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COMMERCIAL HANDICRAFTS AS A LIVELIHOOD OPTION FOR THE
MAASAI OF KAJIADO DISTRICT, KENYA

BY

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UNIVERSITY

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*Commercial
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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or award in any other university.

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DEDICATION

To my parents; Mr. Samuel Sitati and Mrs. Rose Sitati and my brother Edward Sitati.

To the humble, courageous, “great” ones among us who exemplify how academic excellence is a choice not a position.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Livelihood: encompasses income (both cash and in kind), social institutions (kin, family, compound, village), gender relations and property rights required to support and sustain a given standard of living.

Household: the basic residential unit where the members of a household are related by blood or law, it often constitutes a family in which economic production, consumption, inheritance, child rearing, and shelter are organized and carried out.

Handicrafts: are items made by hand, often with the use of simple tools, and are generally artistic and/or traditional in nature.

Handicraft industry: is a manufacturer of Maasai hand made goods both for home use and for the market.

Cottage industry: an industry where the production commodities is home-based and/or localized within community or a group of people with common purpose.

Stakeholders: individual persons, and persons from organizations and the government who play a substantial part in the handicraft activities.

Commercialization: is the process of transforming technology and ideas into profitable products; it is to cause something only having a potential income to be sold, manufactured, displayed, or utilized so as to yield income or raise capital.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACC	African Conservation Center
ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Land
BEADS	Beads for Education, Advancement, Development, and Success
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
COACG	Crafts of Africa Cultural Gallery
DDC	Drylands Development Program
DFID	Department for International Development
EPC	Export Promotion Council
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
KDDP	Kajiado District Development plan
KETA	Kenya External Trade Authority
MAP	Market Access Project
MMET	Maasai Market Empowerment Trust
MLBS	Main Line Bead Society
MRTC	Maasai Rural Training Centre
NCA	Ngorongoro Conservation Area
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forest Products
NWA	Namayiana Women Association
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
P.C.E.A	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
SL	Sustainable Livelihoods
SNV	Schweizerische Normen-Vereinigung
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Statistics
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats
TTF	Tourist Trust Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WEEC	Women's Economic Empowerment Consort

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate commercial handicrafts as livelihood option for the Maasai of Isinya Location, Kajiado District, Kenya. The study was prompted by the fact that ecological, political and socio-economic pressures have, overtime, denied the Maasai an affluent pastoral economy due to diminished grazing land. Part of the grazing land has been fenced to pave way for state and private conservation and for commercial cultivation. There is an increase of immigrants from other communities who have bought land in the Maasai rangelands, thus further subdividing and fencing off the previously communally owned land resources that sustained a pastoral economy. In response, the Maasai are pursuing non-pastoral income strategies that comprise agriculture, trade, formal and informal employment to buttress against these changes. Based on these challenges and resultant responses, the study investigated how the Maasai of Isinya have ventured into commercial handicrafts for their livelihood. The study's objectives were: to examine the range of materials and products in the handicraft industry, to identify stakeholders and their roles in the handicraft industry, to determine the socio-economic benefits of commercial handicrafts on the livelihoods of the Maasai, and to establish opportunities, constraints and challenges of the Maasai handicraft industry. The study was carried out in Isinya Location and utilized both descriptive and analytical approaches. Data were collected using semi-structured questionnaires that were administered to 145 households, interviews were held with CBOs and MRTC officials, field observation and photography were done. SPSS was used for data analysis where descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies and percentages were used to analyse the characteristics of respondents, handicraft material, processes in household-based commercial production and components of handicraft production. Chi-square (χ^2) was also used to test relationship between commercial handicraft income and education, health care, improvement of housing and expenditure on food amongst the Maasai households at a significance level of 0.05. The opportunities, constraints and challenges of the Maasai handicraft industry were determined using SWOT analysis: The findings indicated that Maasai commercial handicraft is a cottage industry that comprises both individual and CBO/NGO based production. The handicrafts are ingrained in the Maasai culture; they mark their wedding and initiation ceremonies and also distinguish them along age groups and sets. The commercial handicrafts income is used to finance their children's schooling, health-care, improvement of housing, and food security. The Use of ICT, grouping/clustering of producers and cultural heritage are opportunities for the industry. However, the industry is also faced with challenges that include: inadequate capital, lack of ready markets, exploitation by middlemen, competition from replica goods, and lack of patent rights for owners, among others. The study recommends patenting and strengthening of Intellectual Property Laws so as to protect the Maasai's creative genius. The government should also come up with ways of marketing the Maasai products locally and abroad. In addition, the Maasai households need to form groups which will enable them wade off exploitative middlemen, accumulate capital for bigger investments and share ideas as a way of improving the industry.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1: Background to the Study

Tropical African pastoralism often involves highly fluid production systems responding flexibly to dynamic and unpredictable arid and semi-arid rangeland environments. The last one hundred years have seen a decline in pasture to support extensive pastoralism. Large areas of land have been put to alternative uses causing pastoral populations to become more and more marginalized in most African states (Gemtessa, 2006). In response, livestock herders are increasingly pursuing non-pastoral income strategies to meet consumption needs and buttress themselves against the ravages of climate change, livestock diseases, market failure and insecurity (Peter, *et al.*, 2001). This trend towards diversification of income sources is evident in pastoral areas including Amboseli (Burnsilver & Mwangi 2006) and Northern Kenya (McPeak & Little, 2004). A study by Little, *et al.*, (2001) shows that in East Africa, there are marked changes in income diversification strategies that increasingly engage the market, even in areas considered to be very remote.

The Maasai living in Kenya and Tanzania, have normally engaged in pastoralism as the core basis of their livelihoods. However, they have, overtime, experienced a lot of land pressures within the rangelands. Rangelands have been put to other uses other than pastoral production. These are like commercial cultivation as well as gazettelement for state and private conservation (Homewood, *et al.*, 2006). Besides conservation, internal population explosion and immigration have added constraints to the land resources. These factors have increased the pastoralists' vulnerability making them venture into non-livestock-based economic activities such as handicraft production as livelihood options. (*ibid*).

Among the Maasai, physical decoration and adornment are of great cultural significance. Their beadwork is astonishingly intricate and beautiful, combining thousands of tiny coloured beads with cowrie shells and leatherwork. The handicraft industry has produced items such as bracelets (of many designs), ceremonial adornments and particularly necklaces which have particular customary meaning and purpose (Shenk, 2006). There has been a marked commercialization of these handicrafts, which have become so popular that it is common to come across replicas of these handicrafts. These include belts, watchstraps, sandals and even mobile phone covers which are produced for local consumption as well as for the wider market at national and international levels. In Nairobi and Northern Kenya, a wide array of copper, brass and wire bracelets are sold. Some of these bracelets feature attractive and unusual designs, and are often made from recycled fencing wire or telephone lines (*ibid*).

In the post-modern, globalized world, the search for authentic and genuine experiences and flavours linked to local environments and living traditions is creating and dramatically widening a market for cultural experiences and typical products (Sahai, 2004). Traditional communities possess a sophisticated repertoire of skills, designs and knowledge which can potentially lead to the development of products that lend themselves for different kinds of marketing and therefore, better income for the knowledge holders. Maiti (2005) emphasizes the fact that products of labour-based adaptive technology are often superior to modern machine-based products in terms of artistic or aesthetic value. For instance, the beaded jewelry and decorative items of the Maasai have become internationally famous and marketable (Shenk, 2006). This has led to the emergence of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in Kajiado District that are involved in the commercial production and sale of handicrafts (KDDP, 1997).

However, there is a dearth of knowledge on the production processes and effect of commercial handicrafts on the livelihoods of Maasai. It is within this context that the study aimed at establishing how commercial handicrafts are a livelihood option for the Maasai of Kajiado district, Kenya.

1.2: Statement of the Problem

The Maasai are changing their livelihoods due to ecological, political and socio-economic strains emanating from causes that are beyond their control. The “free land” traditionally perceived by the Maasai’s as their grazing land is diminishing rapidly hence denying them a base for their pastoral economy. These trends are not only threatening their pastoral way of life but also pushing ill-adapted pastoral communities progressively into poverty. Resolutely, Maasai families are diversifying their livelihoods from the traditional ways of solely depending on livestock to ways that increasingly engage the market, for example agriculture, herbal medicine, handicrafts, business, formal and informal employment.

Peripheral attention has been paid to the importance of the handicraft industry in terms of economic empowerment of the Maasai. Yet, the Maasai are making earnings from these handicrafts. Research on the livelihood diversification among the Maasai (see among others Mung’ong’o and Mwamfupe, 2003; Kituyi, 1990) has mainly focused on eco-tourism, agro-pastoralism and migration. This study, on the other hand, sought to examine how commercial handicrafts contribute to the Maasai livelihood augmentation and the processes involved in their production.

1.3: Research Questions

The study sought to investigate the effects of commercial handicrafts on the livelihoods of the Maasai through the following research questions:

- 1) What are the materials, products and processes in the Maasai handicraft industry?
- 2) Who are the stakeholders and what is their role in the Maasai handicraft industry?
- 3) What are the socio-economic benefits of commercial handicrafts on the livelihoods of the Maasai?
- 4) What are the opportunities, constraints and challenges of the Maasai handicraft industry?

1.4: General Objective

The general objective of the study was to investigate the effects of commercial handicrafts on the livelihoods of the Maasai in Kajiado District, Kenya.

1.4.1: Specific Objectives

1. To examine the range of materials, products and processes in the Maasai handicraft industry.
2. To identify stakeholders and their roles in the Maasai handicraft industry.
3. To determine the socio-economic benefits of commercial handicrafts on the livelihoods of the Maasai.
4. To establish opportunities, constraints and challenges of the Maasai handicraft industry

1.5: Research Hypotheses

Ho₁ Commercial handicrafts income does not contribute significantly to financing of education among Maasai households.

- Ho₂ Commercial handicrafts income does not contribute significantly to provision of health care among Maasai households.
- Ho₃ Commercial handicrafts income does not contribute significantly to improvement of housing among Maasai households.
- Ho₄ Commercial handicrafts income does not contribute significantly to provision of food among Maasai households.

1.6: Significance of the Study

Throughout Africa, subsistence systems based primarily on nomadic livestock herding have given way to more diversified economies (Scoones, 1996; Wolmer, 1997). In addition, research by Reardon, *et al.*, (1997) in tropical Africa highlighted the importance of earnings from non-farm and off-farm activities. Livelihood studies among the Maasai (Mung'ong'o & Mwamfupe, 2003; Kituyi, 1990) have mainly focused on eco-tourism, agro-pastoralism and migration, with peripheral consideration of the economic influence of the handicraft industry; hence the importance of an investigative study on Maasai handicrafts industry to ascertain its effects on their livelihoods.

1.7: The Scope and Limitation of the Study

Kajiado is a vast District and therefore, it was difficult to conduct a survey of the entire district. Hence only Isinya Location was selected for the study due to limited time and financial resources. There was also difficult in obtaining data from illiterate people. This was overcome by deployment of research assistants who were familiar with Maasai language. The other challenge was identifying CBOs and other stakeholders, in spite of the fact that snowball sampling was used to this end.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1: Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of relevant literature used to conceptualize the research theme. The review first gives an overview of the handicraft industry among various communities, followed by the socio-economic drivers of the handicraft industry, the challenges in the handicrafts industry and socio-economic benefits of handicrafts. The literature review places this study in the growing body of literature on commercial handicrafts; it also identified the existing gaps. Finally, a conceptual framework was adopted and used to investigate utilization of assets available to the Maasai in the handicrafts industry for livelihood diversification.

2.2: Handicraft Industry Among Various Communities

Handicrafts are rightly described as the craft of a people, they are not merely an industry but a creation symbolising the inner desire and fulfilment of a community. All handicrafts, be they metal ware, pottery, mats, basketry, woodwork, beadwork, leatherwork, stone carving, or weaving, fulfil a positive need in the daily life of people. They act also as a vehicle of self-expression and conscious aesthetic approach (Sood, 2002).

In Kenya, woodcarving for example, is one of the forest-related enterprises with a fascinating history, dating back to 1919 (Elkan, 1958; Troughear, 1987). The Kamba found around the Nyika Plateau are considered the best wood carvers. The Kamba were introduced to the techniques of wood sculpture by Mutisya Munge, who served in the colonial Carrier Corps in Tanzania during World War I. It was there that he came into contact with Zaramo carvers, who in turn had been influenced by the

Makonde (Makonde figurative carving and Makonde Masks). Munge collected Zaramo models, and on returning to Kenya took up carving as a full-time occupation (Choge, 2002).

Following Munge's efforts, a booming trade in carvings developed at the small town of Wamunyu, along the Machakos to Kitui road. Today the town boasts of a welter of self-help groups and carver's co-operative societies and their shops (*ibid*). Here, some 3000 people, many of whom are youth, eke out a living from woodcarvings. Many more carvers are located throughout Ukambani, and elsewhere in Kenya (especially at the coast), where they supply the tourist market. Obunga, (1998) revealed that the wood carving industry consists of a complete chain of players including resource/harvesters, raw materials agents, the carvers, apprentices, intermediates, curio vendors/hawkers, stockists/wholesalers, retailers and exporters. The industry embraces all age groups between 16 and 92 years old with the youth making up over 50% of the current population of the industry.

The woodcarving industry has gradually expanded to be one of the largest handicraft industries. It supports over 60 000 full-time carvers and provides a means of livelihood to an estimated 400 000 dependants. Even though the industry is associated with export earnings worth more than US \$ 20 million per year, carvers remain poor earning on average a mere Kshs 200 (US\$ 2.5) per day (Obunga, 1995; Johnstone, 2003).

Johnstone, (2003) further notes that several cooperatives exist, i.e. the Nairobi Handicraft Cooperative at Kamukunji and the Akamba Cooperative among others that advocate the carvers' plight. The wood carving industry is established in a well

organized structural set up comprising Kamba producers, carvers and marketing agents, many of whom are bound by close ties of extended families and clans.

Another traditional industry is soapstone carving among the Kisii community. Kenyan soapstone or "kisii" is only found in the Tabaka Hills of Western Kenya, a few kilometres southwest of Kisii town. A soft and easily worked stone, it comes in a variety of colors ranging from cream and lavender to black (*ibid*). The artistic products of the stone carvers have become one of the stock-in-trades of Kenya's tourist-inclined curio market, which produces miniature pink and blue elephants, gaudy egg-shaped globes as well as bowls and vases painted with abstract one-off motifs - real and beautiful works of art (Jen, 2006).

Pottery with its traditional origins is also undertaken in Kenya and generally looked upon as a home-craft. Langenkamp (2000) divides Kenya's traditional potters craft into three categories: the flourishing, the surviving and the diminishing craft. She pointed out that while pottery production is flourishing in western Kenya, particularly among the Luo and Luhyia communities, the status of the pottery craft among the Kikuyu, Kamba, Meru, Adavida and Swahili in central, eastern and coastal parts of the country, respectively, is surviving in contrast to the declining tendencies which characterize the current craft profile among the Embu, Dorobo, Ogiek, Endo, Pokot and Somali. These differences in performance are attributed to the different market gear and extent to which the products have gained national and international market recognition.

While pottery has developed to a specialized craft among some communities, it forms an integral part of the subsistence economy in other communities all over Africa (*ibid*). There are various reasons associated with spatial distinction as commercial pottery flourishes in some geographical locations and diminishes in others. It is, therefore, not surprising that the potter's craft is declining and facing extinction among some ethnic groups while others communities on the other hand, have explored its commercial viability and adjusted their production to suit the prevailing market demands.

In India, Sood (2002) postulates that most craft people learn their skills from their fathers or mothers since caste and family affiliations, rather than training or market demand, have primacy in the industry. The crafts sector is a home-based industry that requires minimal expenditure, infrastructure or training to set up. It uses existing skills and locally available raw materials. Income-generation through craft does not (and this is important in a rural society) disturb the cultural and social balance of either the home or the community (Dastkar, 1995). Many agricultural and pastoral communities depend on their traditional craft skills as a secondary source of income in times of drought, lean harvests, floods or famine. Their skills in embroidery, weaving, basketry, beadwork and stone carving are a natural means to social and financial independence (*ibid*). However, the above study only focused on income generated from handicrafts but this study sought to establish opportunities, constraints and challenges encountered by households in their handicraft activities.

2.3: Socio-economic Drivers of the Handicraft Industry

Traditional knowledge includes information, skills, practices and products often associated with indigenous peoples. This knowledge is acquired, practised, enriched

and passed on through generations. It is typically and deeply rooted in a specific political, cultural, religious and environmental context, and is a key part of the community's interaction with the natural environment (IISD, 2003).

Through interaction of the community and the natural environment, several distinct features define natural resources as unique economic resources for rural households (Cavendish, 2000). First, they provide a wide array of products to meet numerous needs. Among these are wild foods for consumption, non-food direct uses such as medicine, materials for handicrafts (e.g., grasses, reeds, and canes for baskets and mats), wood for energy, construction, and agricultural implements, and other products such as fodder for livestock feed and fertilizer.

Food insecurity and poverty are both positively correlated with dependence on natural resources. Rural households often turn to natural resources in response to agricultural shortfalls and other contingencies (Campbell *et al.*, 2002; Loibooki *et al.*, 2002; Pattanayak & Sills, 2001). For example, in North Central Tanzania, pastoralists responded to their eviction from grazing lands by entering commercial medicinal plant trade (Brockington, 2001). Households fall back on such natural resource-based activities because these activities require minimal capital inputs. For the same reason, natural resource-based activities contribute more consistently to the livelihoods of the rural poor (Arnold, 2001; Cavendish, 2000; Reddy & Chakravarty, 1999; Shackleton *et al.*, 2002).

Non-timber forest products are all of the botanical (plant) and mycological (mushroom and fungus) resources and associated services of the forest other than

timber, pulpwood, shakes, or other conventional wood products. The forest has provided food, shelter and medicine for Aboriginal people throughout the world for thousands of years. Through their mutual association with the environment, the Aborigines developed extensive knowledge of plants, their medicinal and other uses, and their relationship to the natural environment. The efficacy of traditional plant medicines and the public interest in medicinal herbs continues to grow and the commercialization of traditional medicinal plants has become an important issue for Aboriginal communities.

In Kiunga Marine National Reserve in Kenya, an eco-friendly recycling handicraft industry has been created to generate income for the households with the ultimate aim of improving the household livelihood and cleaning up the beach. Flip-flops/thongs washed ashore from all over the world are collected by the women, children and turtle patrol team then carved into a variety of saleable handicrafts including belts, bags, key holders, magnets, toy mobile phones, necklaces, sunglass holders and many more. The income generated thus benefits those directly involved in the work. This has been very successful; over USD 12,000 have been generated by this handicrafts industry in the last two years (TTF, 2008).

Bee *et al.*, (2002) point out that the current social, economic and political changes are greatly marginalizing the pastoral communities. Although the process of marginalization is confined to pastoral communities, pastoralists suffer more than other any community due to a shrinking natural resource base (rangeland). As a result, pastoralism today is under siege forcing some players to seek alternative employment. For example, some Maasai people have taken up crop cultivation, mining, salaried

employment and tourism to supplement livestock keeping within their homesteads. Similarly, some Maasai people of Tanzania have migrated to other parts of Morogoro and Kilosa districts but still uphold livestock keeping as their main source of livelihood as noted by Mung'ong'o and Mwamfupe (2003). From the foregoing, it is evident that the Maasai are incorporating alternative livelihood options for survival and economic empowerment.

Kareithi (2003) documents that out of a total population of 400,000 people in Narok District, over 40 per cent rely on tourism as their alternative source of livelihood: they are engaged in curio making (wood carving, beadwork, basketry and souvenirs) while others hawk curios. Similarly, Namayiana Women Association (NWA) of Kenya's Rift Valley Province makes jewelry and has enabled rural women earn a living by exploiting the economic potential Maasai traditions (Shenk, 2006).

The handicrafts industry can have a marked effect on livelihoods. For example, Crafts of Africa Cultural Gallery (COACG) that was formerly known as Baduku Crafts, a registered self-help organization, focuses on income-generating activities from the grassroots where members meet their basic needs like food, clothing, shelter, education and health services among others. COACG is, therefore, contributing to the country's national economic growth and uplifting the socio economic status of the impoverished grass-roots communities. These include the squatter settlement dwellers, urban poor, small farmers, pastoralists and the handicapped who are striving to be self-reliant despite the harsh realities of their daily lives. COACG is actively involved in nurturing talents for participatory development through mobilizing and encouraging the marginalized or the less fortunate persons tap their ingenuity, talents

and creativity by making unique, high quality artifacts, that will sell locally and internationally (COACG, 2007).

In response to limited market access for commodities produced by pastoralists and agropastoralists in the drylands of East Africa, the Drylands Development Centre (DDC) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is implementing the improving market access for drylands commodities project known as the Market Access Project (MAP), (Gamba, 2005). The project is using a market based approach to reduce poverty and enhance the quality of livelihoods under environmentally sustainable systems of production in Tanzania's Monduli district, Uganda's Moroto district as well as the Kajiado and Turkana districts of Kenya production. MAP is focusing on building capacities for production and marketing of dryland products including livestock and their products, honey, dryland crops, high value trees and herbs. It also focuses on ecotourism and handicrafts, addressing legislative and policy issues that hinder market access, improving market information linkages, exploring opportunities for providing micro-credit, documenting and disseminating lessons learned to the community, contributing to reduction in conflicts over shared natural resources and strengthening regional cooperation.

The changes in land tenure systems from communal to individual have led to rangeland fragmentation in Tropical Africa. This in turn has caused sedentarization of pastoral families. Peter *et al.* (2001) suggest a theoretical framework which postulates that sedentarization is a form of diversification and provides some increased income-earning opportunities. This is especially true for the Maasai because they venture in petty trade (milk and vegetable trading), informal alcohol brewing and local salaried

employment; where women assume prominent roles (*ibid*). Sofie (2006) also hypothesizes that the Maasai have to combine their pastoral lifestyle with other ways to make a living. In Mali, Wendy and Legesse (2004) document that herders were also diversifying their economic livelihoods through jewellery production. They emphasize the fact that nomads have turned a former recreational activity into a source of income in these difficult times thus changing an essentially informal domestic craft into a thriving cottage industry which plays an important role in diversifying the pastoral economy.

2.4: Challenges in the Handicrafts Industry

Craft is basically a commercial activity in several communities across the globe (Jaitly, 2001). To make a living from craft production, the artisan needs to sell his/her products regularly, realize a viable income from each sale and be assured of regular sales in the future (Sood, 2002). Crafts have been an integral part of village life in India and given the changing and competitive markets, getting the product right is often the key to the success or failure of a craft project (*ibid*). Traditional craft skills need sensitive adaptation, proper quality control, correct sizing and accurate costing in order to carve a niche in the market. In other words, the right combination of human, financial, physical and social capital is essential (DFID, 1999).

Jaitly (2001) underlines that training, design, product development, access to credit and cheaper raw material cannot sustain the crafts person in the absence of market outlets that have the least possible number of middlemen. In addition, lack of a regular supply of raw materials is a fundamental constraint to craft production; only a few utilitarian products made from locally available materials are exceptional. For

example, in the Indian carpet industry, small-scale carpet producers compete for the supplies with large factories. Also, numerous distortions in government policies, irregular supplies and unstable prices of raw materials lead to competition for scarce resources between large and small entrepreneurs. This hampers the smooth functioning of players in the industry (Berman, 1996).

In terms of returns, wages for the craft people are meagre (Wilkinson-Weber, 1999). Even the highest wages are low compared to the earnings derived from agricultural or other non- farm activities. The quality of work can only be sustained if the craft people are able to earn a living through working for the market. The combination of low wages and compromised quality exacerbates poverty among craft people.

Langenkamp (2000) asserts that work roles in Kenya's potter's craft, whether traditional or implanted by the formal education system, are still separated along gender lines. Mung'ong'o and Mwamfupe, (2003) document that, in Tanzania, the sale of beadwork to tourists is controlled by female relatives to the Maasai chief in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) and around the Maasai Mara. They further note that the tourism industry continues to engage and encourage practices that undermine Maasai cultural beliefs. Some tourist hotels and operators hire individuals who masquerade as Maasai guides and lecturers. They also mass produce in mass replicas of Maasai artifacts and sell them to tourists sadly, such activities undermine the quality and real monetary value of authentic Maasai artwork and effectively emasculates community-based entrepreneurial initiatives (Meitamei & Kurt, 2005).

2.5: Socio-Economic Benefits of Handicrafts.

Globally, there is a steady realization of the economic feasibility of traditional handicrafts (Mafiri, 2002). In the Philippines, traditional arts and crafts such as pottery, brasswares, woodcrafts, rattancrafts, body tattoos, beads and other ornaments, textile designs, designs of bladed weapons among others are numerous. These crafts fuel tourism which in turn generates the much needed cash. The earnings have led to an economic boom especially in Banaue (a town in Philippines) and its immediate environment where, the cash has been the catalyst to individual growth. The catering and accommodation sectors of the handicrafts industry are key instigators of tourism that later culminates in these economic booms (Daoas, 1999).

In South- Eastern Nigeria Igbo women are endowed with a wide range of skills in crafts and technology. Examples include the traditional pottery craft which has been a big industry for centuries. The earthen pot is used for the storage of grains, a cooking container, a water reservoir, fermentation container for cassava, palm wine storage and distribution, local brewing and distillery in addition to being a musical instrument (Ijere, 1988). The rural crafts and technological industries provided for the needs of the Igbo and others in South-Eastern Nigeria during the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970), when the people were locked out of trade with other parts of Africa and the world. Also, the cloth weaving industry provided most of the clothing needs of the people which implies that people can live on their own traditional crafts and technology (Okechukwu & Uzoma, 2003).

In Kenya, handicrafts organizations network with hotels/resorts that support the exhibition and marketing of handicrafts at their premises. In this light, the Malindi

craftsmens' cooperative displays and sells their handicrafts at the coastal resort of Malindi that is popular with tourists. Furthermore, financial aid is utilized by the handicraft organizations to enhance production and marketing. The Malindi craftsmens' cooperative used Tourist Trust Fund (TTF) assistance in 2004 to set up an office at the Malindi resort which would facilitate the marketing of their products at both retail and wholesale level. They also developed brochures and launched a website (www.malindihandicrafts.org) on which the products' catalogue was posted. This enabled them to capture the global market. The initiative bore fruit when a sustained 43% increase in income was realized in 2005 (TTF, 2008). The cooperative has become so popular that many safari operators now include a visit to the centre in their itineraries. Sixty tourists per day visit the exhibition, spending an average of Kshs 800 each (*ibid*). The increased profits have led to the establishment of a cooperative welfare division that provides funds for members' medical emergencies and the education of their children. These benefits have changed the lives of many carvers as they are now able to support their families in some of Kenya's poorest areas (*ibid*).

2.6: Gaps in the Literature

The literature review underscores the fact that social, economic and political changes are greatly marginalizing the pastoral communities due to a shrinking natural resource base (rangeland). Pastoralism is under siege forcing some pastoralists to seek alternative employment. Some Maasai people have taken up crop cultivation, mining, wage employment and tourism in addition to livestock keeping within homesteads which depicts incorporating alternative livelihoods for survival and economic empowerment.

Literature from handicrafts illustrates that they are a source of livelihood across the globe. In Kenya, wood carvings, soapstone carvings, and pottery among others are home based industries through which several communities generate income. Raw materials for these industries are locally obtained and production is done at household and group (CBO) levels. Family affiliations play a primary role in production skill acquisition where the young are trained by the old and experienced members. The Maasai handicraft exhibited similar characteristics as the other crafts and have acclaimed so much in the local and international markets as authentic aesthetic products to an extent that one wonders of what impact are they to the livelihoods of the producers (the Maasai).

In the light of the changes and resultant diversification among the Maasai, this study looked at commercial handicrafts as an option for the Maasai in which the materials, processes, products, stakeholders, socio-economic benefits, opportunities, challenges and constraints of the handicraft industry were established.

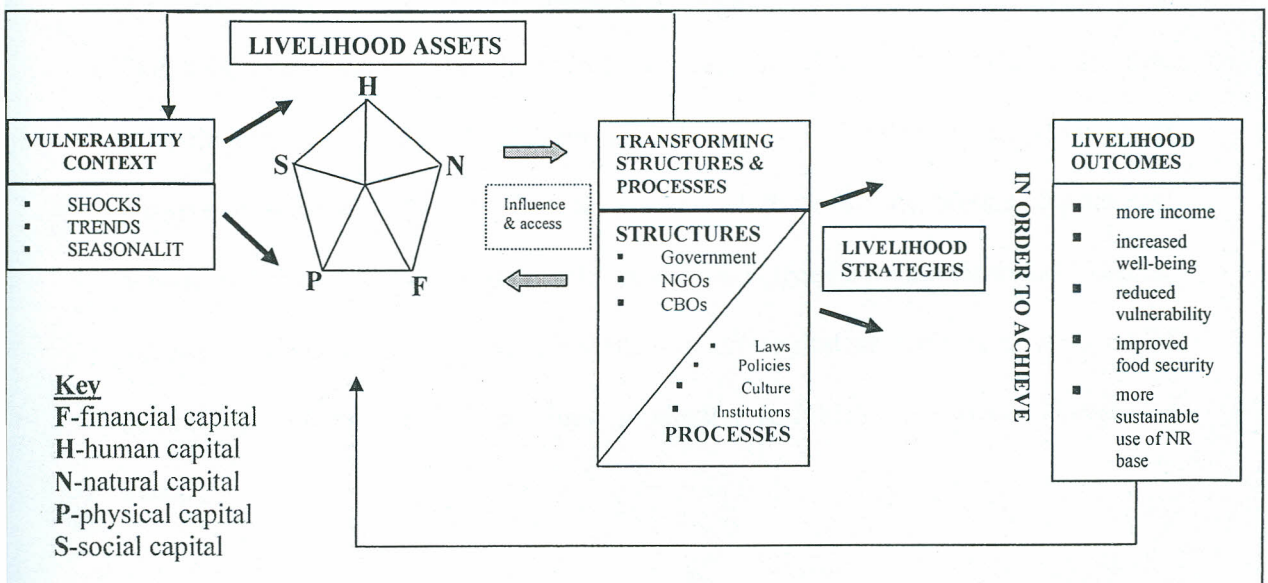
2.7: Conceptual Framework

The sustainable livelihoods (SL) framework is a logical device for improved understanding of livelihoods. It postulates poverty eradication by making the enhancement of people's livelihoods a central goal of development efforts (Scoones, 1998). Chambers and Conway (1992) describes as a livelihood as comprising the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for providing a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with, and recover from stresses and shocks, and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base (DFID, 1999).

The SL framework was employed in this study because it is an analytical structure for coming to grips with the complexity of livelihoods. It was based on the assumption that the Maasai pursued a range of livelihood outcomes (health, income, reduced vulnerability, etc.) by drawing on a range of assets to pursue a variety of activities. Involvement in commercial handicrafts production is driven by the types of vulnerability, the structures and processes which they face.

The SL framework (figure 2.1), is essentially people-centred, it explains the relation between people, their livelihoods, their environments, policies and institutions (Carney, 1999). In the light of sustainable livelihoods, the Maasai commercial handicrafts are a livelihood strategy that emanates from their cultural practice. Handicraft production entwines the populace, their occupations and their surroundings.

Figure 2.1: Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

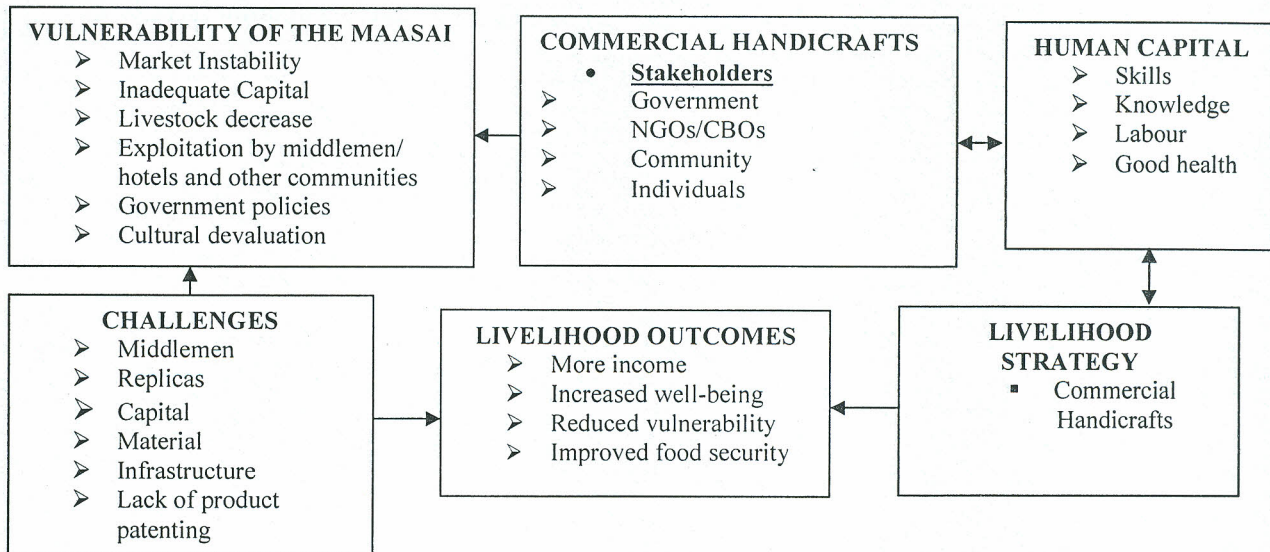


Source: DFID, 1999

Trends, seasonality and shocks in the framework strongly reflect on people's (Maasai) vulnerability. Pastoralism as the main source of livelihood for the Maasai is susceptible to challenges such as inadequate pasture, drought, animal diseases, unreliable livestock market, food deficiency, rangeland subdivisions among others. Some of these challenges are due to trends (in, for instance, resource stocks) that are both gradual and predictable or sudden and unpredictable (shocks) or cyclic (seasonality) (Kristjanson *et al.*, 2002). Such susceptibility brought about diversification and this study looked at commercial handicrafts among the Maasai as a livelihood option for the Maasai.

The study took into consideration all the five livelihood assets in general and human capital in particular, to understand commercial handicrafts as a livelihood strategy for the Maasai (Figure 2.2). This is because the voluminous production for the market is largely dependent on human capital which comprises the skills, knowledge, ability to labour, physical capability and good health that together enable people to pursue different activities and achieve their livelihood objectives. Human capital is a livelihood asset, that is, a building block or means of achieving livelihood outcomes. It is, therefore, a prerequisite, though not solely responsible for the achievement of positive livelihood outcomes for the Maasai. High levels of human capital can substantially add to social (networks and connectedness) and financial (regular inflows of money, savings and available stocks) capital as well as acquisition of natural capital (land) not only for direct productive activities but also as collateral for loans.

Figure 2.2: Maasai Vulnerability and the Commercial Handicrafts Option



Source: Adopted from DFID, 1999

Transforming processes and structures (government, policies, laws, markets, cultural practices and institutions) are important in defining rights and responsibilities and also in defining the terms on which different capitals can be used and (re)generated, and be substituted for others. The study examined this aspect through the roles of stakeholders in the handicraft industry. The enforcers of policies, laws and trade regulations were considered because of their decisive mandate in determining whether the Maasai will access materials, market outlets and protection from exploitation.

Livelihood outcomes represent the ultimate changes that Maasai want to achieve, lasting and significant change that can be attributed to them. In a larger outlook, lucrative employment is considered as a livelihood outcome in most poor countries (Sood, 2002). Harper and Roy, (2000) characterize indigenous/traditional handicrafts as a feasible source of income which will bring about increased wellbeing, food security, resilience, and reduced vulnerability among others. In aggregate, the study

was guided by the SL framework to ascertain achievement of livelihood outcomes by the Maasai through commercial handicrafts.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1: Introduction

In this chapter, a set of systematic techniques used to collect and analyse data are discussed. Specially, the study design, research instruments, study area, target population, sample size and sampling techniques, pilot study, validity and reliability, data collection tools and data type, and data analysis are presented.

3.2: Study Design

Study design is the structure of research; it is the "glue" that holds all of the elements in a research together. This study employed descriptive research design which is a scientific method that involves observing and describing the subject to obtain an overview of the subject (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). It provides descriptions of the variables in order to answer the research questions. The type of description that results from the design depends on how much information the researcher has about the topic prior to data collection. In cases where the researcher has little or no prior knowledge of the topic, exploratory descriptive designs are employed. Where the variables are known but their action cannot be predicted, descriptive survey designs are employed. On this basis, commercial handicrafts variables such as communal labour, local production, cultural heritage and income were known but their outcome could not be predicted. Thus a descriptive survey design was considered appropriate to ascertain their effects on the livelihood of the Maasai.

3.2: Variables, Research Instruments and Analysis Procedure

Table 3.1 shows a summary of the objectives, variables, data collection tools/methods and data analysis procedures employed in this study.

Table 3.1: Variables, Research Instruments and Tools of Analysis

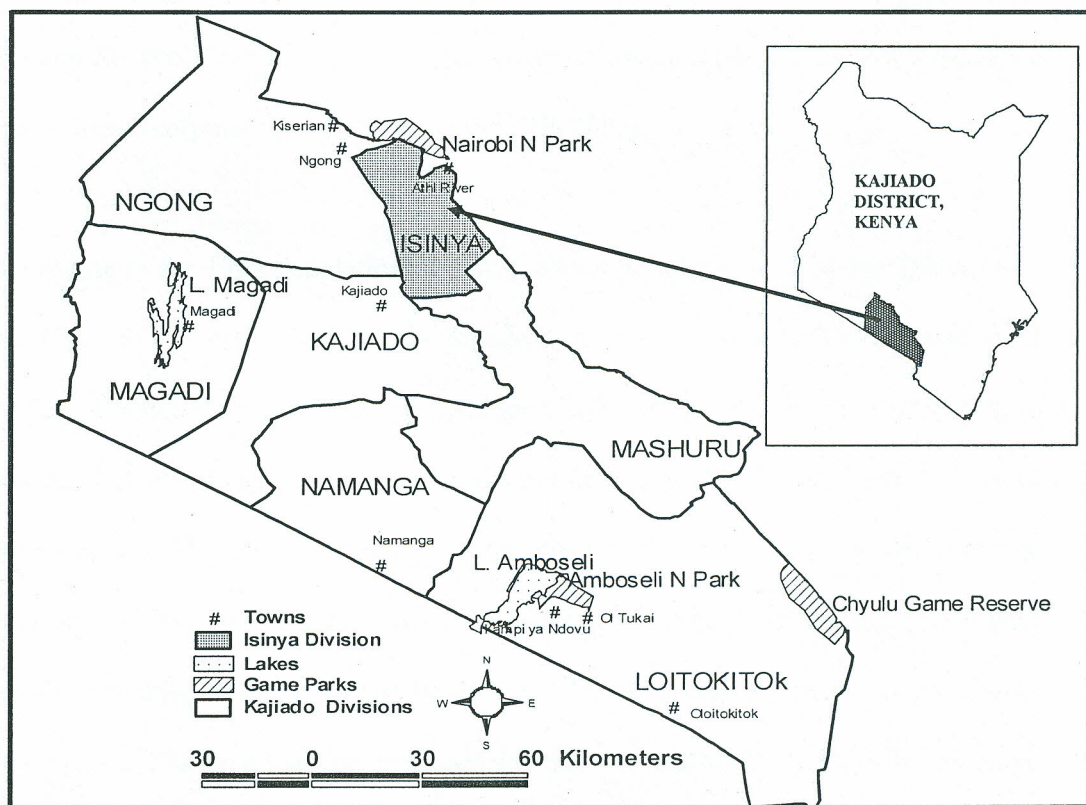
Objectives	Variables	Data Collection Tools/ Methods	Data Analysis and Presentation
To examine the range of materials, products and processes in the Maasai handicraft industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials • Products • Development of Commercial Handicrafts industry • Components of Handicraft Industry 	Questionnaire, observation and photography	Descriptive analysis: Pie chart, graphs, tables
To identify the stakeholders and their roles in the handicraft industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBOs, MRTC and Government • Their Roles. 	Interviews with key informants	Situational analysis
To determine the socio-economic benefits of commercial handicrafts on the livelihoods of the Maasai.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Health care • Improved housing • Food security • Cultural heritage • Beauty and adornment 	Questionnaire and interviews with key informants.	Descriptive analysis: frequencies graphs and Chi-Square test
To establish opportunities, constraints and challenges of the handicraft industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths & Opportunities 	Questionnaire and Interviews with key informants	SWOT analysis
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraints\ weakness & threats 		

Source: Author

3.3: Study Area

The study was carried out in Isinya Location of Kajiado District. Kajiado is one of the 18 districts within the Rift Valley Province (Figure 3.1). It is located in the southern part of the province. The district borders the Republic of Tanzania to the southwest, Taita-Taveta District to the southeast, Machakos and Makueni Districts to the east, Nairobi Province to the northeast, Kiambu District to the north and Narok District to the west. It is situated between longitudes $36^{\circ} 5'$ and $37^{\circ} 5'$ East and between latitudes $1^{\circ} 0'$ and $3^{\circ} 0'$ South (CBS, 2003).

Figure 3.1: Location of Isinya Division in Kajiado District, Kenya



Source: CBS, (2003)

Kajiado District covers an area approximately 21,902.9 km². It is divided into seven administrative divisions, 47 locations and 120 sub-locations. Isinya Division

comprises three locations (Isinya, Olturroto and Kitengela) and Isinya Location comprises two sub-locations and 16 villages (*ibid*). The district's landscape comprises plains, occasional volcanic hills and valleys as the main physical features. The land varies in altitude from about 500 meters above sea level around Lake Magadi to about 2,500 meters above sea level in the Ngong Hills area (KDDP, 2002).

Rivers from diverse catchments serve Kajiado District. The Ngong Hills are the catchment areas of the upper Athi River. Other rivers originating from these water catchments include Embakasi, Kitengela, Stony Athi and Kiboko. The southern and central parts of the district are served by the Ewaso Nyiro River which enters Kajiado through Mosiro. There are also several streams flowing from the eastern face of the Nguruman escarpment and Loita Hills (KDDP, 2002).

According to the 1999 population census, the total population of Kajiado District was 406,054 (50.8% males and 49.2% females). Isinya Division had a population of 38,324 of which 5,968 are in Isinya Location (CBS, 2003). The District's proximity to Nairobi has attracted a large number of immigrants to Ngong and parts of Isinya Division. The Maasai predominantly occupy Kajiado District even though there are other non-Maasai immigrants of whom the Kikuyu, Kamba, Luo, Luhya, and Somali are the majority in order of numbers (*ibid*). There is high variation in population density; the highly populated locations include the township in Kajiado Division, Ongata Rongai, Kiserian, Ololua, Ngong and Nkaimoranya, all in Ngong Division and Kitengela in Isinya Division. The high population density is attributed to settlement by people working in Nairobi and immigrants (KDDP, 2002).

The main economic activity of the Maasai in Isinya Division is pastoralism (CBS, 2003). Cattle are the predominant animals kept by the local community. The Maasai keep on moving with their livestock from one place to another in search of pasture and water. Apart from pastoralism, the area has witnessed a steady growth of commercial handicrafts, informal business activities, agricultural production and mining of gypsum (*ibid*).

3.4: Target Population

The study targeted households within Isinya Location which happens to be one of the major producers of handicrafts. They provided data on commercial handicraft and their effects on Maasai livelihoods. The various stakeholders including CBOs, handicrafts institutions and the government were also targeted. They provided insight on the roles of stakeholders, the benefits, opportunities, challenges and constraints of the commercial handicrafts industry.

3.5: Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A sampling frame is the actual set of units from which a sample is drawn. It contains properties that can identify every single element to be included in the sample (Martyn, 2008). On this basis, government officials, CBOs, handicrafts institution (Maasai Rural Training Centre) and households in Isinya Location comprised the sample frame for this study. From this sampling frame, two categories of respondents were considered; key informants and households.

Key informants were obtained from the government officials, CBOs and institutions that play a role in handicraft processes. Snowball sampling was used identify the

institutions. Snowball sampling entails identifying a small number of individuals who have the required characteristics and who are subsequently used to identify others who qualify for inclusion (Payne & Payne, 2004). In this study the, required characteristics were: leadership/responsibilities in the commercial handicrafts, dissemination of commercial handicraft education as well as worthwhile experience in commercial handicrafts processes.

According to the 1999 Population Census Report (CBS, 2003), there were 1445 households in Isinya Location. Employing systematic sampling that entails selection of elements at equal intervals starting with a randomly selected element on the population list, ten percent of the households were selected, where every tenth (1, 10, 20.....) household was selected for study. The ten percent was arrived at through the conventional law of social sciences which suggests that ten percent of the population is representative (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

3.6: Piloting of the Study

Pilot study was conducted in August 2007 before the actual data collection in October and November 2007. Ten households were randomly picked from Olturuto Location that is situated on the opposite side of Isinya Location along the Nairobi- Arusha highway and questionnaires were administered to them. As a result of piloting, ambiguous questions were identified, scrutinized and amended. The pilot helped determine the soundness and resoluteness of the research instruments.

3.7: Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

The research instruments were validated through the application of content validity procedures. Content validity is usually established by content experts who establish

evidence by looking for agreement in judgments by judges (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). In this connection, the researcher established content validity by seeking expertise from the supervisors while developing and revising the research instrument. On the other hand, instruments reliability is the level of internal consistency or stability of a measuring device. An instrument is reliable when it can produce the expected results (Mulusa, 1988). In this study, the instrument reliability was attained through pilot study and content validity that enabled the researcher to tailor the questions to the expected outcome.

3.8: Data Collection Tools and Data Type

This study relied on both primary and secondary sources to obtain information on Maasai commercial handicrafts.

3.8.1: Primary Data

The Primary methods of data collection employed in this study were questioning, observation and photography. Precisely, questioning called for questionnaires and interview guides whereas observation and photography necessitated observation schedules and digital photographing respectively.

Questionnaires (Appendix 7.1) consisted of open and closed ended questions that were administered to the systematically sampled households. The questionnaire probed the household characteristics, socio-economic benefits of commercial handicrafts and opportunities and challenges of the handicraft industry. Data collected were used to ascertain the benefits of commercial handicrafts.

Interview guides (Appendix 7.2) that constituted lead questions were administered to key informant, namely; government officials (Isinya Division Officer, Ilpolosat and

Enkirrigirri Sub-Locations Assistant-Chiefs), CBOs officials (from Dupoto Women Group and Nasaru Ntoyie Women Group) and Maasai rural training centre; - handicraft and curio-shop manager. They provided data on the role of stakeholders in the handicraft industry, extension services, improving skills (training), marketing, credit schemes, and patent rights enforcement.

Observation schedules (Appendix 7.3) and photographs schedules (Appendix 7.4) were conveniently used to capture various scenes of the handicraft processes. The observation schedules had lead statements on handicraft processes that were ticked against. Data acquired via these instruments were used to support and/or cross-check data acquired through the questionnaires. The observation schedules facilitated acquisition of data on allotment of production roles, raw materials used, dissemination of skills, and working environment. Concomitantly, digital photography assisted to capture data on the array of materials and products as well as levels of stakeholders' participation.

3.8.2: Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected by means of literature review through which objective and systematic inferences from books, articles, journals, and internet search were done. Literature on the handicraft industry among various communities, socio-economic drivers, challenges and opportunities, and socio-economic benefits of the handicraft industry was obtained.

3.9: Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. This allowed the findings on commercial handicrafts as a livelihood option for the Maasai to be synthesized. The information elicited through household questionnaires was subjected

to computation of simple statistics such as frequencies, totals and percentages. Some of these data were further subjected to chi-square. The SPSS (version 12) programme was used for this analysis. Other data were elicited through interviews with stakeholders (CBOs and government officials) and transcribed into written texts by merging the notes taken during the interviews into coherent descriptions. These data were then organized (some in a SWOT grid), and examined for completeness and analysed qualitatively.

Chi-square test is a statistical test used to determine if observed data deviate from those expected under a particular hypothesis (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). In this study, chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses (H_{01} H_{02} H_{03} H_{04}). The chi-square formula is:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$$

That is, chi-square (χ^2) is the sum of the squared difference between observed (o) and the expected (e) data (or the deviation, d), divided by the expected data in all possible categories (Grant & Warren, 2001). The results were then tested for significance at 0.05 (95% confidence level). The chi-square test was used due to the nominal nature of data collected (*ibid*). It enabled a decision to be made on whether or not a significant relationship existed between commercial handicraft income and each economic livelihood aspect. The advantage of chi-square test is that there is no need for parameter values, relatively less mathematical details of scales of measurement such as nominal and ordinal.

SWOT Analysis is a strategic planning tool used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats involved in a project or in a business venture. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving that objective. In essence, it is a subjective assessment of data which are organized into a SWOT analysis template that is normally presented as a grid, comprising four sections, one for each of the SWOT headings: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This organization enhances logical order that helps in understanding, presentation, discussion and decision-making.

Commercial handicrafts among the Maasai are a business venture (industry) that was subjected to SWOT to ascertain the current status and its future progress and sustainability. The *Dupoto* and *Nasaru Ntoyie* Women Groups (CBOs), and Maasai Rural Training Centre (MRTC) were interviewed on the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of the commercial handicrafts industry; they gave the situation they encounter day by day. The government officials (Isinya Division Officer, and Assistant Chiefs for Enkirrigiri and Ipolosat sub-locations) were also interviewed on the same; they gave an administrative view of the commercial handicrafts industry. These data were organized into a SWOT grid that revealed the opportunities, constraints and challenges of the handicraft industry. The household questionnaires also captured data on challenges, opportunities and the future of the commercial handicrafts industry that were used to come up with a coherent description of the industry.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1: Introduction

This chapter presents the findings, results and discussions emanating from the study.

The interpretation was done on the basis of study objectives.

4.2: Characteristics of Respondents

The characteristics of respondents analysed included gender, age, marital status, education level and monthly income.

4.2.1: Gender

In terms of gender representation, there were 66.9% female and 33.1% male respondents in the sampled households. This disparity of 66.9% to 33.1% has a lot to do with the culture of the Maasai people which heaps most of the domestic chores on females while the males converse, hunt or tend livestock. Traditionally, the females made the decorations as they remained at home while the males went herding in the bush. This has been carried over into the industry where females are the main players in handicraft production. The few males in the industry work individually or as brokers who ferry end products to markets like Namanga and Kajiado. Amongst this small male representation, there are old men above the age of 65 who started off long ago as learners and service men at the Maasai Rural Training Centre (MRTC) and acquired several skills. Today, they are responsible for leather cutting and shaping in the women-dominated groups as shown in Plate 4.1.

Plate 4.1: A Member of Nasaru Ntoyie Group Shaping Leather



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

4.2.2: Age

The mean age of the respondents was 35.71 years and their ages ranged from 19 to 72 years. The range highlights how members of different age groups of the Maasai community are involved in commercial handicrafts to enhance their livelihoods. Similarly, (Obunga, 1998) documents that the wood carving industry in Kenya which has a mixture of self-help and co-operative carvers' societies embraces all age groups between 16 and 92 years old, with the youth making 50% of the population. It also illustrates that cultural heritage inspires community integration across the age sets which in return facilitates passing on skills and ideas by the elderly members to the younger generations.

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of respondents across various age groups where the age group 30-49 years represented 50.3%, 18-29 years represented 36.6% and 50-69 years represented only 9.0%. Such distribution indicates that the majority of the households involved in commercial handicrafts are in the (18-29 and 30-49) age brackets which are the most productive economically. In addition, the great representation of the youthful part of the community explains the level of conceptualization of the dire problems associated with rangeland sub-divisions in the name of conservation, climatic fluctuations, and animal diseases amongst others by the Maasai. In response, they are sourcing a livelihood for themselves and their families from commercial handicrafts that are established on expertise, intense labour and market availability (Sood, 2002). This underscores how commercial handicrafts, among other activities, are complementing pastoralism in poverty alleviation and multiplication of employment opportunities for sustainable livelihoods for the Maasai.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Age in Groups

Age Groups	Frequency	Percentage
18-29	53	36.6
30-49	73	50.3
50-69	13	9.0
70+	6	4.1
Total	145	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

4.2.3: Marital Status

The study employed systematic sampling of households and from each household a questionnaire was administered to either a parents or an elderly family member (for instance a mature son or daughter). In this light of systematic sampling, the findings show that across the sampled households, 49.7% of the respondents were married. The singles (unmarried) comprised 26.9% of the respondents. They spoke on behave

of their households and also demonstrated their active involvement in commercial handicrafts. Besides their involvement at family level where they lend a hand in production and marketing, they produced and sold their own crafts in order to finance their needs and investments. This is an indication of the growing realization of livelihood diversification among Maasai youth. On the other hand, the separated/divorced had a 13.1% representation whereas widow(er) s comprised 10.3% of the respondents.

4.2.4: Education

Data on education level indicate that there was nearly equal representation amongst respondents whose highest level of academic attainment was secondary education on one hand, and primary education, on the other hand. Secondary level academic attainment recorded 29.0% amongst the sample whereas primary level academic attainment recorded 28.3% of the respondents. However, a reasonable number had post-secondary education, recording 24.1% while 18.6%, had no education at all.

Although the role of education is not specifically examined in this study, it is a human need that influences people's livelihoods. Currently, most of the Maasai families regard education an essential need for their children. In this light, they finance their children's schooling through sale of livestock, commercial handicrafts and external sponsorship among others. Handcraft activities through CBOs have been a source of funding for the education of members' children. For example, the *Nasaru Ntoyie* CBO channels a certain amount of the members' wages to the education of the girl child. Girls have traditionally been given a raw deal in terms of education.

Lack of awareness about the dynamics of the global handicraft industry and skills in specialized business areas such as quality control, financial management and market analysis as a result of low academic level affect the Maasai handicraft industry. Nevertheless, NGOs, CBOs and elites of the community are enlightening the community on important issues such as health, education, product quality, market dynamism, and networking among others through seminars, organizational briefings and barazas.

4.2.5: Main Occupation

Table 4.2 shows that 42.8% of the respondents had livestock rearing as their key sources of livelihood. The Maasai are nomadic pastoralists (herdsmen, who sometimes move around in search of new grazing land). Cattle are the most valuable livestock; they signify wealth and status in the society (Fieldwork, 2007). A Maasai family often has other animals such as goats, sheep and sometimes donkeys.

Table 4.2: Occupation

Main Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Livestock farming	62	42.8
Beadwork\handicraft	43	29.3
Civil servant	24	16.7
Business	6	4.2
Mixed farming	5	3.5
Manual work	5	3.5
Total	145	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Livestock rearing among the Maasai requires extensive grazing land. However this is hampered by limited access to pasture due to fragmentation of rangelands and conservation efforts. Hence, the Maasai cannot continue to live solely as pastoralists. On contrary, they have to adopt other ways of support themselves. Table 4.2 points

out that a considerable number (29.3%) have commercial handicrafts as their main occupation. Layne., *et al*, (2004) supports this observation by postulating that all women's groups in arid Northern Kenya prominently addressed reduction of poverty by increasing incomes via micro-enterprise development and livelihood diversification.

4.2.6: Income

With regard to monthly income, majority of the respondents (49.7%) earned less than Ksh 5,000, 31.7% earned between Ksh 5,001-10,000, while 2.1% earned above Ksh 20,000 as shown in table 4.3. These low monthly incomes are mere estimates because majority of them do not keep records on incomes and expenditure. The majority suggested they earn daily wages that they use for purchasing household goods or servicing pending debts day by day. Concerning the sale of livestock, the Maasai do it occasionally and at times give livestock to schools in place of school fees.

Table 4.3: Income Distribution

Income Groups	Frequency (N=145)	Percentage
1 001-5 000	72	49.7
5 001-10 000	46	31.7
10 001-15 000	17	11.7
15 001-20 000	7	4.8
20 001-25 000	3	2.1
Total	145	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

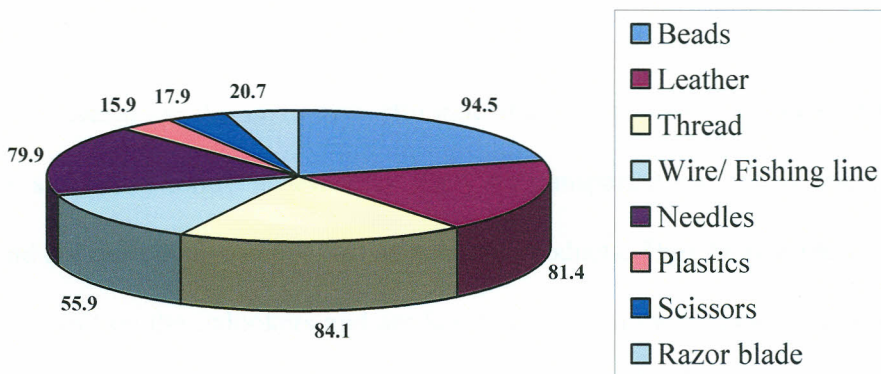
4.3: Range of Materials and Products in the Handicraft Industry

This section presents the finding on the range of materials and products in the Maasai handicraft industry. It also discusses the development of commercial handicraft industry and its components.

4.3.1: Range of Materials in the Handicraft Industry.

The Maasai use a variety of materials to make different products as shown in Figure 4.1. Amongst these are: beads, leather, thread, wire/fishing line, needles, plastics, scissors and razor blades. The basic raw materials for the industry are beads, leather, thread and needles. Likewise, Indian Crafts, (2007) documents that in Saurashtra and Kutch towns of India, the craftsmen create chaklas, door hangings, belts, bags, pot covers and a variety of other things wholly from beads, needles and threads.

Figure 4.1: Materials for the Handicraft Industry



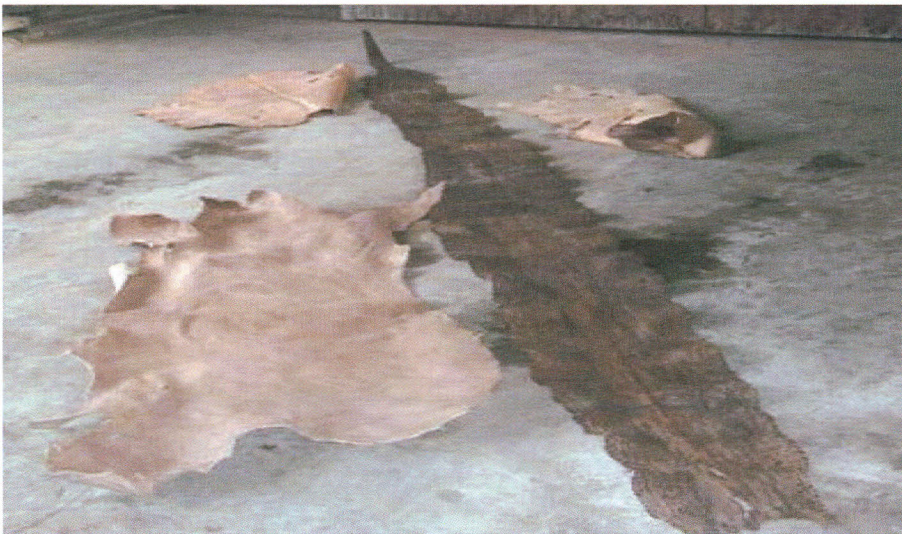
Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Plate 4.2 shows a variety of glass\plastic beads. Large quantities of these products came into Africa from Europe and India as a trading currency for tea, coffee and sugar, and also as a popular payment for slaves during the dark period of Africa's history (Maasai Brand, 2003). The beads soon became very popular and for some tribes, they became a symbol of their traditions, although the small colourful beads themselves are a rather late invention. Before the glass beads spread to East Africa, the Maasai and other tribes used seeds, shells, wood, bone and other natural materials as ornaments (*ibid*).

Plate 4.2: Beads of different Colours

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Presently, the Maasai use the small colourful industrial glass\plastic substances which are round in shape and hollow as jewellery. They are transparent and semi-transparent in nature and are used to give shape and splendor to products. They help in enhancing the overall impact on the onlookers and are key materials on the bracelets, necklaces and headgears (Fieldwork, 2007).

Plate 4.3: Leather of Different Kinds at the MRTC Tannery

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Leather is obtained from hides and skins through the tanning process. Plate 4.3 shows leather from different animals' hides and skins e.g. cattle hide, goat skin and python skin. The leather is cut into different shapes to suit the desired outcome. It is further indented or hollowed along the edges to create holes through which the fastening straps will pass. It forms the base for tablemats, key holders, belts and watch straps. The fastening straps are themselves thin bands of leather which hem the leather base and also revamp the end product.

The Maasai handicrafts are stitched together using needles and the industrial produced thread known as the cobbler's thread. The needles used vary in thickness in relation to the task at hand. Notably, the normal sewing needle is used to mount the beads on cloth whereas bigger/stronger needles are used on belts and mats. Other materials utilized include wires/fishing lines, old plastics, scissors and razor blades. These materials enhance the exclusive distinctiveness and efficacy of the end products. The wires/fishing lines and thread are used for fastening beads onto the base material. Since they are firmer than thread, they give the products such as bracelets, bangles and headgears a definite shape. Old plastics on the other hand are chipped into small pieces and strips. The pieces are then stitched underneath the beads on mats and baskets as stoppers and/or alternated with beads to bring forth intricate designs. The strips are used to fasten/tack the edges of the mats and baskets. Scissors and razor blades are the tools used to cut and shape the leather and the old plastics to the desired shapes (*ibid*).

4.3.2: Products from the Handicraft Industry

In the past, handicrafts such as wedding necklaces, the *moran's* belts, tablemats, were produced and used for ornamental purposes by the Maasai. Presently, they are still

used for the same purpose and even exchanged with other communities and tourists as souvenirs. However, commercialization of Maasai handicrafts in the 1990s has enhanced creativity; products not only meet the community's standards but also measure up to the market expectations. The beaded necklaces, beaded clothes, headgear and bracelets among others are the designs that are readily available in the local market. Headgears resembling the national flag, together with the beaded clothes are produced and used extensively during beauty pageants.. Similarly, specialized and expert craftsmen of particular groups in India produce handicrafts whose designs are tailor made for specific markets (Indian Craft, 2007).

Maasai commercial handicrafts are of many types and they include tablemats, necklaces, bangles, bracelets, key holders, earrings and belts among others. The production of these goods is based on market trends, creativity and innovativeness that offer an opportunity for more innovations in terms of designs. In this light, some of the Maasai products are discussed as follows.

Plate4.4: Tablemats

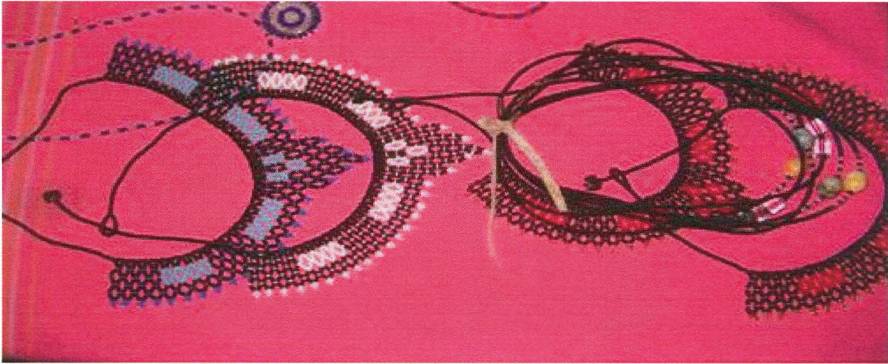


Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Plate 4.4 shows samples of tablemats from the Maasai Rural Training Centre curio shop. A leather base cut into circular shape and holes drilled through it at equal

intervals along the edge is bought from the local market or prepared. Then different colourful beads are embedded on it using thread and needle to cover the entire top face. The bottom part is covered with leather sheet that is fastened to the edges of the leather base by leather strips. Mats are used as table clothes as well as wall hangings.

Plate 4.5: Necklaces



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Necklaces are colourful adornments made of beads, leather and thread/wire. The beads are arranged on the thread/wire by use of a needle to make a circular loop that is connected on either side by fastening devices. On the lower part (front part), they are woven into a web like form. In some instances, the lower part constitutes leather on which the beads are stitched or the leather is cut into a necklace like-shape and the beads are then stitched around its surface (Plate 4.5). They are used as gifts, souvenirs, and ornaments primarily by females.

Plate 4.6: Bangles and Bracelets



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

There are many varieties of bracelets and bangles as shown in Plate 4.6. Bracelets and bangles are adornments worn on the arms. Bangles are made of different beads joined together by wires. Bracelets on the other hand are made of a leather base upon which beads are stitched using threads or wires.

Plate 4.7: Key Holders and Earrings



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Plate 4.7 shows samples of key holders and earrings on displays at the Maasai Rural Training Centre curio shop. Indeed, a variety of key holders are produced by the Maasai to facilitate carriage and storage of keys. Some key holders are leather and beads products while others are products of plastics and beads. On the other hand, earrings are made of beads, wires, shells, and metal. These materials allow for the fashioning of different types and designs. Both key holders and earrings are fashioned on the basis of natural or geometrical shapes.

Plate 4.8: Belts



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

The leather hand crafted Maasai belts shown in Plate 4.8 consist of a leather strip on which colourful beads are embedded using thread/wire to give rise to different patterns. The belt is commonly known as “Kenyatta” because the first president of Kenya, the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta used to wear one (COACG, 2007). Other products such as headgears, beaded sandals, watch straps and crosses are shown in Plate 4.9.

Plate 4.9: Various Maasai Handicraft Products on Display



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

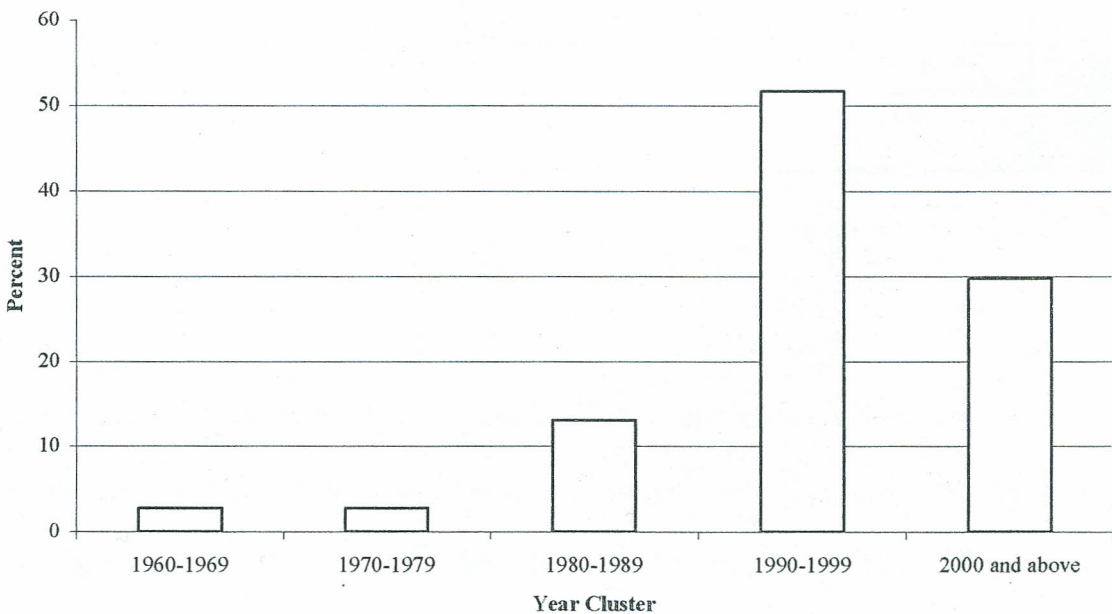
4.3.3: Processes in Household-Based Commercial Handicraft Production

Commercialization encompasses a diverse array of important technical, business, and financial processes that together aim to transform a new or existing technology into a profitable product or service (Coast, 2002). These processes include market assessment, product design, product manufacturing, management of intellectual property rights, marketing strategy development, raising of capital, and training workers. Traditional Maasai handicraft production used technologies that have, over time, undergone a process of transformation thus climaxing in the present day commercial handicrafts. In this light, the Maasai household-based commercial handicrafts industry has developed over time and the study considered the years the

household started commercial production, reason for producing, sources of raw materials and marketing among others.

Household-based commercial handicrafts production started in the 1960s and climaxed in the 1990s as depicted in Figure 4.2. Several reasons contributed to the transformation of the traditional handicrafts to commercial handicrafts. These include: realization of the challenges associated with land fragmentation, population increase, educational empowerment through schooling, seminars, barazas and the availability of a lucrative market for handicrafts. Similarly, the majority of the CBOs dealing in handicrafts emerged during the 1990s. These include *Dupoto Women Group* and *Nasaru Ntoyie Group* which started commercial handicrafts in 1996 and 1998 respectively.

Figure 4.2: Years Households started Commercial Handicraft Production



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Different personalities as well conditions provided incentives to the craftsmen to venture into commercial handicrafts. Table 4.4 shows that 11.7% of the households started commercial handicraft production on their own initiative. The motivation is born out of life's challenges and the quest for better living. The majority of respondents (51.7%) were motivated by their relatives. This is a clear indication of social cohesiveness of the Maasai where they embrace one another as a community or as a family through dissemination of information and opportunities. However, 15.9% of the respondents were inspired by CBOs while friends inspired 20.7% of the respondent.

Table 4.4: Reasons for Households Venturing into Commercial Handicrafts

Started Commercial Handicraft	Frequency (N=145)	Percentage
Personal initiative	17	11.7
Introduced to by a relative	75	51.7
Introduced to by a CBO	23	15.9
Introduced to by a friend	30	20.7
Total	145	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Traditionally the Maasai used seeds, shells, leather and bones which were locally available for handicraft production but at the present time they have incorporated industrial products such as plastic beads, thread and wires among others. There were different sources of raw materials as shown in table 4.5 where the local market supplies 59.3% of the respondents with materials. The materials comprise leather, beads, threads/wires and needles. The study revealed that Monday is the market day

for the Maasai of Isinya Location and it is when most transactions are conducted. However, materials and products are still available at the market on the other days of the week and they purchase required materials from other traders.

Table 4.5: Source of Raw Materials

Source	Frequency (N=145)	Percentage
Local market	86	59.3
Brokers	61	42.1
Nairobi	52	35.9
CBO	25	17.2
Local tannery	7	4.8

NB: Percentages are based on number of response per item

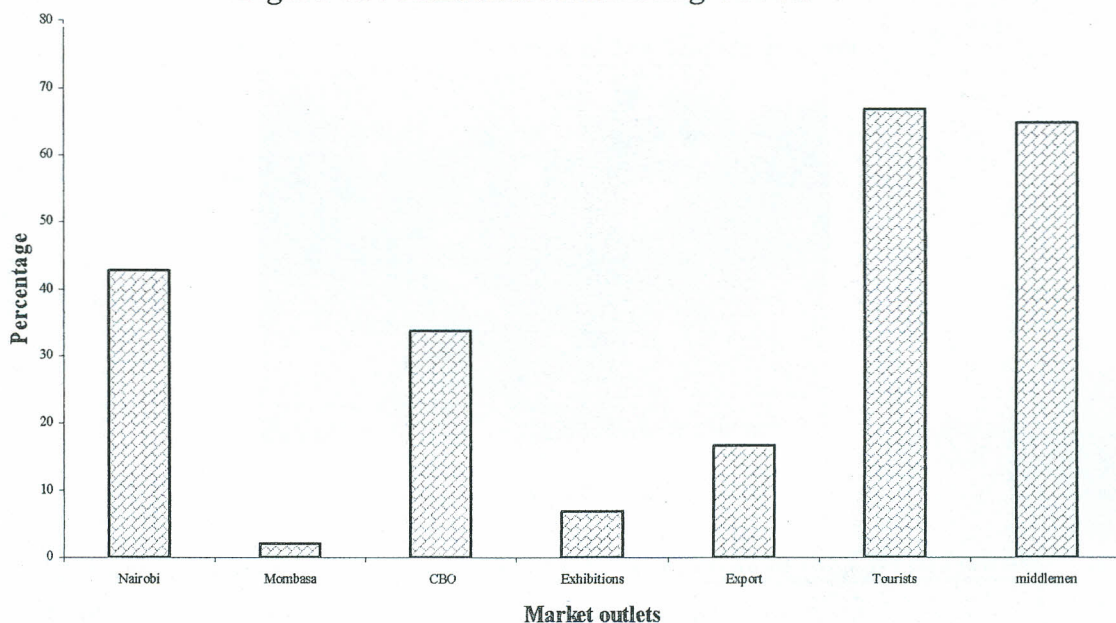
Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Findings from the study revealed that 35.9% of the respondents get their materials from Nairobi. When community members sell their products in Nairobi (i.e. Maasai market), they purchase items like beads, leather and thread at the Ushanga shops along River Road and at the Nairobi Industrial Area. Because of the proximity of Isinya to Nairobi City (50km), brokers/hawkers supply 42.1% of the required materials.

Another finding is that, 17.2% of the respondents were supplied with materials by CBOs indicating that a small portion of the population has ventured into commercial handicrafts through CBOs. However, 4.8% of the respondents acquired their materials, specifically leather, from the local tannery at Maasai Rural Training Centre. This is because leather is sold at the local market already cut into the desirable shapes.

In terms of skills acquisition, 62.1% of the sampled respondents acquired their expertise through apprenticeship from their parents and elderly siblings. This shows how social order and family connectivity is of paramount importance to the Maasai. Through it, knowledge and skills are passed from generation to generation. Evidence from India (Sood, 2002) confirms that most craft people learn their skills from their parents since caste and family affiliations play a key role in the craft industry. Nevertheless, 37.9% of the sampled respondents underwent training at the CBOs and at the local Maasai Rural Training Centre based at Isinya.

Figure 4.3: Handicraft Marketing Outlets



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Figure 4.3 depicts the several avenues used to market handicrafts. These multiple avenues imply that the marketing of the products is challenging and handicraft producers rely on the available options. It confirms that the handicraft producers have varied but unreliable marketing outlets. In fact, most of the respondents (66.7 %) sell their products at the local market in Isinya along the Nairobi- Namanga highway. The market day falls on Monday but due to the nature of this business that capitalizes on

wherever and whenever buyers appear, handicrafts are on display everyday. Odera, (2004) cites evidence from Uganda on the challenge of marketing handicrafts where the Biriwiri Crafts Group in Uganda markets its products from a roadside shop at Biriwiri along the Chimanimani-Mutare highway.

The Government of Kenya through the Maasai market initiative in the City of Nairobi assists the Maasai handicraft producers market their products and earn a living out of their cultural heritage. Plate 4.10 shows Maasai women and customers at the globe cinema round-about and table 4.6 shows the different locations of the Maasai Market on different days in the city of Nairobi.

Plate 4.10: Maasai Women at the Maasai Market



Source: WEEC, 2007

Table 4.6: Venues for Maasai Market on Different Day in the City of Nairobi

Day	Venue
Daily	Westlands Market and City Market
Tuesday	Globe Cinema round-about, City Centre
Wednesday	Capital Centre on Mombasa Road
Friday	Village Market in Gigiri
Saturday	Nairobi law Court Grounds in the City Centre
Sunday	Safari Park Hotel on Thika Road and Yaya Centre, Hurlingham

Source: WEEC, 2007

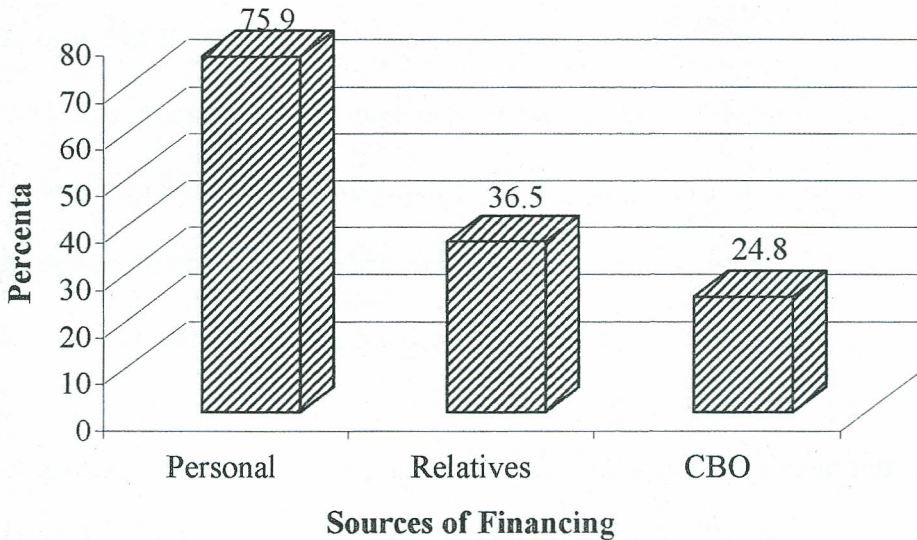
From the Globe Cinema round-about, the Maasai Market has spread to other locations within the City on different days of the week as illustrated in table 4.6. The Maasai still dominate the market but people from different communities are also present. Some traders from these communities sell replicas of Maasai products thus disadvantaging the Maasai. Nonetheless, 42.8% of the sampled respondents confirmed selling their products at the Maasai market. For instance, Matuya Kuresoi, a Maasai lady from the Naserian Women's Group started her beads business at Isinya town in 2000; she decorates belts, mats, necklaces and shoes. After three years, her business did so well that she was able to save a lot of money. She then increased her stock and engaged a female assistant. She now sells her products at Maasai Market in Nairobi. From the earnings, she has provided her family with a decent life and is determined to give her children the best using proceeds from her business. (*ibid*).

4.3.4: Components of Handicraft Production

Several mechanisms facilitate handicraft production. One of the most important mechanism is financing. Individuals, relatives and CBOs are the key financiers of the industry. According to Figure 4.4, 75.9% of the sampled respondents finance their own handicraft production. They use income from merry-go-round contributions, their salaries for instance teachers and nurses, from sale of milk, traditional medicine, food stuffs, sale of livestock, business and loans from loan schemes such as Kiva. Kiva is one of the microfinance training programmes for women; it is a global loan scheme supporting women's businesses in Africa through Women Economic Empowerment Consort whose aim is to empower disadvantaged but economically active rural women in Kenya to enable them meet their basic needs and improve their life-styles. It accomplishes this through savings mobilization, credit provision and information dissemination (WEEC, 2007). Kiva works in collaboration with WEEC

as its field partner in Kenya through which several women in Isinya have acquired loans. This has enabled them fund their beadwork business (Kiva, 2007).

Figure 4.4: Financing of Handicraft Activities



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Relatives have also helped finance handicraft ventures. From the study, 36.5% of the sampled respondents confirmed being helped by relatives. The relatives lent cash as capital to producers and also provided raw materials like hides and skins. These were processed into leather at the local tannery. In addition, raw materials were also provided during ceremonial functions like weddings where the bride is bid farewell with baskets of beads. The other sources of funding were CBOs who financed 24.8% the handicraft activities through buying inputs for the members. They purchased the inputs from income generated from the sale of handicrafts as well as credit from microfinance institutions.

The above observations show that commercial handicrafts are largely a household affair with minimal external funding. Most households source capital for their businesses independently. CBOs on other hand, have opportunities to secure loans

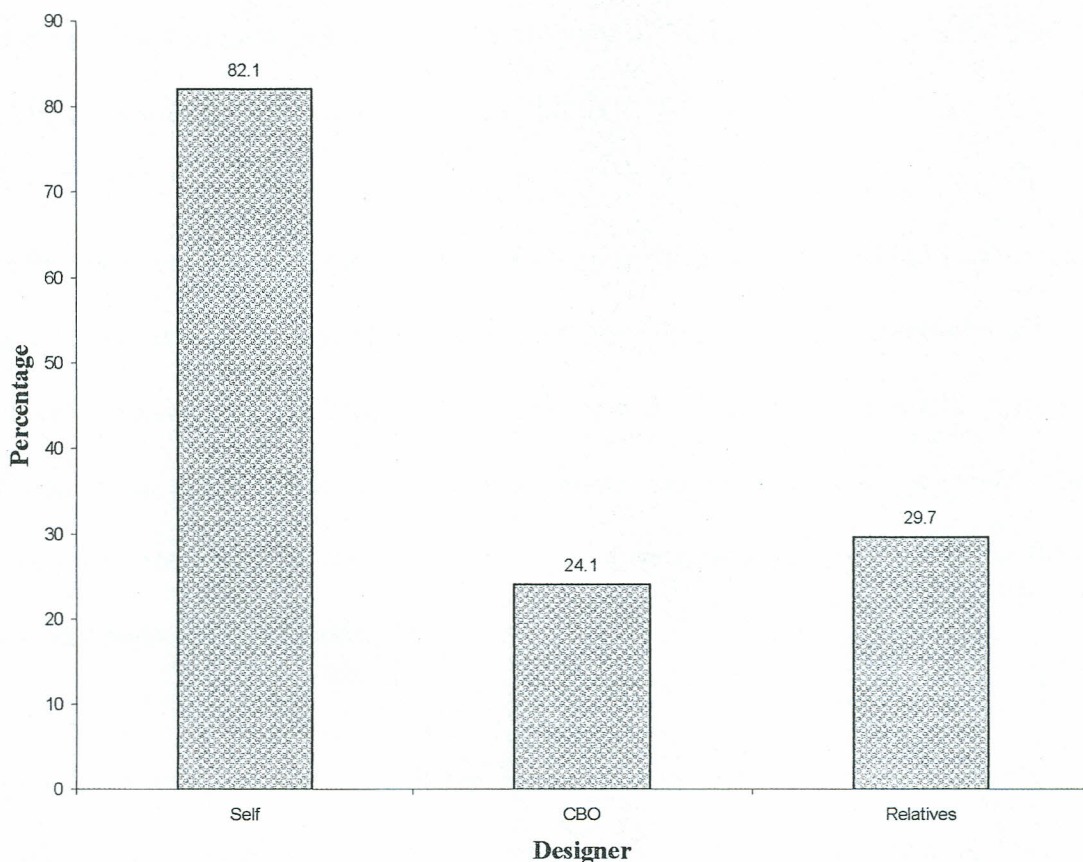
from micro financing organizations since they are registered as legal entities. However, they lag behind other financiers in the industry with regard to contribution capital-wise. This is attributed to the few community based organizations in handicraft activities in the location. The CBOs minimal impact is also attributable to the lack of ready markets for the products as they largely depend on the proceeds from the sale of products in order to finance further production. This has caused a lot of inconvenience to the CBOs when debtors fail to repay in good time. Another drawback is lack of markets for the handicrafts at times.

Designing involves development of the handicraft blueprints. It is done either at the household, at the CBO, or by an expert. The blueprint is then mass produced. Designs keep on changing in relation to the dictates of the market trends, thus, it is a continuous process. Be as it may, the Maasai have their own way of mixing the beads so as to come up with unique products. The colour range in the Maasai jewellery is not broad and the products are distinguished by contrasting colours. Similar coloured beads are rarely mounted side by side. The fields of colour "must" always be divided by a darker or brighter field. Contrasts are viewed as being attractive and natural. There are always opposites and when opposites are juxtaposed the outcome is beautiful in their sight (Maasai Brand, 2008).

Households designed 82.1% of handicrafts by themselves (Figure 4.5). Most of the handicraft designs were imitations of products made by other members of the community. Designs were also obtained by observing the products in the archives. For example, one could use a beaded wedding necklace functioning as a wall hanging as a sample on which improved products for the market will be made. In cases where they came across a different product in the market, they bought a sample and used it as a

guide in designing many other products. They also used their surrounding/nature to come up with designs that translate into marketable products.

Figure 4.5: Designing of Handicrafts



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

The CBOs designed products for 24.1% of the sampled households. The CBOs do an analysis of the market to establish handicraft products that are on demand and their appropriate designs. For some, they purchase samples that they use for training their members. They also work in partnership with other organizations through which they learn about the market and the products in great demand after which they produce unique version. For example, the African Conservation Center (ACC) developed a beaded collar template design for the Dupoto Women Group to act as a blueprint for

products for sale locally and overseas (COACG, 2007). Additionally, they organize seminars to acquaint members with designs they are expected to produce. In these seminars they invite market experts who educate members on the state of both local and global markets. For example, Debby Rooney of Main Line Bead Society taught the Dupoto women group beading (MLBS, 2006).

Beading as a component of handicraft production is the process of making handicrafts where the beads are knit together and sewn on a base material using thread and needle or wire. Traditionally, the Maasai beadwork carried cultural messages: the patterns and colours in a bracelet for instance, were made uniquely for each age group. The women were the ones who decided on the style of the new jewellery to make for their sons, husbands and boyfriends.

Currently, beading is done by all the household members at different levels and 53.8% of the sampled respondents confirmed that children assist their parents in simple bead designs. The females played a significant role in beading where they do it while tending livestock or in the afternoon after they are through with most of their daily chores. Evidence from Ghana (Global Mamas, 2002) suggests that beading is a small and family owned business done in workshop located in homesteads in which women play a major role. In this study the males made their own adornments like bangles, bracelets and belts while in the field tending livestock or at home. They also gave a hand in the cutting, shaping and drilling of holes on leather because the preparation of the leather needed their masculine strength even though their contribution is not significant because most of the leather materials obtained from the local market are already processed to desirable shape.

4.4: Roles of Stakeholders

The following section describes two CBOs and an institution involved in the handicraft industry among the Maasai in Isinya. They are *Dupoto* Women Group, *Nasaru Ntoyie* and Maasai Rural Training Centre.

4.4.1: Dupoto Women's Group

The group started in 1993 with 14 Maasai women as a “merry-go-round” group whereby the group’s 14 members would pool a certain amount of money to give to each member on a monthly rotational basis for development purposes. Each member received a lumpsum once every 14 months. They started commercial handicrafts (beadwork) in 1996 as an activity to boost their economic status. The *Dupoto* Women Group was registered with the Department of Social Services on 18th April 2000 with a membership of 17 women (ACC, 2001). Their aim is to increase the capacity of all the women members by having rotational leadership. Apart from consolidating their identity, registration enabled the group to conduct business as a legal entity. The group is able to operate a bank account, seek funding from financial and other support organizations, and pursue work contracts at both local and international levels.

In terms of product quality, the group facilitates training and seminars on handicraft production and marketing. They train members on new intricate designs and network with other organizations like BEADS for Education organization who endow the group with the reality of the market and industry as shown in Plate 4.11. More so, they motivate and help keep their members abreast with the dynamics of the industry through seasonal tours to thriving handicraft organizations countrywide such as Malindi Craftsmen Cooperative in Malindi as well as organizing exchange programmes that enrich their beading and the marketing of their products.

Plate 4.11: Ellsworth Wendy of BEADS for Education and Dupoto Women Group



Source: ACC, 2001

Handicrafts marketing, be it at the local or international level, are a taxing process that requires constant updates that are only possible when there is a steady flow of information on any new development in the crafts world. With such awareness, COACG is involved in the marketing of African handicrafts and in Kenya it has a membership in both public and private organizations. They include: Kenya External Trade Authority (KETA) of the Ministry of Trade, Export Promotion Council (EPC) and the Kenya National Chambers of Commerce and Industry (COACG, 2007). As a result, *Dupoto* Women Group in conjunction with COACG markets its products in tourist lodges across the country, at the Maasai market, at the village market in Gigiri, overseas and at exhibitions.

Dupoto Women Group has been conducting handicrafts market research to establish the peak season and the global development in handicraft. Through these researches,

the CBO is informed about the changes in the handicrafts industry hence enabling the members cope with some of the challenges in both local and international markets. It also has links with friends across borders like Ellsworth Wendy of the BEADS for Education organization who help advertise and market their products overseas.

4.4.2: Nasaru Ntoyie

Nasaru Ntoyie which means "Lets Save the Girls" is a project of the Maasai Women Group based in Isinya, Kajiado District. The group was established in the year 1993 with the mission of rescuing young Maasai school girls of ages 9-16 years who are traditionally forced into early marriage. This initiative is achieved by counselling the girls and their parents. If the parents do not cooperate, they relocate the girls to boarding schools and use part of the income obtained from handicrafts to fund their schooling. Deeper Africa, (2007) documents the evidence of such interventions where the BEADS for Education project funds schooling for Maasai girls living in Isinya. Schooling has safeguarded them from early/forced marriage. By 2005, *Nasaru Ntoyie* had supported 150 girls through their primary and secondary school education while 10 young women had gone through tertiary colleges. In 2006, *Nasaru Ntoyie* sponsored 210 girls (150 in primary schools, 50 in secondary schools and 10 in tertiary college). They also take care of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), and offer home based care to those infected with HIV/AIDS.

Nasaru Ntoyie ventured into commercial handicrafts in 1998 to broaden its financial resource base. The members' children's education is financed by a portion of their handicraft sales proceeds. *Nasaru Ntoyie* advertises its objectives on the internet and at handicrafts and social welfare exhibitions. Through these, they connect with well-wishers who support the handicrafts activities or directly sponsor the schooling of

girls. In addition, Global Fund financed the group in 2006, primarily focusing on OVC feeding and school uniform programme (Africa Guide, 2006).

Nasaru Ntoyie meets their corporate objective by using the profit from their products as follows. They pay 20% by cash, 20% goes to the girl child education, 20% to home based care people, 20% to OVCs and the final 20% remains in the group. This applies to every product sold. In terms of promoting girl child education, secondary school-going girls are highly encouraged to participate in handicraft production during holidays. In return, the CBO in collaboration with the parents pay their school fees and participate in academic forums like the education days of the students they sponsor as shown in Plate 4.12.

Plate 4.12: Education Day at Moi Girls Isinya Secondary School



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Production and product quality at *Nasaru Ntoyie* is attained through briefs conducted after every fortnight on weekends at their Isinya office during which members are taught new designs and the necessary improvements to be done on the existing products as shown in Plate 4.13. More so in-service programme and seminars are occasionally organized as well as countrywide seasonal tours to thriving handicraft

organizations such as Malindi Handicraft Cooperative of Craftsmen in Malindi. These tours are organized to help members familiarise with the dynamics of the industry.

Plate 4.13: Nasaru Ntoyie Women Group in a Meeting



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Nasaru Ntoyie CBO has been conducting handicrafts market research through which they improve on their production and capture more customers. *Nasaru Ntoyie* CBO in collaboration with a Netherlands Development Organization-SNV (Schweizerische Normen-Vereinigung) is venturing into handicraft production from livestock bones in order to harness the unexploited economic potential in bones.

4.4.3: Maasai Rural Training Centre (MRTC)

MRTC is an Anglican Church-based Institute in Kajiado District established in the 1960s. It is located 50 kilometres from the city of Nairobi. MRTC was formed for purposes of assisting the local community through the following activities: food security, drip irrigation, bee-keeping, dairy farming, artificial insemination, rural tannery, beading, computer training, and ranching (Fieldwork, 2007).

The handicraft curio shop at MRTC was developed as an exhibition centre for students' products. It later developed into a museum and/or curio shop where tourists along the Nairobi – Arusha highway visit and buy souvenirs. MRTC enjoyed a monopoly then because it was among pioneer curios in Kajado District. Eventually, the 1990s saw the spread of commercial handicrafts characterized by many curio shops along the roads traversing the region and in Nairobi. As a result, they receive fewer tourists hence little income (*ibid*).

Presently, MRTC produces commercial handicrafts mainly on order where it hires women from the local community to make the handicrafts. This kind of production is necessitated by lack of a ready market. The women engage in their own home-based production and other activities when they have not been engaged by MRTC.

MRTC supplies the hired women with raw materials as well as the designs. The women are supervised and assisted by officials and experienced members of the group to ensure that the required quality is attained. MRTC curio officials more often than not participate in the production of the products in essence teaching them new designs. The officials also set deadlines for any work given to ensure efficiency. For instance, the sales Manager at the handicraft curio shop highlighted that “if we do not work within given time frames, it will be hard for us to honour any order”. MRTC also appreciated these women they regularly hired during their end-year festivities. They gave them different gifts for their outstanding production in terms of quality and promptness.

4.4.4: The Government

The provincial administration officers in Isinya Division who include the Division Officer, Chief (Isinya Location) and sub-chiefs of Enkirigirri and Ipolosat sub-Locations provided information on how the government supports Maasai commercial handicrafts in Isinya. The Division Officer said that the government of Kenya supports the Maasai commercial handicrafts through registration of CBOs, funding CBOs through the Youth Enterprise Fund among others. It markets and/or links individual and CBOs in the industry to market outlets through the Kenya External Trade Authority (KETA) of the Ministry of Trade; the Export Promotion Council (EPC) and the Kenya National Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The government also facilitates the establishment and operation of village polytechnics in which the youth train on handicraft production, resource capital and savings mobilization among other skills, for example, the MRTTC and Isinya Polytechnic.

More so, the local administration provides the CBOs with licenses/permits and security when they hold meetings through which they market their products as well as acquaint the community with the potential in commercial handicrafts.

4.5: Socio-Economic Benefits of Commercial Handicrafts on the Livelihoods of the Maasai

This study sought to establish the households' monthly income from handicrafts and table 4.7 shows that 73.8% of the sampled respondents earned less than Ksh 5,000. Further, 17.2% earned between Ksh 5,001-10,000 and a partly 3.4% earned between Ksh 10,001-15,000. Majority of the households earned little from handicrafts but in comparison to the overall monthly income discussed earlier in this thesis; income from handicrafts comprised a large percentage. The households attribute the low

income from handicrafts to lack of reliable marketing avenues which limit steady production and causes price fluctuations.

Table 4.7: Monthly Handicrafts Income

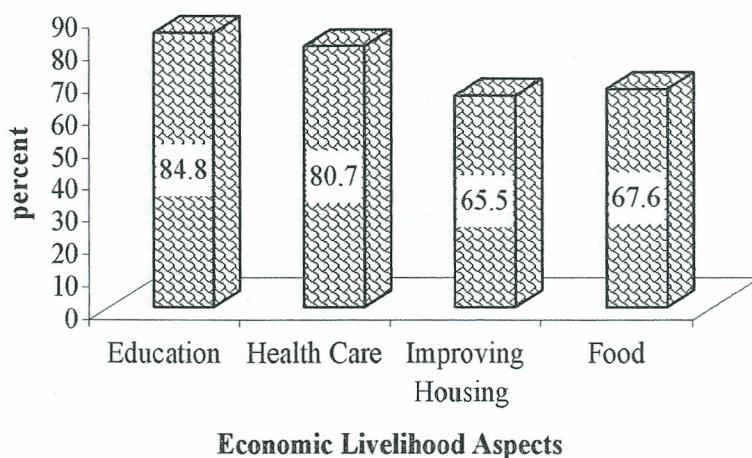
Income Group (Ksh)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
≤5,000	107	73.8
5,001-10,000	25	17.2
10,001-15,000	5	3.4
15,001-20,000	3	2.1
>20,000	2	1.4
Not earning from commercial handicrafts	3	2.1
Total	145	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Household-based benefits of commercial handicrafts among the Maasai may be categorized as both economic and social. Economically, the effects of commercial handicrafts are in the financing of children's schooling, health care, improving housing and food. On the other hand, the social effects include decoration, adornment, cultural heritage and international exposure.

4.5.1: Economic Benefits of Commercial Handicrafts

In this study, households used income accrued from commercial handicrafts to finance different livelihood aspects they include financing of their children's education, health care, improving housing and food. Figure 4.6 shows the percentages of sampled households using commercial handicrafts income to finance different livelihood needs.

Figure 4.6: Financing Education, Health Care, Improving Housing, and Food

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

O'Brien (1998) confirms that a limited number of Maasai students have completed secondary school, a few have attended college while a significant number of children are not able to attend school due to lack of fees, uniforms, and books. Figure 4.6 show that 84.8% of the sampled households used income from commercial handicrafts to financing their children's education. Such a high percentage reveals how the Maasai households are committed to educating their children contrary to popular belief and commercial handicrafts offer an avenue of meeting the community's educational need.

In the same light of education, members of the *Nasaru Ntoyie* women's group confirmed that as a group they conventionally agreed to be giving a certain percentage of their wages directly to schools for fees. For instance, 20% of each member's wage per handicraft sold is channeled to a school for the education of their girls who still stand undermined by the Maasai culture that uphold supremacy of the boy child. *Nasaru Ntoyie's* coordinator noted that through the handicrafts, they have established

links with sponsors and well-wishers (both locally and internationally) to support and fund successful girls in their quest for higher education.

Further, BEADS (Beads for Education, Advancement, Development, and Success), a project founded in 1993 by Debby Rooney as a beadwork cooperative is made up of women from Isinya (COACG, 2007). The women make and sell a variety of beaded handicrafts to earn money. Proceeds from the sale of the products are used to support the women and education of their daughters. In 1998, BEADS began educational sponsorship of girls who were daughters of women from different groups in Kajiado. Through BEADS, girls accessed basic/primary, secondary, and college tuition. In 2007 BEADS sponsored 68 girls (*ibid*).

To determine the actual relationship between handicraft income and education, a χ^2 test was conducted. The results obtained indicated that there was relationship between monthly commercial handicraft income and education ($\chi^2=19.603$, $df=5$, $p=0.001$) as shown in table 4.8. Therefore the first null hypothesis was rejected.

In terms of contribution of income obtained from commercial handicrafts on health, the study established that 80.7% of respondents from the sampled households confirmed that commercial handicrafts provided them with cash that they used to buy drugs and pay hospital bills. Evidence from other studies for instance that of Malindi Handicraft Cooperative of Craftsmen suggest improved health-care for the members through the cooperative's welfare division where hospital bills of the members and their families are settled (TTF, 2008). Hence, there is consistence in findings where

commercial handicrafts income often appears to contribute to health-care for those engaged in it.

Chi-square test results obtained after comparing income obtained from commercial handicrafts and health care (shown in table 4.8) indicated that there was a relationship between monthly income and health care ($\chi^2=14.963$, $df=5$, $p=0.011$). This relationship is also significant at more than 95% confidence level showing that it could not have occurred by chance. Such a high significance implies that commercial handicrafts provided finances that were used in serving health demands like drugs and hospital bills, and as a result the second null hypothesis was rejected.

Further evidence points to dissemination of information on health issues among commercial handicrafts group members and the community at large. For instance *Dupoto* and *Nasaru Ntoyie* CBOs pass on information on health and sanitation through *barazas* and open air meetings. The secretary of *Nasaru Ntoyie* Women Group stated that they usually have regular meetings and occasional seminars on HIV/AIDS awareness, home-based care for HIV/AIDS patients, cancer, nutrition and sanitation. These women groups also disseminated information by making handicrafts that convey health information such as the HIV/AIDS awareness key holders (Plate 4.14). In line with dissemination of information, on 2nd October 2007 HIV/AIDS awareness key holders were on display at a seminar on “Home-based care for HIV/ AIDS patients” organized by *Nasaru Ntoyie* Women Groups at the PCEA church at Isinya.

Plate 4.14: HIV/AIDS Awareness Key Holders

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

Female respondents in Isinya did not hesitate to mention the knowledge they have acquired on family planning through commercial handicrafts CBOs. Likewise, the coordinator for *Dupoto* women's group attested to the fact that they educated their members on health issues and worked with HIV/AIDS and Breast Cancer awareness organizations where they produced handcrafted HIV/AIDS and Breast Cancer pins used for educating the community. All these findings attest to the fact that community and individual health are improved when communities embrace health as a core function of social enterprise.

There were 65.5% of respondents from the sampled households who acknowledged having witnessed an improvement in housing conditions on account of commercial handicrafts. Most respondents stated being able to finance construction of iron sheet roofed houses replacing traditional *Manyatta* roofs that are made of sticks and cowdung.

Table 4.8 also shows chi-square test results obtained after comparing commercial handicrafts income and improvement of housing. The results show that there was a

relationship between monthly commercial income and improvement of housing ($\chi^2=11.214$, $df=5$, $p=0.047$). This accentuates the significant contribution of commercial handicraft in improving housing of the Maasai, and thus the third null hypothesis was rejected. Some of the respondents stated that through income accruing from commercial handicrafts business, they have constructed rental houses in urban centres (for instance at the Isinya market). The respondents also pointed out that they used commercial handicrafts income to purchase household goods like beds and mattresses, sofa sets and utensils.

Evidence from other studies, (for instance Kristjanson et al., 2002; Coast, 2002; Thompson, 2002; Thompson and Homewood, 2002), state that Maasai households around protected areas and throughout the rangelands increasingly have multi-stranded livelihoods drawing on wage employment, remittance income, investment incomes (for example from rental properties) and entrepreneurial activities.

The Maasai are known to be largely dependent on livestock for survival; thriving on blood, milk and meat. With the reducing numbers of livestock per household due to various challenges like reduced grazing land and animal diseases (Gemtessa, 2006), they have incorporated other food types such as vegetables. O'Malley (2003) further postulates that many pastoralists have adopted other livelihood options as cash needs increase for crop inputs and purchase of sugar, maize and tea, so has the need for households to access sources of steady cash income. The range of income or livelihood options has changed for Maasai communities as government policies and the general economic environment have changed.

In this study the Maasai also used commercial handicrafts income to purchase different food stuffs. At least 67.6% of the respondents confirmed that commercial handicrafts provided them with cash which they used to buy food such as vegetables and flour from the local market and from Nairobi at the Gikomba market.

Chi-square test result from a cross tabulation of commercial handicrafts income and expenditure on food pointed out that there was a relationship between monthly commercial handicraft income and food ($\chi^2=12.329$, $df=5$, $p=0.031$) as shown in table 4.8. This implies that commercial handicrafts are providing the Maasai with income to purchase food that is not available at their disposal like vegetables; for that reason the fourth null hypothesis was also rejected. Evidence from Rutten (2006) revealed the growing diversification away from milk, meat and blood by the Maasai towards cash dependent food such as chicken, rice and maize that are bought from the local market and shops.

Table 4.8: Chi-Square Results of Monthly Commercial Handicraft Income and Education, Health Care, Improving Housing and Food

Economic Livelihood aspects	Chi-square (χ^2)	Degree of freedom (df)	Significance value (p)
Education	19.603	5	0.001
Health care	14.963	5	0.011
Improving housing	11.214	5	0.047
Food	12,329	5	0.031

Source: Fieldwork, 2007

In light of the above evidence, the study underscores relationships between commercial handicrafts income and education, health care, improvement of housing and expenditure on food. This implies that the Maasai in their livelihood diversification find a window of economic anchorage in commercial handicrafts.

However, merger returns from commercial handicrafts are a hindrance to improvement of livelihood. Thus, involvement of private sector in financing production, international marketing and mechanization of production of commercial handicrafts will increase returns that will sustainably support the Maasai.

4.5.2: Social benefits of Commercial Handicrafts

Social benefits of commercial handicrafts include: maintaining and promoting cultural heritage, decoration and enhancement of beauty, and enhancement of international awareness on the Maasai culture and Kenya. In this study, 94.5% of the sampled respondents revealed that commercial handicrafts have enhanced cultural heritage hence facilitating passing on the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of the Maasai from generation to generation. Evidence from COACG (2007) shows that the crafts industry is an avenue through which the nation's deepest heritage can be passed on from one generation to the next. In addition, their ceremonies and rituals are characterized by various handicrafts. At the MRTC, ancient handicrafts like the leather shield, the migration bag and the warrior's belt are displayed to tourists and preserved as souvenirs for future generations thus preserving cultural heritage.

There were 92.4% of the sampled respondents revealing that handicrafts are used for house decoration and as adornments. Observation in most of the houses visited by the researcher during data collection showed that the Maasai used a variety of handicrafts for house decoration, an indication of their strong cultural attachment. They uphold their cultural identity by marking cultural occasions like initiation with these handicrafts. The most commonly worn adornments include the warrior's belt and wedding necklace. Again, the handicrafts are distinctive in terms of gender since the

male wear beaded bangle and belts whereas the female adorn themselves with necklaces, bracelets and earrings. Evidence from Klumpp and Kratz (1993) indicates that traditionally, the Maasai have been organized according to age grades. Each individual passes through clearly defined levels, such as childhood, adulthood, marriage, and old age. A transition from one level to the next is often accompanied by a change in clothing and adornment, which are often made from or decorated with beads. What a person wears articulates their identity and position in society through body ornaments. The adornments communicate to others their age, the identities of the groups to which they belong, and their status within their communities. Certain kinds of beaded clothing and adornment are worn only by men or by women (*ibid*).

Maasai commercial handicrafts have enhanced international awareness on Maasai culture and 52.4% of the sampled respondents confirmed this. They stated that their handicrafts and rich cultural heritage have given Kenya recognition internationally.

Thus, a well-organized and managed handicrafts enterprise is an important economic activity with the potential of contributing to the country's national economic growth. It can uplift the socio-economic status of the impoverished grass-root communities such as the squatter dwellers, urban poor, small farmers, pastoralists and the handicapped who are striving to be self-reliant despite the harsh social-economic realities in their daily lives (COACG, 2007).

4.6: Opportunities, Constraints and Challenges of the Handicraft Industry.

Handicraft production has developed to an industry which is of fundamental importance in the economic empowerment of the Maasai. Individual commercial

producers and organizations dealing in handicrafts in Kajiado are on the rise (KDDP, 2002). A SWOT analysis of the Maasai handicraft industry was done. The SWOT analysis provides a good framework for establishing opportunities, constraints and challenges of the industry.

Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors in the industry such as assets, skills or resources the industry has relative to its competitors. Opportunities and threats are external factors emerging from either the competitive dynamics of the industry/market or from demographic, economic, political, technical, social, legal or cultural factors (Figure 4.9). The details of the SWOT analysis results are presented in the following sections.

Table 4.9: Results of SWOT analysis of the Maasai Handicraft Industry

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of reliable labour - Cultural practice and tradition that is rich and diversified in producing wide array of handicrafts - Wide range of traditional production skills derived from indigenous knowledge - Rural production - Internal and external market based on tourism 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited capitalization and low investment in the industry. - Lack of ready market and insufficient market information on export trends, opportunities and prices - Low group production, unstructured and individualized production systems - Limited technical skills, capacity, technology integration and innovations - Limited access to credit - Limited e-commerce competence among exporters - Disjointed and duplication of efforts by stakeholders in capacity building, research and training. - Competition from countries like China, India, and Vietnam which produce cheap and good quality crafts and also have superior access to distribution channels
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing new market (SNV-Schweizerische Normen-Vereinigung and the Internet, e-commerce) - Community is rich in cultural heritage and artifacts that can be marketed through eco-tourism, - Joint ventures or strategic alliances - Emergence of loan scheme supporting arid and semi-arid projects - Government initiatives to support the industry (WEEC) - Existing unexploited handicraft markets in North America and Europe 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Price fluctuations - Competitors have replica product in the home market - Funding base is very precarious and little or no private sector investment - Lack of skills in specialized business areas such as quality control, financial management, and market analysis - Limited policies that are responsive to the market dictates

4.6.1: Strengths

Strengths are internal factors of an industry; they are an industry's resources and capabilities that can be used as a basic for developing a competitive advantage. In the Maasai handicraft industry they include:

a) Readily Available Labour

Handicraft production is a labour-based occupation that requires a lot of time. Maasai women are a great workforce that toils for hours making these handicrafts. There is a rise in involvement of women in these activities through CBOs and NGOs. The groupings have given producers a collective voice in addressing the industry's challenges such as exploitation by middlemen, branding and security when soliciting for funds from external agencies. Concomitantly, accumulation of profits in the groups is a strength which is later given to members as interest, free loans for their children's school fees, medical and capital for small-scale business.

b) Location

As a rural and cultural industry located in the wildlife conservation rangelands, the Maasai handicrafts are inclined to the current and potential internal and external market based on tourism because the rangelands are tourist sites for camping and/or residing. Isinya is located along the Nairobi-Arusha road, the major highway linking the Kenyan and Tanzanian rangelands. Along this highway, the Maasai have established curio shops such as MRTC curio shop as well as open air market such as the Isinya open air market where they sell handicrafts through eco-tourism.

c) Cultural Heritage

The households are rich in cultural heritage that is sustained by operational community systems. The Maasai community maintains their cultural practices amidst high globalization. For example, in weddings and initiation festivities, symbolic use of handicrafts unconditionally augment cultural heritage. Due to their cultural heritage, the Maasai products uphold authenticity and originality with wide ranges in terms of scope and variety (Muli & Otieno, 2005). This guarantees the industry's survival and continuity because the global market emphasizes the authenticity and originality of the crafts.

d) Rural production

The Maasai have the advantage of producing the handicrafts from their local environments which is cheap and flexible. For instance, the men make bangles in the field while herding, where as ladies bead from their homes after they are through with their domestic chaos. This is an advantage because it eliminates the cost of hiring a working place and also they can work on the handicrafts even at night other than where the production is at a central place and only done at specific times.

4.6.2: Weakness

Weaknesses are internal attributes of an industry that could serve as barriers to maintain or achieve a competitive advantage. In the Maasai handicraft industry, the following were evident;

a) Unreliable Market

The industry is faced with lack of a ready market. Many times discouragement engulfs the households and CBOs when they keep finished products at home and/or

offices for so long because of lack of market. *Nasaru Ntoyie* stated that they lack reliable marketing channels for their products whereas competitors, for example Indian craftsmen, have superior access to distribution and marketing channels.

b) Unstable Prices

Another challenge is that prices of vital raw materials like beads, leather, threads and needles have risen, thus reducing the profit margin. Beads and threads are industrial products with unstable prices. In addition, transport charges of raw materials from Nairobi by brokers or by producers themselves as well as transport charges of end products to the various market outlets push the final prices up thus reducing profits.

c) Lack of mechanization

Handicraft production is a home-based labour intensive exercise that takes hours to make a single product. This same industry is dominated by women who need long hours to make the crafts but are culturally overburdened with household chores leaving them with little or hardly any time to work on the handicrafts. In contrast to the long hours required to make the handicrafts by the Maasai, the Indian Craft industry has to some point mechanized its production therefore, reducing production costs. This helps them sell their products at lower prices compared to the Maasai handicrafts industry which is not mechanized. The long hours of time spent in production is factored in the cost of the final product thus making their prices higher.

4.6.3: Opportunities

Opportunities are external conditions if maximized on will lead to the achievement of an industries objectives. The Maasai handicraft industry has various opportunities; if exploited they will enhance their livelihoods.

a) Indigenous Knowledge

The products have over time continued to gain prominence both in the local and international markets because of their authenticity hence giving them an edge over both local and international competitors in the industry. For example, most of their local competitors make replica Maasai products that lack authenticity. A wide range of traditional production skills derived from indigenous knowledge and relayed from generation to generation have facilitated a steady production of wide range of products, which give the buyers a wide variety, hence overcoming the hurdle of replicas.

b) Maasai Market Initiative

The Maasai markets in Nairobi, Yaya Centre, Westlands, Capital centre on Mombasa road and at the village market avails opportunities for the Maasai handicraft industry to thrive. The Maasai display and sell their crafts at these places that are regularly visited by both local and international buyers. To safeguard this entrepreneurial opportunity available to the Maasai traders at the Maasai market, the Maasai Market Empowerment Trust (MMET) has come in handy. MMET is a non-profit umbrella organization with the aim of uplifting the living standards of the people in arts and crafts industry (primary producers and designers). It confronts the challenges facing curio crafts industry in Kenya. Through MMET the artisan and craftsmen/women are protected against uncalled for exploitation and while their intellectual property laws are safeguarded. This enterprise further patents the products and designs in the industry.

c) Training

Interventions that improve household economic access to food and healthcare are directly linked to capacity development. The steadily rising levels of awareness and education about the handicraft industry among the Maasai have necessitated technical empowerment. CBOs in collaboration with tertiary colleges offer training on advanced skills such as project management. The acquisition of these skills has enhanced awareness about the global handicraft industry in terms of production and marketing. Schooling of youth in tertiary colleges empowers them with skills and knowledge in market analysis, products branding, policy advocacy, establishment and management of small-scale enterprises and micro-finance schemes.

d) e-Commerce and Internet Marketing

Through CBOs and other organizations, the handicraft producers have and are securing diverse marketing outlets. E-commerce and Internet marketing represent windows into untapped markets by artisans from less developed countries. A number of handicraft NGOs and CBOs have begun to harness the power of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). One of the astute applications of ICTs by the artisan's sector is the creation of online stores that sell goods over the Internet. In fact, widespread ICT-enabled handicrafts projects are on e-commerce and Internet marketing platforms. Many of the well-known platforms offer typical goods from artisans throughout the world, while smaller sites have emerged to serve niche markets, often with skills, training and capacity building, in addition to a pure business profit motive.

e) Educational Advancements and Networking

In addition, educational advancement among the Maasai has enabled the producers and their organization keep abreast with universal technological progression. The organizations and some individual producers are marketing and advertising their handicrafts over the internet. For example *Nasaru Ntoyie* operates an E-mail account and has developed a catalogue of their products and uploaded them on the internet for global advertisement and transaction. This helps in combating challenges arising from dishonest middlemen as well as enabling them to promptly learn of the expectations of the worldwide market.

Links with resourceful persons is a great opportunity in relation to market acquisition. For example, in 2005 *Nasaru Ntoyie* established an overseas market through a tourist; a family friend to the coordinator. He carried samples that he displaced and explained their origin to the consumers. Then, after capturing the market he asked for shipment of more products. Overtime he continued to update them on the nature of the market and adjustments to be done. Moreover, *Nasaru Ntoyie* on the other hand has started a project on handicraft production using livestock bones with a Netherlands Development Organization SNV (Schweizerische Normen-Vereinigung) which supports artisans from developing nations by acting as a market intermediary. It connects them to potential buyers and informs them on market trends.

f) Loan Schemes

Loans schemes from micro financing institutions that finance entrepreneurs are offering another window of opportunity; reaching even people in the rural areas. In Isinya, micro finance institutions give loans to people through their CBOs. For

example, Kiva Loans Scheme that support women's businesses in Africa, in collaboration with Women's Economic Empowerment Consort (WEEC) gave loans to several women. From these loans, they invested in handicrafts which has led to higher standards of living and guaranteed their children a brighter future (WEEC, 2007).

g) Sub-contracting by NGOs

Another opportunity comes through various NGOs addressing different humanitarian issues in the Maasai community. For instance, one NGO deployed *Dupoto* women's group to produce HIV/AIDS and breast cancer awareness pins. This NGOs in particular, found handicrafts groups to be the best avenues of reaching the community and these opened a new avenue for the women to source income in addition to networking for future opportunities.

4.6.4: Threats

Threats are external factors that could inhibit the maintenance or attainment of a competitive advantage. Some of the threats eminent in the Maasai handicrafts industry are discussed as follows.

a) Individualized Production

Evidence from Teece, (1996) states that the only clear circumstances where the inventor can succeed alone is when the technology is well protected by intellectual property law. The technology can be transferred from the inventor to an organization and the inventor will already have great wealth. Chances that these factors occur together are slim. Indeed, the Maasai are inventors of their handicrafts but they are not bound to succeed individually. They operate in a liberal and competitive market and are subjected to various constraints and challenges. Constraints and challenges arise

from the weakness of an industry that competitors take advantage of and threats originating from the dynamism of industry.

b) Competitors and Brokers

The economic base of Maasai handicrafts is threatened by upcoming competitors who are producing replicas and selling them at lower prices pretending they are genuine Maasai handicrafts. They compromise the quality of products at the expense of the Maasai who have maintained authenticity. Brokers are another challenge; they take advantage of the non-existence of reliable marketing channels and exploit producers by dictating the product prices. This leaves producers even poorer and discouraged. This is evident from the low monthly incomes of various households as discussed earlier.

c) Lack of Specialized Business Skills

The Maasai lack training on and exposure to specialized business skills in areas such as quality control and market analysis that are vital in maintaining relevance of commodities in a liberal market. TechTarget (2008) documents that quality control is employed in manufacturing industries to ensure certain levels of quality in a product are attained. It ensures that products, services or processes provided meet specific requirements and are dependable, satisfactory and fiscally sound. Such interventions call for examination of the product and processes by experts. Unfortunately the Maasai handicrafts producers are not trained on these skills and in turn, they are greatly challenged by competitors such as Bali and Thailand handicrafts (*ibid*) that have well established quality control departments.

Market analysis was considered in terms of productions and markets. On the basis of productions there were threats in relation to primary location of production that was mainly rural and thus challenged by distance in accessing raw materials and delivery of finished goods to the markets as well as information on the market expectations. Manpower was another threat given the increasing diversification into other economic activities and handicrafts production is still not mechanized. The industry does not have steady price structure and elaborate marketing mechanisms; this opens it up lots of external manipulation and exploitation.

d) Unstable Funding Base

The Maasai handicrafts industry is basically financed by the income accumulated from the previous sales that are challenged by unreliable market outlets. In addition, there is minimal private sector investment in the Maasai handicraft industry thus threatening its survival in the competitive global market.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1: Introduction

This study investigated the effects of commercial handicrafts on the livelihoods of the Maasai in Isinya Location. The data were collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Questionnaires were administered to 145 households whereas 4 handicrafts CBO officials, 2 assistant Chiefs and the Division Officer for Isinya Division were interviewed. Data processing and analysis involved checking for completeness of questionnaire, verifying consistency, data coding and entry, computation and presentation of descriptive statistics. Tests of significance were done using chi-square and opportunities, constraints and challenges established using SWOT analysis. This chapter summarizes the findings of the study, draws conclusions, makes recommendations and suggests areas for further research.

5.2: Summary

The main findings of the study are summarized as follows:

Characteristics of Respondents

Majority of the respondents were female (66.9%). In terms of age, the range was from 19 to 72 years; however the dominant age bracket was 30-49 years. On marital status, most of the respondents were married. In relation to education, many of the respondents had attained primary level education. The occupation of most respondents (42.8%) was livestock rearing. However a good number dealt wholly in handicrafts (29.8%). There were a big proportion of respondents who fell in the income category of 5,000 shillings and below.

Materials and Products

The study revealed that there were different materials and resultant products. These results demonstrated that varied materials including beads, leather, thread, wire, needles, plastics, scissors and razor blades were used. However, beads (94.5%), thread (84.1%) leather (81.4%) and needles (79.9%) were the commonly used materials. With regard to products, tablemats, necklaces, bangles, bracelets, key holders, earrings, belts and beaded sandals were produced.

Stakeholders and their Roles

The study investigated the stakeholders and their roles in the handicraft industry. The different stakeholders were the CBOs, MRTC, and government officials. The CBOs and MRTC were involved in providing materials, designing, marketing products and organizing seminars and trainings for their members. The CBOs also supported the education of members' children, for instance, *Nasaru Ntoyie* used 20% of the money obtained from the sale of each product was channeled to finance the schooling of the members' children. The government on the other hand facilitated the registration of CBOs, gave licenses for seminars and open-air meetings, and marketed the handicrafts through the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Socio-Economic Benefits of Commercial Handicrafts

Empirical data from the study indicated that handicrafts had both economic and social benefits. Descriptive analysis using frequencies showed that majority of the households (73.8%) earned an income of 5,000 shillings and below. The frequencies also showed that the economic benefits were: financing of education, health-care, improvement of housing and purchasing of food. Financing of education was the most

highly serviced livelihood aspect by income from commercial handicrafts. In addition, the chi-square tests of commercial handicraft income and education, health care, improving housing and food revealed significant relationships between commercial handicrafts income and the economic livelihood aspects (education, health care, improvement of housing and food). Thus, all the null hypotheses were rejected. With regard to social benefits, descriptive analysis depicted that commercial handicrafts contributed towards cultural heritage, house decoration and body adornment as well as creating international awareness of the Maasai and Kenyan culture.

Opportunities, Constraints and Challenges of the Handicraft Industry

The study focused on established opportunities, constraints and challenges of the handicrafts industry from a SWOT analysis grid. The availability of reliable community labour, cultural practices, rich cultural heritage that produces handicrafts, a wide range of traditional production skills derived from indigenous knowledge, rural production, internal and external market based on tourism and authentic products were some of the opportunities in the handicraft industry. Conversely, lack of a ready market for the products, inadequate capital, exploitation from middlemen and lack of a government policy that directs the trade were some of the constraints and challenges that faced the industry.

5.3: Conclusions

The findings of this study revealed that the Maasai produced a variety of commercial handicrafts (mats, belts bangles, necklaces, earrings and key-holders) using different material acquired from different places, for example, the local market and Nairobi. There were three categories of stakeholder; they included community based organizations, Maasai rural training centre and the government. The community based

organizations supplied their members with materials, organized meetings and seminars, marketed products and supported the families of their members' for instance in financing their children's education. The Maasai rural training centre also provided materials, marketed products and trained community members' on how to make handicrafts. The government was responsible for registration of CBOs, provision of permits for barazas and seminars, and marketing of handicrafts through the Ministry of Trade. Income from commercial handicraft is very low with a majority (73.8%) of the respondents earning 5,000 shillings and below. Although returns from commercial handicrafts were little, the Maasai used this income to finance various livelihood aspects like education, health-care, housing, and provision of food. The commercial handicrafts also have promoted cultural heritage among the Maasai and Kenya's international recognition. On this basis, the commercial handicrafts are a livelihood option for the Maasai but face the hurdles of individualized production systems, inadequate capital, unreliable markets, exploitation by middlemen and lack of government policy to direct the commercial handicrafts trade.

5.4: Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following are the recommendations to the government, CBOs, households, policy makers and extension agents.

The government should support the marketing of Maasai handicrafts through organized exhibitions, overseas advertising and enacting of laws to insulate the craftsmen from the exploitation of middlemen. In addition, the policy-makers should advocate for the protection of Maasai handicrafts. Where possible they should press for patenting of the products and the establishment of micro finance institutions and

NGOs that finance and/or train local commercial handicrafts producers in the location.

The results of this study indicated that most of the households were involved in individualized production which exposes them to exploitation by middle men. The study recommends that community members be encouraged to form groups through community workshops and barazas because they are an important form of social capital through which collective action and participation can be promoted.

The stakeholders in the industry should utilize ICTs resources such as the internet and mount websites to aid in advertisement and global trading. The CBOs should work in conjunction with tour firms, hotels, and ecotourism to enable them link up easily with potential buyers.

5.5: Suggestions for Further Research

- a) This study revealed that grouping and clustering is one of the strategies with underlying implications for commercial handicraft production and marketing. There is therefore, need for further research on nature, levels and types of grouping and clustering in the handicraft industry.
- b) E-commerce also featured as a window of opportunity for the handicrafts producers to access the global market. Therefore, there is need for research on the level of application of e-commerce in the production and marketing of handicrafts.
- c) The study was limited to Isinya Location of Kajiado District. It could be replicated on the entire Maasai community to establish the extent to which commercial handicrafts contribute to wealth creation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 7.1: Questionnaire for Household Heads

A. Household Characteristics

Name of sub-location:.....

Name of village.....

1 a) Sex of the respondent

Male Female

b) Age as per last birthday

c) Number of children

2. Marital status

Married Single Separated Widow (er)

3. Educational level attained

(a) None (b) Primary

(c) Secondary (d) Post secondary

4. What is your main occupation?

5. On average, what is your monthly income?

- (i) 1000-5000 (Kshs)
- (ii) 5001-10000 (Kshs)
- (iii) 10001-15000 (Kshs)
- (iv) 15001-20000 (Kshs)
- (v) 20001& above

5. When did you start producing commercial handicrafts?

c) Where do you get materials?

C. Characteristics and roles of stakeholders in the handicraft industry

1. (a) State special skills required in production of handicrafts

(b) How do you acquire these skills?

c) Who provides the capital (money) for buying materials?

d) Who designs the handicrafts?

2. What roles are played by family members in the handicraft production processes?

3. a) Where do you sell your products?

- (i) Local
- (ii) Nairobi
- (iii) International
- (iv) State others _____

b) The end products (handicrafts) are:-

- a) Sold at the local market
- b) Sold to brokers
- c) Taken to CBO
- d) Specify other means.....

D. Benefits

1. a) Do you do commercial handicrafts?

- (i) Yes
- (ii) No

b) If yes in 1(a), how much monthly income do you get from handicrafts?

c) If yes in 1(a), what are the economic livelihood aspects you meet using income from handicrafts?

d) The economic livelihood aspects in 1(c), which one is most dependent on handicraft income?

2) What are the social benefits associated with handicrafts?

3. What other benefits do you feel emanate from this activity?

E. Challenges and Opportunities

1. In your opinion:

a). What challenges do you face in handicraft activities? (List the most serious to the least)

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)
- (e)
- (f)
- (g)

b). What challenges do you face in handicraft activities? (List from the most serious to the least)

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)
- (e)
- (f)
- (g)

2. What do you feel is the future of this handicraft industry?

Appendix 7.2: Interview guide

CBOs and Government

Date of interview _____
Interviewer _____

Name of

Venue of Interview _____
interviewee _____

Name of

1. What role does your organization play in the handicraft industry?

2. What provisions does your organization provide to the producers?

3. What are your links with the households that produce the handicrafts?

4. What are the reasons for commercialization of handicrafts?

5. What are the challenges facing this industry?

6. What are the opportunities?

7. (a) Are there any rules/laws pertaining to handicraft production and sale?

(b) If yes, state them below.

8. In what ways does the community benefit from commercial handicraft?

9. Are there any extension services you offer to the producers of handicrafts?

Appendix 7.4: Photograph schedule

1. Stages of handicraft production
2. Variety of materials and range of finished products
3. Working conditions

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