffic and tourist signaling, as well as connecting to major traffic corridors.

Jin (2013) examined the impact of the level of mobility inside a place on the marketing of that region. The study focused on the experiences of visitors in China. The survey highlighted that Guangzhou as a pivotal tourist attraction in China, particularly renowned for its diverse exhibitions. Typically, the majority of visitors either travelled by air from their home countries or travelled from Hong Kong to the town via a two-hour direct train. Although the visitors had easy access to the city, the local transport within the city presented a significant difficulty. The utilization of local taxis presented several difficulties mostly related to language problems and the professional ethics of the taxi drivers. The survey observed that although Guangzhou city has a comprehensive metro system that covers many areas of the city, certain visitors rarely utilized it on account of their lack of knowledge and apprehension of getting lost.

The transportation infrastructure plays a crucial role in the tourist sector by providing access to various locations and connecting people, goods, and services to these desired attractions (Park, 2015). The transportation infrastructure, including the links between destinations by air, sea, and land, has a crucial role in shaping the perception of a certain tourist destination. It also determines the presence of support services such as petrol

stations, car repair facilities, hotels, and rest facilities for land transportation (Jin, 2013). The transport infrastructure has a significant impact on destination marketing through its influence on passenger travel patterns, holiday preferences, destination selection, and transportation mode. Hence, the availability of particular facilities varies based on the characteristics of the location, condition of the infrastructure, and effectiveness of the public transportation system. Transportation infrastructure plays a crucial role in shaping the perception of a certain destination. It is primarily responsible for facilitating convenient access to the tourist destination from the visitor's place and ensuring smooth movement inside the destination (Guat, 2013).

Transport infrastructure plays a crucial role in regional development and serves as a key determinant of economic activity (Brida, Deidda, & Pulina, 2014). In a separate study, Sakolnakorn, Naipinit, and Kroeksakul (2013) examined tourism in Phuket Island and investigated the transportation system to address its issues. They proposed enhancing public transportation and upgrading the island's road network as potential solutions to ameliorate the economic impact of these problems on the province.

Nuryyev et al. (2020) found that the adoption and effective use of technology improve customer service and ensure the uninterrupted operation of businesses. Multiple first investigations have verified the correlation between the use of contemporary technology and the overall sustainability of tourist competitiveness (Hinson & Boateng, 2007; Intan Salwani et al., 2009; Ren et al., 2015). Specifically, Mollah et al. (2022) emphasised the use and utilisation of contemporary technology in the advancement of tourism within the Asian setting. Their study delineated the beneficial contributions of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and artificial reality to the growth of tourism in

Asia, namely in the areas of scenic attractions, transportation, athletic events, catering, and lodging.

The study conducted by García et al. (2019) posited that smart technologies exert a substantial influence on the selection of tourism destinations. Additionally, a study conducted by Uwamariya et al. (2022) found a substantial impact of mobile payment on the competitive viability of the tourist industry. A recent study conducted by Amoako et al. (2022) shown that the use of new technologies has facilitated the interaction between tourist organisations and stakeholders through the means of conferences, seminars, and presentations.

Furthermore, Abou-Shouk et al. (2013) contended that technology advancement has enabled the creation of websites and other social media apps to promote the expansion of tourist businesses. Study findings indicate that tourism service providers with easily accessible websites offer sufficient and current information on ticket booking, hotels, lodging, and auto rentals to visitors, which greatly impacts their choice of destination. Several studies have been conducted to establish the significance of social media technologies in enhancing the competitiveness of the tourist industry.

Notable social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, and WeChat (Mohanty et al., 2022). Social networking platforms facilitate communication and information sharing between travellers and providers of tourism services. Social media platforms are the means by which tourist service providers disseminate information to prospective tourists, therefore facilitating their trip planning and destination selection (Osei & Abenyin, 2016). A study by Kotoua and Asiedu-Appiah (2022) demonstrates that social media has become a crucial instrument for travellers when selecting their destinations.

Khan et al. (2022) demonstrated that Facebook facilitated the distribution of information to visitors, therefore enhancing the intention of UK Muslim women to visit their destination. The empirical study conducted by Kim and Tussyadiah (2013) provided evidence of a favourable association between the use of social media and the competitive sustainability of tourism. Wang et al. (2022) provided more evidence of a statistically significant impact of social media usage on the competitive sustainability of tourism. According to Lucarelli and Heldt Cassel (2020), social media has facilitated the attainment of tourism competitive sustainability by tourist service providers by improving customer service, customer relationship management, and engagement with stakeholders.

The infrastructure index comprises three components: ecological sustainability, information and communication technologies (ICTs), and all-encompassing infrastructure.

Ecological sustainability include the optimisation of energy use, obtaining of quality certifications, and assessment of environmental performance index. Among the components of the general infrastructure sub index are equipment and machinery, industrial, commercial, and residential buildings, schools, railways, and so on. On the other hand, the ICTs sub index encompasses the online participation of citizens, online services provided by the government, ICT use, and access (WIPO, 2020).

The integration of ICTs is an essential element of intelligent tourism. Furthermore, the utilisation of mobile applications, digital signs, and social media platforms serves to augment the overall tourism experience. Most research on tourist innovation and the relationship between innovation and the environment have often focused on the business environment in connection to innovation (Madanaguli et al., 2021; Prajogo,

2016). The natural environment, as measured by OECD/Eurostat in 2019, has a significant impact on innovation through the choices made by enterprises. Probable environmental elements that contribute to this influence include air, water, and soil pollution, climate change, diseases, and pandemics.

The study conducted by Jacomossi et al. (2021) employed regression analysis and mediation models to ascertain the significance of ecological sustainability in the relationship between innovation and competitiveness across 119 nations. Empirical evidence indicates that ecological sustainability plays a crucial role in mediating the positive correlation between the two variables. The role of infrastructure in enabling collaborative business innovation at the local and regional level is widely seen as significant (Kringelum et al., 2021). A pyramid for innovation, akin to Maslow's hierarchy of requirements, was developed by Launonen and Viitanen (2011). In this pyramid, physical infrastructure and service structures are regarded as crucial and fundamental to the process of innovation.

Research conducted by Roche (2020) examined the impact of urban physical layouts on innovation. The author postulated that an increase in physically linked infrastructure would result in a greater prevalence of human interaction, thereby facilitating a more fortuitous sharing of knowledge, hence fostering creativity. The study findings indicate that differences in regional innovation can be attributed to changes in roadway network density rather than traditional geographical location analysis.

According to Ratten et al. (2019), tourism innovation refers to the implementation of innovative strategies that consider the available resources. Consequently, the level of tourism innovation is influenced by the existing infrastructure, which subsequently impacts the economic growth of the country or area. Enhancing infrastructure and

airport transport systems may significantly contribute to fostering tourist innovation and generating favourable economic growth (Campos, 2023). When a nation allocates resources to construct or enhance its infrastructure, it facilitates seamless entry for tourists to various locations, therefore stimulating tourism.

Moreover, the existence of a strong airport transportation infrastructure may enhance the mobility and dissemination of information across various destinations, therefore fostering the emergence of creative concepts that can be advantageous to the tourist industry. Furthermore, allocating resources into infrastructure and airport transport infrastructure has the potential to enhance the overall travel experiences for visitors, thereby resulting in a rise in tourism earnings. For instance, the establishment of new airports, the enhancement of current ones, and the improvement of road networks can enable more efficient and seamless linkages between various areas and effectively address the current obstacles to travel (Poulaki et al., 2022). These advancements have the potential to increase the appeal of a location to visitors, therefore resulting in a rise in tourism earnings.

Implementing effective infrastructure management to support tourist operations (Jovanović & Ivana, 2016) helps to generate prospects for economic diversification. The study conducted by Csapó et al. (2016) found that the efficacy of designs and infrastructure played a significant role in enhancing the perception of a tourist attraction. These attractions are improved by the consideration of five assessment criteria: genuineness, distinctiveness, promotion, visual appeal, and visitor turnout.

The World Economic Forum has recognized health and cleanliness as key factors that contribute to the competitiveness of a tourist resort. Improved education infrastructure, particularly in higher education, is necessary to enhance the economic development of

tourist destinations (Naidoo, 2016). The study conducted by Hanefeld et al. (2016) investigated the phenomenon of medical tourism in Thailand, which has gained significant recognition as a highly sought-after destination for medical tourists since the early 2000s. Since 2010, the research revealed that 167,000 tourists have been to Thailand seeking medical tourism help, predominantly from low to medium-income nations. The revenue and consumption generated by this medical tourism activity have had a beneficial impact on the growth of the tourist industry in a particular tourism location.

One of the objectives of Khatri's (2018) study was to determine the impact of infrastructure on the tourist performance in Lumbini, Nepal. The study utilized a descriptive survey research approach and included a sample of 184 individuals who visited the Lumbini sacred site. The study found that the performance of tourism in Nepal was impacted by infrastructural amenities, including high-quality housing, recreational facilities, efficient road transit, and expansive retail centers. Nevertheless, it was proved that Lumbini Religious Centre has a restricted Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) infrastructure, together with insufficient entertainment options. The research findings indicate that the quality of infrastructure has a significant impact on the tourist performance in Nepal.

Kavunkil (2017) highlights the significant potential of tourism infrastructure in attracting tourists and improving the viability of tourism enterprises. In the growth of this ever-increasing sector, infrastructure plays a unique and critical role. The decision-making process regarding the selection of tourist destinations is explicitly linked to the presence of tourism infrastructure. The tourism infrastructure serves as both the driving and attracting elements of the tourist sector. To achieve successful promotion in the

intended markets, a destination must be effectively distinguished from its competitors, or strategically positioned, in the eyes of the customers. An integral aspect of this positioning process is the development and control of a unique and attractive perception of the destination using suitable marketing tactics. These results align with the assertions made by Jovanović and Ilić (2016) that a greater degree of tourist infrastructure development may enhance the effectiveness of producing and distributing tourism services. Additionally, in certain situations, such as in distant locations, it can lead to an improved availability of tourism services.

Moreover, Yuksek, Akkoc, and Bayer (2016) suggest that the local transit has a substantial impact on the level of satisfaction with the holiday destination. Hence, destination management organisations or decision makers related to destinations should prioritise the provision of satisfactory local transportation for destination visitors. Given the importance of infrastructure and the user-friendliness of local transit, it is crucial to acknowledge that these factors have a substantial impact on overall destination satisfaction.

Infrastructure, in a broader context, is a crucial component of the tourism package. For example, road infrastructure improves the ability of tourists to reach various areas of the destination country, while well-developed airport infrastructure guarantees a smooth and comfortable transition for tourists between arriving and departing the plane. As such, communication infrastructure enables rapid and cost-effective communication between the source and destination countries, while also offering comprehensive information about the destination, hence minimising uncertainty, anxiety, and asymmetric information. Further infrastructure pertaining to security, medical,

wastewater, and energy, among other sectors, is also thought to contribute to the provision of more dependable services, therefore augmenting the appeal of the location.

2.2.3 Tourism Policy

Conventional tourism policy is a fundamental component of destination management (Guo, Jiang, & Shengchao, 2019). This study defines tourism policy as a collection of strategies, directives, rules, guidelines, regulations, and declarations that provide the foundation for decisions and actions taken by institutions and individuals to achieve tourism development and desired societal changes (Bryant, 2015; Guo, Jiang and Shengchao, 2019).

Tourism policy fulfils this function by establishing regulations and provisions for operators in the sector, outlining acceptable behaviours and activities, promoting a unified approach for all stakeholders in a destination, fostering agreement on the vision, goals, and strategy of the destination, providing a forum for public and private sector involvement and participation, and establishing connections with other sectors in an economy (Guo, Jiang and Shengchao, 2019; Hsu, Inbakaran & George, 2013). tourist policy enables forward-looking tourist planning and growth (Goffi, 2013). The function of tourist policy is to provide a comprehensive and enduring plan for a destination, rooted in the values of society, and significantly enhance the achievement of tourism competitiveness (Hsu, Inbakaran & George, 2013; Ismet & Abuhjeeleh, 2016).

An efficient tourist strategy ensures the growth of a destination and is assessed based on its clear and well-defined principles (Goffi, 2013; Guo, Jiang and Shengchao, 2019). These encompass a concentration on macro-level policy, namely the societal viewpoint and ideals on the trajectory of tourism growth at local, national, and international levels. More importantly, the policy should take into account the long-term vision or

sustainability requirements of tourism and allocate limited resources to address limitless possibilities in a very dynamic environment; follow the professional recommendations, namely research, knowledge, and experience on policy development and implementation; promote policies based on innovation and adaptability; eliminate obstacles while strengthening connections among different sectors; and guarantee consistency between subnational and national policies.

A comprehensive competitive model should assess a range of policy concerns, their interconnections, and their contribution to improving the attractiveness of tourist goods (Goffi, 2013). The analysis of tourism policy (Goffi, 2013) can be conducted at several levels, including site, regional, national, or international. For policy evaluation, it is important to take into account the level of community awareness about the tourism sector and its effects, the opportunities for participatory policy development and implementation, the support and capacity building from the community, the ability to meet the needs and expectations of stakeholders, and the integration of the tourism sector into the broader territorial industry (Goffi, 2013; Ismet & Abuhjeeleh, 2016).

The empirical study conducted by Hudson, Hunter, and Penckham (2019) reveals that policies do not simply fail due to their own characteristics; their effectiveness is influenced by the capacities to implement them. Hence, it is crucial to comprehend the intricacy of policies in relation to their development and execution in order to ensure the anticipated policy interventions. To avoid policy failure, one must be aware of the policy environment, which is often unpredictable and non-linear and mandates significant flexibility. Destinations should actively promote and facilitate access to information and develop institutional connections with both providers of tourism products and travellers as integral stakeholders.

The legitimacy and effectiveness of institutions, policies, strategies, and plans are determined by the level of stakeholder active involvement. These institutions and policies contribute to the achievement of a competitive and attractive destination (Goffi, 2013; Ndivo and Oketch, 2019; Velasco, 2016). Assessment of tourism policy as a component of destination management is conducted by analysing its indicators. Developed from previous empirical research, these indicators include destination values, vision, institutions and governance systems, participation strategy, and competitive strategy (Cloete, Wissink, & Coning, 2011; Goffi, 2013; Ndivo & Oketch, 2019; Velasco, 2016).

Tourism policies refer to a collection of discourses, practices, and regulations implemented by the government, typically in cooperation with social or corporate entities, with the aim of promoting tourism (Velasco, 2016). The implementation of policies and enabling circumstances can enhance the economic development of smart tourist destinations by providing incentives for enterprises to invest in these destinations, such as tax exemptions, grants, and other forms of financial assistance. Moreover, it establishes a conducive atmosphere for enterprises to function, by granting them access to infrastructure, technology, and other vital resources. Moreover, by implementing rules and establishing enabling conditions, destinations may be effectively maintained and retain their appeal to visitors, therefore contributing to the growth of tourist numbers and their spending.

In addition, governments should provide a conducive atmosphere that facilitates the growth and execution of intelligent tourism projects. This includes a robust legal and regulatory structure, laws that promote open data, and institutional structures that provide sufficient support. Thus, the implementation of a thorough travel strategy will

promote sustainable tourism (Escoto et al., 2019). It is imperative that these policies incorporate the environmental consequences of tourism, including the promotion of public transit, the encouragement of renewable energy sources, and the promotion of appropriate waste management. Access to dependable Internet and mobile services, together with the development of infrastructures that facilitate the use of digital technology, establishes the necessary circumstances for smart tourism. Implementing digital platforms for booking and payment, together with granting access to digital tools for marketing and promotion, will enhance the influx of tourist visitors, therefore fostering a favourable impact on the economic development of these places.

Likewise, the implementation of policies that promote cooperation between the commercial and public sectors through the establishment of a partnership aimed at developing breakthrough solutions for intelligent tourism would exert a beneficial impact on economic growth (Boes et al., 2015). Furthermore, the implementation of policies that promote investment in research and development will facilitate the identification of novel prospects for smart tourism, the creation of innovative technologies and services, and the engagement in innovative activities. Consequently, these efforts will yield a favourable impact on the economic growth of the smart tourism destinations.

Cao (2015) argues that a regulatory and policy framework is crucial for the growth of tourism as it greatly aids the attraction of tourists and contributes to the attainment of competitiveness. The responsibility of implementing ecotourism rules lies mostly with governments (Scott, 2022; Xin & Senin, 2022). Existing literature suggests that the regulatory framework is designed to promote active involvement of local communities

and facilitate the growth of eco-tourism (Basera et al., 2022; Karmoker & Ahmed, 2022; Sudini & Wiryani, 2022).

Accordingly, the regulatory framework is considered to be focused on sustainable tourism, with a particular emphasis on environmental and legal concerns (Freeland & Martin, 2022). Wu et al. (2022) said that the "14th Five-Year Plan" in the Green Concept framework seeks to promote tourist growth and regulate the water environment in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, China. Furthermore, Huseynli (2022) states that the National Tourism Strategy in Australia was implemented with the aim of developing a sustainable tourism industry that positively impacts the economic, environmental, and social components of society. Scholarly research has shown that a regulatory framework has a beneficial impact on the long-term competitiveness of the tourist industry (Aktürk, 2022; Bezvesilnaya et al., 2020).

A study conducted by Dredge et al. (2016) suggested that regulatory strategies in the hotel sector enhance both tourism development and sustainability. From a business environment standpoint, Rigelskú et al. (2021) observed a favourable impact of the business regulatory environment on the competitiveness of the tourist industry. A flexible regulatory framework improves the competitiveness of tourism by attracting visitors and foreigners for business and other reasons. Prior research indicates that a regulatory framework may greatly enhance visitors' selection of destinations (Ying et al., 2022; Zulvianti et al., 2022; Mensah & Blankson, 2013; Tasnim et al., 2022; Toivonen, 2022).

An enabling environment is essential for the successful implementation of intelligent tourist projects. This include a resilient telecommunications infrastructure, dependable electrical provision, and sophisticated cybersecurity protocols. Furthermore, the growth

of a prosperous smart tourism sector relies on access to finance, supporting legal and regulatory frameworks, and conducive macroeconomic conditions. The institution index, as defined by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), encompasses the corporate, regulatory, and political environment (WIPO, 2020).

The business environment encompasses the facilitation of bankruptcy resolution and private entrepreneurial activities, while the regulatory environment encompasses the perception of the government's capacity to develop and implement coherent policies to promote the private sector, assess the expenses associated with redundancy termination, and uphold the principles of the rule of law. The political environment encompasses the assessment of security, operational, and political risks, as well as the evaluation of the quality of civil and public services, policy development, and implementation.

The research conducted by Montanes-Del-Río and Medina-Garrido (2020) examined the social capital, intellectual capital, perceptual, sociodemographic, and economic indicators that influence the inclination of tourist businesses to innovate. Analysis of their research indicates that the inclination of tourist entrepreneurs to innovate is influenced by informal investment, educational attainment, age, and gender. Tourism innovation in the business environment is closely linked to the implementation of safe and sustainable transport methods, as part of a strategic approach to logistics and mobility at both regional and national scales (Kelemen et al., 2018). This will have a significant influence on the economy. An appropriate regulatory framework and policy approach are selected depending on the expertise of the government and the prevailing political conditions (Rigelsky et al., 2021). Instability in the political landscape (Nadeem et al., 2020) and corruption have been shown to impact innovation (Xie et al., 2019). Mattsson and Orfila-Sintes (2014) argue that in cases of political instability or

inadequate implementation of favourable and effective policies by the government, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in tourism often face a lack of capacity and knowledge necessary for survival and growth, which are essential for foster innovation. Furthermore, this might lead to a decrease in the tourist demand for these areas. As the tourism sector is mostly driven by demand, such a decrease will result in a lack of inherent motivation to exhibit creative work behaviour (Surya et al., 2022). In the context of tourism, Amoah et al. (2021) shown that pricing is a significant factor that drives travellers. The cost imposed on visitors is of utmost importance in their decision-making process about a place, since it encompasses expenses related to lodging, transportation, and toll/service charges. Academic literature has shown that price plays a crucial role in determining the competitive sustainability of tourism. Research undertaken by Richards (2014) unveiled that tourism price tactics encompass tickets, hotel pricing policy, cost-effective lifestyles, parking facilities, and service diversity.

The research conducted by Elgarhy (2022) concluded that the pricing strategy of travel agencies in Egypt has a substantial and noteworthy impact on their competitiveness in the tourist industry. Their research provided more evidence that tourism pricing methods have a favourable impact on the selection of tourist destinations. Furthermore, Mensah-Ansah et al. (2011) contended that the destination selection of visitors is favourably influenced by the price strategy of tourism, thereby leading to the attainment of competitive sustainability in the tourism industry. The study conducted by He et al. (2019) provided convincing evidence of a direct correlation between pricing strategy and the competitive sustainability of tourism.

Moreover, the study conducted by Wahyuningdyah et al. (2019) investigated pricing techniques designed to enhance the competitiveness of tourism. Their study revealed that crucial tourist services, service quality, information accessibility, physical elements, and pricing strategy had a favourable impact on attaining competitive sustainability in the tourism industry. The implementation of pricing strategies enhances the competitive sustainability of the tourist industry (Ahmadi & Ghasemi, 2022; Magdalena & Sondakh, 2022). The price mechanism facilitates the competitiveness of tourism destinations in managing their pricing strategies.

A tourism strategy encompasses the mechanisms that guarantee the growth of a tourist destination. Successful growth of a tourism destination requires the formulation and efficient implementation of policies, together with strategic planning of measures to enhance the competitiveness of the destination. It is imperative to explicitly define the responsibility for the development of the tourist attraction, which should be shared by community members and government officials.

2.2.4 Supporting Environment

Customer relations management, business resource planning, and knowledge management are among the many domains in which support systems may be implemented. These support systems collect precise information as to the resources available at the destination. Chin et al. (2018) propose that support systems are essential in providing those responsible for managing tourist destinations with precise information to make informed decisions on infrastructure development, policies, and the advancement of stakeholders. Swarbrooke (2012) asserts that there is a scarcity of empirical research on support networks within the tourist sector.

According to Boniface et al. (2020), amenities are shown as auxiliary elements rather than standalone tourism attractions. Tourism attractions activities are of utmost significance in a location as they contribute to the overall satisfaction and enjoyment of tourists throughout their vacation (Dodds & Butler, 2019). Additionally, services such as entertainment, financial services, shopping and recreation facilities, police force, information centres, health centres, tourism agents, housekeeping, internet services, printing, insurance, wholesaling and retailing contribute to facilitating and enhancing the travel experience for visitors (Boniface et al., 2020b).

An environment lacking quality indicators is not only unappealing to tourists, but also diminishes their pleasure (Chi & Han, 2020). Furthermore, there is a substantial degree of overlap between attractions and amenities. A resort, for instance, has the potential to develop into a standalone attraction, even if its main purpose is provision of catering services. Lack of adequate technology and transportation infrastructure at a destination can have a detrimental impact on visitors' experience, leading to less satisfaction and a decreased likelihood of revisiting (Choo et al., 2016).

The tourist information centre enhances the traveller experience by implementing a visitor programmes that offer reliable information about the destination. A travel information centre is a tangible establishment where tourists may obtain information on a certain destination. This information hub facilitates the connection between tourists and suppliers. Tourism destinations should allocate resources towards the establishment of information centres since they enhance visitor satisfaction, so encouraging them to prolong their stay and increase their expenditure by offering a wider range of information services and goods at a specific location (Su et al., 2016).

Meyer and Meyer (2015) assert that regional authorities have the responsibility of ensuring the advancement of the developmental progress of residents. Historically, regional governments and authorities had a restricted responsibility to guarantee the success of a tourist destination. Nevertheless, regional governments and authorities have lately acknowledged their responsibility to actively assist destinations in the growth of tourism.

Official dedication of the government to the advancement of tourism, Kubickova and Hengyun (2017) argue that regional governments play a crucial role in ensuring the proper development of the tourist industry. Second, regional governments and authorities are unable to effectively intervene in the tourist industry and may discourage tourism growth by imposing unnecessary regulations. In recent times, Chen et al. (2016) argue that regional governments and authorities have been increasingly recognising the importance of the tourist industry.

A study conducted by Bulatovic and Rajovic (2015) examined the factors that influence the competitiveness of enterprises in north-eastern Montenegro between July 2012 and August 2013. The findings indicate that safety and security rank as the fourth most important driver of tourist destination competitiveness in the "qualifying and amplifying" category, with a significance value of 3.43 out of five. Armed conflicts, xenophobia, acts of violence, and heinous crimes intensify the reluctance of tourists (particularly foreign tourists) to visit a tourist location.

A perception of a tourist area as hazardous, which is a primary need, will result in a reduction in the number of visitors and immediately impact consumption. Before visiting a tourist site, it is often advisable for a visitor to ascertain the level of safety and security they will experience throughout their journey. Among the many aspects

that contribute to safety and security, physical safety is the most important. The ancillary infrastructure of a tourist location serves to enhance the primary resources in drawing tourists and, thus, enhancing competitiveness. The infrastructure provides a basis for the development of the tourist industry, including transportation, water, sanitation, communication networks, and amenities associated with community services offered by a financial institution, capital, and human resources.

2.3 Theoretical Review

As defined by Collins and Stockton (2018), a theory is a collection of interconnected ideas, definitions, and propositions that provide a systematic perspective on phenomena by establishing relationships among variables in order to explain or predict those phenomena. According to Börner, Bueckle, and Ginda (2019), the theoretical framework serves to present and elucidate the theory that provides an explanation for the existence of the research topic being investigated. A theoretical framework comprises several ideas, combined with their definitions and references to pertinent scholarly literature, as well as established theories that are employed in a specific study. Theoretical framework illustrates the current understanding of theories and concepts that are pertinent to the study issue and are connected to the wider domains of knowledge under examination. The Competitiveness Model was used to establish a framework for the research undertaken in this study.

2.3.1 Competitiveness Model

The Ritchie & Crouch model (2000, 2003) is widely recognised as the primary conceptual model of destination competitiveness in tourism literature. It has served as the foundation for several subsequent research investigations on destination competitiveness. Ritchie & Crouch (2003) define competitiveness as the capacity to

achieve higher tourism spending, attract more visitors, deliver satisfying and memorable experiences, and do so in a profitable manner, while also improving the welfare of local residents and conserving the natural resources of the destination for future generations.

Dwyer & Kim (2003) operationalise the Ritchie & Crouch (2000) paradigm by devising precise indicators. The model clearly highlights demand condition and situational variables as other important elements that contribute to determining destination competitiveness. A well recognised model on tourist competitiveness is the one developed by Crouch & Ritchie in 1999 and then expanded upon in 2000 and 2003. Crouch and Ritchie (1999) argued that the revitalisation of regional and local traditions significantly contributed to the growth of tourism.

Location competitiveness, as defined by Dwyer & Kim (2003), refers to the capacity of a location to provide products and services that outperform other destinations in the specific elements of the tourism experience that travellers evaluate as significant. This study employed the theoretical framework of Ritchie and Crouch's model of destination competitiveness as proposed by Kovačević et al. (2018). The competitiveness of a location may be understood as being intrinsically influenced by the strength of its core resources, the diversity of attractions, the associated resources, and the effectiveness of the management structure.

The components "core resources and key attractors," "tourism policy," and "destination management" are derived from the Richie & Crouch model implemented in 2000. They categorise two subcomponents, namely "hospitality" and "infrastructure," under the umbrella term "supporting factors and resources". Within this paradigm, they are considered distinct elements from "conditioning and supporting factors". Numerous

scholars (Pearce, 1981; Murphy, 1985; Inskeep, 1991; Gunn, 2002) emphasise the significance of these components, considering them as distinct fundamental constituents.

Furthermore, in accordance with Ritchie & Crouch (2000), the model clearly acknowledges the demand function as a crucial driver, as demonstrated by Dwyer & Kim (2003). As specified by Crouch and Ritchie (1999). Principal considerations in the development of a product and the transfer of value to visitors include core resources, major attractors, and tourism services. They are intricately and immediately interconnected with the demand factor. Their vital function is to serve as the primary drivers for visiting a tourist site. In addition, there exists a sophisticated framework of necessary conditions for achieving competitiveness in a destination. These concerns pertain to the domains of "tourism policy" (TPPD) and "destination management".

Tourism policy establishes the principles and specific instructions for the sustained growth and development of a tourist destination. Destination management is closely and directly linked to the development of the tourism product and manages its components in the short term. Factors that condition and support a location can either limit or enhance its competitiveness. "General infrastructures" serve as the fundamental supporting structures for the development of a prosperous tourism sector. "General infrastructures," "conditioning and supporting factors," "TPPD," and "destination management" refer to the actions and situations that facilitate the execution of primary operations.

The terms "TPPD" and "destination management" are consolidated into a bigger category. Furthermore, "TPPD" is connected in a forward direction to the category "destination management". This suggests that while tourism policy establishes a

structure for the long-term development of a competitive destination, destination management addresses its many aspects within a limited time frame to guarantee economic profitability and prevent the deterioration of the elements that constitute the competitive position of a destination (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999).

The primary factors that influence tourists to select a certain place over another are core resources and significant attractions. There exist several categories of attractors, such as natural, cultural, events, activities, etc., which serve as the basis for a remarkable experiencing. In the context of tourism destinations, natural resources are widely regarded as key assets. A natural resource is an essential component of the natural environment that may be utilised by people, including for tourism, given the prevailing economic, social, cultural, and institutional circumstances. The growing recognition among scholars in the field of tourism of the interconnections between tourism and natural resource management has led to a substantial corpus of scholarly literature investigating this matter.

Mihalić (2000) emphasises that an effectively controlled destination environment serves as the most effective marketing tool for a location. A tourist site must safeguard the authenticity and appeal of its own product, as well as defend against the activities and competition of rivals (Murphy 1995). Culture resources may be identified by three characteristics: historical and archaeological sites, artistic and architectural elements, and "cultural attractors".

Culture, as interpreted in a broad sense, is a second very influential aspect of destination appeal (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Over the past twenty years, several literary works have been written on this increasingly popular topic (Richards, 1996, 2007; Richards & Munsters, 2010; Boniface, 1995; Walle, 1998; McKercher & du Cros, 2002; Sigala

& Leslie, 2005; Smith, 2003, 2009; Smith & Robinson, 2006). One significant percentage of foreign visitors are now classified as cultural tourists (Richards, 1996). A destination's cultural and historical attractions exert a substantial influence on prospective visitors (Ritchie & Zins, 1978; Cohen, 1988; Prentice, 1993; Murphy, et al., 2000).

Events, recreational pursuits, vibrant nightlife, and shopping are also major incentives for visiting a location (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Events have the potential to prolong the duration of the seasonal cycle, particularly in tourist sites that naturally experience seasonality (Getz, 1989, 1991; Hall, 1987; Faulkner, 2003). Hallmark events have the potential to elicit significant levels of interest among visitors and offer various benefits (Hall, 1992). The documented literature extensively studies the ability of events to attract a large number of tourists and generate tourism expenditures, so making a significant economic contribution to tourist destinations (Getz, 1997; Shone & Parry, 2001; Van der Wagen, 2002; Yeoman et al., 2003; Raj et al., 2008; Allen et al., 2008; Bowdin et al., 2010; Robinson, 2010).

The range of activities is becoming increasingly important as visitors increasingly seek experiences that surpass the predominantly passive tourism of the past (Poon, 1993). Furthermore, entertainment may serve as a significant provider to the tourism industry (Hughes, 2000). Perceived distinctiveness, rather than quantity, may determine its significant role in the destination competitive strategy (Dwyer & Kim 2003). Shopping is often regarded as one of the most frequently engaged in activities by travellers.

The phenomenon of shopping tourism may also be regarded as a means to rejuvenate conventional metropolitan hubs, declining resorts, and even rural regions (Jansen-Verbeke, 1991). This paper by Timothy (2005) offers a thorough analysis of the

interconnections among tourist, leisure, and retail. Among the main attractions are also gastronomy and traditional crafts. Thorough investigation of the relationship between food and tourism has been overlooked until lately. Gourmet cuisine has a crucial role in determining the genuineness of a tourist resort (Sedmak & Mihalić, 2008).

Hjalager & Richards (2002) investigate the function of cuisine as both a means of defining regional identity and as a driver of economic growth in tandem with tourism. In response to the growing number of tourists, the business sector develops specialised services to cater to the visitors, resulting in the region acquiring the typical features of a tourist destination (Laws, 1999). This factor encompasses the categories of "quality", "quantity", and "environmental friendliness" of tourist lodgings, as well as "food service quality" and "tourist-oriented services". The concept of hospitality has been described as the fundamental nature of tourism (Page, 2003: 254) and plays a crucial role in creating economic advantages for the community (Cooper et. Al, 1998). An essential aspect of hospitality is the concept of quality (Qu, Ryan & Chu, 2000). This topic has been extensively investigated in several research papers (e.g., Sargeant & Mohamad, 1999; Tsang & Qu, 2000; Briggs, Sutherland, Drummond, 2007).

One of the most important types of tourist lodgings for many countries is hotels, which attract a larger number of tourists and generate more income (Page, 2003). In their study, Go, Pine, and Yu (1994) found evidence of a reciprocal relationship between the economic development of a location and the performance of hotels. However, several methodologies in literature only discuss a restricted range of factors related to the competitiveness of the hotel business. Less emphasis has been placed on constructing a complete framework (Tsai, Song & Wong, 2009).

Similar to the hotel sector, the provision of quality culinary services is essential to provide the utmost satisfaction for guests. The food services encompass conventional dining establishments, quick-service restaurants, cafeterias, and convenient travel meal services available in hotels, motels, and airports. During the last twenty years, the food industry has experienced remarkable growth, particularly in the fast-food sector. While the fast food sector is seeing the fastest growth, it is important not to disregard the high-quality segment and the local and traditional restaurants. A significant portion of the tourist industry relies on consumer demand for unique and genuine experiences (Sedmak & Mihalić, 2008).

Establishing general infrastructures is essential for the development of a tourist destination, especially in underdeveloped nations or regions with inadequate infrastructures (Heraty, 1989). In order to effectively attract tourists, a location must have not only abundant resources and attractions, but also the necessary assistance from other fundamental components (Gunn, 2002). Naturally occurring resources of tourism lack inherent economic worth. By way of illustration, a picturesque valley lacks inherent economic worth if the sole entities capable of appreciating the landscape are the indigenous animals.However, constructing a road into the valley, thereby granting visitors access, does indeed offer value (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999).

This variable encompasses the infrastructure of public roads and transportation, the communication infrastructure, the medical care facilities, as well as the sanitation and sewage systems. The works of Kaul (1985), Prideaux (2000), and Khadaroo & Seetanah (2007) provide valuable insights into the fundamental importance of transport infrastructure in achieving effective tourist growth. The significance of passenger transport has been widely acknowledged in both the field of tourist planning (Gunn,

2002; Hall, 2000; Inskeep, 2001) and the broader academic literature on tourism (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003; Cooper et al., 1998; Page, 2003).

Telecommunications play a crucial role in the tourism industry, facilitating the functioning of lodging and sightseeing services, as well as catering to the needs of tourists, particularly those who are business travellers. Furthermore, this factor is comprised of additional characteristics associated with general infrastructures that are not particular to tourism, such as medical care facilities and cleanliness. Ensure that the minimal sanitation and hygienic standards are maintained is a necessary condition for the growth of tourism. Similarly, sufficient medical care facilities are crucial in all locations, including tourist destinations (Inskeep, 1991).

Conditioning and supporting elements have the potential to either enhance or diminish the influence of all other measures that determine the competitiveness of a place. This variable includes metrics pertaining to the ease of access to a place and the network of connections with other tourist destinations. The correlation between the provisions of unrestricted access to destination attraction sites and the close proximity to other tourist attractions is closely linked to the infrastructure problem. Accessibility pertains to the ease of reaching a place, which is determined by geographical factors and conditions imposed by transportation services.

The proximity to other tourist towns can significantly impact the tourism growth of a place (Gunn, 2002); it is further impacted by the availability of transit amenities. The connection between a destination and its main source markets relies on the professional, organisational, and personal connections that motivate individuals to visit the destination. The task for destination managers is to identify how to effectively utilise these connections to encourage and facilitate travel to the destination area (Ritchie &

Crouch, 2003). Two other factors considered in this determinant are "value for money in accommodation" and "value for money in destination tourist experience". One significant factor that contributes to the appeal of a tourist location is the comparative cost of using tourist facilities and services within that destination, in relation to similar places (Inskeep, 1991).

The cost that visitors incur to visit and fully experience a tourism site significantly influences the decision-making process of travellers (Crouch, 1992). Price competitiveness refers to the differences in market prices of destinations, taking into account fluctuations in currency rates, the productivity levels of different parts of the tourism sector, and qualitative elements that influence the appeal of a location (Dwyer Forsyth, Rao, 2000). Many variables pertain to the state of the local enterprises. Wall & Mathieson (2006) argue that in order to fully realise the capacity of the tourism sector to contribute to the local economy, it is crucial that local producers are used to the greatest extent feasible.

Page (2005) analyses the challenges related to managing the highly dispersed operations of various firms in the tourist industry, such as accommodation and hospitality services, tour agencies, merchants, visitor attractions, and transportation services. A comprehensive analysis of the many facets of tourist business management is conducted by Moutinho (2000). Regarding the issue of skill levels, Choy (1995) notes that the abundance of hotels, restaurants, and bars in the tourist sector may lead one to suggest that the business is comparatively less competent. The significant technological advancements in the tourist industry have increased the competitiveness of firms and raised the expectations of customers. Baum (1995) contends that both skill levels and human resource management may strategically contribute to the task of enhancing the

quality of the tourism offering and strengthening the market position of tourist destinations. In 1997, Rimmington & Kozak asserted that the use of information technology (IT) by tourist companies had the potential to design and develop top-tier tourism destinations and organisations. Buhalis & Cooper (1998) observed that the future competitiveness of the tourist sector will primarily rely on the various telecommunication technologies employed. The predictions have materialised: empirical data indicates that operators and locations lacking a well-established telecommunication infrastructure are less adept at reaching prospective visitors and effectively managing clients.

This factor is also linked to three other variables: "The quality of our hospitality towards tourists is excellent", "the quality of the environment", and "the level of safety". The hospitality exhibited by inhabitants is a crucial component of the ultimate tourist experience. The threshold of tolerance for tourism may be characterized as a social carrying capacity, since surpassing this threshold would need detrimental consequences for the sector, as an unwelcoming environment will diminish the appeal of the location (Murphy, 1985).

The attractiveness of a site is significantly influenced by the "quality of the environment" as tourism and environment are intricately interconnected (Butler, 2000). Among increasingly competitive business environments, the amicable interaction between visitors and the local community of tourist locations is a crucial factor. Furthermore, this determinant incorporates the quality of "safety". Throughout the holiday, there exists a potential hazard of violence directed at visitors. High levels of security issues are more prevalent in specific locations experiencing fast growth. The study conducted by Sonmez and Graefe in 1998 revealed that perceived hazards and

safety concerns were more influential factors in determining the inclination to avoid selecting certain holiday destinations. There exists a vast body of literature on tourism planning that focusses on different aspects. Notable contributions include Gunn's expertise in spatial planning (Gunn, 2002), Murphy's research on a community approach (Murphy, 1985), Hall's emphasis on the many levels of planning (Hall, 2000), and Inskeep's comprehensive approach (Inskeep, 1991). Tourism policy refers to a collection of regulations, rules, guidelines, directives, and development/promotion goals and strategies that establish a structure for making decisions that directly impact the long-term advancement of tourism and daily activities in a destination (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003).

According to Hall (2000), effective tourist planning requires a multifaceted and unified strategy that acknowledges the interconnectedness of resources, services, facilities, and infrastructures with each other and with the social, cultural, and natural surroundings. The planning for tourism is not limited to tourism alone and encompasses various aspects such as development, infrastructure, land and resource use, organisation, and human resource management. It involves different structures including government, quasi-government, and non-governmental organisations, and operates at different scales including international, transnational, national, regional, local, and site levels spanning different time periods (Hall, 2000).

In 1986, Getz conducted a comprehensive analysis of 150 models of tourist planning and categorised them into several groups. Getz (1987) categorises tourist planning under four overarching traditions, which are not mutually exclusive: boosterism, an economic/industry-focused strategy, a physical/spatial approach, and a community-focused strategy. An essential goal of tourist planning is to integrate the growth of

tourism with the social and economic aspects of a community (Gunn, 2002). It is necessary to strategically design destination locations with consideration for the social, environmental, and economic consequences to reduce user conflicts and environmental strain.

Failure to adequately consider the elements that determine economic, social, and environmental sustainability might result in unfavourable outcomes (Hall, 2000). Hence, the several indicators associated with this factor pertain to the preservation of the environment and the reduction of adverse social and cultural consequences. Furthermore, this determinant also encompasses factors related to the level of dedication of the governmental sector in optimising the economic influence of tourism on the local population. It is imperative for any tourism plan to effectively address the long-term economic requirements of the local population (Ritche & Crouch, 2003).

Numerous scholars argue that the economic advantages derived from tourism should be evenly distributed around the population (Müller, 1994; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Wall & Mathieson, 2006). The tourist business should focus its efforts on enhancing the employment of local workers. This too relies on the dedication of the public sector to tourism and hospitality education. The prioritisation of community empowerment is crucial for enhancing the skills and abilities of those employed in the tourist sector. This approach is significant for generating positive effects that are beneficial to the communities residing in the destination (Wall & Mathieson, 2006). Collaboration between public sector entities, collaboration between the public and commercial sectors, and focus on community participation in decision-making processes.

Wall & Mathieson (2006) argue that organisations at every hierarchical level should strive to synchronise their growth and planning efforts. According to Gunn (2002), a

crucial aspect of effective planning would involve increased cooperation across public sector entities. This is because the fragmentation of policy rules and management practices has a significant negative impact on the competitiveness of a tourist destination. Considerable focus has been directed towards the significance of collaboration between the public and commercial sectors in facilitating the development of a tourism destination. An effective tourism strategy depends on a synchronised approach to the design, development, management, and marketing of the destination (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003).

Though tourism policy establishes a structure for the long-term development of a competitive destination, destination management addresses its many aspects within a short time frame to guarantee economic profitability while preventing the deterioration of the elements that constitute the competitive position of a destination (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). A study by Swarbrooke (1999) asserts that no single kind of tourism is intrinsically more sustainable or superior to any other. Effective management of any type of tourism can provide a high level of sustainability, while inadequate management of any form of tourism may result in its unsustainable nature. Numerous academic publications have addressed the prominent topic of destination management in tourism literature, including works by Laws (1995), Ritchie and Crouch (2003), Weaver and Lawton (2006), Buhalis and Costa (2006), and Wang and Pizam (2011).

The indicators are derived from the primary empirical models of destination competitiveness, and are further enhanced by indicators which are deduced from the conceptual models of destination competitiveness and the broader literature in the fields of tourism policy, planning, and management. The selection is determined based on the capacity of each factor to pinpoint the key elements that enhance the competitiveness

of a place. As recommended by Miller (2001), the first factor to consider when choosing the indicators is their policy relevance.

The indicators lack a comprehensive approach to addressing the complexities associated with the notion of tourist sustainability. Specifically, they fail to adequately prioritise the social, cultural, and economic aspects of sustainability, as well as the challenges related to collaboration. Hence, the fundamental components of sustainability, encompassing economic, social, and environmental aspects (Swarbrooke, 1999), are transformed into precise metrics. An important reference point for selecting the indicators is offered by the "Tourism Development's Magic Pentagon" (Müller, 1994).

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework illustrates the correlation between the independent and dependent variables, as seen in Figure 2.1. The independent variable in this study was the factors that influence the growth of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County. These factors include resources, infrastructure, supportive environment, and tourism governance. The study focused on the dependent variable of tourist destination development. An independent variable is a variable that is intentionally changed or adjusted to quantify its impact on a dependent variable. Conversely, a dependent variable is a variable that is influenced by changes in other variables and reflects the observable outcome that occurs when another variable is manipulated (Saunders et al., 2019).

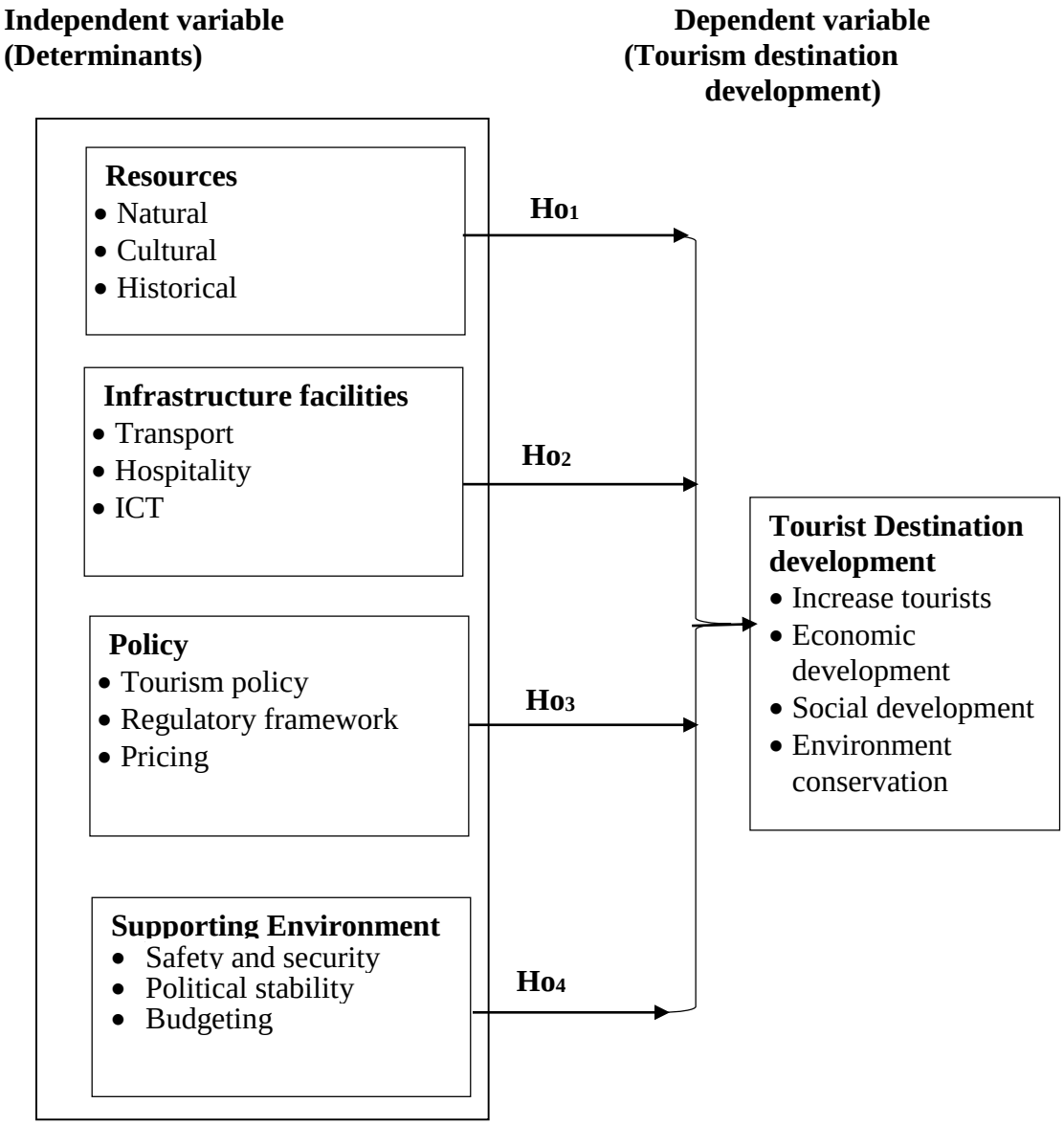

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Adapted and modified from Ritchie & Crouch (2000)

2.5 Summary

A considerable number of studies have examined viewpoints from both the demand and supply sides. To improve the empirical approach for evaluating wine heritage and cultural destination competitiveness in the North of Portugal, Salvado and Joukes (2021) incorporate the perspectives of travellers and tourism practitioners. When analysed from the viewpoints of both the demand and supply sides, most scales only incorporate characteristics that are measurable by all parties involved (Abreu-Novais et al., 2016). Supply-side players, namely service providers, possess extensive information about their targeted market.

Previous studies have examined the competitiveness of tourist sites that are either nature-based (Mustafa et al., 2021), culture-based (Eddyono et al., 2021), or a combination of both (Guizzardi et al., 2021). The majority of studies adopt a demand-side methodology, and current research on the Tourism Development Cost (TDC) of nature-based destinations is being carried out in Brazil (Dos Anjos & Da Rosa, 2021). The little amount of detailed knowledge that visitors have about a certain destination development and its rivals, resulting from the short duration tourists spend at that specific destination, is a critique of this strategy. Thus, the objective of this study was to identify the factors that influence the growth of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive account and elucidation of the methodological approach employed in the study, encompassing the study area, research paradigm, research design, target population, and sample processes. In addition, it addresses techniques and tools for collecting data, the validity and dependability of the data, pilot testing, data analysis and presentation, and ethical concerns.

3.1 Research Paradigm

The present work was informed by the philosophical framework of pragmatism. The decision to use a pragmatic perspective in this research was strengthened by Simpson and den Hond (2022), who examined the current relevance of classical pragmatism in the analysis of organisation and organised systems. The study confirmed pragmatism as a philosophy focused on processes and its emphasis on experience as both the beginning and conclusion of investigation. It argued that this philosophy provides an important foundation for the study of organisation and organising. This decision was based on the recognition that pragmatism offers a philosophical position that is consistent with the methodological aspects of both qualitative and quantitative research. The mixed methods research strategy employed in this study very well with pragmatic perspectives of addressing problems with the aim of obtaining comprehensive information. An inherent benefit of employing mixed methods research in this study was the ability to address confirmatory enquiries pertaining to the research issue at hand by means of closed-ended questionnaires and interviews.

3.2 Research Design

The present study employed an explanatory design in order to assess the associations between variables. The chosen design was appropriate as the study primarily focused on measuring a correlation or deliberately comparing groups in order to establish a cause-effect relationships. The explanatory design enables the deployment of questionnaires and thus the application of inferential statistics to determine the significance of the correlation between independent and dependent variables.

The study was of a quantitative character, where hypotheses were examined by empirically evaluating the correlations between variables. Also included was an explanatory sequential mixed methods design. The design exhibited the highest degree of simplicity across mixed method methods. The primary aim of explanatory sequential mixed methods designs is to augment the explanation and interpretation of the results obtained from a predominantly quantitative investigation by including qualitative data.

An explanatory sequential mixed methods approach, as proposed by Creswell and Clark (2011), involves the first collection of quantitative data followed by the subsequent collection of qualitative data to provide further explanation or elaboration on the quantitative findings. The justification for this method is that while quantitative data and findings offer a broad understanding of the study issue, a more detailed examination, particularly through qualitative data gathering, is necessary to elucidate this overall picture. An inherent advantage of its design was its simplicity. The implementation process was straightforward since the steps can be divided into distinct and well-defined stages.

3.3 Study Area

The county of Elgeyo Marakwet is one of the 47 devolved entities in Kenya (Elgeyo Marakwet County, 2018). Adjacent to the North is West Pokot County, to the East is Baringo County, to the Northwest is Trans Nzoia County, and to the West is Uasin Gishu County. The overall number of households in Elgeyo Marakwet County is 99,861.

The county is geographically partitioned into three distinct topographic zones: Highlands, Kerio Valley, and Escarpment. These zones are all separated by the prominent Elgeyo Escarpment. Each of the three zones has exhibited a distinct pattern of settlement. The Highlands, accounting for 49 percent of the county's total area, are highly inhabited because of their abundant rich soils and consistent annual rainfall. The Escarpment and the Kerio Valley constitute 11% and 40% of the geographic area, respectively. Originating in the southern mountains of the county, the Kerio River flows into Lake Turkana (Elgeyo Marakwet County, 2021).

The county has two forest habitats, notably Kaptagat and Cherangany, and boasts the second highest forest cover in Kenya, accounting for 37.6%. These ecosystems serve as the origin of several rivers that constitute the primary water divide paralleling the Escarpment. Adjacent to the water split is the Kerio catchment region, which empties into Lake Turkana, while the Lake Victoria Basin, located to the west of the divide, empties into Lake Victoria. The rivers comprising the Lake Victoria Basin include Moiben, Chepkaitit, and Sabor.

The Kerio catchment region comprises the Kerrer River and the adjacent Kerio River. Additional prominent rivers in the county include Torok, Chesegon, Embobut, Embomon, Arror, Mong, and Kimwarer. The watercourses that flow into the Kerio River provide significant potential for facilitating irrigation operations and producing hydro-electric power. The Kerio Valley is an additional ecological zone located in Elgeyo Marakwet County, 2021.

The County presents a somewhat temperate climate characterised by fluctuating levels of precipitation across its territory. The presence of three discernible agro-ecological zones, namely the highlands to the west, the escarpment (hanging valley), and the lowlands (valley) to the east, is attributed to the geomorphology/topography. The significant disparity in height, ranging from 900 m above sea level in the Kerio Valley to more than 3000 m above sea level in the highlands, leads to substantial variations in meteorological conditions (Elgeyo Marakwet County, 2021).

Furthermore, the county is renowned for its distinctive tourist niches, such as the Rimoi National Game Reserve, athletics, paragliding, and the vibrant culture of its people, all of which contribute to the county's earnings. Within the tourism sub-sector, the county aims to enhance the profile of Rimoi National Game Reserve as a prominent tourist destination. Additionally, the county seeks to capitalise on the opportunities presented by various tourism niches like as extreme sports, vibrant culture, and sports tourism (Elgeyo Marakwet County, 2018).

3.4 Target Population

The target population of a research refers to a subset of persons selected from the overall population who possess similar traits and may be utilised to make generalisations about specific phenomenon in the tourist destination. As summarised in Table 3.1, the target population consisted of 99986 respondents, including 99,861 household heads, 23 Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife personnel, two county government staff members (Chief Officer and Director in the ministry of tourism and culture), and 100 tourists.

3.5 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

In the context of sample selection, sampling techniques refer to the precise procedures employed. Statistical sampling design is the process of choosing a subset of the population to accurately represent the whole population for a research project (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). It is a systematic approach of gathering observed variables for a certain research utilising a predetermined strategy.

3.5.1 Sampling Procedures

This study used stratified random sampling to choose respondents from tourist destinations who possessed vital information specifically related to the growth of their respective destinations. Respondents were selected using a multi-stage sample method that included stratified, simple random, and purposive selection. Stratified sampling was employed to classify the respondents into several groups, each of which was designated as a stratum. To determine the necessary sample size, a stratified random sampling approach was used (Sharma, 2017). A total of 437 respondents were selected from each strata using stratified

simple random selection. So assuring that each responder had an equal chance of being included (Taherdoost, 2016a).

The study used stratified sampling to subdivide the county into four sub-counties, each constituting a strata. Furthermore, the sub-counties were divided into 20 wards. The basic random sample method was used to choose 398 household heads from the 20 wards. Personnel employed by the Chief Officer and Director of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, as well as the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, in the county were chosen by purposive sampling.

A systematic sampling technique was employed to choose 30 visitors. The researcher designates a specific sample size from the population and a set of regular interval numbers to determine the individuals included in the sample. Under this sample technique, travellers were chosen automatically based on a pre-established pattern. The systematic sampling approach guaranteed that every visitor had an equal chance of being included in the sample.

3.5.2 Sample Size

The sample size refers to the specific number of individuals or subjects chosen from the population to take part in the research (Denscombe, 2017). The formula proposed by Yamane (1967) offers a simpler method for calculating the sample size (n);

$$\mathbf{n} = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = the sample size; **N** = the population size; **e** = the acceptance sampling error

= 99861/1+ 99861 $(0.05)^2$

= 398

From the target population of 99986 respondents, a sample size of 437 comprising of seven Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife employees, two county government staff comprising of (CO/Director) and 30 tourists selected as indicated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Sampling Frame

Category of Respondent	Target Population	Sample size
Tourism and wildlife ministry staff	23	7
County government staff	2	2
Tourists	100	30
Households	99861	398
Total	**99986**	**437**

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The research employed original data. Primary data, as defined by Groenland & Dana (2020), refers to data that is extracted directly from firsthand events and has not undergone any processing or manipulation. The collection of primary data was conducted using standardised questionnaires and an interview schedule. The study conducted by HR and Aithal (2022) revealed that the selection of a suitable instrument for data collection is influenced by the objectives of the research.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

The primary data for representative community members in the County was collected via a questionnaire sent to homes. Heap and Waters (2019) contend that a questionnaire is suitable for gathering primary data because it is efficient in evaluating a wide range of responses and allowing respondents to participate to the study without any partiality from the researcher. Incorporating both open-ended and close-ended questions, the questionnaire was organised into five

sections. The use of close-ended questions enabled the researcher to get direct and unambiguous responses to the study questions, while the use of open-ended questions allowed the respondents to express their varied viewpoints on the factors influencing the growth of tourist destinations.

The survey consisted of six components. The initial piece included background information on the organisations and respondents, while sections two (2) to five (5) addressed topics related to the four determinants: resources, infrastructure, policy, and supportive environment. The sixth part detailed the evolution of the tourist destination, which served as the dependent variable. Measurements were conducted using a 5-point Likert scale with the following anchors: 1 = strongly disagree/very dissatisfied to 5 = strongly agree/very satisfied.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

According to Kumar (2012), one of the benefits of doing a structured interview is the researcher's ability to address and resolve any uncertainties related to the questions. An interview guide guaranteed the consistent aggregation of responses and facilitated targeted questioning. In general, the interviewer demonstrated a higher level of proficiency in employing suitable techniques to elicit replies (Tight, Hughes & Blaxter, 2006). A systematic interview protocol was employed to collect data from personnel employed in the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, the chief officer and director of Elgeyo Marakwet county, and tourists.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The study goals dictated the selection of the data collecting technique. Prior to distributing the questionnaire to the chosen participants, the necessary legal

licence was acquired from the National Commission of Science Technology and Innovation Kenya (NACOSTI), and the required letters seeking permission were sent to the respondents. The selected respondents were individually delivered a total of 398 questionnaires. Survey participants were requested to fill out the questionnaire anonymously. To get information from the participants, the study aimed to clarify the objective of the study and alleviate any concerns by confirming that the provided information would be used exclusively for academic reasons. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the intended response group using the drop and pick later method.

3.8 Pilot Testing

A pilot test is an initial investigation carried out to validate the final research by identifying defects, deficiencies, and constraints in the design and methodology of a data collecting equipment. In addition to assessing and identifying deficiencies in the design and execution, a pilot test allows for the determination of the validity and reliability of research instruments (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). Groenland & Dana (2020) concur that pilot testing serves the objective of determining the precision and suitability of the study design and data collection tools. According to HR and Aithal (2022), the significance of the pilot test cannot be overstated, as it allows for the identification of both clear and unambiguous questions, as well as questions that may not provide essential information. According to Cooper and Schindler (2011), a pilot research typically requires a sample size of at least 10% of the broader population. Therefore, this study used 10% of the total sample size, which amounts to 39 respondents from Uasin Gishu County, for the pilot study.

3.8.1 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability refers to the evaluation of the level of consistency among several measurements of a certain variable (Mkandawire, 2019). A research instrument's reliability is a quantification of the extent to which it produces consistent outcomes or data after repeated trials. The dependability of an instrument is directly proportional to its capacity to consistently give equivalent findings, or more precisely, the repeatability of the measurement.

The dependability of the instruments was assessed by applying internal consistency protocols utilising Cronbach's Alpha. To evaluate reliability, the data were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated. An evaluation of the study measures' reliability was conducted by calculating Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, and the entire assessment was presented for inference and interpretation. Summary of the test results is provided in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Tourism destination development	.849	14
Resources	.822	9
Infrastructure facilities	.919	10
Tourism Policy	.704	9
Supporting environment	.788	9
Overall	**.951**	**51**

A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.919 was found for infrastructural facilities, while resources had the lowest coefficient of 0.704. Tourism destination development had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.849, resources had a coefficient of.822, and supporting environment had a coefficient of 0.788. Based on the analysis of 51 statements, the research variables exhibited a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.951.

3.8.2 Validity of the Research Instrument

Validity refers to the capacity of an instrument to accurately assess the specific construct it is intended to evaluate. Heap and Waters (2019) define validity as the accuracy or reliability of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other evaluative statements. The concept of validity necessitates the reliability of an instrument, yet it is possible for an instrument to possess reliability without being valid. According to Quintão, Andrade, and Almeida (2020), there exist several aspects via which validity may be assessed. These include the specific content and structure that were of significance to this investigation.

Content validity, as proposed by Bryman and Bell (2015), is a qualitative type of validity in which the extent of the definition is clearly defined and the analysts or judges determine if the test falls completely within that extent. The researcher assessed the content validity of the instrument by seeking input from a panel of experts consisting of supervisors and lecturers from the department. Professional consultations were conducted with specialists during the questionnaire development phase to guarantee that the measure has a suitable item that aligns with the study goals.

Construct validity, in contrast, pertains to the degree of accuracy with which a notion, idea, or behaviour (referred to as a construct) is translated or changed into a functional and operational reality, known as operationalisation. Conducting construct validity evaluates the actual measurement of the construct or scale. The measure of construct validity was established by limiting the items in the questionnaire to the operationalised conceptual framework,

variables, indicators, and guided by the theories used and the literature examined. A factor analysis was employed to determine the suitability of the questionnaire constructs. This study used Kaiser-Mayor-Oklin measures of sample adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity to assess the presence of a correlation between the study variables.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

Following data collection, the researcher performed data cleaning, which entailed identifying missing or incorrect replies and rectifying them to enhance the quality of the provided information. This entailed rigorous examination and revision to ensure comprehensiveness, classification, and identification of any missing data. The questionnaire data was classified, encoded, and inputted into the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) V26. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the data obtained from the interview schedule. Analysis of the data obtained from surveys was conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The descriptive statistics involved the calculation of the mean and standard deviation. The inferential statistics included the applications of Pearson Product Correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis.

A correlation analysis was conducted to determine the degree of association between the independent factors and the dependent variable. In accordance with the findings of Gogtay and Thatte (2017), correlation analysis allows the researcher to ascertain the general level of association between variables. In this work, a bivariate correlation analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation coefficients and significance levels to identify factors influencing

destination development. A bivariate correlation indicates the presence and manner in which two variables exhibit linear correlation, meaning that the variation of one variable varies in a linear manner when the variation of the other variable changes (Sandilands, 2014).

The study employed linear regression to ascertain the correlation between the independent and dependent variables. Linear regression analysis is a statistical technique used to establish the correlation between two or more variables under consideration (Reyna, 2017). In order to ascertain the causal quantitative impact on the variable, the researcher gathered data on the underlying components of interest and employed linear regression. A linear regression analysis was performed on the data based on the following assumptions: Two variables were assessed on an interval scale; There existed a linear connection between the two variables; There were no notable outliers; and the variables were roughly normally distributed. Let the linear regression model be expressed as;

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$ …….....….....(3.1)

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$ ……..….....(3.2)

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$ ……...…....(3.3)

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$ …….....….....(3.4)

The overall aim was addressed by employing a multivariate regression model to quantify the association between the independent factors and the dependent variable. The multi-linear regression model is a statistical technique that enables the estimation of response variables using a provided set of independent variables. The multiple linear regression model developed by Petterle et al. (2021) is a dependable statistical technique used to estimate or forecast the expected values of one variable based on the known values of another variable.

Multiple regression is the quantification of a statistical correlation between two or more variables, in which one variable (referred to as the independent variable) represents the causal factor for the behaviour of another variable (referred to as the dependent variable).

$$Y= \beta o + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (3.5)$$

Where:

Y = Tourism destination development

X_1 = Resources;

X_2 = Infrastructure;

X_3 = Tourism Policy;

X_4 = Support environment;

$\beta 0, \beta 1, \beta 2, \beta 3, \beta 4,$ = Regression coefficients

ε = Error term.

3.10 Assumptions of Multiple Regression

The assumptions of the Linear Regression Model were not violated and the data exhibited a properly represented distribution. Validity, reliability, normalcy, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, and autocorrelation were assessed in the study. Residual analysis was performed in SPSS to get descriptive statistics for the diagnostic tests of the model.

3.10.1 Test for Multicollinearity

Linear regression analysis, as highlighted by Groenland and Dana (2020), presupposes that the independent variables are uncorrelated, indicating the absence of a linear relationship among the explanatory factors. Diagnostic analysis was conducted using Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factors (VIF)

statistics. In order to assess multicollinearity, this work employed the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), which was computed using SPSS. Statistical software packages provide collinearity diagnostics that quantify the extent to which each variable is autonomous from other independent variables. If the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) numbers are less than 10 and the tolerance statistics are greater than 0.2, it is established that there is no Collinearity (Bowerman & O'Connell, 1990).

3.10.2 Test for Normality

Conforming to Moore and McCabe (2014), normality tests play a crucial role in assessing whether the data set was accurately represented by a normal distribution. The assumption of normalcy is the presumption that the basic random variable of interest follows a normal distribution, or closely approximates it. The assumption of normality does not often pertain to the variables being studied, but rather to the error, which is approximated by the residuals.

An assessment of normality was conducted in the study to verify the normal distribution of the gathered data. The regression model presupposes that the data employed in analysis follows a normal distribution therefore exhibiting a linear trend. A regularly distributed dataset is characterised by a symmetrical bell-shaped probability distribution. In this work, the quantile-quantile plot (P-P plot) was employed to assess normalcy. If two distributions are identical, the data points on the graph demonstrate a linear trend that passes through the origin with a slope of one unit.

3.10.3 Test for Linearity

In this work, scatter plots were employed to evaluate the linear assumption. A linear correlation exists between the target variable (development of tourism destinations) and the independent variables (determinants). The scatter plot revealed that the residual trend was centrised at zero, with the variance around zero exhibiting uniform and random dispersion. Therefore, the premise of linearity was met.

3.10.4 Homoscedasticity Test

The presence of homoscedasticity indicates that the connection being studied is consistent over the whole range of the dependent variable. The homoscedasticity test examines whether the variables in the research exhibit equal finite variance, commonly referred to as homogeneity of variance. Homoscedasticity refers to the condition when the pattern of the connection being studied is consistent over the whole range of the dependent variable. The test in this case involves analysis of the squared residuals using graphical methods. When the condition of homoscedasticity is satisfied, the residuals exhibit a pattern that is less scattering of data points.

The residuals were graphed to produce histograms, a normal probability plot, and residual scatterplots. During the procedure, SPSS created variables for each of these statistics and added them to the pre-existing SPSS dataset. Furthermore, SPSS produced variable labels that served as a point of reference for distinguishing the influence statistics. A single selection of all the boxes of interest allowed the researcher to calculate all the residuals simultaneously.

The absence of homoscedasticity may be readily observed in a standardised scatterplot. When a scatterplot is constructed by regressing the standardised predicted dependent variable against the standardised residuals, it should exhibit a conspicuous random pattern over the whole range of the dependent variable. The visual examination of the scatter plot verified the presence of homoscedasticity or heteroscedasticity, since the variation around zero was evenly distributed.

3.10.5 Test for Autocorrelation

The Durbin-Watson test for autocorrelation was performed to see if the residuals of the data exhibit serial correlation. The Durbin Watson (DW) statistic was employed to examine autocorrelation in the study, utilising Ordinary Least Square (OLS) residuals with values between 0 and 4. A value of 4 for the DW indicates negative autocorrelation, a value of 2 indicates no autocorrelation, and a value of 0 indicates positive autocorrelation. Should autocorrelation occur, it will be necessary to modify the model in order to achieve serial independence of the error term.

3.11 Measurement of Variables

Table 3.3 summarises the variables to be measured, which consist of the dependent variable of tourist destination development and four independent variables: resources, infrastructural facilities, tourism policy, and support environment. An result that is anticipated and/or explained by other factors is referred to as a dependent variable. This study focusses on the dependent variable of tourist destination development, which is assessed using 14 statements on a five-point Likert scale. The chosen independent variable was

derived and adjusted from the work of Ritchie & Crouch (2000). The measurement of destination resources was conducted using a Likert scale consisting of nine items. Infrastructure facilities were assessed using ten things, while tourist policy was evaluated using nine items. Lastly, the supporting environment was quantified using nine elements.

Table 3.3: Measurement of variables

Variable	Type of Variable	Indicators	Author Adopted & Modified
Resources	Independent	• Natural resources • Historical and archaeological sites • Cultural attractors • Events • Entertainment	Crouch and Ritchie (1999) Dwyer & Kim (2003)
Infrastructure facilities	Independent	• Hospitality • Transport • Communication • ICT	Crouch & Ritchie (1999) Ritchie & Crouch (2000, 2003).
Tourism policy	Independent	• Political commitment • Tourism planning • Community empowerment • Collaboration • Community participation	Crouch & Ritchie (1999) Ritchie & Crouch (2000, 2003).
Supporting Environment	Independent	• Safety and security • Budgetary allocation	Ritchie & Crouch (2000, 2003).
Tourism Destination development	Dependent	• Economic growth • Social development • Environmental	Mustafa *et al*., 2020).

Source: Literature review, (2024)

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

The current chapter provides a study, presentation, and interpretation of the data pertaining to the factors influencing the growth of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The chapter delineates the data analysis techniques employed to accomplish the study goals. This chapter provides the following findings: demographic characteristics of the respondents, descriptive analysis of independent and dependent variables, assessment of the reliability and validity of results, and inferential analysis (Pearson methodology). Statistical measures of product moment correlation coefficient, linear regression, and multiple regression. Also provided was the qualitative topic analysis.

4.1 Response Rate

Primary data was gathered from heads of households through the administration of a questionnaire. Out of the total of 398 questionnaires distributed, 354 were completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of 86% as shown in Table 4.1. An interview guide indicated that a total of thirty-nine respondents were anticipated to be questioned. However, only twenty-five respondents actually participated, resulting in a response rate of 64%..

Table 4.1: Response Rate Questionnaire

	Questionnaires		**Interviews**	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Returned	354	86	25	64
Non-returned	44	14	14	36
Total	398	100	39	100

Blumenberg and Barros (2018) contend that a 50% response rate is sufficient. At 60%, the analysis is considered good, and at 70% it is extremely good. These results indicate that the 86 percent response rate for the questionnaire instrument and the 64% response rate for the interview schedule employed in this study were suitable for data processing.

The effective questionnaire response rate was ascribed to the researcher's implementation of self-administration of the questionnaires, which the respondents were informed of before the data collecting date. The poor interview response rate was ascribed to the hectic schedules of the personnel employed at the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, county government of Elgeyo Marakwet, as well as the presence of visiting tourists. Further phone calls were made to request clarification on queries, hence increasing the already high response rate.

4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents

The primary objective of the study was to ascertain the demographic attributes of the participants, encompassing gender, age, and educational attainment.

4.2.1 Gender Distribution

Both genders participated in the study as shown below Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Gender Distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	165	46.6	46.6
Female	189	53.4	100.0
Total	354	100.0	

The findings revealed that 189 respondents, accounting for 53.4% of the total, were female, while 165 respondents, representing 46.6%, were male. This distribution is commendable since it accurately represents an equitable gender

balance. Gonzalez et al. (2020) argue that a gender representation ratio of at least 1:2 in the study is sufficient to be considered representative.

4.2.2 Age Distribution

The objective of the study was to determine the age of the participants, and the findings are presented in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Age Distribution Age

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-30 years	79	22.3	22.3
30-40 years	169	47.7	70.1
41-50 years	97	27.4	97.5
>50 years	9	2.5	100.0
Total	354	100.0	

The questionnaire revealed that the majority of participants, 169 individuals (47.7%), were within the age range of 30 to 40 years. Additionally, 27.4% of respondents were aged between 41 and 50 years, 22.3% were aged between 20 and 30 years, and 2.5% were aged above 50 years. These data revealed that the majority of the participants were adults, aged over 30 years, and possess knowledge of the factors that influence the growth of tourist destinations.

4.2.3 Education Level of the Respondents

Determining the educational attainment of the study participants was crucial to determine their comprehension of the study's research aim. The findings are displayed in Table 4.4 further down. Table 4.4 indicates the educational level of the respondents.

Table 4.4: Education Level of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Degree	101	28.5	28.5
Diploma	148	41.8	70.3
Certificate	64	18.1	88.4
Secondary	41	11.6	100.0
Total	354	100.0	

Out of the respondents, 148 individuals (41.8%) had completed bachelor studies, 28.5% had a diploma education, 18.1% had a master's degree, and just 11.6% had completed secondary education. These data suggest that the majority of the respondents had an education level above a certificate and were competent in comprehending the factors that influence the development of tourist destinations.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of the Study

The next section provides a descriptive analysis of the research variables. A descriptive analysis was used to determine the mean and variance of each variable, allowing for the presentation of the main features of the details and the standard deviation (Saunders et al., 2019). The purpose of providing it was to illustrate the replies of the participants and determine their level of agreement. This allows the researcher to characterise a distribution of scores or measures via the use of indices or statistics. The descriptive statistics provided a statistically significant summary of the numerical data obtained from the questionnaires.

Participants in the research were requested to indicate their level of agreement with the statements using a five-point Likert scale: 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree. To demonstrate the main results, the study employed mean averages and standard deviations.

Margaret (2017) defined the Likert scale of mean as follows: x=4.2 to 5 for highly agree; 3.5 to 4.2 for agree; 2.6 to 3.45 for unsure; 1.8 to 2.6 for disagree; and 1 to 1.8 for severely disagree.

4.3.1 Tourism destination development

The variable of tourist destination development comprised fourteen components. Tourism destination development was assessed using a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). Description statistics were employed to succinctly summarise the perspectives of the respondents on the development of tourist destinations (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Tourism destination development

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Number of tourist's visiting our county has increased	5	1.4	12	3.4	62	17.5	175	49.4	100	28.2	4.00	0.85
There is an increase in demand for accommodation services in our county	26	7.3	49	13.8	65	18.4	112	31.6	102	28.8	3.61	1.24
Our standard of living of the local community has improved considerably because of tourism	9	2.5	31	8.8	83	23.4	134	37.9	97	27.4	3.79	1.02
Tourism activities has created formal and informal employment opportunities	9	2.5	26	7.3	71	20.1	167	47.2	81	22.9	3.81	0.96
Tourism activities in our county has enhanced investments opportunities	41	11.6	47	13.3	42	11.9	154	43.5	70	19.8	3.47	1.27
Tourism has brought foreign exchange earnings in our county	27	7.6	61	17.2	76	21.5	113	31.9	77	21.8	3.43	1.22
Tourism activities has effects on environmental conservation	44	12.4	79	22.3	54	15.3	128	36.2	49	13.8	3.17	1.27
Tourism activities has increased pollution of environment	14	4.0	27	7.6	54	15.3	109	30.8	150	42.4	4.00	1.11
Tourism activities has caused ecological disturbance	38	10.7	57	16.1	75	21.2	76	21.5	108	30.5	3.45	1.35
Tourism activities has negative effects on the local community culture	96	27.1	81	22.9	21	5.9	93	26.3	63	17.8	2.85	1.51
Relationship between tourists and locals was good	56	15.8	60	16.9	79	22.3	102	28.8	57	16.1	3.12	1.31
Tourism activities have resulted in increased crimes	29	8.2	43	12.1	44	12.4	113	31.9	125	35.3	3.74	1.28
The tourism activities have encouraged migrations to tourist area	5	1.4	9	2.5	68	19.2	172	48.6	100	28.2	4.00	0.84
Tourism activities has increased destination demographics	20	5.6	37	10.5	26	7.3	163	46.0	108	30.5	3.85	1.13
Mean											**3.59**	**0.71**

The majority of respondents concurred that there has been an increase in the number of tourists visiting the county, as evidenced by a mean ($\bar{x}$) of 4.00 and Standard Deviation (σ) of 0.85. Based on a coefficient of 3.61 and a coefficient of 1.24, the majority of respondents concurred that there was a rise in demand for housing services in the county. In response to the assertion that tourism has significantly enhanced the quality of life in the local community, the majority of respondents agreed, as shown by a mean score of 3.79 and a standard deviation of 1.02. As shown by ($\bar{x}$) of 3.81 and (σ) of 0.96, the majority of respondents believed that economic growth had grown as a result of tourism activities.

Regarding the assertion that tourist operations in the county had improved investment prospects, the majority of respondents agreed, as shown by a coefficient of 3.47 ($\bar{x}$) and a coefficient of 1.27 (β). Based on the coefficients ($\bar{x}$) of 4.00 and (σ) of 1.11, the majority of respondents concurred that tourism activities had led to an increase in environmental contamination. In relation to the assertion that tourist activities have led to a rise in criminal activities, the majority of respondents expressed agreement, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 1.28. Based on a ($\bar{x}$) value of 4.00 and (σ) value of 0.84, the majority of respondents believed that tourism activities had stimulated migrations to tourist areas.

The majority of respondents agreed with the assertion that tourist activities have lead to an increase in destination demographics, as shown by a coefficient ($\bar{x}$) of 3.85 and a coefficient (σ) of 1.13. As shown by a ($\bar{x}$) of 3.43 and (σ) of 1.22, the majority of respondents believed that tourist activities

had generated both official and informal job possibilities in the county. The majority of respondents agreed with the assertion that tourist activities had produced ecological disruption, as depicted by a ($\bar{x}$) value of 3.45 and a (σ) value of 1.35. The assertion that tourist operations have impacts on environmental conservation and have adverse effects on the local community culture is substantiated by calculated coefficients ($\bar{x}$) of 3.17, (σ) of 1.22, and ($\bar{x}$) of 2.85 and (σ) = 1.51, respectively.

A traveler expressed that obtaining information on which destinations to visit is challenging due to the limited number of attractions featured in travel guides, which mostly focus on the major tourist circuits. I was previously unaware of the existence of an official destination website for Kenya, which offers a comprehensive overview of its attractions. I received word-of-mouth suggestion from acquaintances and in turn I have suggested the place to my friends, some of whom are already making arrangements to travel.

The descriptive findings of the study revealed that the 14 statements utilised to elucidate the growth of tourism destinations had an average value of 3.59 and a standard deviation of 0.71. The data indicated that most of the participants expressed agreement with the statements employed to assess the status of tourist destination development. With the rise in the number of tourists accessing our county, there has been a corresponding surge in the demand for lodging services inside the county. The tourist industry has significantly enhanced the quality of life for the local population. Both official and informal job possibilities have been generated by tourism operations.

These findings support the assertions made by Benard & Nicolau (2022) and Khan et al. (2021) that destination development has several components such as a regulatory framework, resource allocation, identification and protection of sensitive sites, codes of behaviour, zonal area plans, inclusiveness, and participant involvement. Hence, it is necessary to prioritise the treatment of many economic, social, and environmental concerns related to sustainable tourism development in order to promote the expansion of tourist destinations.

Tourism operations have exacerbated environmental damage and escalated crime rates. The tourism activities have stimulated migrations to tourist areas and have lead to a rise in the demography of the destinations. The results indicated that tourism operations had detrimental impacts on the socio-cultural fabric of the local community, whereas the interaction between visitors and residents was positive. The friendliness shown by local residents, sometimes referred to as 'the foundation of tourism' (Cucculelli & Goffi, 2016), is a crucial element of visitor appeal.

4.3.2 Destination Resources/products

The variable representative of tourism destination resources comprised nine elements. Statements elucidating resources were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). Descriptive statistics were employed to summarise the data set as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Destination Resources

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Natural scenery (escarpments, rivers & viewpoints)	21	5.9	25	7.1	62	17.5	110	31.1	136	38.4	3.89	1.17
There was cool & warm weather	9	2.5	8	2.3	53	15.0	155	43.8	129	36.4	4.09	0.91
Nature-based activities (bird watching and camping).	29	8.2	33	9.3	90	25.4	118	33.3	84	23.7	3.55	1.18
There are historical landmarks (Cheploch gorge & Kerio river)	23	6.5	54	15.3	72	20.3	118	33.3	87	24.6	3.54	1.20
There are annual sports events (football & athletics)	25	7.1	25	7.1	44	12.4	181	51.1	79	22.3	3.75	1.10
County has Rimoi national game reserves	84	23.7	75	21.2	21	5.9	111	31.4	63	17.8	2.98	1.48
County has wild animals such as elephants	12	3.4	15	4.2	77	21.8	153	43.2	97	27.4	3.87	0.98
County has natural forest	38	10.7	51	14.4	82	23.2	96	27.1	87	24.6	3.40	1.29
Traditional cultural ceremonies (Rites of passage and marriage)	29	8.2	37	10.5	20	5.6	191	54.0	77	21.8	3.71	1.16
Mean											**3.64**	**0.74**

Indicated by a ($\bar{x}$) of 3.89 and (σ) of 1.17, the majority of respondents believed that natural landscape (escarpments, rivers, and vistas). Regarding the assertion of chilly and warm weather, the majority of participants expressed agreement, as shown by a ($\bar{x}$) value of 4.09 and (σ) value of 0.91. The majority of participants expressed agreement with nature-based activities such as bird watching and camping, as shown by statistics ($\bar{x}$) of 3.55 and (σ) of 1.18. The bulk of the participants expressed agreement on the existence of historical

sites, namely Cheploch gorge and Kerio river, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.54 and a mean score of 1.20.

This discovery supports the Chief Officer's perspective that the county is renowned for its distinctive tourist sectors, such as a Rimoi National Game Reserve, athletics, paragliding, parachutes, and the cultural assets of the local population, all of which contribute to the county's revenue. The County has formulated the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) with the aim of improving the tourism sub-sector, promoting tourist attractions, and capitalising on the potential of additional tourism niches such as extreme sports, rich culture, and sports tourism.

Among the respondents, the majority were unsure about the presence of Rimoi National Game Reserves and natural forests in the county. The mean scores for these variables were 2.98, 1.48, 3.40, and 1.29, respectively. This conclusion was corroborated by a visitor who expressed that one of the primary motivations for their travel to Kenya is to engage in safari activities. Safari, derived from Swahili, refers to a travel, although it is most often used to describe a drive through wildlife parks and reserves. The primary impetus was the want to witness the "big five" in their natural habitat, and the most exhilarating aspect of the expedition was the opportunity to photograph them closely.

The chief officer also participated in this effort, emphasising the need of opening the Rimoi wildlife reserve, replenishing the park, and constructing nature paths. A prominent tourist destination in the County is Rimoi wildlife reserve, renowned for its abundant and varied plant and animal life. The

reserve is home to the most extensive elephant herd in Central and East Africa.

The majority of respondents agreed with the assertion that there are yearly sporting events (football & athletics), as shown by a combined coefficient ($\bar{x}$) of 3.75 and (σ) = 1.10. The highest number of respondents, with a mean score of 3.87 and a standard deviation of 0.98, agreed that the county had wild animals, namely elephants. The presence of traditional cultural events, namely rites of passage and marriage, is supported by the values of ($\bar{x}$) of 3.71 and (σ) of 1.16.

The descriptive results of the study revealed that the nine statements used to describe tourist destination resources had an average score of 3.64 and a standard deviation of 0.74. These findings indicate that most of the participants expressed agreement with the statements employed to assess the resources of the location. This aligns with the findings of Armenski, Dwyer, and Pavluković (2017) that the comparative advantages of natural and socio-cultural endowment resources provided by a destination, together with the administration by the public sector, are essential factors. Nyamweno, Okotto, and Tonui (2016) said that the resource endowment of tourism destinations remains mostly unexplored and is in its early stages of development.

The results indicated that the county possesses picturesque landscapes (rock formations, waterways, and scenic vantage points) and opportunities for nature-oriented pursuits (avian observation and camping). Cheploch Gorge and Kerio River are noted historical sites. The county is home to indigenous fauna, including elephants, and pristine woodlands.

One of the tourists described the topography of Elgeyo Marakwet county as "awe-inspiring" and the scenery as "outstanding". In addition to flora and fauna, bird-watching and mountain climbing, culture and the arts are other notable attractions.

Similarly, the chief officer expressed the opinion that the county encompasses several other areas of interest, such as sports tourism, irrigation furrows, natural caves, hot springs, cultural heritage, international migratory routes, community conservancies, gorges, extreme sporting and adventure activities, viewpoints, and cultural sites.

The climate was both chilly and warm. The yearly sporting activities included football and athletics, as well as traditional cultural ceremonial practices like as rites of passage and marriage. This aligns with the findings of Khan et al. (2021) that the growth of tourism has greatly beyond the sustainable limits of environmental resources. Therefore, it is imperative to implement effective resource management practices. The location has a limited number of national parks and nature reserves, along with a county abundant in natural forests. This supports the findings of Cîrstea (2014) and Khan et al. (2021) that tourism is well recognised for its contribution to sustainable development, preservation of the environment, and continuation of authentic indigenous culture..

4.3.3 Destination Infrastructure Facilities

The measure of tourism destination infrastructure facilities comprised 10 components. The statements elucidating infrastructure facilities were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to

Strongly Agree (SA). Descriptive statistics were employed to summarise the data set as shown in Table 4.7..

Table 4.7: Destination Infrastructure Facilities

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
The road transport to destination are good.	8	2.3	21	5.9	80	22.6	163	46.0	82	23.2	3.82	0.93
Feeder roads to tourist attractions sites are well maintained	20	5.6	49	13.8	50	14.1	115	32.5	120	33.9	3.75	1.22
Our county as a destination has high quality tourist hotels	12	3.4	25	7.1	62	17.5	98	27.7	157	44.4	4.03	1.10
Our county has a reliable network coverage	3	.8	8	2.3	53	15.0	140	39.5	150	42.4	4.20	0.84
Our county has adopted internet technology in tourism marketing	26	7.3	38	10.7	42	11.9	121	34.2	127	35.9	3.81	1.24
In our county there are adequate accommodation facilities.	27	7.6	52	14.7	70	19.8	89	25.1	116	32.8	3.61	1.28
County has quality accommodations	35	9.9	58	16.4	87	24.6	107	30.2	67	18.9	3.32	1.23
Hospitality services within the county are good.	12	3.4	37	10.5	52	14.7	158	44.6	95	26.8	3.81	1.05
Employees working in hospitality industry are friendly.	14	4.0	24	6.8	54	15.3	139	39.3	123	34.7	3.94	1.06
Our hotels prepare meals using local recipes and cooking methods	26	7.3	45	12.7	60	16.9	115	32.5	108	30.5	3.66	1.24
Mean											**3.79**	**0.79**

The majority of respondents expressed agreement on the quality of road travel to their destination, as evidenced by a ($x\tau$) score of 3.82 and (σ) score of 0.93. For the statement that feeder roads to tourist attraction locations are well

maintained, the majority of respondents agreed, with a mean score of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 1.22.

This aligns with the experience of tourists who said that when they went on a package, they were accompanied and given transportation in vehicles specifically designed for safaris. This involved both road travel within the game reserves and commuting to and from their lodgings located within the reserves, therefore eliminating the need for extensive travel to see the wildlife. The majority of respondents expressed uncertainty as indicated by a ($\bar{x}$) value of 3.32 and a (σ) value of 1.23 on the presence of high-quality lodgings within the county.

The visitor expressed agreement with the statement that the quality of lodging was satisfactory. The available lodging options offered a range of quality to cater to diverse preferences. The majority of these accommodations were of excellent quality, equipped with essential facilities such power, water, and mosquito nets. The available forms of lodging varied from hotels, tented campgrounds, to self-service facilities.

This aligns with the statement made by an employee from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, who confirmed that the lodging was constructed using indigenous materials, including traditional grass thatch roofs, in order to mimic traditional huts. This architectural choice is believed by visitors to enhance the genuineness of their experience.

The majority of respondents expressed agreement on the presence of high-quality tourist hotels in the county, as shown by a coefficient ($x\tau$) of 4.03 and a coefficient (σ) of 1.11. Regarding the assertions about the county's

dependable network coverage, a significant proportion of the participants expressed agreement, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.84. An overwhelming majority of participants expressed agreement on the use of internet technology in tourist marketing, as shown by a ($\bar{x}$) of 3.81 and (σ) = 1.05. The county's accommodation facilities were deemed sufficient, as indicated by a coefficient ($\bar{x}$) of 3.61 and a coefficient (σ) of 1.28.

The majority of participants expressed agreement on the efficiency of hospitality services in the county, as shown by a (x) of 3.81 and (σ) = 1.05. The poll results indicate that a majority of employees in the hotel business agreed with the assertion that they are friendly, with a mean score of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 1.06. The majority of participants expressed agreement that the hotels offer meals prepared utilising indigenous recipes and culinary techniques, as shown by a mean score of 3.66 and a standard deviation of 1.24.

The descriptive results of the study clearly showed that the ten statements used to describe the infrastructural facilities of tourist destinations had an average score of 3.79 and a standard deviation of 0.79. The results indicated that most of the participants expressed agreement with the statements employed to assess the infrastructural facilities of the location.

The transportation to the location was efficient and the infrastructure of the feeder roads leading to tourist attractions sites is well maintained. The county boasts top-notch tourist accommodations and a dependable network connectivity. Web technology has been implemented by the county in its

tourism marketing efforts. This supports the findings of Charles and Zegarra (2014), who identified four key components of infrastructures that significantly impact the success of a tourist destination: communication, transportation, road, and energy systems.

This aligns with the perspective of the County Chief Officer, who emphasised that the safeguarding of Rimoi wildlife reserve with a 32 kilometre fence was one of the significant accomplishments in the field of tourist development. A feasibility study was conducted to determine the viability of cable car construction, campground building, tourism marketing displays, park road gravelling and grading (in km), and the installation of nature paths. This reinforces the findings of Azzopardi and Nash (2015) that public infrastructure directly and indirectly stimulates tourism. Responses indicated that the effectiveness, expenses, speed, and quality of products and services generated and provided by tourism-supporting sectors depend on the accessibility, dependability, safety, and efficiency of overall infrastructure services.

Adequate lodging accommodations and excellent hospitality services were available within the county. Personnel employed in the hospitality sector were amiable. This support the statement made by the County Chief Officer, who said that the county's overall bed capacity of 300 is still inadequate to satisfy the demand during peak seasons. Additional projects include the establishment of a county cable car system and advocating for the implementation of high-quality park projects to enhance tourism.

The presence of fundamental infrastructure such as communication facilities, watercourses, ports, roads, railways, and airports, as well as secondary systems like sewerage and waste disposal, electricity and water supplies, and services at tourist destinations, is essential for enabling tourism (Boniface et al., 2020b).

This classification also includes intricate infrastructural and super structural components that provide lodging options such as hostels, resorts, farms, hotels, caravan parks, vacation villages, campgrounds, residences, and guesthouses. These establishments consist of several types of restaurants, bars, and coffee shops that offer a diverse range of cuisines (Della Corte et al., 2015).

4.3.4 Tourism Policy

Nine entries comprised the policy variable. The statements outlining the policy were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). Table 4.8 presents a summary of the data set using descriptive statistics.

Table 4.8: Tourism Policy

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Our county government is commitment on tourism activities	14	4.0	31	8.8	98	27.7	150	42.4	61	17.2	3.60	1.00
Our community are involved on formulation and implementation of tourism policies	28	7.9	32	9.0	74	20.9	130	36.7	90	25.4	3.63	1.18
Our county government engage all the stakeholders in mitigating the negative effects of tourism	14	4.0	15	4.2	86	24.3	142	40.1	97	27.4	3.83	1.01
Our county has put in place regulations that guides tourism activities	29	8.2	49	13.8	53	15.0	103	29.1	120	33.9	3.67	1.29
Local community are involved during planning and implementation of tourism policies	18	5.1	40	11.3	89	25.1	146	41.2	61	17.2	3.54	1.06
Our county has sufficient budgetary allocation to tourism activities	6	1.7	11	3.1	74	20.9	182	51.4	81	22.9	3.91	0.84
The ministry of tourism and wildlife has formulated good policies to govern destination development	29	8.2	44	12.4	57	16.1	130	36.7	94	26.6	3.61	1.23
County has functional tourism policy	30	8.5	70	19.8	100	28.2	101	28.5	53	15.0	3.22	1.17
County tourism policies are regularly reviewed	38	10.7	73	20.6	99	28.0	104	29.4	40	11.3	3.10	1.17
Mean											**3.57**	**0.72**

The majority of respondents felt that the county government is committed to tourist initiatives, as shown by a median score of 3.60 and a standard deviation of 1.00. Most respondents agreed with the statement that the community is involved in the development and implementation of tourist policy, with a mean score of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 1.18. Based on the coefficients ($x\tau$) of 3.83 and (σ) of 1.01, the majority of respondents agreed that it reduces the potential negative effects of tourism. Regarding the assertion that the county has implemented rules to govern tourism operations, as evidenced by the coefficients ($x\tau$) of 3.67 and (σ) of 1.29. The majority of respondents accepted the involvement of local communities in the formulation and execution of tourist policy, as shown by a ($\bar{x}$) of 3.54 and (σ) = 1.06.

Based on the coefficients ($\bar{x}$) of 3.91 and (σ) of 0.84, the majority of respondents felt that the county had an adequate budgetary allocation for tourist activities. Regarding the assertion that the ministry of tourism and wildlife has developed effective policies to regulate destination growth, a significant majority of respondents agreed, as shown by a mean score of 3.61 and a standard deviation of 1.23. The majority of participants were uncertain about the assertion that the county has a functional tourist policy ($\bar{x}$ = 3.22; y = 1.17), and that the county tourism policies are routinely evaluated, as shown by $\bar{x}$ = 3.10 and y = 1.17 of the related measurements.

The descriptive findings of the study revealed that the ten statements used to elucidate policy had a mean value of 3.57 and a standard deviation of 0.72. These findings indicate that most of the participants expressed agreement with the statements employed for policy evaluation. The county administration is

dedicated to tourist-related activities and has guaranteed enough financial allocation to the sector. Additionally, the ministry of tourism has implemented favourable regulations for the industry. This supports the findings of Khan et al. (2021) that regulation establishes the criteria for inclusion and exclusion by means of environmental regulations, which direct the use of the environment and discourage damage by restricting the activities of tour operators and visitors to controlled levels of natural resource use.

tourist activities are a priority for the county administration, and the community actively participates in the development and execution of tourist policy. In order to alleviate the adverse impacts of tourism, the county administration actively involves all relevant interested parties. In order to govern tourism operations, the county has implemented rules. Active participation of the local population is essential in the development and execution of tourist initiatives. Each county has an adequate fiscal allocation for tourist initiatives. The ministry of tourism and wildlife has devised effective policies to regulate the growth of visitor destinations. This result aligns with the consensus of the Chief Officer and Director that the County government already has a well defined vision and strategic plan for destination development. However, it is necessary to periodically assess the implementation of these plans in the long run. This assesses the availability and quality of inventories of the most important attractions, facilities, services, and experiences in the destination. Sustained monitoring of tourism effects is necessary to safeguard the charms of the place.

Consistent with the findings of Khan et al. (2021), the identification of heritage sites serves as a motivation for destination management organisations. This is evaluated by assessing the level of interest in allocating funds, adopting appropriate policies, and implementing management strategies to improve the protection and development of these sites.

4.3.5 Destination Supporting Environment

The variable of supportive environment comprised nine components. Statements elucidating the supportive environment were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). Descriptive statistics were employed to summarise the data set as shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Supporting Environment

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Our county ensure that tourists have unlimited access to destination attraction sites	7	2.0	9	2.5	59	16.7	175	49.4	104	29.4	4.02	0.86
Our county has user-friendly tour guiding services.	28	7.9	43	12.1	69	19.5	117	33.1	97	27.4	3.60	1.23
Our county tourist attraction sites offer efficient service delivery	3	.8	28	7.9	74	20.9	153	43.2	96	27.1	3.88	0.93
Our county tourism products are marketed online	13	3.7	26	7.3	59	16.7	181	51.1	75	21.2	3.79	0.98
Our hospitality products are attractive	39	11.0	39	11.0	32	9.0	171	48.3	73	20.6	3.57	1.24
There is mutual relationship between the tourists and local community	18	5.1	48	13.6	57	16.1	149	42.1	82	23.2	3.65	1.13
Our county is safe for tourists to visit	33	9.3	72	20.3	61	17.2	134	37.9	54	15.3	3.29	1.22
Our county provides safe and secure environment to the tourist	6	1.7	29	8.2	50	14.1	115	32.5	154	43.5	4.08	1.03
Our county has enough medical facilities	29	8.2	47	13.3	66	18.6	99	28.0	113	31.9	3.62	1.28
Mean											**3.72**	**0.71**

A significant proportion of the participants expressed agreement on the unrestricted availability of destination attraction sites to visitors, as evidenced by a ($\bar{x}$) value of 4.02 and (σ) value of 0.86. Regarding the assertion that there were user-friendly tour guiding services, the majority of respondents agreed, with a mean score of 3.60 and a standard deviation of 1.23. Based on the coefficients ($\bar{x}$) of 3.88 and (σ) of 0.93, the majority of respondents felt that county tourist attraction sites provide effective service delivery. The majority of participants expressed agreement on the internet marketing of county tourist items, as shown by a coefficient ($\bar{x}$) of 3.79 and a magnitude (σ) of 0.98. In relation to the assertion that hospitality items are appealing, the majority concurred, as shown by a coefficient of 3.57 and a coefficient of 1.24.

The majority of participants expressed agreement on a reciprocal link between visitors and the local population, as shown by a coefficient ($\bar{x}$) of 3.65 and a variance (σ) of 1.13. Concerning the assertion of tourist safety, a significant proportion of participants expressed uncertainty, as evidenced by a ($\bar{x}$) value of 3.29 and (σ) value of 1.22. The majority of respondents expressed agreement on the commitment of tourist destinations to provide a safe and secure environment, as shown by a mean score of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 1.03. Regarding the assertion that there were medical facilities available to cater to its visitors, the majority of respondents agreed, with a mean score of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 1.28.

The study's descriptive results revealed that the nine statements utilised to explicate the supportive environment had an average mean of 3.72 and a

standard deviation of 0.71. These findings indicate that most of the participants expressed agreement with the statements employed to assess the supportive environment. This aligns with the findings of Khan et al. (2021) that a destination that implements rules rooted in solid concepts of sustainable tourism development is able to provide a clean, safe, and high-quality environment that effectively meets the expectations of tourists.

The tourism environment encompasses factors associated with the accessibility, number, and quality of infrastructures and services specifically designed for tourism. These measures are primarily intended to assist tourists and are seen a crucial element of destination appeal. According to an employee from the Ministry of tourist and Wildlife, the tourist sector is characterised by fragmentation and heterogeneity, with several tiny enterprises that function as coordinating entities for the various organisations engaged in tourism. An essential objective of destination management organisations (DMOs) is to foster collaborations among the different operators. Destination Management Organisations (DMOS), which have authorities including a country, state/province, region, or a particular city/town, play a vital role in the tourist sector. DMO members encompass governmental entities, commercial consortia, people, or companies that provide direct or indirect assistance to tourism, such as hotels, restaurants, and tour operators.

The supportive atmosphere guaranteed that visitors had unrestricted access to the attractions of the location and received easily understandable tour navigation services. The tourist attraction sites provide effective service delivery and promote tourism items through internet marketing. Such services as

entertainment, financial services, shopping and recreation facilities, police force, information centres, health centres, tourism agents, housekeeping, internet services, printing, insurance, wholesaling, and retailing contribute to facilitating, enhancing, and impressing visitors during their travels.

The hospitality offerings are appealing, and there exists a reciprocal interaction between the visitors and the local economy. In addition to its ample medical services, the county offers a safe and secure atmosphere for tourists. The people shown commendable friendliness towards tourists, and the tourist attraction consistently prioritised the provision of a safe and secure environment for tourists. This supports the conclusions of Ahmed et al. (2010) that the success or failure of a tourist destination is contingent upon the destination's capacity to offer a safe and secure environment for its guests.

4.4 Reliability of the Instrument

After the preliminary testing sessions, a modified set of questions was created. The tools underwent rigorous assessment of their validity and reliability to confirm the appropriateness and relevance of the measures produced by the instrument. The dependability of the instruments was assessed based on the degree of agreement between the responses obtained from the field and the empirical and theoretical data studied by other researchers investigating comparable concepts. The Likert-scale questionnaire served as the core tool for collecting data. An analysis of the instruments' reliability was conducted using Cronbach's alpha test. Table 4.10 presents a concise summary of the test results.

Table 4.10: Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Tourism destination development	.866	14
Resources	.807	9
Infrastructure facilities	.882	10
Policy	.827	9
Supporting environment	.819	9
Overall	**.958**	**51**

Infrastructure facilities exhibit the greatest Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.882, while resources have the lowest coefficient of 0.807. The coefficient for tourist destination development was 0.866, while tourism policy had a value of 0.827, and supporting environment came in at 0.819. The research variables exhibited a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.958, derived from the analysis of 51 statements.

According to FitzPatrick (2019), a Cronbach's alpha test certifies the consistency and dependability of a Data gathering Instrument. The research instrument provided consistently high Cronbach's alpha coefficient scores, which are considered generally acceptable as they surpass 0.7. This indicates that the instrument is both consistent and dependable (FitzPatrick, 2019).

4.5 Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is an instrumental method for the reduction and interpretation of data, allowing researchers to reveal latent dimensions or factors that elucidate patterns in intricate data sets. Each of the five Likert scales underwent exploratory factor analysis using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) extraction and was then rotated using Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalisation technique. Only components with Eigen values over one were selectively retrieved following the method described by Kaiser (1960). The

widely acknowledged guideline is that factor loadings of 0.50 and above (Hair et al., 2010) are considered appropriate. The cut-off value selected in this investigation was 0.50.

In order to evaluate the consistency and sampling appropriateness of the research instruments, factor analysis was conducted. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sample adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity were employed to assess the suitability of data for statistical factorisation. Therefore, the KMO criterion of 0.50, as established by Hair et al. (1995) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), is deemed appropriate for factor analysis. In accordance with Bartlett's test of Sphericity proposed by Bartlett in 1950, a chi-square result should be obtained that is statistically significant, indicating that the matrix is not an identity matrix. This significance level should be $p < 0.05$ for factor analysis to be appropriate, as suggested by Hair et al. (2006) and Tabachnick & Fidell (2001).

The factor analysis included KMO sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Sphericity tests, estimation of the variance explained by each variable, and determination of the Rotated Component Matrix factor loadings of the items. The Kaiser Criterion was used to establish the number of components to be retained. Eigenvalues, which indicate the proportion of variation explained by a component out of the overall variance, are essential for comprehending the individual contribution of each factor in elucidating the observed pattern in the data. The presence of an eigenvalue over one indicates that the factor should be preserved.

4.5.1 Factor Analysis for Tourism destination development

The measurement of tourism destination development was conducted using fourteen questions. The findings of the Kaiser-Meyer-Okin measure of sample adequacy test (0.784) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\varrho 2$ (91) = 917.5, $p < 0.001$) revealed that the data meet the criteria for factor analysis, as presented in table 4.11. Utilising the Kaiser Criterion, three variables were calculated from a pool of 14 assertions. The use of Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalisation resulted in the extraction of three components with Eigen values over 1. These components together accounted for 63.71% of the variance. The first factor explained 22.76%, the second factor explained 20.97%, and the third factor explained 19.83%. The tourist destination development rotational component matrix revealed that the first component consisted of five elements (TD8, TD9, TD10, TD11, and TD12) with factor loadings ranging from 0.649 to 0.750. The second component consisted of four individual items (TD1, TD3, TD4, and TD13) with loadings ranging from 0.546 to 0.886. Within the third component, there were four items (TD2, TD5, TD6, TD7, and TD14) with loadings ranging from 0.544 to 0.790.

Table 4.11: Tourism destination development Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component		
	1	**2**	**3**
Tourism has resulted in positive impacts on the cultural identity of the local community	.750		
Relationship between tourists and locals was good	.748		
Tourism activities has increased pollution of environment	.694		
Tourism activities has caused ecological disturbance	.672		
Tourism activities have resulted in increased crimes	.649		
Number of tourist's visiting our county has increased		.886	
The public transportation system has increased considerably because of tourism		.823	
Our standard of living of the local community has improved considerably because of tourism		.745	
Tourism activities has created formal and informal employment opportunities		.546	
There is an increase in demand for accommodation services in our county			.790
Tourism activities has increased destination demographics			.694
Tourism activities in our county has enhanced investments opportunities			.688
Tourism has brought foreign exchange earnings in our county			.660
Tourism activities has effects on environmental conservation			.544
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.784		
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	917.5		
df	91		
Sig.	.001		
Total Variance Explained	63.71		
Total Eigenvalues	3.186	2.936	2.798
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings % of Variance	22.759	20.972	19.983

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 11 iterations.

4.5.2 Factor Analysis for Resources

Table 4.12 presents the findings of the Kaiser-Meyer-Okin measure of sample adequacy test (0.747) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\varrho 2$ (36) = 436.174, $p < 0.001$) that revealed the acceptability of the data for component analysis.

Table 4.12: Resources Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component	
	1	**2**
County has Rimoi national game reserves	.825	
County has natural forest	.823	
There are historical landmarks (Cheploch gorge & Kerio river)	.733	
Traditional cultural ceremonies (Rites of passage and marriage)	.660	
County has wild animals such as elephants	.622	
There is cool & warm weather		.856
There are annual sports events (football & athletics)		.783
Nature-based activities (bird watching and camping)		.736
Natural scenery (escarpments, rivers & viewpoints)		.727
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.747	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	436.174	
df	36	
Sig.	.001	
Total Variance Explained	60.442	
Total Eigenvalues	2.833	2.607
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings % of Variance	31.474	28.968

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

A factor analysis was conducted on destination resources statements, and two components with Eigen values over 1 were identified. These components together accounted for 60.44% of the variance. The use of Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalisation indicates the presence of two components. The component matrix of destination resources, when rotated, revealed that the first component consisted of five items (R4, R6, R7, R8, and R9). These items had

factor loadings ranging from 0.622 to 0.823, which accounted for 31.474% of the aggregate variance. The second component consisted of four components (R1, R2, R3, and R5) with loadings ranging from 0.727 to 0.856, which accounted for 28.968% of the total variance under investigation. Retained were nine elements used to quantify destination resources, which were then calculated and renamed for further study.

4.5.3 Factor Analysis for Infrastructure Facilities

Table 4.13 presents the findings of the Kaiser-Meyer-Okin measure of sample adequacy test (0. 843) and Bartlett's test of sphericity (ϱ2 (45) =627.598, p < 0.001) that suggested the data was suitable for factor analysis in measuring infrastructure facilities.

Table 4.13: Infrastructure Facilities Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component	
	1	**2**
In our county there are adequate accommodation facilities.	.859	
Our hotels prepare meals using local recipes and cooking methods	.839	
County has quality accommodations	.834	
Our county has adopted internet technology in tourism marketing	.748	
Employees working in hospitality industry are friendly.	.655	
Hospitality services within the county are good.	------	
Feeder roads to tourist attractions sites are well maintained	------	
The road transport to destination are good.		.850
Our county has a reliable network coverage		.759
Our county as a destination has high quality tourist hotels		.727
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.843	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	627.598	
df	45	
Sig.	.001	
Total Variance Explained	62.152	
Total Eigenvalues	3.785	2.430
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings % of Variance	37.851	24.301

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

An examination of infrastructure facilities assertions was conducted using factor analysis. Two components with Eigen values larger than 1 were identified, which together accounted for 62.152% of the variation. The use of Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalisation indicates the presence of two components. On the first factor, the rotational component matrix of infrastructure facilities revealed five items (IF5, IF6, IF7, IF9, and IF10) with factor loadings ranging from 0.655 to 0.859. These items accounted for 37.851% of the total variance. Items IF1, IF3, and IF4, with loadings ranging from 0.727 to 0.850, were loaded on the second factor and accounted for 24.30% of the total variable variation. The statements IF2 and IF8, which measure infrastructural facilities, were removed. For further examination, eight items were calculated and dubbed infrastructure.

4.5.4 Factor Analysis for Policy

Table 4.14 presents the findings of the Kaiser-Meyer-Okin measure of sample adequacy test (0.794) and Bartlett's test of sphericity (ϱ 2 (36) = 521.158, $p < 0.001$), which indicated that the data was suitable for factor analysis. A factor analysis was conducted on policy statements, and two components with Eigen values over 1 were identified. These components together accounted for 64.132% of the variation. The use of Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalisation indicates the presence of two components. The policy's rotational component matrix revealed that five items (PPD1, PPD2, PPD3, PPD4, PPD5, and PPD6) were strongly associated with the first factor. The factor loadings, ranging from 0.599 to 0.870, accounted for 35.914% of the aggregate variance. The second factor had loadings ranging from 0.759 to 0.903 for the three items (PPD7, PPD8, and PPD9), which accounted for 28.218% of the overall

variation. For subsequent study, nine elements used to assess policy were maintained, calculated, and renamed.

Table 4.14: Policy Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component	
	1	**2**
Our county government engage all the stakeholders in mitigating the negative effects of tourism	.870	
Local community are involved during planning and implementation of tourism policies	.802	
Our county has sufficient budgetary allocation to tourism activities	.732	
Our county government is commitment on tourism activities	.676	
Our community are involved on formulation and implementation of tourism policies	.669	
Our county has put in place regulations that guides tourism activities	.599	
County has functional tourism policy		.903
Our county has favorable policies for development of tourism industry		.900
The ministry of tourism and wildlife has formulated good policies to govern destination development		.759
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.794	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	521.158	
df	36	
Sig.	.001	
Total Variance Explained	64.132	
Total Eigenvalues	3.232	2.540
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings % of Variance	35.914	28.218

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

4.5.5 Factor Analysis for Support environment

The measurement of support environment was conducted using nine questions. The findings of the Kaiser-Meyer-Okin measure of sample adequacy test (0.774) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\varrho 2$ (36) = 392.20, $p < 0.001$) established that the data was suitable for factor analysis, as shown in table 4.15. An investigation of the support environment was conducted using factor

analysis. Three components with Eigen values over 1 were identified, which together accounted for 68.718% of the variation. The use of Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalisation uncovers three components. The rotational component matrix of the support environment revealed that the first component consisted of four items (SE1, SE2, SE3, and SE4) with factor loadings ranging from 0.630 to 0.838. These factor loadings accounted for 24.542% of the total variance.

Table 4.15: Support environment Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	**2**	**3**
Our county ensure that tourists have unlimited access to destination attraction sites	.838		
Our county tourism products are marketed online	.680		
Our county has user-friendly tour guiding services.	.654		
Our county tourist attraction sites offer efficient service delivery	.630		
Our county provides safe and secure environment to the tourist		.836	
Our county is safe for tourists to visit		.683	
Our county has enough medical facilities		.647	
Our hospitality products are attractive			.858
There is mutual relationship between the tourists and local community			.759
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.774		
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	392.20		
df	36		
Sig.	.001		
Total Variance Explained	68.718		
Total Eigenvalues	2.209	2.068	1.908
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings % of Variance	24.542	22.979	21.197

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 6 iteration

The second component consisted of three items (SE7, SE8, and SE9) with loadings ranging from 0.647 to 0.836, which accounted for 22.979% of the overall variance. The third component consisted of two items (SE5 and SE6) with loadings ranging from 0.759 to 0.858, which accounted for 21.197% of the overall variation. Thus, it was deduced that the support environment may be assessed using three items, which were then employed in the following regression study. Retained nine items used to assess the support environment were calculated and renamed support for subsequent analysis.

4.6 Correlation Analysis of the Variables

This study employed correlation analysis to establish the association between a dependent variable and an independent variable (Saunders et al., 2019). The correlation coefficient, as defined by Saunders et al. (2019), should fall between the range of 0.2 to 0.9. numbers below 0.2 indicate a weak association, while numbers above 0.9 indicate a robust relationship. Coefficient correlation analysis was used to ascertain the magnitude and direction of the association between two variables. The Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was employed to determine the relationship between the variables included in the research, as documented in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Correlation Analysis of the Variables

		Destination	Resources	Infrastructure	Policy	Support
Destination	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Resources	Pearson Correlation	.814**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001				
Infrastructure	Pearson Correlation	.876**	.835**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.001			
Policy	Pearson Correlation	.722**	.553**	.710**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.001	.001		
Support	Pearson Correlation	.786**	.490**	.679**	.660**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.001	.001	.001	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
b. Listwise N=354

The results indicated a statistically significant and robust correlation (r= 0.814, p =0.001) between destination resources and the growth of tourism destinations. This indicates that the greater the availability of destination resources, the more the growth of the tourism destination advanced. This affirms the assertion made by Ritchie and Crouch (2010) that attractions and resources play a crucial role in determining the competitiveness and profitability of tourism destinations. Accordingly, the main driving force for a visitor to choose a specific place is the appeal of that destination.

An substantial positive and robust correlation (r= 0.876, p =0.001) was seen between infrastructural facilities and the growth of tourist destinations. Such evidence suggests that when infrastructural facilities increased, there was a proportional enhancement in the growth of tourist destinations. This supports Nasr's (2016) assertion that Egypt's tourism industry has been able to attract a

growing variety of tourists from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East because to its well-developed tourism infrastructure, which includes a large bed capacity and direct international networks.

The positive and substantial correlation between tourism policy (r= 0.722, p =0.001) and tourist destination development was shown to be statistically significant. These findings indicate that a robust tourism policy resulted in the growth of tourist destinations. A comprehensive evaluation of several policy matters and their correlation with and promotion of the increased attractiveness of tourism products and activities (Hsu, Inbakaran and George, 2013) greatly impact and contribute to the competitiveness of tourist destinations.

A robust and statistically significant positive correlation (r= 0.786, p = 0.001) was seen between the environment and the growth of tourist destinations. Consequently, a notable alteration in the conducive atmosphere resulted in an enhancement in the growth of the tourist attraction. Results indicated a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between tourist policy and destination resources. Indications suggest that effective management of destination resources results in the prosperous expansion and development of a destination. This aligns with the findings of Cîrstea (2014) and Khan et al. (2021) that a measure of commitment should encompass policies aimed at guaranteeing the quality and safety of the environment, as well as enhancing the attractiveness of the destination through the sustainable utilisation of natural environmental resources for tourism..

4.7 Linear Regression

A regression analysis was performed to quantify the correlation between the independent and dependent variables and thereby ascertain the significance of predictors in determining the growth of tourism destinations. The null hypotheses H_{01}, H_{02}, H_{03}, and H_{04} were tested via linear regression analysis. In order to determine the factors that influence the growth of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet, the researcher employed linear regression to examine the four hypotheses of the study. The decision criterion for testing this hypothesis was to reject the null hypothesis if the p-value is less than 0.05, or the alternative is to not reject it.

4.7.1 Relationship between Resources and Tourism Destination Development

The coefficient of determination quantifies the degree to which changes in the dependent variable can be accounted for by changes in the independent variable, or the proportion of total variation in the dependent variable that can be accounted for by the independent variable. A regression analysis was conducted on the dependent variable (tourist Destination Development) using the independent variable (tourist resource). Table 4.17 presents the regression model findings, which show that tourism resource accounts for 66.3% (R^2= 0.663) of the overall volatility in tourist destination development.

Table 4.17: Model Summary on Tourism Resources

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.814[a]	.663	.662	.415

a. Predictors: (Constant), Resources

The ANOVA results assess the statistical significance of the model. Statistical analysis of variance was employed to assess if the model could provide a more

accurate prediction of the outcome compared to using the mean, as shown in Table 4.18. The regression analysis of resources as a predictor yielded a statistically significant result (F=693.47, p value =0.001), indicating a strong correlation between tourism resources and the growth of tourist destinations.

Table 4.18: ANOVA of Tourism Resources

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	119.45	1	119.45	693.47	.001[b]
	Residual	60.63	352	.172		
	Total	180.08	353			

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism destination development
b. Predictors: (Constant), Resources

In order to accomplish the goals of the research, the beta coefficients and p-values were correctly analysed. The estimations of the β-value and the contribution of the predictor to the model were summarised in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Coefficients of Tourism Resources

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.711	.112		6.38	.001
	Resources	.790	.030	.814	26.33	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism destination development

A t-test was employed to see if the tourist resources, when utilised as a predictor, had a statistically significant impact on the model. In the model, the β-value for tourist resources showed a positive coefficient, indicating a positive correlation with the growth of tourism destinations:

$Y = .711+0.790X_1+\varepsilon$……..... Equation I

Where: Y = Tourism destination development; X_1 = resources and ε = error term

Hypotheses of the study were tested by generating β coefficients for the independent variable of tourist resources from the model. The statistical analysis revealed that the coefficients revealed a substantial relationship between the expected development of tourist destinations and the available tourist resources.

Hypothesis H_{01} posited that there was no statistically significant correlation between tourism resources and the growth of tourist destinations. To test this hypothesis, we conducted a regression analysis of the tourist resources variable on the tourism destination development variable. The study results indicated a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between resources and the growth of tourist destinations ($\beta 1=0.790$ and $p=0.001$). This indicates that for each one-unit increase in tourist resources, there was a substantial reciprocal shift of 0.790 units in the development of tourism destinations. Hence, the abundance of tourist resources resulted in a rapid growth of tourism destination development. Given a p-value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (Ho1) was rejected.

Thus, it can be inferred that there exists a substantial correlation between tourist resources and the growth of tourism destinations. The findings align with the conclusions of Vengesayi (2017), which suggest that the appeal of a tourist site increases its popularity. Andrades and Dimance (2017) argue that the current slow progress in tourism growth in Russia is mostly due to several challenges including destination image, infrastructure, quality management, and sustainable management, despite its significant potential.

4.7.2 Relationship between Infrastructure facilities and Tourism Destination Development

The findings of the regression model shown in Table 4.20 demonstrate that infrastructural facilities account for 76.7% (R^2=.767) of the overall fluctuations in the growth of tourist destinations..

Table 4.20: Model Summary of Infrastructure facilities

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.876[a]	.767	.767	.345

a. Predictors: (Constant), Infrastructure

The F statistic of the regression ANOVA model included in Table 4.21 is 1160.87, with a corresponding P value of 0.001. Given that the P value is below the alpha value (P < 0.05), it may be concluded that the model is statistically significant (excellent fit) in its ability to forecast tourism destination development.

Table 4.21: ANOVA of Infrastructure Facilities

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	138.18	1	138.18	1160.87	.001[b]
	Residual	41.90	352	.119		
	Total	180.08	353			

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism destination development
b. Predictors: (Constant), Infrastructure

The β coefficients for the independent variable were derived from the model to see if the incorporation of infrastructural facilities as a predictor had a statistically significant impact on the model. The estimations of β-value and the contribution of predictive variables to the model were provided in Table 4.21.

Table 4.22: Coefficients of Infrastructure Facilities

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.569	.091		6.28	.001
	Infrastructure	.796	.023	.876	34.07	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism destination development

From the results of the Table 4.22, the regression equation model was fitted and becomes:

$Y = .569 + 0.796\ X_2 + Ɛ$……..... Equation 2

Where;

Y= Tourism destination development, X_2= infrastructure facilities

Consider the variables Y and X2: Tourism destination development and infrastructural facilities. The statistical coefficients for the independent variable were derived using the model to evaluate the research hypotheses. The study postulated that there was no statistically significant correlation between the presence of infrastructural amenities and the growth of tourism destinations. The results indicated a statistically significant positive correlation (β=0.650, p=.001) between the growth of tourism destinations and the available infrastructural amenities. Given a significance level of P< 0.05, we may reject the null hypothesis (H_{O2}) and infer that there is a substantial correlation between infrastructural facilities and the growth of tourism destinations. Thus, a one-unit increase in infrastructural facilities resulted in a 0.796 coefficient of positive and substantial impact on the growth of tourism destinations. This supports the assertion made by Lijia (2015) that the presence of local infrastructure, including roads, footbridges, and telecommunication, plays a crucial role in shaping the perception of a certain tourist location. It agrees with Jovanović and Ilić (2016) that in order to achieve effective tourist growth,

it is becoming increasingly evident that a more substantial investment in the modernisation of infrastructure is a required requirement..

4.7.3 Relationship between Tourism policy and Tourism Destination Development

Tourism policy was used as the independent variable in a regression analysis of the dependent variable, Tourism Destination Development. The findings of the regression model shown in Table 4.23 demonstrate that tourism policy accounts for 52.1% (R2= 0.521) of the overall fluctuations in the growth of tourist destinations.

Table 4.23: Model Summary on Tourism policy

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.722[a]	.521	.520	.495

a. Predictors: (Constant), Tourism policy

The ANOVA results assess the statistical significance of the model. Statistical analysis of variance was employed to assess if the model could provide a more accurate prediction of the outcome compared to using the mean, as shown in Table 4.24. The regression analysis of tourism policy as a predictor yielded a statistically significant result (F=382.86, p value =0.001), indicating a strong correlation between tourism policy and the development of tourist destinations.

Table 4.24: ANOVA on Tourism Policy

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	93.82	1	93.82	382.86	.001[b]
	Residual	86.26	352	.245		
	Total	180.09	353			

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism destination development
b. Predictors: (Constant), Tourism policy

In order to accomplish the goals of the research, the beta coefficients and p-values were correctly analysed. Table 4.25 presents the results of the β-value estimation and the contribution of the tourist policy predictor to the model.

Table 4.25: Coefficients of Tourism Policy

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.045	.133		7.873	.001
	Tourism policy	.714	.036	.722	19.567	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism destination development

The t-test was employed to determine if the tourist policy, when analysed as a predictor, had a statistically significant impact on the model. The coefficient for the β-value of tourist resources was positive, indicating a positive correlation with the development of tourism destinations as summarised in the model:

$Y = 1.045+0.714X_3+\varepsilon$……..... Equation 3

Where: Y = Tourism destination development; X_4 = tourism policy and ε = error term

To examine the hypotheses of the study, coefficients for the independent variable of tourist policy were derived from the model. The statistical analysis revealed that the coefficients revealed a substantial relationship between the expected development of tourist destinations and tourism strategy.

Hypothesis H_{03}: posited that there was no statistically significant correlation between tourism policy and the growth of tourist destinations. An analysis was conducted to examine this hypothesis by regressing the tourism policy variable on the tourist destination development variable. The analysis revealed a strong

and statistically significant positive correlation between tourism strategy and the growth of tourist destinations (β3=0.714 and p=0.001).

This indicates that for each one-unit increase in tourism policy, there was a substantial and proportional 0.714-unit increase in the development of tourism destinations. Hence, an enhancement in the execution of tourism strategy resulted in a rise in the growth of tourist destinations. Given a p-value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (Ho3) was rejected. Consequently, it was deduced that there exists a substantial correlation between tourism strategy and the growth of tourist destinations. This supports Cao's (2015) assertion that a legal and policy framework is crucial for the growth of tourism, since it enables the attraction of tourists and contributes to reaching competitiveness.

The existing literature has provided evidence that a regulatory framework has a beneficial impact on the sustainability of tourism (Aktürk, 2022; Bezvesilnaya et al., 2020). This supports the findings of Wahyuningdyah et al. (2019) that crucial tourism services, service quality, information accessibility, physical structure, and pricing strategy have a favourable impact on attaining competitive sustainability in the tourism industry.

4.7.4 Relationship between Support environment and Tourism Destination Development

Table 4.26 presents the regression model findings, which show that the support environment accounts for 61.8% (R2=.618) of the overall fluctuations in the growth of tourist destinations.

Table 4.26: Model Summary of Support environment

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.786[a]	.618	.617	.442

a. Predictors: (Constant), Support environment

Table 4.27 presents a regression ANOVA model with a F statistic of 568.72 and a P value of 0.001. Given that the P value is below the alpha value (P < 0.05), it can be concluded that the support environment model is statistically significant (excellent fit) in its ability to forecast tourism destination development.

Table 4.27: ANOVA of Support environment

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	111.23	1	111.23	568.71	.001[b]
	Residual	68.85	352	.196		
	Total	180.08	353			

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism destination development
b. Predictors: (Constant), Support environment

The coefficients for the independent variable were derived from the model to see if the support environment, when utilised as a predictor, had a statistically meaningful contribution to the model. The estimations of β-value and the contribution of predictive variables to the model were provided in Table 4.28.

Table 4.28: Coefficients of Support environment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.645	.126		5.13	.001
	Support environment	.792	.033	.786	23.85	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism destination development

From the results of the Table 4.28, the regression equation model was fitted and becomes:

$Y = .645 + 0.792\ X_4 + Ɛ$……..... Equation 4

Where;

Y= Tourism destination development, X_4= support environment

The statistical coefficients for the independent variable were derived using the model to evaluate the research hypotheses. The study postulated that there was no statistically significant correlation between the support environment and the growth of tourism destinations. The results revealed a statistically significant positive correlation (β=0.792, p=.001) between the support environment and the growth of tourist destinations. Given a significance level of P< 0.05, we may reject the null hypothesis (H_{O4}) and infer that there is a substantial correlation between the support environment and the growth of tourism destinations. Consequently, a one-unit increase in the support environment resulted in a 0.792 positive and statistically significant impact on the growth of the tourist attraction. It is consistent with the findings of Boniface et al. (2020) that amenities are portrayed as auxiliary elements rather than standalone tourism attractions. Consistent with the findings of Dodds & Butler (2019), the support environment plays a crucial role in a destination as it enhances the overall experience of tourists when they engage in the activities offered by tourist attractions.

4.8 Assumptions of Regression Analysis

Regression, as defined by Kothari & Garg (2018), is the process of establishing a statistical correlation between two or more variables. The regression model was modified to better examine the nature of the connection between the independent factors and the dependent variable. Optimal performance of

multiple regressions relies on specific assumptions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Next, the variables were analysed to assess the regression assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, autocorrelation, and multicollinearity.

4.8.1 Normality Assumption Test

The assumption of normal distributions for variables is made in multiple regression (Osborne & Waters, 2002). This implies that the mistakes follow a normal distribution, and a graph consisting of the residual values will closely resemble a normal curve (Keith, 2006). The normality of the standardised residuals was assessed by examining histograms (Stevens, 2009). The histogram in Figure 4.1 was generated using the SPSS program and follows a normal distribution. Histograms are graphical representations of bar graphs of residuals, where a normal curve is overlaid to depict the distribution. The premise is derived from the inherent characteristics of a normal distribution and provides the researcher with insight into the anticipated values (Keith, 2006).

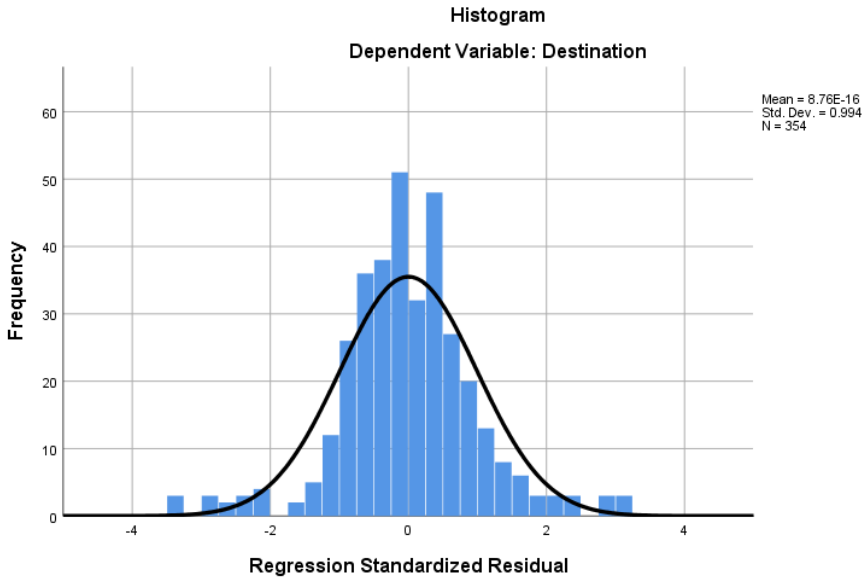

Figure 4.1: Histogram with normal distribution

This graph displays the frequencies on the vertical axis and the standardised residuals on the horizontal axis. The data exhibited a normal distribution with a standard deviation of 0.994. Accurate knowledge of the sampling distribution of the mean enables the formulation of predictions for a fresh sample (Keith, 2006).

4.8.2 Linearity Assumption Test

The assumption of linearity posits the presence of a linear connection between two variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Normal P-P plot for the residuals of the regression model of the dependent variable. In this graph, the vertical axis represents the predicted cumulative probabilities, while the horizontal axis represents the observed cumulative probabilities. Upon careful analysis of the residual plots, it is evident that the data conforms closely to the normal distribution, as seen in Figure 4.2 (Keith, 2006).

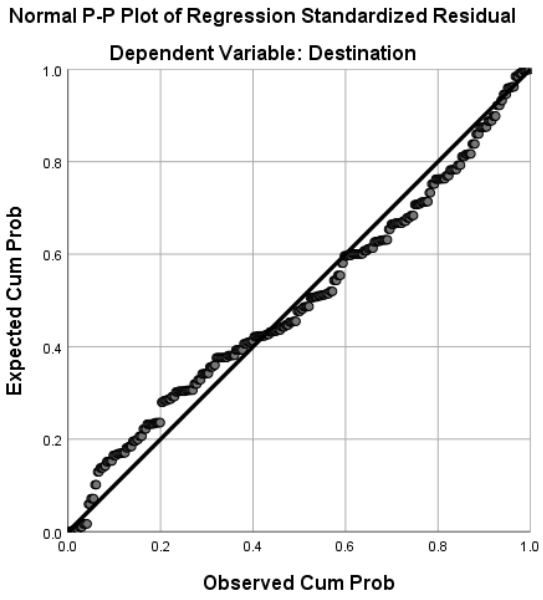

Figure 4.2: Linearity

4.8.3 Homoscedasticity Assumption Test

In the context of multiple regressions, homoscedasticity refers to the assumption, as highlighted by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), that the scores for the dependent variable exhibit consistent variability in respect to the independent variables. Homoscedasticity was assessed by examining the standardised residual scatter plot shown in Figure 4.3. To satisfy this premise, it was anticipated that variables would provide scatter plots that were either oval or elliptical in shape. Analysis revealed that oval scatter plots were present in all the cells, suggesting that the homoscedasticity criteria was not violated.

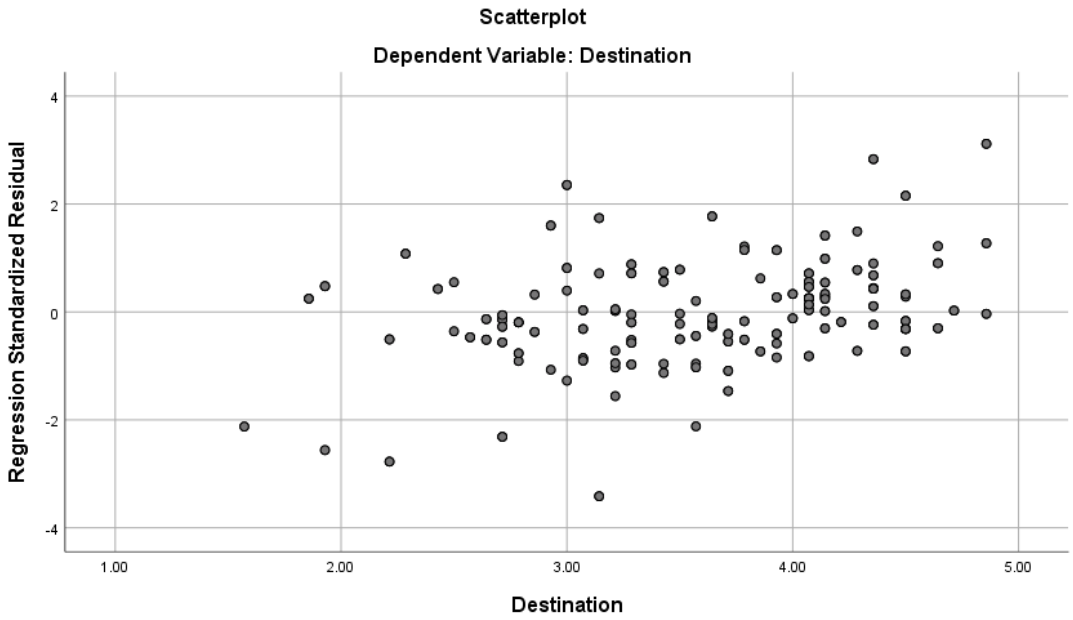

Figure 4.3: Homoscedasticity

4.8.4 Autocorrelation Assumption Test

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), autocorrelation is a statistical metric that quantifies the degree of connection among regression residuals. Deviation from the concept of error independence occurs when variables such

as time and distance are linked to the sequence in which instances are collected. Statistical tests for autocorrelation (independence of mistakes) were conducted using Durbin-Watson (DW) statistics. According to Verbeek (2012), a Durbin-Watson statistic within the range of $1.5 \leq d \geq 2.5$ indicates the absence of autocorrelation. The findings displayed in Table 4.29 indicate that the Durbin-Watson statistic d=1.946 fell within the range of the two crucial values, suggesting the absence of auto-correlation in the multiple linear regression data.

Table 4.29: Autocorrelation Test

Model Summary[b]

Model	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.24806	1.946

a. Predictors: (Constant), Supporting environment, Resources, Tourism policy, Infrastructure facilities

b. Dependent Variable: Destination

4.8.5 Multicollinearity Assumption Test

Multicollinearity refers to the condition in which certain independent variables or predictors exhibit a strong correlation among themselves (Vatcheva, Lee, McCormick, & Rahbar, 2016). Multicollinearity was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance as statistical measures. The recommended guideline is that the VIF value should be below 10 and the tolerance should exceed 0.2 (Keith, 2006; Shieh, 2010). This was further corroborated by the VIF value, which failed to exceed 6, and the minimum tolerance of 0.2, which fell below the respective thresholds of 10 and 0.2 (Table 4.30).

Table 4.30: Collinearity Statistics

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Resources	.292	3.43
	Infrastructure facilities	.183	5.47
	Tourism policy	.437	2.29
	Supporting environment	.462	2.16

a. Dependent Variable: Destination

Analysis revealed that all the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were below the established threshold, suggesting that multicollinearity was not a concern in the study. Thus, the assumption of multicollinearity is not violated. When multicollinearity is present, it may not be feasible to interpret the regression coefficient as ascribed to one variable while keeping the others constant due to the overlapping information presented.

4.9 Multiple Regression Analysis

Saunders et al. (2019) employed multiple regression analysis to derive a coefficient of multiple determination and construction of a regression equation incorporating two or more independent variables. Linearity is the degree to which the change in the dependent variable is consistently associated with the change in the independent variables (Saunders et al., 2019). Thus, linear regression analysis demonstrates the constant relationship between changes in one variable and changes in another one.

4.9.1 Model Summary[b]

Its objective was to determine the total impact of the independent factors on the dependent variable. The regression coefficient summary elucidated the nature of the association between all the independent factors and the dependent variable. The model summary measure was developed to quantify the extent of

variability in the growth of tourist destinations that may be accounted for by changes in certain factors. The model; $Y= \beta 0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$ explained 88.1% of the variations in tourism destination development as shown in Table 4.31.

Table 4.31: Overall Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.938[a]	.881	.879	.248

a. Predictors: (Constant), Supporting environment, Resources, Tourism policy, Infrastructure facilities
b. Dependent Variable: Destination

The coefficient of determination (R squared) of.881 under the multiple regression model indicates that 88.1% of the variability in tourist destination development can be accounted for by the determinants, namely resources, infrastructural facilities, policy, and support environment. The present analysis indicates that the variables chosen, namely resources, physical facilities, tourist policy, and support environment, collectively account for 88.1% of the elements that influence the growth of tourism destinations.

According to the Travel and Tourism Report, South Africa's attractiveness as a destination is supported by several factors. These include its abundant natural resources, cultural assets, world heritage sites, diverse fauna and flora, thriving creative industries, hosting international fairs and exhibitions, well-developed infrastructure, efficient air transport, high-quality rail system, well-defined policies and regulations, safeguarded property rights, and minimal visa requirements. Nevertheless, another elements account for 11.9% of the development of tourist destinations. The remaining 11.9% indicates the presence of additional variables that may be accountable for the variability in the growth of tourist destinations, which were not addressed in this study.

4.9.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Statistical analysis of variance was employed to ascertain the significance of the model and its adequacy in fitting the data. The model's significance was assessed at a conventional 5% level of significance. The findings shown in Table 4.32 demonstrate the statistical significance of the model (P<0.001).

Table 4.32: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	158.606	4	39.651	644.38	.001[b]
	Residual	21.476	349	.062		
	Total	180.081	353			

a. Dependent Variable: Destination
b. Predictors: (Constant), Supporting environment, Resources, Tourism policy, Infrastructure facilities

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that resources, infrastructural facilities, policy, and support environment were important predictive factors of visitor destination development. The F-statistics results (F=644.38, p=0.001) established the statistical significance of the model employed to connect the dependent variable and independent variables. Therefore, the model in this work demonstrated a satisfactory level of fit. Given that the p-value (0.001) was below the threshold of 0.05, it may be concluded that the model displays statistical significance in assessing the impact of resources, infrastructural facilities, policy, and support environment on the growth of tourism destinations.

4.9.3 Regression Coefficients

The statistical coefficients for the independent variable were derived using the model to evaluate the research hypotheses. The t-test was employed to determine if the determinant variable, when utilised as a predictor, had a

statistically significant impact on the model. Table 4.33 presents the results of the β-value estimations and the individual contributions of each predictor to the model.

Table 4.33: Regression Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.315	.082		-3.86	.001
	Resources	.371	.033	.382	11.17	.001
	Infrastructure facilities	.211	.039	.232	5.37	.001
	Tourism policy	.096	.028	.097	3.46	.001
	Supporting environment	.380	.027	.377	13.87	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Destination

The regression equation model was fitted based on the findings recorded in Table 4.21. When the variables resources, infrastructural facilities, policy, and support environment are held constant at zero, the model equation indicates that the tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet will remain constant at -0.315. The regression model shown below includes the interpretations of the obtained results.

$Y= \beta 0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$ 4.1

When these beta coefficients are substituted in the equation, the model becomes:

$Y = -0.315 + 0.371 X_1 + 0.211 X_2 + 0.096 X_3 + 0.380 X_4 + \varepsilon$ 4.2

Where; X_1=resources, X_2=infrastructure facilities, X_3=policy, X_4=support environment and ε= error

Among the four considered factors, resources and support environment emerged as the primary determinants. This is because in order to achieve one unit of

tourist destination development, it is necessary to raise 0.371 units of resources and 0.380 units of support environment. Hence, it is imperative for Elgeyo Marakwet County to prioritise resources and support environment over infrastructure and policy. The findings corroborate the conclusions of Wang, Hsu, and Swanson (2012) that the key to constructing a prosperous destination is in the infrastructure of the destination, which enables the availability of resources and ease of access. Supports the recommendations of Loureiro and Ferreira (2015) that destination development should prioritise initiatives that improve the attractiveness of the main resources and attractions, and raise the quality and efficiency of the supporting elements and resources.

ince the calculated p-value (0.001) was lower than the chosen level of significance (0.05), the results confirmed that destination resources had a significant link with tourist destination development. Furthermore, the study revealed a positive correlation (β=0.371) between destination resources and tourist destination development. Consequently, the whole model indicates that resources are positively correlated with the growth of tourist destinations.

Analysis indicates that a one-unit increase in destination resources will result in a 0.371 rise in the development of the tourism destination. This result is consistent with the findings of Blanke and Chiesa (2013), which suggest that support resources and destination attractors are key factors that contribute to the attractiveness of a location.

Based on the obtained p-value of 0.001, which was lower than the chosen level of significance of 0.05, the overall model coefficients indicated that infrastructural facilities had a substantial impact on the growth of tourism

destinations. The results indicated a substantial positive correlation (β=0.211) between infrastructural facilities and the growth of tourist destinations. In the overall model, it can be inferred that there exists a positive correlation between infrastructural facilities and the growth of tourism destinations.

The findings indicate that a one-unit increase in infrastructural facilities will result in a 0.211 rise in the progression of tourism destination development. The study results support the assertions made by Claudio and Constanza (2017) that a destination should possess a suitable degree of development in both its services and destination offerings, including connectivity, infrastructure, attractions, excursions, hotels, restaurants, and so on. The absence of these amenities renders the destination unable to effectively compete with other comparable alternative tourist destinations.

As the p-value obtained (0.020) was lower than the chosen level of significance (0.05), the results confirmed that tourism strategy had a substantial impact on the growth of tourist destinations. Moreover, the results indicated a favourable (β=0.096) impact of tourism policy on the growth of tourist destinations. The implication is that there exists a favourable correlation between tourism policy and the growth of tourist destinations. Analysis indicates that a one-unit rise in tourism policy results in a 0.096 increase in the development of tourism destinations.

This result was consistent with the findings of Hudson, Hunter & Penckham (2019), who emphasise the importance of institutions in shaping the development and execution of tourist policies. The determination of whether a

policy action will have a beneficial impact on destination development is contingent upon this factor.

The results indicated that the support environment had a substantial impact on the growth of tourism destinations, since the resulting p-value (0.001) was lower than the chosen level of significance (0.05). Furthermore, the results indicated that the impact of the support environment on the growth of tourist destinations was favourable (β=0.380). The implication is that there exists a favourable correlation between the support environment and the growth of tourism destinations. The findings indicate that a one-unit improvement in the support environment would result in a 0.380 rise in the growth of the tourist attraction.

This aligns with the conclusions of Claudio and Constanza (2017) that a destination must possess a certain degree of infrastructure development in terms of the services it provides. This supports the findings of Cîrstea (2014) and Khan et al. (2021) that the environment of a destination is a significant predictor of its quality. A dedication to responsibly managing the sustainable use of tourist resources serves as an indication and metric of competitiveness.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The current chapter provides a concise overview of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, together with proposals for future study that are grounded in the aims and hypothesis.

5.1 Summary of Findings

Tourism-related activities have resulted in a surge in the influx of tourists to the area. There has been a surge in the demand for lodging services within the county. The tourist industry has significantly enhanced the quality of life for the local population. Tourism operations have generated both formal and informal means of employment. Tourism operations have exacerbated environmental damage and escalated crime rates. Tourism activities have stimulated migrations to tourist areas and transformed the demography of the destinations.

5.1.1 Relationship between destination resources and tourism destination development

The descriptive findings of the study clearly indicated that the county possesses remarkable natural landscapes such as cliffs, rivers, and vistas, as well as opportunities for nature-based activities like bird watching and camping. Cheploch Gorge and Kerio River are noted historical sites. The weather was both cold and warm. The yearly sporting activities included football and athletics, as well as traditional cultural ceremonial practices like as rites of passage and marriage. The county boasts indigenous fauna, including elephants, and pristine virgin woodland.

The correlation study revealed a statistically significant and robust positive association between destination resources and the growth of tourism destinations. This indicates that the greater the availability of destination resources, the more the growth of the tourism destination advanced. Regression study confirmed that destination resources exerted a substantial impact on the growth of tourism destinations. A beneficial impact of destination resources on the development of tourism destinations was seen. Given a p-value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{O1}) was rejected. The research findings indicate a direct correlation between destination resources and the growth of tourism destinations. The resources that augment the appeal of a tourist site render it very attractive.

5.1.2 Relationship between Infrastructure Facilities and tourism destination development

The descriptive findings indicate that the road conveyance to the designated location was satisfactory, and the feeder roads leading to tourist attractions sites are well maintained. The county boasts very high-quality tourist accommodations and a dependable network coverage. Web technology has been implemented by the county in its tourism marketing efforts. Ample lodging accommodations and excellent hospitality services are available within the county. Staff employed in the hotel sector were amiable. The hotels employ indigenous recipes and culinary techniques to meticulously craft their dishes.

Correlation research revealed a statistically significant and robust positive association between infrastructural facilities and the growth of tourist destinations. The regression study revealed a statistically significant positive

correlation between infrastructural facilities and the growth of tourist destinations. Given a p-value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{O2}) was rejected. There exists a favourable correlation between the physical infrastructure amenities and the growth of tourism destinations. These findings suggest that as the infrastructural facilities increased, there was a proportional enhancement in the growth of the tourist attraction.

5.1.3 Relationship between tourism policy and tourism destination development

The descriptive findings indicate that the county administration shown a strong commitment to tourist undertakings, while the community actively participated in the development and execution of tourism policies. In order to alleviate the adverse impacts of tourism, the county administration actively involves all relevant interested parties. In order to govern tourism operations, the county has implemented rules. Active participation of the local population is essential in the development and execution of tourist initiatives. Each county has an adequate fiscal allocation for tourist initiatives. The government responsible for tourism and wildlife has devised effective policies to regulate the growth of destinations.

The correlation study revealed a statistically significant and robust positive association between tourism policy and the growth of tourist destinations. Indeed, a robust tourism policy resulted in the development of tourist destinations. The statistical research revealed a direct correlation between tourism strategy and the growth of tourist destinations. Given a p-value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{O3}) was rejected. There exists a good correlation between the tourism strategy and the growth of tourist destinations.

5.1.4 Relationship between support environment and tourism destination development

The descriptive findings indicate that the county has effectively provided tourists with unrestricted access to destination attraction places and has implemented user-friendly tour guide services. The tourist attraction sites provide effective service delivery and promote tourism items through internet marketing. The hospitality offerings are appealing, and there exists a reciprocal interaction between the visitors and the local people. In addition to its ample medical services, the county offers a safe and secure atmosphere for tourists.

The correlation study revealed a substantial and robust beneficial association that supports the development of tourism destinations and the environment. Consequently, a notable alteration in the conducive atmosphere resulted in an enhancement in the growth of the tourist attraction. The regression analysis revealed that the support environment exerted a statistically significant favourable impact on the growth of tourism destinations. Given a p-value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{O4}) was rejected. There exists a favourable correlation between the support environment and the growth of tourism destinations.

The coefficient of determination (R squared) of.881 in the multiple regression model indicates that 88.1% of the variability in tourist destination development can be accounted for by the determinants, namely resources, infrastructural facilities, tourism policy, and support environment. The present analysis indicates that the variables chosen, namely resources, physical facilities, tourist policy, and support environment, collectively account for 88.1% of the elements

that influence the growth of tourism destinations. Among the four variables examined, resources and support environment emerged as the primary determinants. Thus, it is imperative for Elgeyo Marakwet County to prioritise the development of tourist policies and infrastructural amenities.

The results of the multiple regression model establish empirical evidence that certain aspects of destination tourism development are significantly associated with distinct destination environments, accessible resources, infrastructural amenities, and tourist policy. Nevertheless, the impact of each variable on destination growth varies, with resources being the most significant factor, followed by the support environment, infrastructural facilities, and tourist policy being the least influential.

5.2 Conclusions

The research findings of this study indicate that the growth of tourist destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County is greatly impacted by destination resources. The infrastructure facilities in Elgeyo Marakwet County has a substantial correlation with the growth of the tourism attraction.

The tourism strategy has a substantial impact on the development of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The correlation between the support environment and the growth of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County was shown to be substantial. In conclusion, the study determined that the key factors for achieving effective destination development are the infrastructure, resources and accessibility, tourist policy, and supportive atmosphere of the destination.

5.3 Recommendations

The study made the following recommendations:

5.3.1 Recommendation to Practice

The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and the county administration of Elgeyo Marakwet should optimise resource utilisation, create travel goods and activities, and establish comprehensive plans for successful and streamlined destination development. To enhance the development of tourist destinations under devolved governance units, it was necessary to implement county policies that promote community involvement in tourism projects and provide sufficient allocation of resources to the tourism and travel industry.

Elgeyo Marakwet county administration should actively market and foster a favourable perception of the destination among prospective visitors by offering comprehensive information about the county's appeal, which is a necessary condition for visiting the place. This would facilitate visitors who are visiting the destination to effectively prepare for their trip in advance.

It is recommended that the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and the County Government of Elgeyo Marakwet enhance its fundamental infrastructure and establish experience programs that promote interactions between visitors and locals, as well as provide opportunities to learn about the history and cultural heritage of the border regions. Interactions between visitors and host communities about lodging, dining establishments, and local markets may enhance and enriche travel experiences at various places.

5.3.2 Recommendation to Policy

It is recommended that the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife construct both short- and long-term strategic plans for destination development and implement capacity-building programs for the stakeholders involved in these destinations. It is necessary for the Ministry of Tourism to thoroughly examine tourism policy decisions and the existing institutional structure ahead to their acceptance and implementation. It is imperative for the Elgeyo Marakwet County administration to prioritise the enhancement of the environment with regards to infrastructure, health-related services, and safety.

The devolved entities must actively pursue clear and intentional public policy decisions for the development and marketing of tourism. Policy choices in the tourist industry should encompass strategies for ensuring sufficient resource allocation, promoting participation and inclusion in tourism company investment, enhancing infrastructural facilities, and creating a supportive environment for destination growth.

Moreover, the policy should take into account the long-term vision and sustainability requirements of tourism development and allocate limited resources to take advantage of limitless possibilities in a highly changing environment. It should also follow the professional recommendations, such as research, knowledge, and experience, in formulating and implementing policies. It should promote policies based on innovation and adaptability, eliminate obstacles while enhancing connections among different sectors, and guarantee consistency between subnational and national policies.

5.3.3 Recommendation for Further Research

The present study specifically examined the factors that influence the growth of tourism destinations in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya. The report proposes that more investigations be undertaken in different counties to facilitate comparisons. It is recommended that more research be undertaken on additional factors such as competitiveness and safety and security. Further investigations were necessary to examine the mediating role of competition in the factors influencing the growth of tourist destinations.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire for Household Heads

Dear Respondent,

I am a Maters student in Tourism Management at Moi University Eldoret. I am conducting a study on **'Determinants of Tourism destination development in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya.'** You have been selected as one of the respondents for this study. Kindly complete this questionnaire as honestly and precisely as possible to assist me get data. The information given is purely intended for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your participation is entirely voluntary and the questionnaire is completely anonymous. Your contribution in facilitating this study will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.

Section A: Background Information

Please read the questions carefully and tick **[√]** *in the appropriate space*

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]

3. Please indicate your age group.

   18-25 [ ] 26-35 [ ] 36-45 [ ] 46-55 [ ] Over 56 years [ ]

4. What is your highest level of education?

   Secondary [ ] Certificate [ ] Diploma [ ] Degree [ ]

   Any other (Specify)…….

Section B: Resources

5. In the scale given below, *please tick* **[√]** *in the appropriate space* indicating your level of agreement with the following statements describing resources. **Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 =Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**

	1	2	3	4	5
There is natural scenery (escarpments, rivers & viewpoints)					
There is cool & warm weather					
Our county has nature-based activities (bird watching and camping).					
There are historical landmarks (Cheploch gorge & Kerio river)					
There are annual sports events (football & athletics)					
Our county has Rimoi national game reserves					
Our county has wild animals such as elephants					
Our county has natural forest					
Traditional cultural ceremonies (Rites of passage and marriage)					

Section C: Infrastructure facilities

6. In the scale given below, *please tick* **[√]** *in the appropriate space* indicating your level of agreement with the following statements describing infrastructure facilities. **Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 =Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**

	1	2	3	4	5
The road transport to destination are good					
Feeder roads to tourist attractions sites are well maintained					
Our county as a destination has high quality tourist hotels					
Our county has a reliable network coverage					
Our county has adopted internet technology in tourism marketing					
In our county there is adequate accommodation facilities.					
Our county has quality accommodations					
Hospitality services within our county are good					
Employees working in hospitality industry are friendly.					
Our hotels prepare meals using local recipes and cooking methods					

Section D: Tourism Policy

7. In the scale given below, *please tick* **[√]** *in the appropriate space* indicating your level of agreement with the following statements describing policy. **Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 =Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Our county government is commitment on tourism activities					
The community are involved on formulation and implementation of tourism policies					
Our county government engage all the stakeholders in mitigating the negative effects of tourism					
Our county has put in place regulations that guides tourism activities					
The local community are involved during planning and implementation of tourism policies					
Our county has sufficient budgetary allocation to tourism activities					
The ministry of tourism and wildlife has formulated good policies to govern destination development					
Our county has functional tourism policy					
Our county tourism policies are regularly reviewed					

Section E: Supporting Environment

8. In the scale given below, *please tick* **[√]** *in the appropriate space* indicating your level of agreement with the following statements describing supporting environment. **Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 =Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**

	1	2	3	4	5
Our county ensure that tourists have unlimited access to destination attraction sites					
Our county has user-friendly tour guiding services.					
Our county tourist attraction sites offer efficient service delivery					
Our county tourism products are marketed online					
Our hospitality products are attractive					
There is mutual relationship between the tourists and local community					
Our county is safe for tourists to visit					
Our county provides safe and secure environment to the tourist					
Our county has enough medical facilities					

Section F: Tourism destination development

8. In the scale given below, *please tick* **[**√**]** *in the appropriate space* indicating your level of agreement with the following statements describing Tourism destination development. **Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 =Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**

	2	**3**	**4**	**5**
The number of tourist's visiting our county has increased				
There is an increase in demand for accommodation services in our county				
The standard of living of the local community has improved considerably because of tourism				
Tourism activities has created formal and informal employment opportunities in our county				
Tourism activities in our county has enhanced investments opportunities				
Tourism has brought foreign exchange earnings in our county				
Tourism activities has effects on environmental conservation				
Tourism activities has increased pollution of environment				
Tourism activities has caused ecological disturbance				
Tourism activities has negative effects on the local community culture				
Relations between tourists and locals is good				
Tourism activities has resulted in increase in crimes				
Tourism activities has encouraged migrations to tourist area				
Tourism activities has increased destination demographics				

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix II: Interview Guide for County Government and Ministry of Tourism And Wildlife Staff

1. What makes tourists attracted to Elgeyo Marakwet County?

2. Are their infrastructure facilities that tourists enjoy at Elgeyo Marakwet County destination? Enumerate them?

3. Do your Ministry/Elgeyo Marakwet County have tourism policy? If yes what does it entail?

4. How are the local community in policy issues?

5. What support services do the destination have?

6. What should Ministry/Elgeyo Marakwet County do to make the destination develop?

7. Has there been any benefits the community has gained as a result of tourist visit?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix III: Interview Guide for Tourist

1. What attractions makes you to choose Elgeyo Marakwet County destination?

2. What is your experience on infrastructure facilities during your visit at Elgeyo Marakwet County destination? Enumerate them?

3. In your view, what support services did you enjoy during your tour?

4. During your visit, were you guided by destination rules and regulations?

5. How was your interaction with the local community during your visit?

6. How will you rate your stay in Elgeyo Marakwet County?

7. What should the Elgeyo Marakwet County do better to ensure its destination develop?