

**ASSESSMENT OF INTERACTION AMONG STUDENTS, SURROUNDING
COMMUNITIES AND WILDLIFE IN THE MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY ENVIRONS.**

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Abstract

Rapid development within the environs of Maasai Mara University has led to habitat fragmentation, alteration and degradation. This environmental disturbance, together with high solid waste pollutions rate has threatened the survival of wild animals to this area. The objective of the study was to find out the knowledge of the students and the local communities concerning wildlife since campus is situated on a wildlife corridor and the impacts of these environmental disturbances on the wildlife.

The area being around a learning institution, have most residents either students or have some level of education. To get data from these respondents, questionnaire was used with both open ended and closed questions. It was effective as all questions were filled and 95% of the questionnaires were returned. **Some of the interests of the study were to find out the perception of the residents on the importance of wildlife and the measures the measures they intend to undertake to ensure the existence of these wild animals.** The response was positive and most of the residents know major importance of wildlife and rules and regulations governing wildlife conservation.

The study found out that both the students and the locals have knowledge about the existence of the wildlife within the study area. Some of the residents were worried about the decline of the wildlife species per unit time with the increased infrastructure development and commercial farming being practiced within the area. Most residents were for wildlife conservation with measures to curb poaching. The respondents were against wildlife utilization, a factor which has been contributed by the implementation of wildlife act against wildlife utilization by the government.

The research found out that more awareness programs should be in place both within and outside the campus as most people have limited knowledge on what is wildlife and how they can be conserved. The residents should also be educated on the importance of wildlife corridors to prevent further encroachment to these ecologically important areas. The 2013 wildlife act should also be explained to enable locals understand the process of licensing, compensation and other ways to benefit from wildlife and conservation measures as a whole.