

**The Mediating Role of Strategic Planning on the Determinants of Sustainable Urban Tourism: Empirical Evidence from Tanzania**

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**Abstract**

This study investigates the mediating role of strategic planning on the relationship between the destination determinants and sustainable urban tourism in Tanzania. The paper is guided by both social exchange theory and stakeholders' theory. Four determinants of sustainable urban tourism were explored namely, stakeholders' financial support, level of responsibility, technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism and support from the local communities. Unlike other variables which were positively related to sustainable urban tourism, the support from the local communities was found to have a negative relationship with sustainable urban tourism. Structural equation modelling technique revealed that strategic planning had a full mediating effect of two sustainable urban tourism determinants namely, level of responsibility and support from the local communities. It was also revealed that the effects of stakeholders' financial support and technical support on sustainable urban tourism are partially mediated by strategic planning. It is recommended that strategic planning policy initiatives to promote sustainable urban tourism development should focus on stakeholders' willingness and participation, awareness on the sustainability issues, enhance technology innovation and proper infrastructure development.

**Key Words:** Strategic planning, Sustainable urban tourisms, social exchange theory, stakeholders' theory, structural equation modelling,

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## **1. Introduction**

Urban tourism is the fastest growing tourism segment (UNWTO, 2018). The growth of urban tourism has been motivated by a number of factors such as technology innovation, rapid economic growth, increased competition among urban destination, changing work patterns, consumer lifestyles, disposable income (Mlozi 2011; Andari & Setiyorini, 2016). Urban tourism offers great economic opportunities, while at the same time increasing destination's vulnerability to overcrowding and uncontrolled growth. Several increasing studies have demonstrated a consensus that sustainable urban tourism is the main source of employment and income generation in urban cities (Rogerson, 2016; Shiji, 2017). Despite its benefits, urban tourism can pose a number of challenges such as environmental destruction, increased traffic congestion, biodiversity loss; security issues, migrations (high population rate), pollution, destruction of historical buildings & local culture destructions and crime that are stimulated by increasing urban population and rapid urbanisation (Andari & Setiyorini 2016; Dabeedooal et al., 2019).

Rapid urbanization and changes in urban setting have resulted into high global tourist flow thereby creating the need for sustainable urban tourism to cater the growth (UNWTO, 2018). For instance, the World cities report on urbanization and development (2016) pointed out that, by the year 2030 the urban population of developing countries will double while the areas covered by cities will triple. The increase number of people in urban destination leads to high population and increases demand on daily activities especially on the environment and other urban resources. In this regard, sustainable urban tourism (SUT) development has emerged to solve and replace the ineffective approaches of tourism development in urban area (Andari & Setiyorini 2016; Dabeedooal et al., 2019).

Sustainable urban tourism and urban tourism has been emphasized in various international conferences, publications and summits such as the seven UNWTO global summits on city and urban tourism since 2012-2018. The UNWTO discussions have focused on the role of sustainable urban tourism in supporting economic development and livelihood of local communities through innovative strategies (UNWTO, 2012; UNWTO, 2013; UNWTO, 2014; UNWTO, 2015; UNWTO, 2016; UNWTO, 2017; UNWTO, 2018).

In recent years tourism scholars and practitioners have endeavoured to research on the determinants of sustainable urban tourism. Previous studies of sustainable urban tourism revealed financial support from stakeholders, level of responsibility, technical support, and support from the local community to be some of the determinants of sustainable urban tourism (Andari (2019; Aydin & Emeksiz, 2018). Despite the increased knowledge in sustainable urban tourism, there still remain some gaps in the on-going research. Besides, previous studies have not paid attention on the mediating influence of strategic planning on the determinants of SUT (Miller et al., 2015). Some previous studies (Baldwin, 2013) have also revealed a lack of clear consensus among scholars regarding the difference between sustainable urban tourism and urban tourism. Sustainable tourism, usually treated as another topic separated from urban tourism and has been discussed extensively by tourism scholars. Sustainability has only been related to natural resources in ecotourism and protected areas. The corresponding cultural, historical attractions found in urban areas lacks similar broad and deep discussion on sustainability (Miller et al. 2015).

Furthermore, in the studies that have quantitatively examined sustainable urban tourism there has been no exploration of complex models such as a mediation model to observe the mediating role of strategic planning on destination determinants and sustainable urban

tourism. To contribute towards filling this research gap, examines how strategic planning mediates the relationship between the destination determinants and sustainable urban tourism. The study proposes a framework and methodologies that facilitate sustainable urban tourism management models with regard to strategic planning. The objective of this paper is to examine the mediating role of strategic planning on the effects of the determinants of sustainable urban tourism in urban destinations of Tanzania.

After this introduction the rest of study is structured as follows: section two gives the literature review and conceptual framework, section three explains the methodology of the study, section four presents the findings, section five discusses the findings whereas section six concludes the study.

## **2. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework**

### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

This study applies both the social exchange theory and stakeholders' theory to analyse the destination determinants that determine sustainable urban tourism practices. Social Exchange Theory (SET) is proved to be useful in explaining individual and social interactions. It purports that stakeholders tend to support tourism projects in exchange for the benefits brought by the project. This comes from evaluating the economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts that stakeholders may decide whether to support tourism project or not (Achi-Anyi, 2016; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011).

According to SET there will be always a group of stakeholders who support SUT when they realize the exchange is important to them, while the ones with negative perception will feel the exchange can be harmful to the community well-being. The theory guides the four objectives of the study which intends to explore the destination determinants towards achieving sustainable urban tourism.

The stakeholders' theory on the other hand focuses on searching for proactive ways to change the way in which the world of business operates in relation to surrounding environment (Freeman *et al.*, 2004). It also aims at pushing destination managers to be very clear about how they want to run their urban destinations; specifically what kinds of relationship they want and need to create with other tourism stakeholders in order to achieve their goals. Furthermore, Freeman argues that destination managers must formulate, design and implement strategies that will satisfy all tourism stakeholders in the country (Freeman *et al.*, 2004). In tourism stakeholders comprises tourism planners who have a complete picture of all those involved in strategic planning, processes and results of a tourism destinations.

The assumption underlying the stakeholder theory is to capitalize on the collective intelligence and capacity of a system which comprises different types of stakeholders to improve and transform the system for collective survival and success (Svendsen & Laberge, 2005). From applicability point of view, several empirical enquiries used stakeholder theory to study strategic planning towards sustainable urban tourism (Getz & Timur, 2005; Timur & Getz, 2002; Alonso, 2015; Khunou, 2016).

Turker *et al.* (2016) applied the stakeholder theory to investigate the role of stakeholder in sustainable tourism destination. The study found out that according to the stakeholder theory,

local authorities have the most responsibility to play in order to achieve sustainable urban tourism and they are responsible to lead other tourism stakeholders because they are regarded as the most powerful part which plays a very important role in conserving and preserving heritage buildings and planning for sustainable tourism. Tourism enterprises have the responsibility of preserving heritage buildings by renovating and restoring their hotels while local communities play the role of preserving the local culture and to sustain it for future tourism usage.

## **2.2 Empirical Literature Review**

The agenda of sustainable urban tourism has been supported by several studies carried out in different countries throughout the world. For example, in Bangladesh strategies for sustainable urban tourism have been observed through ensuring tourists security, planning for sustainable economic profit, setting environmental regulations, creating awareness about sustainable tourism, and the development of urban infrastructure (Kisi 2019).

In Eskisehir, Turkey, it was found out that sustainable urban tourism can be achieved through strategic planning of urban resources, cooperation among tourism stakeholders, technical support, environmental conservation and financial support from public institutions (Aydin & Emeksiz 2018). Asante *et al.* (2010) further argues that, understanding local community perceptions helps in tourism planning, setting strategies for proper utilization of tourism resources in urban destinations coupled with involvement and participation of local communities in urban tourism act as a main pre-requisite in achieving sustainable urban tourism.

A study in Croatia (Stahan 2018) indicate that, the key factors for sustainable urban tourism success in Croatia include increased stakeholder participation, regional cooperation, sustainable urban mobility, supporting environmental and social innovation, preventing negative social issues, resource efficiency and environmentally acceptable waste management. Likewise a study in Romania (Zamfir & Corbos 2018) indicates sustainable urban tourism can basically be achieved and managed through strategic planning and developing urban areas as a tourist destination. They further provide sustainable urban tourism guidelines including limitation of wastes and environmental degradation, integration of tourism into the national planning emphases on better management and sustainable practices, education, preservation of natural, cultural and historical resources and observance the destination carrying capacity.

In Kenya sustainable urban tourism has been embraced by ratified three international treaties aiming at cooperatively considering action to limit average global temperature increases resulting from climate change, biodiversity and combating of desertification. The Kenyan government has introduced different initiatives such as policies, institution and legislative frameworks to deal with the major cause of environmental degradations and negative impacts brought about by industrial and economic development program (UN, 2012).

Tanzania urban destinations are endowed with natural, cultural and manmade resources. Sustainable tourism development is emphasised in the National Tourism Policy of 1991 which focuses on conservation of tourism attractions, preservation of the environment and sustainable development of the tourism industry. The national policy promote economy and local communities livelihood, poverty alleviation, development of sustainable tourism that is

cultural and socially acceptable, ecological friendly, environmental sustainable and economically supportive (URT 1999). The policy insists on developing wildlife safari and cultural tourism. It also aimed to maximize the national GDP through foreign exchange earnings, job creation and human resource development. It is with these policies that several approaches have been made to develop sustainable tourism development project. For instance introduction of Community Based Tourism (CBT) projects with the intention of helping the poor communities to utilize resources (Mgonja *et al.*, 2015). Sustainable tourism has been emphasized in the Tanzanian National tourism policy (URT, 1999), Tanzania development vision 2025(URT, 2016a). Cognizant of the newness of the Sustainable urban tourism debate the concept is somewhat missing in in Tanzanian tourism policy framework. The policy framework underscores sustainable tourism in nature based destinations due to the fact that sustainable practice is only concentrated in nature and historical sites.

Sustainable urban tourism is yet to be achieved as the people living adjacent to urban tourism attractions are poor (Vedeld *et al.*, 2012). “The individual who live in this striking landscape are some of the poorest in Tanzania, struggling to survive in the face of frequent famine and disease” (Baldwin, 2013). Urban tourism in Tanzania is also relative undeveloped because there is no substantial domestic market for locally produced products; tourism attractions in urban centres are poorly developed and marketed; private and public sectors do not work in harmony; and city development plans and national tourism policy are not integrated (Vedeld *et al.*, 2012).

Throughout the world there is considerable pressure on governments and other stakeholders to seek alternative ways for supporting economic development in urban areas (Ivna, *et al.*, 2016; Maxim, 2016; Khunou, 2016; Yilmaz *et al.*, 2018). Hence understanding the destination determinants and the role of strategic planning in achieving sustainable urban tourism is of important.

A mixed research conducted by Acha-Anyi, (2014) in South Africa using descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, factor correlation analysis, Spearman’s rank correlations, ANOVA tests and t-tests aimed at finding out on how good sustainable urban tourism strategies can solve the local communities problems (i.e unemployment rate, poverty alleviation and reducing crime incidences). The findings reveal that sustainable urban tourism requires good strategies for transforming urban tourism destination into attractiveness and competitive destination. Also the study highlighted the importance raising awareness and consultations with stakeholders as key strategy for sustainable urban tourism development.

A survey by Asadi (2011) on urban tourism development strategies revealed that strategies and planning is the main prerequisite for the sustainability and development of urban tourism. Also the determination and prioritization of urban tourism strategies by the urban tourism planners should consider the strength of the urban tourism resources, looking for new markets for their products through market penetration and develop urban tourism products.

Awedyk *et al.*, (2018) conducted a study using mixed method on sustainable tourism development strategies in Poland which aimed at investigating the tourism development through strategic planning, tourism stakeholders’ participation and sustainable development principles. The study revealed sustainable urban tourism development requires good strategic planning indicators, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

A review of the literature on sustainable urban tourism reveals several gaps. In the first place, the literature on determinants of sustainable urban tourism (SUT) in Africa is scanty whereas

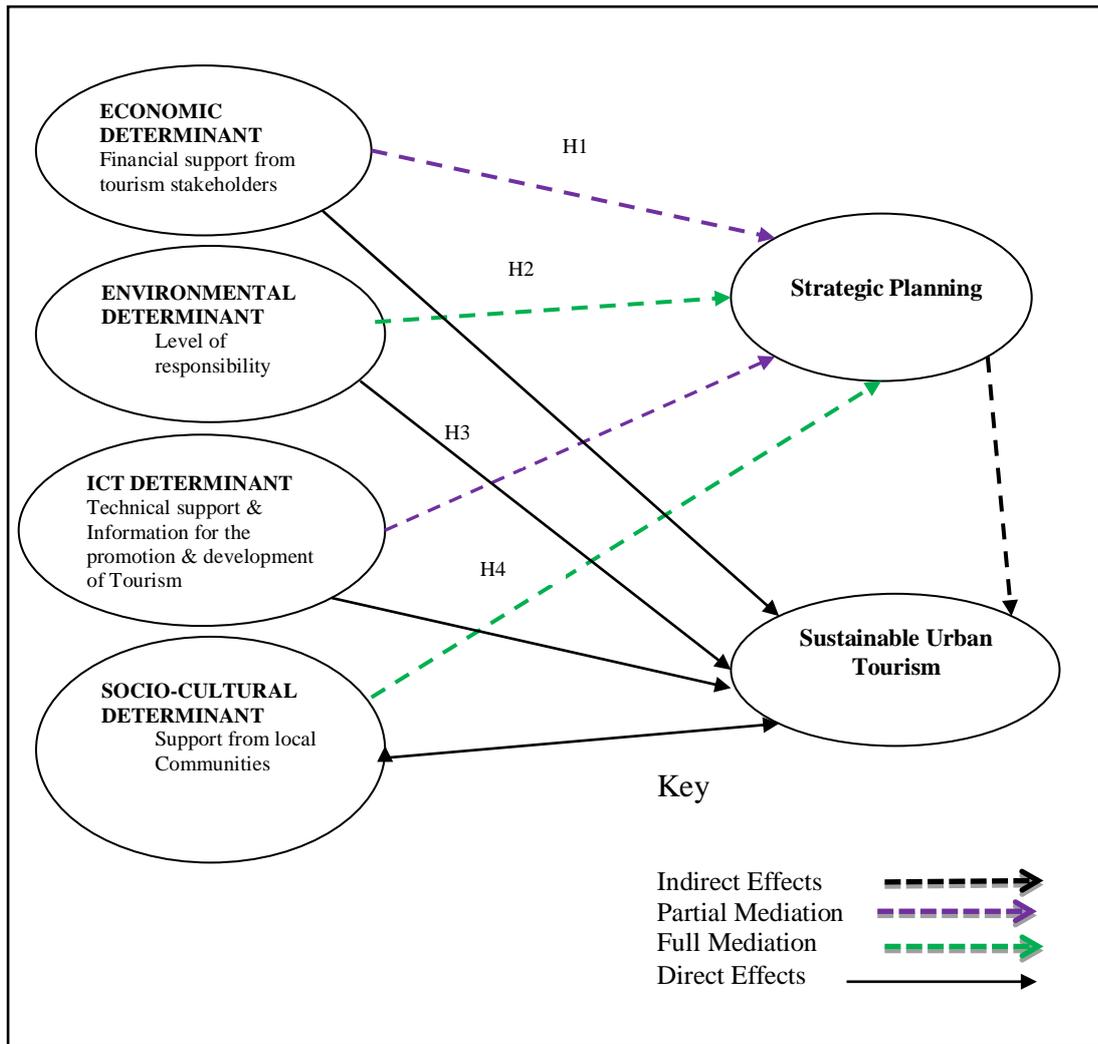
in Tanzania the literature on SUT is non-existent. Most of the literatures focused on nature and historical sites sustainable tourism. Secondly, a critical analysis of the empirical literatures on SUT indicate that studies have concentrated on developing different aspects of sustainability including, green tourism & sustainability, local community involvement in sustainable urban tourism, indicators for SUT, while leaving out important issue of strategic planning as a mediating factor in achieving sustainable urban tourism. This gap has also been reported by previous studies on sustainable urban tourism (Maxim, 2016; Farouk, 2013; Sariya, 2016).

Furthermore, in the studies that have quantitatively examined sustainable urban tourism there has been no exploration of complex models such as a mediation model to observe the mediating role of strategic planning on destination determinants and sustainable urban tourism. This study therefore aim at filling the above gap by examining the mediating role of strategic planning in determining the destination determinants of sustainable urban tourism. The study employs structural equation modelling in determining the variables and tests their acceptability empirically.

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of this study is presented in Figure 1. It depicts that strategic planning mediates the relationship between four destination determinants and sustainable urban tourism (SUT). Since each of these factors is a latent variable, varying number of measured indicators were used to measure and record responses. The latent variables from economic determinant (i.e *financial support from tourism stakeholders (FS)*) is adopted and adapted from Aydin & Emeksiz (2018); The latent variables from environmental determinant (i.e Level of responsibility) is adopted and adapted from Vieira et al., (2016); while the latent variables from the ICT determinant (technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism (TS) is adopted and adapted from Aydin & Emeksiz (2018) while the Socio-cultural determinant (i.e support from local Communities (*SL*)) is adopted and adapted from Rahman & Jahan (2016).

In this context, the literature's conceptual and empirical perspective lead to the following hypotheses: H1: Strategic planning mediates the relationship between financial support from stakeholders and sustainable urban tourism, H2: Strategic planning mediates the relationship between level of responsibility and sustainable urban tourism, H3: Strategic planning mediates the relationship between technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism and sustainable urban tourism, and H4: Strategic planning mediates the relationship between support from local Communities and Sustainable urban tourism



**Figure 1. 1SUT Conceptual Framework**

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Sampling design

This study was conducted in two Tanzanian urban tourist destinations (Arusha and Dar es Salaam). These destinations were selected because of their abundance tourist attractions and activities, availability of different tourism amenities, various accommodation facilities and easy accessibilities. The target population of this study was all decision makers of tourism organization in urban destinations in Tanzania. Such individuals were either the top management in the tourism organization or owners-managers of these organizations which is composed of both private and public.

The use of structural equation modelling (SEM) technique requires a large sample size. In this study, the research instrument consisted of forty one (41) indicator variables. The sample size of this study was considered in relation to the numbers of observed indicator variables and a widely accepted rule of thumb that is 10/15 cases per indicator variable (Kline, 2011; Byrne, 2010). Hence the sample size of 12 x 41 which equal 492 would suffice. Respondents were sampled through a combination of quota and snowballing sampling based on an

estimated quota per urban destination. Self-administered structured questionnaire was used to collect data through the drop and collect technique.

### **3.2 Variables and Measurement Scales**

The items used in scale measurements of variables were the adopted from the literature. Sustainable urban tourism, strategic planning, financial support from stakeholders, support from local Communities, technical support as well as information for the promotion and development of tourism were adopted from Aydin & Emeksiz (2018) whereas measurement of the level of responsibility was adopted from Muhammad (2011). Responses for these variables were measured on a 5-point Likert-like scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

### **3.3 Data Analysis Techniques**

Data were analysed through four steps. Firstly, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed in order to determine the destination determinants of sustainable urban tourism which are the components of theoretical model of the study. Secondly, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed in order to determine the validity and unidimensionality of destination determinants for sustainable urban tourism. Thirdly, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used in order to determine the relationship between sustainable urban tourism destination determinants. Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin test was employed for the determination of sample conformity of the factor analysis. In the fourth step the mediation effect of strategic planning on the relationship between destination determinants and SUT was tested.

## **4. Findings**

### **4.1 Model Path Coefficient and Hypothesis Testing**

This section aims at describing the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) techniques which were used to test the study hypotheses and report the results of the hypotheses tests. Test of the hypotheses were conducted using various coefficients and scores obtained from the analysis. The current study tested the hypotheses based on the direction, the strength of the standardized paths coefficient ( $\gamma$ ), the critical ratio (C.R), and significance level (p-value). Before testing the mediation effects of strategic planning on the relationship between the destination determinants and sustainable urban tourism, the model tested results for direct effects without mediator. The result of the structural model without a mediator construct indicates that the chi-square ratio (ratio of  $\chi^2$  statistic to the degree of freedom (df) = 1.705 was below the threshold of three (3.0). The GFI = 0.943; NFI = 0.945; CFI = 0.977 and RMSEA= 0.038. This indicates a good model fit. Therefore, from these indices the model confirms the suitability of the structural model to explain the mediation effect of SP on the determinants of sustainable urban tourism (i.e. FS, LR, TS, and SL) and SUT.

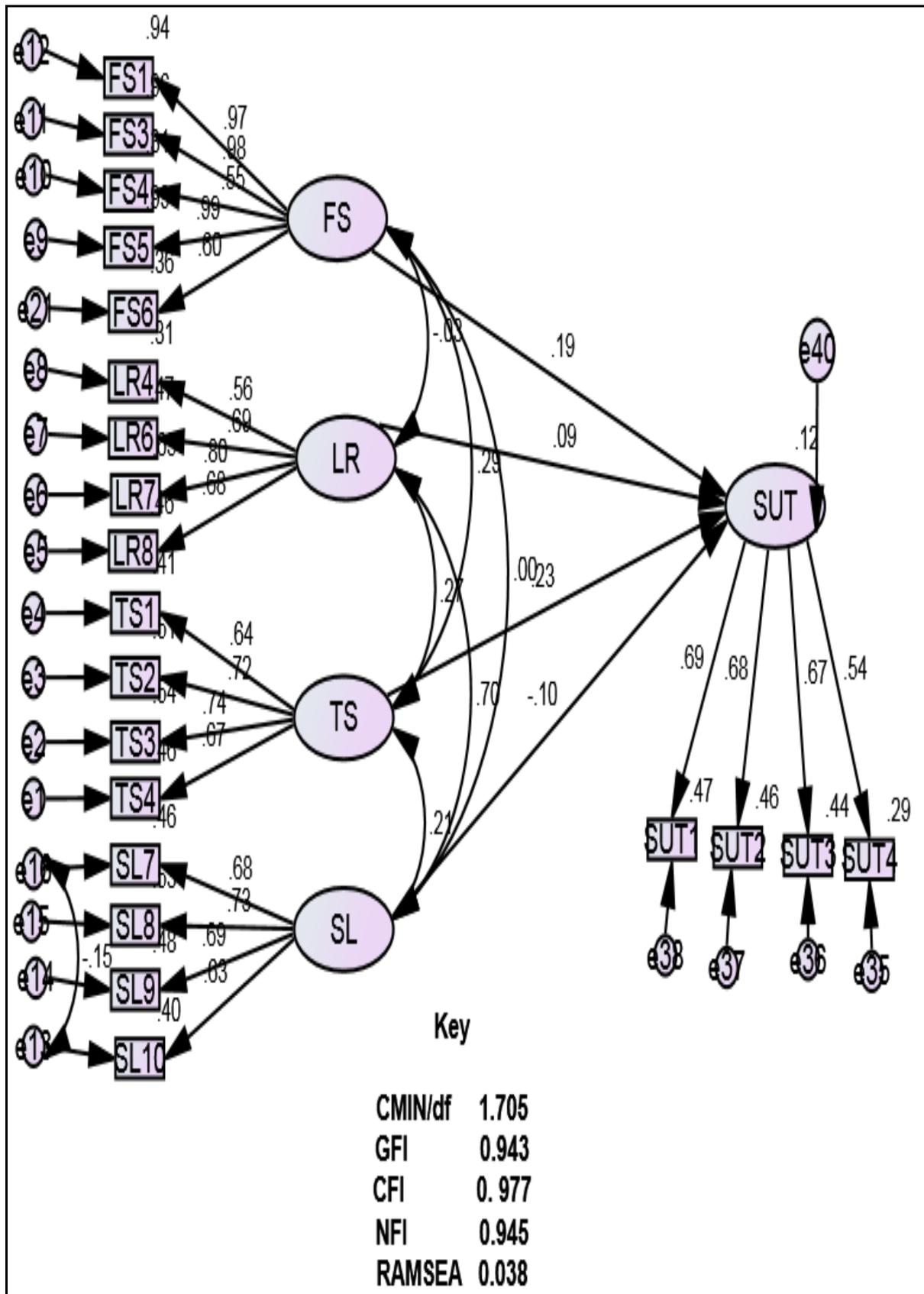


Figure 2. SEM Direct Effect Without mediator

**Table 1. Standardized and unstandardized estimates for direct Effects without Mediator**

Path			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
SUT	<---	FS	.104	.032	3.291	.001	.187
SUT	<---	LR	.062	.064	.966	.334	.094
SUT	<---	TS	.184	.055	3.312	***	.226
SUT	<---	SL	-.076	.075	-1.013	.311	-.096
TS4	<---	TS	1.000				.675
TS3	<---	TS	1.160	.093	12.515	***	.738
TS2	<---	TS	1.102	.089	12.318	***	.717
TS1	<---	TS	.980	.086	11.390	***	.642
LR8	<---	LR	1.000				.681
LR7	<---	LR	1.191	.086	13.866	***	.805
LR6	<---	LR	.999	.080	12.539	***	.686
LR4	<---	LR	.800	.076	10.562	***	.561
FS5	<---	FS	1.000				.993
FS4	<---	FS	.550	.038	14.386	***	.553
FS3	<---	FS	1.021	.011	91.552	***	.981
FS1	<---	FS	1.005	.013	78.700	***	.972
SL10	<---	SL	1.000				.630
SL9	<---	SL	1.214	.109	11.143	***	.694
SL8	<---	SL	1.219	.107	11.399	***	.726
SL7	<---	SL	1.208	.114	10.586	***	.677
FS6	<---	FS	.572	.035	16.188	***	.599
SUT4	<---	SUT	1.000				.539
SUT3	<---	SUT	1.220	.132	9.223	***	.667
SUT2	<---	SUT	1.115	.120	9.279	***	.677
SUT1	<---	SUT	1.348	.145	9.325	***	.686

#### **4.2 The Mediation Test Results (Direct and Indirect) Effect with a Mediator**

SEM used to test for both direct and indirect effect with strategic planning as a mediator. The process was followed by confirming the model fit and to ensure the legitimacy of the fit in which the following indices were generated; CMIN/df = 1.647; GFI = 0.928; NFI = 0.922; CFI = 0.968 and RMSEA= 0.037. On the other hand, Hoe (2008) suggested that a RMSEA value of 0 indicate perfect fit, < 0.05 = indicate close fit, 0.05 to 0.08 indicate fair fit and 0.08 to 0.1 a mediocre fit > 0.1, = poor fit. Comparing to the current study findings the RMSEA values of 0.037 that was produced in the analysis indicate that the model fairly fits the data.

This confirms that the structural model is appropriate for explaining the mediation effect of strategic planning on the destination determinants and SUT as portrayed in figure 2. After confirming the direct and indirect model fits, the next stage was the test for significant estimate of the p-values < .05 to check if there were significant direct and indirect effects with the mediator variable present. The significant estimates were compiled and tabulated in Table 2.

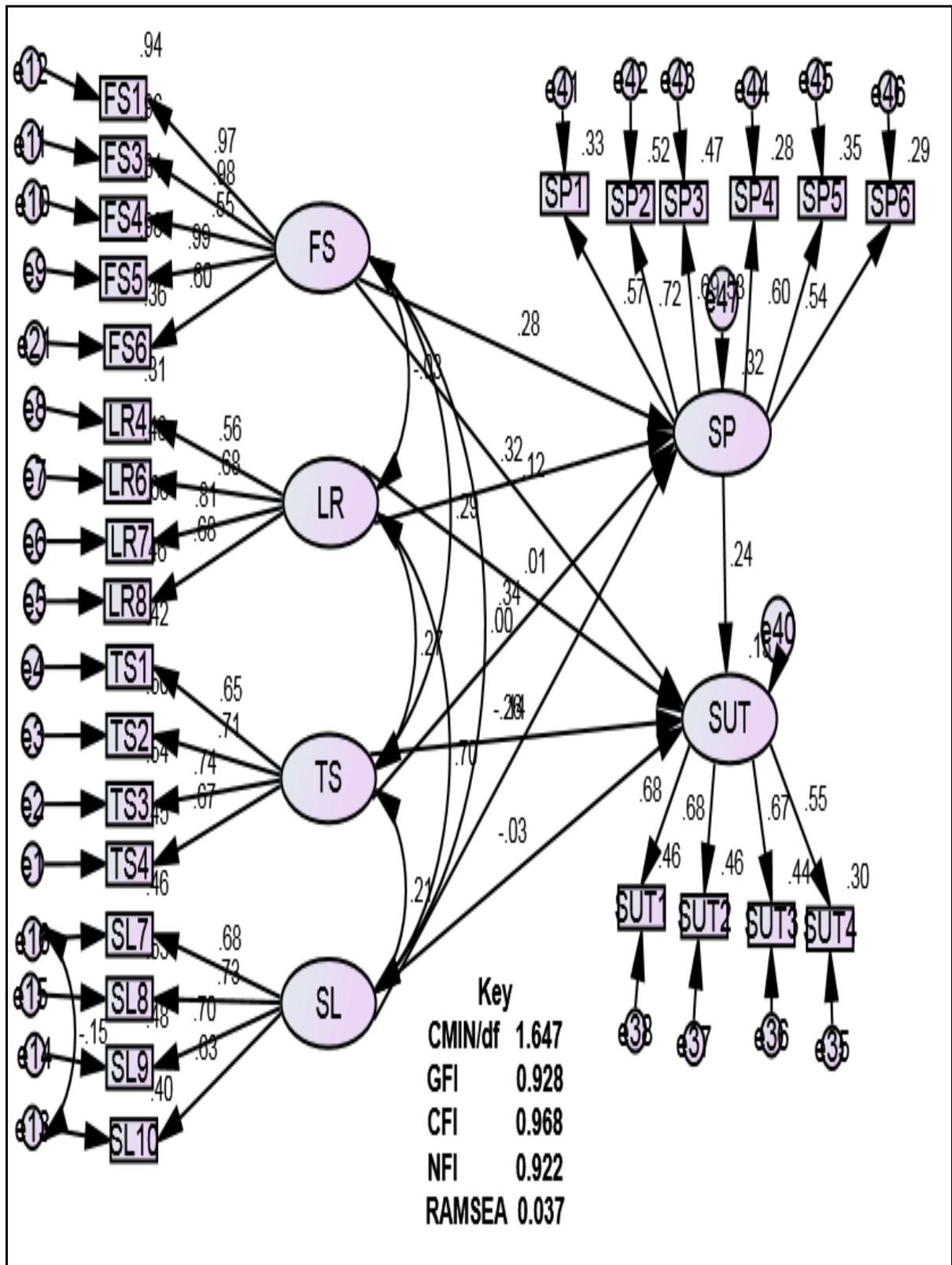


Figure: 2: The SEM Full Structural Model for the Overall Sample

**Table 2. Standardized and unstandardized estimates for the full structural model**

	Path		Unstandardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Standardized Estimate
SP	<---	FS	.169	.032	5.233	***	.280
SP	<---	LR	.235	.067	3.521	***	.325
SP	<---	TS	.300	.058	5.164	***	.339
SP	<---	SL	-.225	.077	-2.934	.003	-.263
SUT	<---	FS	.070	.033	2.107	.035	.123
SUT	<---	LR	.010	.068	.149	.882	.015
SUT	<---	TS	.120	.059	2.028	.043	.145
SUT	<---	SL	-.026	.078	-.328	.743	-.032
SUT	<---	SP	.221	.074	2.991	.003	.235
TS4	<---	TS	1.000				.674
TS3	<---	TS	1.162	.092	12.613	***	.738
TS2	<---	TS	1.093	.089	12.327	***	.710
TS1	<---	TS	.992	.086	11.554	***	.649
LR8	<---	LR	1.000				.680
LR7	<---	LR	1.203	.086	14.004	***	.811
LR6	<---	LR	.995	.079	12.527	***	.682
LR4	<---	LR	.797	.076	10.536	***	.557
FS5	<---	FS	1.000				.992
FS4	<---	FS	.550	.038	14.385	***	.553
FS3	<---	FS	1.021	.011	91.545	***	.981
FS1	<---	FS	1.005	.013	78.659	***	.972
SL10	<---	SL	1.000				.630
SL9	<---	SL	1.217	.109	11.189	***	.696
SL8	<---	SL	1.218	.107	11.430	***	.726
SL7	<---	SL	1.206	.114	10.593	***	.676
FS6	<---	FS	.572	.035	16.183	***	.599
SUT4	<---	SUT	1.000				.549
SUT3	<---	SUT	1.195	.127	9.380	***	.666
SUT2	<---	SUT	1.093	.116	9.442	***	.676
SUT1	<---	SUT	1.311	.139	9.462	***	.680
SP1	<---	SP	1.000				.573
SP2	<---	SP	1.282	.118	10.869	***	.719
SP3	<---	SP	1.303	.123	10.624	***	.689
SP4	<---	SP	1.023	.115	8.933	***	.529
SP5	<---	SP	1.130	.116	9.704	***	.596
SP6	<---	SP	1.037	.115	9.041	***	.538

### **4.3 The Mediation Effect of strategic Planning (SP) on the Relationship between Financial Support from Tourism Stakeholders (FS) and SUT**

The relationship between financial support from tourism stakeholders (FS) and SUT was subject to a mediation effect whereby strategic planning mediated the relationship between financial support from the tourism stakeholders and SUT. In order to establish the type of mediation between these variable it was hypothesized that; H1 *strategic planning positively mediates the relationship between financial support from the tourism stakeholders and SUT*. The result of the direct effect before mediation whereby FS has a direct influence on SUT were ( $\gamma = 0.187$ ; C.R = 3.291;  $p = 0.001$ ). However, when the mediation SP was entered the strength of the direct effect increased and the p- value remained significant ( $\gamma = 0.280$ , C.R =

5.233  $p = 0.000$ ) (Table 1). Therefore, partial mediation occurs since the path increased and the  $p$ -value remained significant after the mediation.

The Mediation Effect of Strategic Planning (SP) on the Relationship between level of Responsibility (LR) and Sustainable Urban Tourism (SUT). The relationship was then subjected to mediation effect using SP as a mediation variable between LR and SUT. In order to establish the type of mediation between these variable it was hypothesized as *H2: strategic planning positively mediates the relationship between Level of Responsibility and SUT*. The result of the direct effect before mediation whereby LR has a direct influence on SUT were ( $\gamma = 0.096$ , C.R 3.291,  $p = 0.335$ ). However, when the mediation SP was entered the strength of the direct effect increased and the  $p$  value became very significant ( $\gamma = 0.325$ , C.R 3.521,  $p = 0.000$ ) (refer **Table 2**) therefore, full mediation occurs since the path before mediation was insignificant and very weak. However, after the mediation SP entered in the model the path became very significant and the strength increased. The findings suggest that with strategic planning of the environment sustainable urban destination is inevitable.

#### **4.4 Relationship between Technical Support and Information for the Promotion and Development of Tourism (TS) and SUT**

The study considered whether there is a relationship between ICT Factors through technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism (TS) and SUT as stated in hypothesis *H3: there is a positive relationship between technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism and SUT*. The hypothesis was strongly supported by the empirical results with a positive and significant relationship between technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism (TS) and sustainable urban tourism ( $\gamma = 0.339$ ; C.R = 5.164;  $p = 0.000$ ). The strength increased from 0.226 to 0.339 with the mediation factor while the  $p$ -value remained significant, thus indicate partial mediation occurs. These findings articulate that when urban tourism decision makers level of ICT usage increases they will apply innovative approaches and hence sustainable urban tourism becomes unavoidable.

#### **4.5 The Mediation Effect of Strategic Planning (SP) on the Relationship between Support from Local Communities and Sustainable Urban Tourism (SUT)**

The relationship between socio-cultural determinants through support from local communities was then subjected to mediation effect using SP as a mediation variable between support from local communities and SUT. When the mediation SP was entered the strength of the direct effect increased from ( $\gamma = -0.096$  to  $-0.263$  and the  $p$ -value change from insignificant to significant ( $p = 0.311$  to  $p = 0.003$ ) (**Table 1 & 2**). Thus full mediation occurs since the  $p$ -value after mediation changed to significant. The findings suggest that with strategic planning in urban destination, local communities will highly be involved in all matters related to tourism development. Thus, supporting SUT initiatives remains to be viable. Decision makers in Tanzania urban destinations need to focus on developing proper urban tourism policies that will involve local communities in all the decision making agenda with regard to tourism development to ensure SUT.

**Table 3. Results of the mediation test**

Hypothesis Statement for Path Analysis	Estimates	P-Value	Results on Hypothesis
<b>H3a:</b> Strategic planning to mediate the relationship between FS and SUT	0.280	0.000	Partial mediation
<b>H3b:</b> Strategic planning mediates the relationship between LR and SUT.	0.325	0.000	Full Mediation
<b>H3c:</b> Strategic planning mediates the relationship between TS and SUT.	0.339;	0.000	Partial mediation
<b>H3d:</b> Strategic planning mediates the relationship between SL and SUT	-0.263;	0.003	Full Mediation

## 5. Discussion

The strength of the direct effect of financial support from the tourism stakeholders (FS) has a significant and positive relationship with SUT. This is consistent with Kisi (2019) who found that, strategic planning of an urban destinations in Turkey will allow destination managers (DMO's) to evaluate SWOT analysis of their destinations and initiate tourism stakeholders to take part into different tourism related economic activities such as organizing different events, promotion and branding of destination as well as diversifying of tourism related products so as to attracts new niche market. Thus this initiative from DMO's will allow tourism stakeholder to practice sustainability in their day to day activities in urban destinations.

The presence of Mediation Effect of Strategic Planning (SP) on the Relationship between level of Responsibility (LR) and Sustainable Urban Tourism (SUT) implies that strategic planning fully mediates the relationship between level of responsibility and sustainable urban tourism. This finding is consistence with Zamfir & Corbos (2015) who found that, strategic planning that prioritize on Level of responsibility (LR) through formulation of long term tourism planning for protection, preservation and conservation measurements are key environmental sustainability factors to sustainable urban tourism.

However, there are some contradicting findings; for example from Grevjo & Noorzaei (2014) who found out that lack of strategic planning including laws and regulations on tourism related environmental issues results into environment problems such lack of waste management facilities, water pollution as well as poor stakeholders participation and involvement in urban planning. Therefore attaining SUT is yet a nightmare in such destinations. Therefore, as also stated by Andari & Setiyorini (2016) there is need for strategic planning that focuses on environmental friendly tourism activities in urban destinations in order to maintain sustainability of the urban destinations.

The partial mediating role of strategic planning on the relationship between technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism and Sustainable urban tourism is consistent and supported by several other previous studies (Farkhondehzadeh *et al.* 2013; Ali, 2009; Karimidizboni, 2013 Shafiee *et al.* 2013). The current study slightly differs from the other researches like Elena & Andrea (2013) which found insignificant relationship between technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism (TS) towards SUT. Asongu *et al.* (2018) found that, ICT contributes towards increasing of carbon dioxide per capital from liquid fuel consumption and are used as proxies for

environmental degradation in Sub Sahara Africa. This study confirms that technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism significantly contributes towards sustainable urban tourism in Tanzania through effective communication, effective information sharing and ensures proper destination management.

The full Mediation Effect of Strategic Planning (SP) on the Relationship between Support from Local Communities and Sustainable Urban Tourism (SUT) is consistent with Kisi (2019) who found that, strategic planning of urban destination through establishment of public private partnership strengthen the commitment of all tourism stakeholders and increase their roles and capability to participate in SUT initiatives. The findings are also supported by Ghabouli (2015) who found out that tourism development in Damavand cultural heritage in Iraq is supported by local communities through ‘a based plan’ which focus on antiquities and natural resources and supports sustainable urban tourism.

Likewise, in Tanzania Muganda *et al.* (2017) found out that local communities want to be involved in sustainable urban tourism if strategic planning through the tourism policy meets stakeholders needs and addresses their concerns. It can therefore be concluded that strategic planning fully mediates the relationship between support from local communities and SUT. Thus urban tourism decision makers need to take into consideration that strategic planning of a destination contain three factors namely, economic, socio-cultural and environment levels. Thus, economic factor is one of the most important factors which influence implementation of SUT initiatives as it considers local communities to be fully engaged in tourism related development. It also saves as a catalyst for meeting socio-cultural and environmental determinants

## **6. Concluding Remarks**

The general objective of this study was to examine the mediation role of strategic planning on the determinants of sustainable urban tourism and SUT. Of the four proposed research hypotheses, two were significant whereas the other two were insignificant because the p values were greater than 5% level of significance without the mediation. The significant hypotheses include financial support from stakeholders (economic determinants) and technical supports for the promotion and marketing of tourism development (stands for ICT) significantly affects sustainable urban tourism. The insignificant hypotheses include Level of responsibility significantly influences sustainable urban tourism and support from the local communities significantly influences. Furthermore, the findings confirm that there is a positive relationship between level of support from local communities and sustainable urban tourism. This findings also confirms the social exchange theory which stipulates that stakeholders will support sustainability initiatives in a so far as they perceive benefits from such initiatives. Some previous studies (Harun *et al.*, 2018) reported that there is a negative relationship, contrary to social exchange theory. With the mediating of strategic planning, all the four hypotheses become significant at p at the 5% level of significance

The social exchange theory fits perfectly in explaining the relationship between the construct. The study findings will help urban decision makers in the application of strategies and the use of SUT determinants in developing sustainable urban tourism. According to the findings of this this study, the application and use of the key factors responsible for sustainable urban tourism by decision makers will focus on stakeholders’ involvement through public-private partnership (PPT). Decision makers from the public sector will therefore focus on developing policies and guidelines on SUT while the private sector will

adhere to the rules and regulations formulated by the public sectors in achieving SUT as well as supporting the SUT initiatives. It can be concluded that, tourism industry is a people centred industry that requires participation and involvement of all stakeholders in order to attain sustainable urban tourism and good policies and strategies are prerequisite for the development and attainment of sustainable urban tourism. The findings of this study will help policy makers in developing policies that match the sustainable urban tourism development initiatives.

This study indicates that in achieving sustainable urban tourism, the willingness of the stakeholders to participate in SUT being a paramount. However, the tourism policy needs to create awareness on the sustainability issues to all stakeholders through in the entire sustainable tourism factors (i.e financial support from tourism stakeholders (FS), level of responsibility (LR), technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism (TS), support from local Communities (SL) and Sustainable urban tourism (SUT).

Furthermore, in order for sustainable urban tourism initiatives to materialize, there is a need for long term investment in technology and innovation to promote competitive urban tourist destinations. The investment in technology is needed hand in hand with strategic long-term plan for sustainable urban tourism in terms of the definition of the carrying capacity for the cities and for specific areas and attractions.

On the other hand, this study reinforces the theoretical foundation relationship between the ICT and sustainable urban tourism. Many studies on sustainable urban tourism have been carried based on the three pillars of sustainability including the economic, environmental and Socio-cultural determinants. This study has confirmed ICT through technical support and information for the promotion and development of tourism (TS) has a significant and positive relationship with SUT.

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