ABSTRACT

This study aimed at establishing the contribution of eco-tourism towards improving the livelihoods of the people surrounding Lake Bunyonyi and Kabale district with a case study of Bwama and Bukoora parishes in Kitumba Sub-County, Kabale. The study was guided by the three objectives namely, to analyze the various eco-tourism activities contributing towards community livelihoods around lake Bunyonyi in Kabale district; to explore the eco-tourism benefits enhancing the livelihoods of the people around lake Bunyonyi and Kabale district and; to investigate strategies that aim at sustaining eco-tourism for improved livelihoods of the people around lake Bunyonyi and Kabale District. The literature review of the study was extracted from different textbooks; manuals, reports, journals and websites from different libraries and computer laboratories in Kabale district. The research process involved proposal writing, data collection, data analysis, presentation and discussion of results. The study is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Simple random and purposive sampling methods were used to select the 140 respondents who included local community members, local council administration, and tourism investors around Lake Bunyonyi (from Bwama and Bukora parishes) in Kabale district. The researcher used the questionnaire; focus group discussion, interview and observation guides to collect data from the field. Data was finally presented in tables, pie charts and graphs. Conclusion and recommendation of the study were drawn basing on the results of the study. It was found out that the majority of the people around the study area 74% were involved in eco-tourism activities for their livelihoods. The study results also revealed that the majority of the people 97% around the study area embraced eco-tourism as a benefiting venture towards improving the livelihoods of the communities surrounding lake Bunyonyi such as improved infrastructure development, provision of employment opportunities, environmental conservation and educational support especially for the needy, creation of social capital of the local people with local and international tourists, agricultural improvement, market creation for the local commodities and health improvement around the study area. It was concluded that, canoeing was the main activity attracting tourists around Lake Bunyonyi. The study also ended by suggesting measures to enhance eco-tourism for improved people’s livelihoods around Lake Bunyonyi. The study recommended that there is great need for the government of Uganda to emphasize certification systems for sustainable tourism need to be developed and operated to fit geographical, political, social economic and sectarian characteristics of the country.