

Terrorism Incidences and Its Effects on Sustainable Tourism in Lamu County, Kenya

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Abstract

In Lamu County, the tourist industry is a critical source of economic earnings. Still, it faces significant challenges due to security risks such as terrorist incidences, land disputes, environmental degradation, and socio-economic instability. These threats not only disrupt tourist arrivals and revenue generation but also pose long-term sustainability concerns for the region. The study covered the period from 2014 to 2024 and examined the effects of terrorism incidences on sustainable tourism in Lamu County. Grounded in Crisis Management and Sustainable Development Theories, the descriptive design was used, drawing data from a target population of 497 stakeholders, including security agencies, hotel operators, and tourism entities sample of 105 respondents was eventually used. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze the data. The study found that terrorism incidences are a critical factor influencing sustainable tourism. The study therefore concluded that terrorism incidences are measurable drivers of tourism outcomes. The study recommended that security collaboration be strengthened through enhanced community policing, intelligence sharing, and coordination between government agencies and local communities.

Keywords: *Terrorism Incidences, Sustainable Tourism, Lamu County*

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1. Introduction

The tourism sector is among the top most fastest-growing in the globe, the biggest economic activity, and a significant generator of the GDP of most nations (Ashish, 2022). Meanwhile, the industry is extremely vulnerable to security threats. Threats to international safety, including pandemics, natural disasters, political unrest, and terrorism, can severely harm tourism. For instance, terrorist attacks on major cities or tourist destinations trigger rapid and large declines in tourist arrivals as visitors prioritize security over taking a holiday. The global tourism industry has faced several threats from security risks, which result not only in economic loss but also alter travel patterns (ROK, 2016).

France is the leading country in the world in the number of tourist visits, providing a case study of how security threats affect tourism. France also receives millions of tourists annually because of its cultural heritage, icons, and lively city life, such as that of Paris. France, however, has experienced serious security issues, such as terrorism. The 2015 Paris attacks and the 2016 Nice truck attack had direct and immediate effects on the tourism sector. As a result of that, the overall volume of tourists visiting France, particularly from neighbouring nations, fell precipitously. The French government, in collaboration with tourism industry players, had to

implement stringent security measures and undertake marketing campaigns that would rebuild tourist confidence (Lowy, Bond, Nathanson, Dolgen, & Resnik, 2016; Solla, Carboni, Breaud, Babe, Brezac, Chivoret, Dupont, & Fernandez, 2018).

With so much history and some of the world's most well-known historical landmarks, Egypt draws millions of tourists annually. The Pyramids of Giza, temples at Luxor and Karnak, and the Sphinx are some of the wonders that draw people from around the planet. However, Egypt has experienced some major security issues that have affected its tourism industry. Egypt has suffered several terrorist attacks on tourists. In October 2015, for example, a Russian airliner was bombed just after departure from Sharm El Sheikh and all 224 individuals on board were killed. This horrific event caused tourist arrivals, primarily from Russia and Europe, to fall sharply. Similarly, attacks on tourist buses and sites, such as the 2014 bombing of a tourist bus in Taba, have raised concerns over tourists' safety.

Somalia, one of the least wealthy countries in Africa, is facing dire security occurrences in some regions, affecting the government's trajectory in development. The terrorist attacks have devastated the stability of some of its territories, crippled the economy through erosion of investments of both physical infrastructure and entrepreneurial activities, with tourism being the most affected, rendering its pristine beaches, sublime landscapes, and its blue economy unproductive in tourism (Nunez-Chaim & Pape, 2022).

Kenya, being a country with exquisite scenery, diverse wildlife, and a strong cultural heritage, is one of Africa's top tourist destinations. The national parks, like the Maasai Mara, Amboseli, and Tsavo, are a haven for nature lovers. Kenya's coastal towns, like Mombasa and Diani Beach, are well known for their serene beaches and cultural heritage. Nonetheless, Kenya has faced security issues, particularly from the extremist organization Al-Shabaab from adjacent Somalia. High-profile incidents include Nairobi's Westgate Mall terrorist attack in 2013, which claimed 67 lives, and the 2015 attack on Garissa University College, which led to the killing of 148 people. These attacks have raised alarm among tourists for safety and security, triggering travel warnings and reducing tourist numbers (Musoma, 2023; Diphooorn & Kagwe, 2015).

Since Kenya pursued Alshabaab terrorists in 2011 by sending its auxiliaries to Somalia under AMISOM, it has been left to bear the brunt of sporadic terrorist attacks from the group. Such attacks include the West Gate (2013), Dusit (2019), and the Lamu-Mpeketoni attack (2014). These attacks led to travel advisories against Kenya as a tourist destination, zoning effects, and loss of potential investors (Kiptoo, 2016).

Lamu County, located at the northeast tip of the Kenyan coast, is characterized by its outstanding cultural heritage, historic sites, and pristine beaches. Lamu has been a key tourist destination in Kenya. In spite of its prospects, Lamu has also experienced several security issues that have negatively impacted its tourism sector. The region has been vulnerable to terrorist attacks, mainly due to its geographical location near Somalia and the presence of the terror group Al-Shabaab. Incidents of violence, intimidation, and recruitment efforts have generated tourist fear and deterrence among potential visitors, thus a reduction in tourism.

1.1 Problem Statement

Security risks pose a substantial problem to the sustainability of tourism worldwide, affecting traveller confidence, economic stability, and the long-term viability of destinations. These risks, including terrorism incidents, land disputes, environmental degradation, and socio-economic instability, have been observed across various regions, demonstrating their far-reaching effects on tourism industries. Despite existing studies exploring individual security

threats, there remains a critical gap in understanding how these risks collectively influence the sustainability of tourism in fragile environments.

This is aimed at advancing knowledge on security risks and their effect on sustainable tourism by examining the interplay of these factors within a real-world context. Lamu County, Kenya, provides a compelling case study due to its history of security challenges and its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. By analyzing how these risks manifest and impact tourism in Lamu, this research contributes to the broader discourse on how destinations facing security threats can adapt and build resilience.

Prior studies have largely focused on specific aspects such as counterterrorism measures (Langat & Handa, 2023), violent extremism (Ouma, 2020), and government budget allocations for security interventions (Kazungu, 2022). However, analysis of security risks and their cumulative effects on tourism sustainability remains underexplored. This research aimed to fill that gap by providing empirical evidence, offering a nuanced perspective on the effects of terrorism incidences on sustainable tourism in Lamu County.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Crisis Management Theory

The origin of crisis management theory is generally attributed to Erich Lindemann, a sociologist who published a landmark study in 1944 analysing the grief reactions of survivors from the Cocoanut Grove nightclub fire, laying the foundation for understanding crisis psychology and intervention strategies. It was initially developed to address crises in business settings but has since been adapted to various fields, including tourism and public administration. Main Assumptions include that Crises are inevitable and can severely impact organizations and sectors. Effective crisis management involves four key phases: preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation and Stakeholders are essential to crisis management because they work together and coordinate efforts. Crisis Management Theory was applied to examine how Lamu County addresses security threats, including terrorism incidences, land disputes, environmental degradation, and socioeconomic challenges, by assessing the effectiveness of current crisis response strategies. This framework looked at how different actors, including local government agencies, local communities, and tourist companies, help handle crises and promote the region's tourism industry's sustainability. By means of this research, the study aimed to identify current deficiencies and suggest actions to improve the tourist industry's resilience.

2.1.2 Sustainable Development Theory

Sustainable Development Theory originated from the 1987 Brundtland Report, titled "Our Common Future," published by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. The report emphasizes the need for development that meets present needs while ensuring future generations can fulfil their own. This concept of sustainable growth requires a balance among social welfare, environmental conservation, and economic advancement. It also involves long-term planning, foresight regarding potential outcomes, community engagement, and the implementation of coordinated policies. In the context of sustainable tourism in Lamu County, Sustainable Development Theory will be used to assess how well current tourism practices align with sustainability principles.

The study explored how tourism can contribute to the local economy while minimizing environmental impact and addressing socio-economic challenges. To strengthen tourism's

resilience to security risks, this framework examined the roles of eco-friendly practices, community involvement, and policy integration. By examining these aspects, the study aimed to propose strategies that promote sustainable tourism development in Lamu.

2.2 Empirical review

2.2.1 Sustainable Tourism

Kaiwa (2017) conducted a comprehensive study on Sustainable Tourism in Asia, focusing on the contemporary landscape, emerging trends, and prevailing practices within the rapidly expanding tourism industry across various Asian nations. The methodology employed included an extensive literature review, case studies, and interviews with key stakeholders. The theoretical framework is built on the notion of long-term development, which emphasizes the significance of balancing wealth creation with ecological consciousness and social well-being. The findings highlight both the obstacles and opportunities for fostering sustainable tourism in Asia, emphasizing the urgent need for improved governmental coordination, more community engagement, and broader implementation of sustainable alternatives. Furthermore, the study identifies a significant gap in putting sustainable tourism strategies into practice within community settings, thereby highlighting the necessity for more localized and context-specific approaches.

In Romania, Ionel (2024) conducted an examination of sustainable tourism and its various manifestations within the tourism market. The study focused on Romania's tourism sector, characterized by its rich cultural heritage and diverse natural landscapes. The study applied a mixed methodology, gathering insights through stakeholder surveys and qualitative interviews. The analysis was grounded in the sustainable tourism development model, emphasizing the interrelationship among environmental, economic, and social factors. The findings revealed that, although stakeholder awareness regarding sustainability issues is increasing, the implementation of sustainable practices is hindered by challenges such as insufficient funding, inadequate infrastructure, and weak collaboration among stakeholders. The study highlights a disjunction between national and local policy alignment and advocates for enhanced coordination and capacity-building initiatives.

Musa, Fatmawati, Nuryakin, and Suyanto (2024) conducted a bibliometric assessment of sustainable tourism research in Africa from 2003 to 2023. The study analysed publication volumes, citation metrics, and research trends, utilizing VOSviewer for thematic mapping. The theoretical framework emphasizes the multidisciplinary nature of sustainable tourism research. The results highlight that South Africa leads in research output, followed by Egypt and Nigeria.

In Kenya, the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife (2020) undertook research on resilience and its effect on sustainable tourism. The study included a review of existing regulations, meetings with stakeholders, and an analysis of tourist trends. The findings emphasized the importance of policy coherence, stakeholder engagement, and widespread adoption of sustainable practices. It also noted a deficit in the implementation of sustainable tourism policy and suggested more cooperation between national and county administrations.

2.2.2 Terrorism Incidences and Sustainable Tourism

Muna (2017) investigated how terrorism affects Kenya's economy and society, focusing on the fallout from significant terrorist attacks and how they affect the tourism sector. The research employed a qualitative approach, which included analysing secondary data from government reports, news articles, and previous studies to assess the cost implications of terrorism. According to the research, terrorist attacks, including the 2013 Westgate Mall attack and the

2015 Garissa University College attack, resulted in significant financial losses, particularly for the travel and tourism industry. The perception of insecurity resulted in decreased tourist arrivals, leading to revenue losses and affecting the livelihoods of those driven by tourism-based enterprises. However, the extent of this crucial study was limited to a national perspective on terrorism's economic burden in Kenya and lacked a focused analysis of specific analysis of regions like Lamu County, which have unique security risks affecting tourism. Moreover, the study does not thoroughly analyze the theoretical frameworks that clarify the connection between tourism and terrorism occurrences in Kenya's Lamu County. And lastly, the use of secondary data limits the inhibits to capture real-time impacts and perceptions from stakeholders directly affected by terrorism incidents.

Additionally, Diriye (2015) conducted research on how terrorism has influenced tourism in Africa during the 21st century, with Kenya serving as the central case study. The study examined the impact of terrorism on Kenya's tourism industry and highlighted challenges faced by local stakeholders, and also evaluated government mitigation strategies. The researcher employed a case study approach, targeting local stakeholders in the tourism industry. The study was based on crisis management theory, and it analysed how unexpected events like terrorist attacks can disrupt tourism. It also examined how effective management strategies can mitigate these security risks. The study found that terrorism has led to a significant reduction in tourist arrivals, which has adversely affected businesses, hence increasing unemployment in the sector. The study suggests that there is considerable potential for development to enhance and protect Kenya's tourism sector.

Akamavi, Ibrahim and Swaray (2022) examined the travel of tourist visitors both locally and internationally. The study concentrated on geopolitical tensions in travel abroad. The researchers used spatial and non-spatial panel data analysis. The results showed a substantial correlation between declining tourism earnings and rising security risks. The paper highlights the significance of further research into how changing security dynamics impact tourist results across various geographies and historical periods using longitudinal data up to 2022.

3. Methodology

The descriptive research design was adopted to conduct a thorough investigation into the impact of security threats on sustainable tourism in Lamu. The study focused on a target population consisting of tourism stakeholders and government institutions involved in managing security and tourism-related functions. The security agencies involved the Tourist police Unit in Lamu county, composed of 18 office (Office of the County Commissioner, 2025), The County Police Commander (1), 1 Deputy County Commissioner-Lamu Central, County Director Trade, Tourism and Investment and the President (1) Lamu Tourism Association, 176 Hotel operators (The county Government of Lamu, 2025) and about 300 local tourism excursion companies (Kenya Association of Tour Operators, 2025).

A stratified random sampling method was used to ensure that various segments of the population are adequately represented. Selecting between 10% and 30% of the target population is considered sufficient, provided the sample is carefully selected and consists of more than 30 elements (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). In this study, 30% of hotel operators and 10% of local tourism excursion firms were randomly selected. Additionally, purposive sampling was used to identify key informants, including officers from the Tourist Police Unit in Lamu County, the County Police Commander, the Deputy County Commissioner of Lamu Central, the County Director for Trade, Tourism, and Investment, and the President of the Lamu Tourism Association. Data was collected through a semi-structured questionnaire

featuring both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Quantitative data were analyzed utilizing descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were explored through thematic analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

This section presents the quantitative results followed by qualitative evidence derived from open-ended responses. The combination of both provides a holistic view of factors shaping sustainable tourism in Lamu.

4.1.1 Sustainable Tourism

The researcher asked the respondents to provide insights and indicate their opinions in a five-point Likert scale on their level of agreement, from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree, on sustainable tourism in Lamu. Table 1 presents the outcome.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Sustainable Tourism

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fixing security problems can help maintain the tourism industry in Lamu.	84	4.63	.485
There is a rise in tourist influx in Lamu	84	4.63	.485
Government security measures have contributed to longer stays of tourists in Lamu	84	4.23	.421
Protecting the environment promotes tourism in Lamu.	84	4.17	.375
There is a constant rise of tourism-related investments in Lamu County.	84	4.29	.454
Valid N (listwise)	84		

The results in Table 1 above indicated that the respondents were asked if fixing security problems can help maintain the tourism industry in Lamu, which revealed a mean of 4.63 and a standard deviation of .485. This showed that there was a strong agreement that addressing insecurity risks sustains tourism. A study by Buigut, Insecurity and Kenyan Tourism, 2014, on Insecurity and its effects on the tourism sector in Kenya that focused on the impact of terrorism (mainly Al-Shabaab attacks) and political instability (electoral violence) on Kenya’s coastal and safari tourism found that insecurity led to significant reductions in tourist arrivals, especially in coastal Kenya, including Mombasa and Lamu. The study concluded that government counter-terrorism interventions and restoring stability were critical for rebuilding tourist confidence and sustaining the tourism industry. Additionally, a study by Liu (2024) that

gauged the relationship between security measures, global peace, and tourism competitiveness established that security measures like armed forces presence and law enforcement improvements have a statistically significant effect on boosting tourism competitiveness and tourist arrivals. The study concluded that sustained improvements in security conditions directly support tourism growth, supporting local findings of this research.

The findings on there are a rise in tourist influx in Lamu, revealed a mean of 4.63 and a standard deviation of .485, showing that there is a strong agreement that Security measures boost tourists' confidence, hence an increase in the number of tourists visiting Lamu. A report by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics & Institute, Kenya Tourism Research(2025) on international visitor arrivals to Kenya, recovery of tourism post-COVID-19 showed that visitor arrivals rose from about 2,089,259 in 2023 to 2,394,376 in 2024, giving a 14.6% increase in visitor arrivals. The report informed of consistent recovery and growth in tourism following pandemic disruptions. Another report by The Standard 2025 assessed Yearly growth in international tourist arrivals and associated tourism metrics, including visitor days and stay duration in Kenya. It was found that in 2024, Kenya recorded 2.39 million international visitor arrivals, up by 14.7% from 2023.

The findings on Government security measures have contributed to longer stays of tourists in Lamu, had a mean of 4.23 and a standard deviation of .421, showing that responders agreed that there is a positive impact of security operations, and it has boosted tourists' confidence to stay longer in Lamu. A study by Serić, Jakšić, Stojanović, & Bagarić (2022) on how tourists' perceptions of safety/security at a destination influence how attractive it is, including decisions about staying longer, found that positive perceptions of security significantly increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of the tourist destination. Tourists who perceive higher security tend to choose destinations where they feel safer, stay longer, and have better satisfaction. This supports the idea that when the government implements security measures or destinations enhance safety perception, tourist tends to lengthen their stay. Another study by Preko & Gyepi-Garbrah, (2023) examined how safety, security, and trust in information influences tourists' behaviour, including length of stay, revisit intention among others and found out that tourists who perceive destinations as safe, and trust the safety information for example; from governments or tourism boards, are more likely to extend their stay, revisit, or participate more fully in activities.

The findings on Protecting the environment promotes tourism in Lamu had a mean of 4.17 and a standard deviation of .375, showing that there was a high agreement among the respondents, meaning they emphasized the role of environmental conservation in sustaining visitors' interest. A study by Tubey, Kyalo, & Mulwa (2020) intended to find out how environmental conservation strategies impact the sustainability of community-based tourism projects. Established that a strong positive relationship ($r = 0.808$, $R^2 = 0.653$, $F(1,204) = 383.571$, $p < 0.05$) exists between environmental conservation strategies and the sustainability of community-based tourism. This means that better environmental practices significantly contribute to sustainable tourism. Additionally, a study by Widayati, Semarang, & et al (2023), which established how environmental awareness and environmental components influence visitor satisfaction, behavioural intentions, and overall sustainability of marine ecotourism, found that environmental awareness, along with destination attractiveness and service quality, positively influence visitor satisfaction and behavioural intention. These advantages, in turn, enhance sustainable marine ecotourism. This study also supports the idea that protecting the environment contributes to better tourist experiences and hence promotes tourism.

Lastly, the findings revealed that there is a constant rise of tourism-related investments in Lamu County, had a mean of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.454, showing that there was a high agreement and suggesting that respondents see growth in tourism-related investments. A report by the Government of Kenya(Office of the President) (2025) reports that Kenya’s tourism revenue reached about KSh 450 billion in 2024, a significant increase from previous years. The reports also stated that the government is investing in infrastructure, marketing, and experiences, targeting to reach 5 million tourists by 2027. This report supports that tourism-related investments are rising consistently. Another report by the Kenya Association of Travel Agents (2024) indicated that Kenya’s Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Tourism signed an MoU to strengthen tourist security, resource allocation to the Tourism Police Unit, and improve safety to attract investments. The report also said, foreign arrivals increased by about 21.3% in the first half of 2024 compared to 2023, reflecting growth in tourism-related investments.

Qualitative findings also revealed that sustainable tourism in Lamu is closely linked to the preservation of cultural heritage, Swahili architecture, and traditional festivals such as the Maulid and Lamu Cultural Festival. Respondents emphasized that these cultural assets are key attractions that differentiate Lamu from other destinations. However, they cautioned that over-commercialization of these cultural events risks eroding their authenticity. The thematic analysis further highlighted that while tourism has generated employment and business opportunities, the benefits are unequally distributed, with outside investors often gaining more than residents. This aligns with the quantitative findings that emphasize the importance of stability and community inclusion for tourism sustainability.

4.1.2 Terrorism Incidences and Sustainable Tourism

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which the following parameters of Terrorism incidents affect sustainable tourism in Lamu.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Terrorism Incidences and Sustainable Tourism

	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	
	Terrorist attacks have a significant negative effect on tourism in Lamu.	84	4.49	.503
	The threat of terrorism deters tourists from visiting Lamu.	84	4.43	.521
	Recruitment of local youth by terrorist groups affects tourism in Lamu.	84	4.19	.395
	Violent extremism affects the perception of safety among tourists visiting Lamu County	84	4.25	.462
	Terrorism has reduced investors' willingness to support Tourism in Lamu.	84	4.20	.460

The results in Table 2 above indicated that the respondents were asked if Terrorist attacks have a significant negative effect on tourism in Lamu. The responses revealed a mean of 4.49 and a standard deviation of .503, which implies the respondents highly agreed that terrorism directly undermines tourism performance in Lamu. A study by Buigut & Amendah, (2016) on the effect of terrorism, both fatalities and incidents, on international tourist arrivals/ tourism demand in Kenya revealed that a 1% increase in fatalities due to terrorism significantly reduces tourist arrivals by about 0.13%, leading to economic losses. Another study by Njoya, Efthymiou, Nikitas and O'Connell (2022) that focused on economic and tourism impacts of terrorism and political unrest in Kenya showed that terrorist attacks and political unrest significantly reduce tourist arrivals and tourism expenditures, hence harming the economy. These two studies directly agree that terrorism has adverse effects on tourism.

The findings on the threat of terrorism deter tourists from visiting Lamu, had a mean of 4.43 and a standard deviation of .521, showed a high agreement from the responders, indicating that perceived insecurity discourages both domestic and foreign tourists from choosing Lamu as a destination. A study (Karmelikli, Khan, & Karimi, 2019) on the impact of terrorist incidents on both inbound and domestic tourism demand in Turkey found that increases in terrorism incidents significantly reduce tourist arrivals on both domestic and international, and evidence that the threat, whether real or perceived does deters tourists. Another study (Polyzos, Papadopoulou, & Xesfingi, 2023) Studied Tourism demand in relation to terrorism metrics, including incidents, deaths, and injuries in Egypt, showed a long-term cointegrating relationship in which terrorism causes declines in tourism demand/visitor arrivals, suggesting that the threat of terrorism deters tourists.

The findings on recruitment of local youth by terrorist groups affect tourism in Lamu, had a mean of 4.19 and a standard deviation of .395, showing a strong agreement, though with less intensity compared to direct terrorist incidents. This suggests that socio-economic drivers of radicalization can spill over into tourism impacts. A study by Masaga and Handa (2023) focusing on Youth radicalization, extremism, and community security found that youth recruitment into violent extremist organizations is increasing, driven by socioeconomic marginalization, ideological influences, and lack of employment. The study also flagged how youth recruitment into violent extremist organizations leads to insecurity and threatens economic stability and community confidence, hence affecting sectors like tourism, even if tourism wasn't the primary focus. Additionally, a study by Wakanini (2014) focused on the Effects of terrorist threats on tourism business operations and perception and found that after terrorist threats or incidents, tourism businesses in Malindi experienced reduced demand, cancellations, and had to change their business strategies, including security measures in place. While this study does not isolate youth recruitment by terrorist groups as the sole factor, it still shows that broader terrorist group activities, which include or may result from recruitment, eventually negatively shape tourist perceptions and business strategy.

The findings on Violent extremism affect the perception of safety among tourists visiting Lamu County, had a mean of 4.25 and a standard deviation of .462, showing high agreement. Respondents emphasized that even perceptions of violent extremism can damage the country's image and tourist confidence, stopping them from choosing Lamu as a destination. A study by Hefow and Njoroge (2023) established the effects of violent extremism on tourism performance, including tourist perceptions and safety concerns, and found that violent extremism is significantly associated with reduced tourism demand and negatively affects perceptions of safety, as stakeholders reported low transportation, reduced tourist visits, and sometimes also damage to infrastructure. The sense of insecurity in this study was cited as a

key factor in reduced tourist inflows. Another study by Agarwal, Page, and Mawby (2021) on how tourism safety and risk management practices affect feelings of safety among tourists in the aftermath of terrorist incidents revealed that tourists’ perceptions of safety are strongly affected by incidents of violent extremism. Additionally, factors like poor communication, weak risk management, or visible signs of threat reduce tourists’ feelings of safety and negatively affect travel decisions.

The findings on terrorism have reduced investors’ willingness to support tourism in Lamu, had a mean of 4.20 and a standard deviation of .460, showing Strong agreement. Respondents recognized that insecurity discourages private sector investment in tourism facilities and infrastructure. A study by Kinyanjui (2014) examining how terrorism correlates with Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows found that terrorism negatively affects FDI in Kenya, where, when there is a higher frequency/incident of terrorism, there is reduced foreign investor confidence, leading to lower investment in tourism and other sectors in the Country. Another study by Njoya et al. (2022) analysed how terrorist acts and political unrest reduce tourist arrivals, expenditures, and impact on the economy, including investment climate found that terrorism and unrest reduce tourist expenditures and arrivals, and also increase uncertainty in the investment climate making investors less willing to commit to projects in the tourism sector when security risks that will deter tourist are high.

The qualitative data supported these findings, showing that insecurity and terrorism remain among the most pressing concerns for Lamu’s tourism industry. Participants described visible military patrols, police presence, and community policing (Nyumba Kumi) as crucial to maintaining safety. However, while these measures enhance confidence, they also make some visitors uneasy due to the militarized atmosphere. Public awareness campaigns and counter-extremism initiatives were praised for improving perceptions of safety, though some respondents noted they can also heighten anxiety by constantly reminding people of the risks. Overall, the thematic findings reveal that security interventions must strike a balance between visibility and comfort to sustain tourism.

4.2 Regression Analysis

The regression analysis was carried out to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Coefficients^a

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	7.684	2.814		2.731
	Terrorism Incidences	.339	.093	.377	3.631

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable Tourism

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The constant ($B = 7.684$, $p = .008$) represents the predicted level of sustainable tourism when all other variables are held constant. This value serves as the baseline of the model. The findings indicate that terrorism incidents ($B = .339$, $\beta = .377$, $p = .001$) have a positive and statistically significant influence on sustainable tourism. This means that improvements in security and reductions in terrorism-related activities are strongly associated with higher levels of sustainable tourism in Lamu County. Among all the predictors, terrorism incidents recorded the highest standardized beta coefficient (.377), showing it is the most influential factor in the model.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded that terrorism incidents are a major constraint to sustainable tourism in Lamu County, affecting visitor arrivals, business continuity, and local livelihoods. It established that proactive and well-coordinated security management plays a vital role in restoring tourist confidence and attracting investment, which ultimately strengthens the country's reputation as a secure and desirable destination. Ensuring long-term resilience of the tourism sector in Lamu, therefore, requires sustained security improvements, community involvement in countering threats, and strategic efforts aimed at safeguarding tourism resources for present and future generations.

6. Recommendations

1. Enhance security collaboration by strengthening community policing, intelligence-sharing mechanisms, and coordination among government security agencies and local communities to effectively prevent terrorist threats.
2. Invest in improved security infrastructure within key tourist zones, including surveillance technology, coastal patrols, and emergency response systems, to boost visitor safety and confidence in Lamu as a tourism destination.
3. Implement targeted destination recovery initiatives that promote sustainable tourism, such as community empowerment programs, image rebranding campaigns, and support for local tourism enterprises, to rebuild tourist trust and stimulate long-term growth.

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