

HOPES AND REALITIES: LOCAL PERSPECTIVES ON PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM

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Abstract: Tourism development has been promoted as an alternative major source of income for countries and local communities. This perspective has further underscored local communities as critical stakeholders in tourism development. As such, community-based tourism gained momentum as a viable community participation approach for sustainable tourism development. However, even though community participation is said to be critical in sustainable tourism development, relatively little is known about how locals perceive community-based tourism as an alternative for sustainable livelihood, let alone the kind of local participation expected. The purpose of this article is to determine how the Mmadinare community in Botswana perceives community-based tourism and their own participation. The radical empowerment theory provides a theoretical framework. A qualitative multiple-case study approach using semi-structured interviews and focus groups was applied to gather data. The findings suggest that, in reality, community participation in tourism initiatives remains a challenge attributed to the lack of funding, a lack of capacity building, the limited involvement in decision-making platforms, the low awareness level of tourism development, and an unsuitable policy framework.

Keywords: *participation, tourism, community, empowerment, sustainability, Community-Based Natural Resource Management policy*

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Introduction

Tourism is perceived as a viable tool in improving community livelihoods as it generates income and employment opportunities for local communities in tourism destinations. Over the years, the tourism sector has gained popularity and has become one of the major possible sources of income for countries and local communities. As Idris and Purnomo (2021) have explained, local communities are critical stakeholders of tourism development. They contribute to environmental conservation and tourists' experience. As such, a community participation approach is advocated as one of the determinants of sustainable tourism development (ibid.). Based on this, community-based tourism is presented as one of the viable projects for community empowerment as it is hoped that when local communities are actively included in the tourism industry, they will greatly benefit and create livelihoods for the respective communities while on the one hand committed to environmental conservation. Community-based tourism is critical for sustainable community development as it aligns with the 2030 development agenda. According to Dodds et al. (2018), community-based tourism is founded on the concept of sustainable development as it strives for social equity while ensuring preservation of the environment that is used for the community's financial gains. However, even though the success of community-based tourism and of sustainable tourism rests on the active involvement of the local communities, the reality is that local communities' participation remains extremely limited due to various factors such as local capacity and lack of financial resources (Saayman and Giampiccoli 2016). Even though multiple studies have been carried out about community-based tourism and participation, most of them have looked at community participation in the context of planning and decision-making and not at the community's participation as tourism business owners (see Woyo and Musavengane 2023; Selmanaj and Murati 2018). As explained by Manwa et al. (2017), although community-based tourism emphasises community participation, the right to participate does not equal the capacity to do so. This suggests that people might have the right of participation, but their capacity to do so might be constrained by different factors. The purpose of the present article is to determine how the Mmadinare community in Botswana perceives community-based tourism and their participation.

Community Participation in Development

The importance of community participation in tourism was first developed formally in the Manila Declaration of the World Tourism Organization (Reindrawati 2023). The Manila Declaration emphasises that tourist satisfaction

must not be detrimental to local communities' social and economic interests and that tourism activities should improve people's working capacity (UNWTO 2022). Owing to this, community participation has gained traction as a critical ingredient for sustainable tourism development. The community's active involvement in tourism development has been marked as a necessity for the sector's success and the improvement of community livelihoods. According to Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017), in the context of community development participation forms the basis for the empowerment of communities. As explained by Mosse (2001) participation should embrace the total inclusion of community members in the decision-making process in order to bring about a maximisation of development benefits.

From a rights-based perspective, community participation gives the community a rightful and legitimate position at the decision-making structures of development interventions. Objectively, participatory development seeks to move away from externally led development interventions in order to enable beneficiaries of development to take a lead and shape their own development prospects. As such, participatory development positions community involvement as an integral factor to the empowerment of local communities as it has the potential to enhance sustainable development. It is believed that, by participating, local communities are empowered to contribute actively to the development interventions that concern them and hence develop a sense of ownership. As noted by Molosi-France and Dipholo (2019), community participation actively gives beneficiary groups an opportunity to influence the direction and execution of a development project by partaking in the decision-making and implementation processes. Furthermore, Adebayo and Butcher (2022) observed that participation can take the form of allowing locals to benefit from tourism economically, socially, building awareness, educating residents, and allowing the masses access to entrepreneurial tourism opportunities.

However, since participation is a contested term, it is not always used to espouse inclusion in decision making, it may be used to mask the exclusion of the very people to be included in development interventions. As conceptualised by Arnstein (1969), when presenting the ladder of participation, participation should be seen in terms of a continuum with mere information provision on one end and empowerment on the other end. Furthermore, Arnstein argued that even though participation is praised as important for development interventions and community empowerment, participation can be nothing but tokenistic. According to Green (2000), participation is anything that reflects involvement of the local community which makes it far less straightforward. For

Molosi and Dipholo (2016, 2020), participation simply refers to the engagement and involvement of people at the grassroots level in decision-making processes. However, the weakness of participatory approaches is that even though involvement of the people is key, participatory approaches rarely ask why those people were not involved in the first place. Asking such an important question in the context of community-based tourism may show that communities are not only left out of the decision-making, and need to be integrated, but are also disadvantaged by relations of production and power (Mosse 2007). This suggests that the ability of communities to maximally benefit from the community-based tourism approach goes beyond access to decision-making platforms, but finances as well. As Woyo and Musavengane (2023) argue, most community-based tourism projects are constrained by a lack of financial capital.

Furthermore, according to Makumbe (1996: 12) no development programme, however grand, can succeed unless the local people are willing to accept it and make an effort to participate in it. The participation rhetoric assumes that communities are in one accord and ready to participate. This assumption is problematic. Idris and Purnomo (2021) are even of the view that “communitarianism” is a fallacy not rooted in reality. To this end, it is important to question the community’s ability to meaningfully engage and demand genuine participation because their members may have a different understanding of participation or even a different understanding of what participation can change for them. According to Sebele (2010), community participation in tourism ensures that there is sustainability and better opportunities for local people to benefit from tourism in their locality, positive local attitudes, and the conservation of local resources.

Ben-Meir (2009) argued that for genuine participation to occur and for the community to meaningfully engage in an intelligent manner, the community should believe in itself and its sense of self-worth. To this end, community participation in community-based tourism opportunities will be dependent on how they understand participation and what benefits can be drawn from such. However, this is rarely asked; instead, it is assumed that communities will jump to the opportunity when they are invited. Molosi (2015) argued that agency of the rural communities is not enabled by only providing them with spaces of decision-making, as proclaimed by participatory development theory; their capability also relies on how they see themselves in the social structure. This suggests that if people see themselves as unable to change the development context, inviting them to participatory spaces will not empower them for decision-making because of their perception of themselves – acquired self-helplessness/internalised oppression. According to Freire

(1972), acquired self-helplessness/ internalised oppression will make people lose hope and believe that their effort will not change anything, or believe that their exclusion and lack of voice is normal, and they do not have to actively participate in decision-making platforms even where they are invited. This suggests that inviting communities to actively take part in community-based tourism opportunities may not be a guarantee towards local communities actively benefiting from sustainable tourism. In fact, Saayman and Giampiccoli (2016) warned that community-based tourism should not be regarded as a perfect, pre-packaged solution to community problems as it can potentially disempower the very community it sought to empower if care is not taken.

Community-Based Tourism in Botswana

In Botswana, community-based tourism is officially legitimised by the Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) policy which upholds natural resources conservation and rural community development. CBNRM in Botswana has been in place since the early 1990s. CBNRM is promoted as a mechanism by which local communities gain control over resources in their own area through the decentralisation of natural resource management (Mbaiwa and Tshamekang 2012). According to Gaodirelwe et al. (2020: 2269), “the basic principles of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) are rural economic development, community empowerment and sustainable natural resource conservation.” At its inception, the CBNRM approach mainly focused on wildlife utilisation, but later CBNRM was extended to other natural resources including veld products, historical sites, scenic landscapes, and other natural resources (Centre for Applied Research 2016). As explained by the Centre for Applied Research (2016), CBNRM in Botswana is closely linked to the Community-Based Rural Development Strategy and the Revised Rural Development Policy, each of which encourage community-based sustainable development. Proponents of CBNRM in Botswana such as Mbaiwa and Tshamekang (2012) argue that Community-Based Tourism under the CBNRM policy has great potential to result in significant economic benefits for local communities. Demers (2011) is of the view that local communities will even benefit timely if they partner with private organisations to form joint ventures since private organisations are equipped with capital and skill base.

Many studies have further indicated that most Community-Based Tourism projects in Botswana face a diversity of challenges related to capacity and skills (Demers 2011), beneficiation issues (Sebele 2010) and the lack of business

acumen and power relations from multiple stakeholders (Stone and Stone 2020). Mbaiwa (2015) further explained that in the Okavango Delta, the lack of understanding of tourism business by local communities has resulted in the failure to come up with tourism projects that are appropriate and in line with their knowledge and skill base. Moreover, according to Stone and Stone (2020), the mismatch between the demands of Community-Based Tourism and community capacity has made it difficult for local communities to participate since they are required to engage in processes they do not have the skills to engage in, such as complex business contracts and business plans. Consequently, due to some challenges and opportunities, since its implementation in Botswana, CBNRM has shown mixed results where some projects were successful while other projects collapsed (Mbaiwa 2015).

Theoretical Framework: Freirean Radical Empowerment Theory

Empowerment is at the heart of community-based tourism since it is believed that local community participation in tourism may empower communities for livelihood creation and environmental conservation. The basic belief underpinning Freirean radical empowerment theory is that in every society a small number of people exert domination over the masses, resulting in “dominated consciousness” which creates unequal systems and community conditions that advantage some while creating compounding disadvantages for others. From the radical empowerment perspective, community-based tourism should be understood beyond the mere inclusion of the local community as building the capacity of people from the grassroots level to penetrate the political and economic forces at play. As stated by Mohan and Stoke (2000), the obsession with the “local” tends to downplay the economic and political forces. Perhaps this helps us to understand that for local communities to effectively participate and benefit from community-based tourism they should be economically and politically capacitated as well. From the Freirean empowerment perspective, community participation is a process that enhances the capacity of individuals to improve or change their own lives (Lenao 2015). Empowerment represents a higher level of community participation where residents have control. As such, community participation in community-based tourism should enable the Mmadinare community to re-create their livelihoods for economic empowerment and beyond.

According to Scheyvens (1999), empowerment in tourism development should be understood from four dimensions: political, economic, social, and psychological. If the community experiences the opposite in any of these dimensions, they are

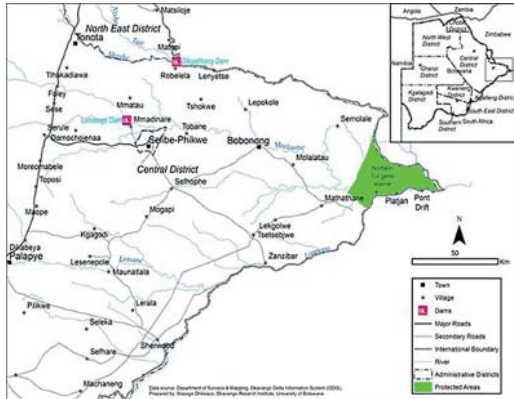
disempowered in tourism development and perhaps alienated from tourism developments occurring in their midst (ibid.). Furthermore, Scheyvens states that the political empowerment dimension is about community management of the process of tourism development which happens when the voices and concerns of the community guide tourism development. This is in line with the basic belief that human beings are subjects, able to think and reflect for themselves and recreate their world as explained in the Freirean empowerment theory. As Scheyvens (1999) further said, the empowerment within community-based tourism should enable the local community to believe in their abilities and have confidence in participating equitably in tourism development, which addresses the psychological dimension of empowerment. This is what Freire calls *conscientization*, the process of becoming critically aware of the structural forces of power that shape our lives, and leads to action for change (Ledwith 2020). According to Freire, *conscientization* prompts active participation and thus plays a very important role in cultivating a self-directed bottom-up process of social mobilisation for communities to effectively make use of opportunities brought about by community-based tourism. This suggests that participation without *conscientization* will not reverse the kind of tourism that treats locals as passive players in the tourism industry. Furthermore, as Woyo and Musavengane (2023: 529) argue, deliberate policy frameworks especially in terms of promoting local people to be owners of community-based tourism ventures should be drawn up to facilitate the intended purposes of community-based tourism.

Description of the Study Area: Mmadinare

Mmadinare is a village situated in the north-east of the central district of Botswana, 15 km from the mining town Selebi-Phikwe. Mmadinare has a population estimated over 17.000 people comprising of different ethnic groups such as Bangwato, Basarwa, Bapedi, Babirwa and Batalaote. Since Mmadinare is a small village, there are limited economic opportunities and people mostly work in Phikwe as there are more job opportunities there.

Mmadinare is situated between two national dams, Dikgatlong and Letsibogo and due to these dams, Mmadinare has an immense potential for tourism. Several tourism related business activities such as fishing, lodging and water-based leisure activities may thrive in the area and thus contribute towards the improvement of community livelihoods. The Mmadinare community has formed the Mmadinare Development Trust as a community-based organisation that leads community-driven tourism.

However, according to the Mmadinare Development Trust concept paper (2015; page number), “since the commissioning of Letsibogo Dam sometime in 2004, the community of Mmadinare has never benefitted anything in terms of economic spin-offs derived from a facility of its nature.” It is further reported that the Mmadinare community has as far as the dam tourism activities are concerned, been turned into mere spectators.



Map of Botswana showing Mmadinare

Methodology

Our study has been positioned within the constructivist school of thought as it will enable the researcher to explore and understand how the Mmadinare community perceive community-based tourism and their own participation. We believe that experiences and perceptions are subjective and socially constructed and, as such, have no reality independent of the social context. As such, the experiences of the Mmadinare community about Community-Based Tourism may be peculiar to them and their environment. Reflecting on the methodological assumptions tied to the ontological and epistemological positions of the present study, a qualitative research design was found to be suitable as it is likely to hold interpretivist views about the perceptions and experiences of individuals and their communities. The study has used semi-structured interviews and focus groups in order to gather data. A total of twenty-five adults from members of the community and government officials were purposively sampled as key informants.

Among the local members of the community were local authorities: Kgosi, the Mmadinare Development Trust (MDT) chairperson, the Village Development Committee (VDC) chairperson, and the Mmadinare Youth Association (MYA) chairperson. Government officials comprised of officers from the Selebi-Phikwe Economic Development Unit (SPEDU), the Water Utilities Corporation, the Botswana Tourism Organisation, the Department of Wildlife, and the Youth Development Office. Focus group discussions concentrated on further engaging with the VDC and MDT as special committees responsible for spearheading Mmadinare community developments to probe for new information and corroborate findings of research interviews.

Furthermore, official documents on tourism policy, local community participation, such as the 1990 Tourism policy; the 2016 Review of CBNRM in Botswana report; the 2015 Mmadinare Development Trust (MDT) concept paper; the 2017 Letsibogo Dam Tourism Master Plan; the SPEDU Annual Report from 2016/2017 and specialised literature were reviewed in order to analyse prospects of active participation in tourism development by local communities. These reports provided policy information on whether tourism policies have encouraged participation of the residents or not. Moreover, it helped validate information taken from interviews and the literature, hence gave quality to the study.

Findings and Discussion

According to the findings of this study, Mmadinare residents are well aware of the requirement for them to actively participate in community-based tourism even though their participation is reported to be low. They identified hindrances such as financial constraints, the lack of empowerment and unfavourable policy frameworks.

The Difference that Makes a Difference: Financial Dis-/Empowerment

The results show that Mmadinare residents were keen to engage in community-based tourism enterprising activities but were primarily constrained financially. Some of the participants in our study indicated that the community participated only in meetings but failed to take part in tourism-based projects such as fish farming, lodges, boat hiring and guided tours, while foreigners were actively involved in such activities. One participant went further to lament that:

We hardly see individually owned local tourism businesses despite the many campaigns and consultations we have carried out due to lack of funds.

Another participant shared the same sentiments and explained that

it is not like the Mmadinare people are not interested in initiating tourism projects that they may financially benefit from, the challenge is that the involvement of the community was not properly thought about, how can you ask a poor person to get involved in business when you know very well that they don't have funds?

This shows that in its conception, community-based tourism put emphasis on what the community will benefit and less attention to the fact that the community should also inject resources for them to reach the expected community-based tourism benefits. Perhaps this is why Havadi-Nagy and Espinosa-Segui (2020) perceive the community-based tourism concept as romantic and naïve in its approach. Moreover, there is a possibility that in its theoretical conception, community-based tourism did not seek to address why local communities have not been included in tourism in the first place because it is at this stage that funding effect will be determined. As reflected from Freire's perspective, it should be understood that the "local" does not in any way offset the unequal systems that has in the first place excluded the local community from benefitting from tourism development. The compounding advantages for the already privileged may continue to exist even in instances where the excluded are now said to be included.

This is a weakness that is common with participatory development approaches. According to Budiwiranto (2007), a failure to ask why people have been excluded in the first place has made participatory development theory overlook structural forces at play in (non-)participation. As Molosi (2015) has explained, participatory framework such as community-based tourism usually stresses empowerment and inclusion of the marginalised in ways that bind them more tightly to structures of power which they are unable to question.

As indicated by the residents of Mmadinare, tourism projects in their area are mainly owned by a few white foreigners because they can finance such projects while the average members of the community do not possess

such financial power. The local community's financial incapacity was also reported by Morupisi and Mokgalo (2017), who noted that as long as local communities are not financially empowered, they will not reap any benefits from tourism development. According to Mohan and Stoke (2000), this goes to show that focusing more on the "local" has made the community-based tourism concept underplay the national and transnational economic forces at play, and the issue of funding is not deeply considered to ensure that local communities maintain the benefits that are hoped to come with community-based tourism. As explained through the Freirian empowerment theory, community-based tourism should move beyond a mere inclusion of local communities in tourism to addressing all political and economic forces at play in creating and maintaining unequal systems of dominated consciousness. According to Lenao (2017), one of the forces at play is the policy frame work which gives room to exclusion in a subtle manner. Lenao (2017) has explained that the Tourism Policy of 1990 has promoted tourism which attracts rich investors from developed countries to derive economic benefits from the country, rather than tourism which encourages and benefits local participation. As such, the policy framework coupled with exceptional challenges peculiar to rural areas should be key in enhancing the benefits of community-based tourism on the local community. As explained by Havadi-Nagy and Espinosa-Segui (2020), rural areas face numerous challenges, among them a disadvantageous demographical location, which perpetuates the economic marginality and limits income possibilities and diversification. Considering these issues, the Mmadinare community may indeed not benefit from community-based tourism if they are not economically empowered considering its peripheral location.

The findings further suggest that residents felt that if funding was not a major hindrance to effective engagement in tourism-based activities the village committees would by now have boats for rental to tourists during recreational fishing games as they have the power to be licensed for such business opportunities by the Water Utilities Corporation (WUC). On the other hand, through the Department of Wildlife the Government has built a high standard fish hatchery in Mmadinare to promote tourism development. If there was funding available, individuals and the entire community could engage in tourism businesses through the products and services provided by this facility, such as fish farming and others. The Mmadinare Development Trust has taken necessary steps to advance tourism in Mmadinare. To this effect, through engagement with community members, other stakeholders including businesspeople, potential consultants and researchers, the Trust

has put forth strategic plans for tourism development. This mobilisation of relevant stakeholders for tourism development is an innovative project that requires funding to be carried out effectively. However, Stone and Stone (2020) caution that even though the involvement of relevant stakeholders is key in Community-Based Tourism, community power and control might be reduced because some partners may be having specific political agendas.

The Paradox of Capacity Building: Local (Dis-) Empowerment in Tourism

Despite a few Government initiatives which are meant to capacitate local communities to undertake and benefit from community-based tourism, some community members cry lack of capacity. Organisations such as the Selebi-Phikwe Economic Development Unit are reported to be working with local communities through facilitating training and sensitising communities about tourism development opportunities. The views pertaining to the lack of capacity questions the appropriateness of the already provided empowerment initiatives – is this a matter of quality or relevance? As the findings suggest, almost three quarters (n=18, 72%) of the study participants mentioned the lack of capacity as a factor that hindered local participation in community-based tourism projects in Mmadinare. Participants complained about a lack of knowledge and of skills on tourism enterprising, which resulted in the lack of capability by members of the community to actively engage in tourism initiatives and projects. They argued that there were no specific empowering initiatives and majors advanced for building the capacity of communities in tourism development, such as training on tourism financing management, tourism enterprise management, and community education on tourism development. These findings about a lack of skills and of knowledge are not only peculiar to the Mmadinare community. A similar view was advanced by Dolezal and Novelli (2022) who reiterated that some common issues in community participation in less developed countries include the lack of skills and knowledge. Furthermore, the study by Porter et al. (2018) on New Zealand also argued that communities often lack direct exposure to tourism activities, resulting in low levels of awareness of tourism and minimal participation in tourism development planning and implementation.

Moreover, the Mmadinare community mentioned some of the specific topics (tourism financing management, tourism enterprise management, and community education on tourism development) that they think may empower them to actively take part in the community-based tourism sector.

As Freire (1972) explained, human beings should be seen as subjects, able to think and reflect for themselves and in doing so transform their world. This is in juxtaposition to the common view that people are objects of development, and as such are excluded when interventions such as training are made, they are not asked what they want to be taught. In the end, various kinds of training may be provided but these will not very helpful to the intended beneficiaries. As argued in the participatory literature (Freire 1972; Schnoes et al. 2000) placing local realities and desires at the heart of development interventions and transforming agents of development from being directive “experts” to “facilitators” of local capabilities is very key in development contexts.

It is further interesting that some of the study participants argued that in terms of being empowered to participate in community-based tourism, they have been well empowered with the right skills and knowledge. However, it was observed that most community members are not keen to undertake community-based tourism projects because they are unable to perceive tourism activities without wildlife species. With regards to this view, the community members emphasised that educating the Mmadinare community about tourism development should be a priority over participating in tourism activities. In relation to this view, the findings suggest that instead of assuming that people will participate when they are told about the “good” benefits of community-based tourism, they should be sensitised so that there may be a change of attitude. As argued by Budiriwanto (2007), due to the significance of values and beliefs, and of cultural and ideological norms, empowerment begins with how people see issues. Unfortunately, this is often downplayed in the participatory development framework as it is usually assumed that people will always want to participate when given an opportunity to do so.

Local Participation in Community-Based Tourism as Analysed by the Mmadinare Development Trust

Documents were also analysed to understand community-based tourism participation in Mmadinare, such as the Letsibogo Dam Tourism Master Plan (2017), the Mmadinare Development Trust Conceptual Paper (2015) and the CBNRM Policy (2007).

The Mmadinare Development Trust (MDT) was formed in April 2001. The Trust is mandated to manage natural resources for the benefit of the people of Mmadinare and surrounding areas. The Mmadinare Development

Trust was formed after a realisation that there is need for an organisation or entity that will manage local natural resources and drive the Community-Based Natural Resource Management. The Mmadinare Development Trust Conceptual Paper (2015) revealed that the community of Mmadinare was not given priority in sharing benefits derived from natural resources in their area, as they have not greatly benefited economically from tourism-based projects and activities in and around the Letsibogo Dam. This is the same cry that the findings of this study established during interviews. The Mmadinare community argued that there was no intended policy framework that favours local community members against outsiders in tourism tendering processes. As explained in the Mmadinare Development Trust Conceptual Paper, the policies could specifically make provision of financial assistance to local communities in order to enable them to participate in tourism activities. The policy could also have projects reserved specifically for local community residents as tendering means that the local community will compete with outsiders who will have more financial power. This will work against the community-based tourism concept and the local community, as it will only favour the rich, foreigners, and outsiders as indicated in the findings. This is not peculiar to Mmadinare, as a study on residents' support for alternative and mass tourism by Nunkoo and Gursoy (2017) has argued that governments often make a local community compete with the elites on the allocation of land resources and of permits for tourism development. The MDT also indicated that even though the Community-Based Natural Resource Management framework promotes that communities living in or around natural resources should be allowed to derive economic benefits and incentives from such resources, the community of Mmadinare is still waiting to enjoy such.

Another document, the Letsibogo Dam Tourism Master Plan (2017), which intends to engage residents living around the dam, has failed to show how the community will be empowered and enabled to undertake tourism projects. Similarly, the CBNRM Review and Conference (2016) has revealed that although the Government of Botswana has endeavoured to promote local community participation through the CBNRM Policy (2007), it has not been effective in improving rural livelihoods nor in the conservation of rural natural resources. Instead, the Social Entrepreneurship Tourism Model was proposed to address the shortcomings of Community-Based Tourism (CBT); however, it was compromised by the lack of locally based tourism funding. Tourism awareness should be embedded in the basic education programme throughout lifelong learning initiatives in order to

provide on-going educational programmes and training that can change the community's perceptions about tourism and increase the participation of communities in tourism development.

The document analysis in this regard shows that there is indeed a need to radically empower communities to participate in tourism activities not only by means of public education and awareness raising, skills impartation of knowledge through workshops and training, but also through policies and other requisite resources that motivate and capacitate local people to be able to engage meaningfully in tourism activities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the Mmadinare case study, on the literature review analysis and on facts derived from the analysed documents, it is evident that local participation plays a vital role in tourism development. However, the present article highlights operational and structural barriers that often hinder the active participation of communities through full engagement in tourism projects ownership. In this case, the operational hindrance is the lack of capacity by locals to effectively engage in tourism development. There is a need to fully capacitate locals by putting in place community empowering mechanisms, such as strengthening local people's legal rights of land use and resources and educating community members about sustainable tourism development.

On the other hand, structural limitations include a lack of funding, unsuitable policy and governance in tourism development. Local tourism projects and businesses should be financially supported to attract residents' engagement in tourism development. The case study findings suggest that foreigners benefited more in the tourism development sector than the local community because they are financially and materially well resourced. Multiple funding programmes and initiatives, specifically intended to support local participation in tourism development, must be put in place.

Finally, having policies that deliberately promote the participation of local communities in tourism can contribute a great deal to sustainable tourism development. For example, Reservation and Preference Schemes on Procurement Policy should be adapted in tourism initiatives tendered for local community residents in order to promote local community participation. Locals must be a priority in the sharing of tourism opportunities and benefits if they are to actively engage in tourism

development and see it as a privilege for sustainable livelihood. Therefore, policy reviews and restructuring must be carried out regularly in order to accommodate current tourism developments, principles of sustainable tourism, and execution strategies to avoid gaps that often exist between policy and implementation.

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