

The Role of Local Communities in Tourism Development: Grassroots Perspectives from Tanzania

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ABSTRACT One of the core elements of tourism development is to encourage local communities' participation as it is central to the sustainability of tourism industry. While the literature suggests a number of roles local communities could take in tourism development, little emphasis has so far been given as to how local communities themselves feel about this. As a result, there has been little evidence, especially from the grassroots, on what communities really think of their role(s) in tourism development. Using a case study of Barabarani village in Tanzania, this paper contributes to the understanding of community participation in tourism development by examining local communities' views on their role in tourism development. The paper triangulates both quantitative and qualitative data to bring together perspectives from the grassroots based on household questionnaire survey with some members of the local community and a two-month period of field observations in the study area, coupled with the researcher's experience with the wider community. The findings revealed that local communities want to be involved when tourism policies are being made to enable policymakers to prepare a policy that meets stakeholders' needs and addresses their concerns. They also want to be part of tourism development decisions to ensure their needs are incorporated. Furthermore, local communities want to have a voice in development issues (not necessarily tourism development) to enable them to protect community interests, and increase transparency and accountability, and wipe out embezzlements and abuse of offices, which are rampant acts amongst decision-makers. Similar to previous studies, they rejected the statement 'local people should not participate by any means' in tourism development. It is clear from the findings that people are against the prevailing top-down approach in decision making when it comes to tourism development in their areas. It also depicts the nature of the central government which controls all the forms of decision making when it comes to development and policy formulation. The study emphasizes on small scale methods in analysing and assessing the role of local communities views of participation from the communities themselves rather than what has been normally imposed on them.

INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing body of literature that addresses tourism as a viable economic option for local community development. However, there is little evidence on the literature that depict the nature of interaction between local communities and tourism development (Aref et al. 2010) which is one of the core elements for developing a viable tourism industry in a destination. While the literature recognizes that the inclusion of the local community in tourism development is considerable, there have been some debates about their role. According to Godfrey and Clarke (2000) communities form a basic element in modern tourism as they are

...the focal point for the supply of accommodation, catering, information, transport facilities and services. Their local natural environment, buildings and institutions, their people, culture and history, all form core elements of what the tourists come to see; whether as towns, villages or cities, every community has

tourism at one level or the other and are affected by the growth and development of the industry (p. 3).

In most recent tourism development literature it appears that local communities form an integral part of the tourism development agenda (Aref et al. 2010; Bushell and McCool 2007; Jamal and Stronza 2009; Tosun 2006). Given the complex nature of most tourist destinations there are also numerous stakeholders with varying interests and views. This provides good environment for resource use conflicts within and around tourist destinations (Haukeland 2011; Jamal and Stronza 2009; Tosun 2006). The representation of interests of the local communities in the tourism development agenda is a complex issue that needs to be addressed carefully. There is unclear description of local communities' roles and how their views are incorporated in the whole planning and development process. While the literature suggests a number of roles local communities could take in tourism development, little emphasis has so far been given as to how

local communities themselves feel about these imposed roles. This creates a knowledge gap regarding what communities think of their role(s) in tourism development as opposed to the imposed roles. This is a crucial step in development of better and holistic plan for sustainable tourism destinations. This paper explores the preconceived ideas and views by local communities regarding their roles in tourism development in the context of local communities' domain. It examines these using a case study of Barabarani Village, Arusha, Tanzania. The paper starts by looking at the literature on tourism development and local communities with a view to explore how these are related. It then continues with a discussion of the rationale of the case study and the mixed methods research adapted in this paper. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the results on views of local communities in the study area of their role in tourism development. Then the paper ends with discussion and conclusion of major findings.

Local Communities and Tourism Development

To understand the current widespread use of the term 'communities' one needs to understand what makes a 'community' (Agrawal and Gibson 1999). Most conservation literature views the 'community' as a small spatial unit, homogenous social structure with shared norms and common interest (Agrawal and Gibson 1999; Olsder and Van der Donk 2006). Although current literature on tourism development has noted that community is central to sustainable tourism development, they seldom devote much attention to analyze the concept of community or how community affects the outcome. Scherl and Edwards (2007) describe local communities as

...groups of people with a common identity and who may be involved in an array of related aspects of livelihoods. They further note that local communities often have customary rights related to the area and its natural resources and a strong relationship with the area culturally, socially, economically and spiritually (p.71).

According to Aref et al. (2010) a community refers to a group of individuals living or working within the same geographic area with some shared cultures or common interests. This geographical definition of community is essential to understand how community development is

linked (Olsder and Van der Donk 2006) or the ability of a community to improve tourism development (p. 155). However, Western et al. (1994) argue that the definition of a 'community' varies with context. Given so many definitions of community from people in a certain geographical location (Aref et al. 2010), nature of their interactions and community characteristics (Agrawal and Gibson 1999; Olsder and Van der Donk 2006; Shrel and Edwards 2007), for the purpose of this paper the researchers adopted the definition of communities as a set of multiple actors with formal and informal rules and norms that shape their interaction in local level processes - a definition which comprise also institutions which have much influence on community development activities (Agrawal and Gibson 1999).

Tourism development can be linked and explained better using two concepts: sustainable tourism and sustainable development. The World Tourism Organisation defines sustainable tourism as "tourism which leads to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be filled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life supporting systems" (Shah et al. 2002: 1). Therefore, tourism development can be meaningless if it's socio-economic and environmental benefits do not trickle down to the local communities. Likewise, the sustainability of nature-based tourism development in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in a way lies in the hands of local communities. According to Bushel and McCool (2007), local communities have historically co-existed with the protected areas - the key tourism attractions. Figgis and Bushell (2007) further assert that "tourism development and conservation that denies the rights and concerns of local communities is self-defeating, if not illegal" (p.103). Therefore, the involvement of local communities in tourism development cannot be overlooked due to their crucial roles. Jamal and Stronza (2009) assert that involving the local communities in tourism development within and around protected areas is crucial in bridging the gap between governance and use of the resources in a tourist destination. Apart from the economic contribution that the local communities can accrue from tourism, their involvement in tourism development can as well be beneficial to tourism development because they can create an "effective environmental stewardship that

builds on indigenous, local and scientific knowledge, economic development, social empowerment, the protection of cultural heritage and the creation of interpretive and nature-based experiences for tourist learning and cross-cultural appreciation” (Jamal and Stronza 2009: 177).

Communities as Key Stakeholders in Tourism Development

There are different actors involved in tourism development, including private sector, government, donor agencies, civil societies and local people themselves. Local communities are regarded as important asset in tourism development as it is within their premises that these activities take place. Local communities are also regarded as legitimate and moral stakeholders in tourism development (Haukeland 2011; Jamal and Stronza 2009) because their interests affects and are affected by decisions of key policy makers (McCool 2009). Mayers (2005) divides stakeholders into two categories: the first are the stakeholders who affect decisions and the second category are those stakeholders who are affected by decisions. The degree of involvement of local communities in various decision making and policy issues is determined by the extent to which they affect or are affected by these decisions and policies. In the same token, Pongponrat (2011) noted that “local tourism development requires people who are affected by tourism to be involved in both the planning process and the implementation of policies and action plans. This ensures that development meet the perceived needs of the local community” (p. 60). If decisions concerning development of tourism in a region are not made in consultation with the local communities during the design stage, it will be impossible for the local communities to be involved during implementation (Niezgoda and Czernek 2008). Likewise there will be little support of local communities for tourism activities. Whichever circumstances, it is vital to identify and involve key stakeholders right from the design stage. Failure to do so can cause technical or political difficulties during implementation, and can significantly influence the success and outcome of the process. In fact, “enabling wide participation of various stakeholders in the decision making process, including local communities, makes possible to gain knowledge about other stakeholders, acquire

new skills and share ideas which, in turn, fosters understanding of regional problems and allows for generation of new and innovative solutions” (Niezgoda and Czernek 2008: 386).

Role of Local Communities in Tourism Development

Policy and Decision- making

According to Matarrita-Cascante et al. (2010), McIntyre et al. (1993), Muhanna (2007), and Niezgoda and Czernek (2008) to achieve sustainable tourism development local communities need to participate in decision- making process. Local communities can take part in identifying and promoting tourist resources and attractions that form the basis of community tourism development. To achieve long lasting outcome, communities need to be active participants rather than passive observers. Jamieson (2001) as cited in Pongponrat (2011) noted that more direct local involvement in decision-making, for example, may enable residents to request a specific portion of tax benefits from tourism to be allocated to community development and the protection of the tourism resource base. This is consistent with Sanoff (2000) who maintains that the main purpose of community participation is to involve people in the design and the decision making processes. It is further argued that community participation in decision making increases people’s trust and confidence with the tourism industry. It also provides the local community with a voice in design and decision-making in order to improve plans, service delivery, and finally, promotes a sense of community by bringing together people who share common goals (Pongponrat 2011).

Theoretically, the role of local communities in tourism development in the context of policy and decision- making depends on the type and level of participatory approach within a tourist destination. According to Mannigel (2008) there are different levels of participation ranging from simple sharing of information to a full transfer of power and responsibilities. The power of the local communities to influence decision making as well as policy making will therefore depend on the level of participatory approach being in operation in a particular destination. For example, in most developing countries, the decision and policy making process is typically top-down

and is dominated by the government, private sector and/or NGOs (Scherl and Edwards 2007). In such unbalanced scenario, the power of local communities to influence decision making and demand their legitimate stake is questionable. Arguably, their participation can hardly go beyond mere consultation and information exchange (Scherl and Edwards 2007). However, there are some positive examples of partnership between local communities and other key stakeholders. For example, in a study conducted in Costa Rica, Matarrita-Cascante et al. (2010) noted that participation was reflected in different levels ranging from local participation in community meetings (involvement) to ownership and management of local resources. Such varied participation provided local communities with the capacity to directly influence change in their region. Perhaps, this difference can be attributed to the heterogeneity of communities and the variations in the adoption of different participatory approaches.

It is, however, important to note that while there is a well-established tourism literature on community participation in tourism, much of this has focused more on the importance and lack of community participation in tourism planning and development rather than how this can be realized from communities themselves. Also, much of the studies on community participation in tourism development have predominantly focused at a macro level (Mbaiwa 2005; Timothy 1999). Only few studies (Aref and Redzuan 2009; Matarrita-Cascante et al. 2010; Tosun 2006) have taken a further step to examine community participation in tourism development at the grassroots level. In such studies, local communities indicated their preferred role in tourism development as being workers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry (see for example Tosun 2006). However, the literature has not explored how practically local communities should be involved, how they should participate, and to what extent. Little emphasis has so far been given as to how local communities feel about the various ways of community participation suggested by the literature. As a result, there has been short of hard evidence, especially from the grassroots on how communities would like to participate in tourism development. Using a case study of Barabarani village, Mto wa Mbu, Arusha – Tanzania, this paper aims to contribute to the understanding of these by examining

local communities' views on their role in tourism development.

The paper helps tourism managers and planners in the study area and other local destinations within the country and elsewhere with similar characteristics to clearly understand how local communities would like to participate in tourism development. In turn, this sheds light on and enables policy-makers and decision-makers to see how they could improve or maintain their strategies to encourage the participation of local communities. The paper further provides the basis for comparison and offers grounds for further research in other destinations like Barabarani in Tanzania and elsewhere. This paper contributes to wider scientific debates of nature of community participation in tourism development, notably on sustainable tourism development and local communities. On its methodological approach, the paper offer contribution on how to bring together perspectives from the grassroots, where, because of various reasons including language and cultural barriers-among others, many researchers have not been able to explore.

Case Study Area Profile

Barabarani is a village in Mto wa Mbu ward, Monduli District in Arusha region, Tanzania. Other villages in the ward include Migombani and Majengo. The ward, Mto wa Mbu - the *River of Mosquitoes* or *mosquito creek* in English, is a small most popular town found in the famous northern tourism circuit of Tanzania. The area is situated under the Great East African Rift Valley escarpment (Tanzania Tourist Board 2000). It is the host town at an entry-point and close to the entrance gate to the Lake Manyara National Park, which contributes significantly to making this study area also popular for wildlife-based tourism (Norton 1991). Arguably, its position within a short distance to the entrance to the Lake Manyara National Park make Mto wa Mbu easily connected to wildlife safari tourism activities (Van der Duim et al. 2006). It is also conveniently located on the way to the two world-renowned tourism attractions: the Ngorongoro Crater and the great Serengeti National Park, which together make Mto wa Mbu an ideal rest place for most safari travelers.

Similar to Muganda et al. (2010), the decision to undertake this study in Barabarani vil-

lage, Mto wa Mbu was largely based on a combination of four major factors. First, the area's location supports tourism activities and it is found within the tourism nodes of the well-established and famous northern tourism circuit. Second, it is close to Lake Manyara National Park. This makes Barabarani one of the villages in which the park outreach programme, Community Conservation Service (CCS), operates. The outreach seeks to involve the local community in tourism by sharing tourism benefits with them. The way tourism benefits are shared, was one component the wider study was trying to address (see Muganda 2009). Third, the history of the area and the number of ethnic groups that supports cultural tourism in the area in relation to its size. Fourth, the background information about this area and the evidence that there are already some tourism activities going on are clear enough to make this research useful in the area. For example, statistics from village office indicated that out of 28,000 people in Mto wa Mbu ward, Barabarani alone serves as home to more than 15,969 people (58 per cent) in an area of 1544 hectares by the year 2007 while the other two villages, Majengo and Migombani, contribute about 19 and 23 per cent respectively. At the time of this research Barabarani had eight sub-villages, namely Kisutu, Korea, National Housing, Magadini, Jangwani, Migungani A, Migungani B and Kigongoni.

Furthermore, the area has a number of ongoing community-based tourism activities such as the Cultural Tourism Programme¹ and various small-scale formal and informal local tourism groups. Also, it has a number of tourism establishments such as tourist hotels, lodges, and campsites whose staffs were needed to participate in this study. It is worth noting that many tourism activities in Mto wa Mbu ward are concentrated in Barabarani village. Field observations, for example, revealed that all 15 guest houses and all 8 campsites available in Mto wa Mbu ward, including many restaurants whose number was not easily identified, are located in Barabarani village. These factors together made the area suitable for this community case study, which thought to examine local communities' views of their role in tourism development.

METHODOLOGY

Data were collected between June – August 2008 through a mixed method approach involving household questionnaire survey and field

observations. Household survey was administered face-to-face by the lead researcher in Swahili due to low literacy rates in the study area (Kisembo 2008). Barabarani village had 2480 households at the time of the research; out of which 139 households (6 per cent) were surveyed. For each of the eight sub-villages, 5 per cent of households were randomly selected, in line with Tosun's study (2006) of community participation in tourism development in Turkey. Respondents were surveyed in their home and an adult family member represented each household. Checks with the electoral register confirmed that each respondent was a resident member of the local community. A village government official accompanied the lead researcher during the survey; he introduced the lead researcher to a particular household then withdrew.

Table 1: Profiles of survey respondents (N=139)

<i>Respondent characteristics</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	76	54.7
Female	63	45.3
<i>Education</i>		
Primary school education	82	59
Secondary school education	41	29.5
College/university education	2	1.4
Without formal education	14	10.1
<i>Age</i>		
16-24 years old	14	9.4
25-34 years old	38	27.3
35-44 years old	38	27.3
45-59 years old	38	27.3
60 + years old	11	7.9
<i>Period of Living</i>		
Lived less than 10 years	12	8.6
Lived longer than 10 years stay	45	32.4
Born in the study area	82	59
<i>Occupation</i>		
Peasants	89	64
Business	30	21.6
Employed full-time	9	6.5
Unemployed	11	7.9
<i>Sub-village</i>		
Kisutu	21	15.1
Korea	16	11.5
National Housing	16	11.5
Magadini	19	13.7
Jangwani	16	11.5
Migungani 'A'	19	13.7
Migungani 'B'	12	8.6
Kigongoni	20	14.4

Source: Field survey, June-August 2008

The profile of respondents is presented in Table 1. The number of respondents in each sub-village ranged from 21 in Kigongoni (14.4 per

cent of total respondents) to 12 (8.6 per cent) in the smallest sub-village Migungani 'B'. Males made up 54.7 per cent of respondents, females 45.3 per cent. Respondents were highly diverse in terms of their ages with age groups 25-34 years, 35-44 years and 45-59 years being equally represented (27.3 per cent each). 9.5 per cent of respondents were between 16 and 24 years old while 7.9 per cent were 60 years or above. Other profile variables, including length of residence, education, and employment status, showed more homogeneity. 59 per cent had lived in the village since birth while 32.4 per cent had been resident for ten or more years; only 8.6 per cent had lived in that area for less than a decade. Thus, respondents were long-time members of the local community. A majority of respondents had a low level of formal education: 59 per cent had completed a primary school education while 10.1 per cent had no formal education. In contrast, 29.5 per cent had a secondary school education and a very small number (1.4 per cent), had a college or university education. In employment terms, the sample was dominated by peasants or small-scale farmers (64 per cent). 6.5 per cent of respondents were full-time employees, 21.6 per cent were in small-scale business activities, and the remainder, 7.9 per cent, was unemployed.

To get a better understanding of what happens in the study area in relation to tourism, a realistic situation, rather than just relying on reported information, the researcher visited all eight sub-villages, with the intention to physically see (field observations) among other things, various issues raised by the respondents. This was possible with a researcher's two-month period stay in the study area, coupled with his experience with the wider community.

To gather views of local communities regarding their role in tourism development, respondents were asked on a 5-point Likert scale how strongly they agree or disagree with a series of seven statements similar in Mbaiwa (2005), Timothy (1999) and Tosun (2006). Each question followed by an open ended question probing for more information why a particular respondent held such a point of view on a particular aspect. This provided a wider picture of their views regarding their role in tourism development in the study area, and allowed for the emergence of issues not originally included in the questionnaire. For example, some respondents identified the importance of the main road, as

one of the factors that have facilitated tourism activities in the study area. This informed the subsequent analysis.

In analysing the data, free responses were coded into a set of categories developed from identified commonalities in line with the seven statements. The approach focused on meaning drawn from the content of the data and considered in a particular context (Finn et al. 2000). Quantitative data were analysed by SPSS whereby mean scores and standard deviations (SDs) were produced. Independent profile variables were used to examine differences based on gender, occupation, education, and the location of the sub-village in relation to the main road. The latter was included after it emerged from free responses as an important factor that facilitates tourism activities in the study area. The findings from the analysis of survey responses are integrated and compared with those from field observations. This verifies and strengthens the findings while enabling crosschecking and increasing greatly their validity (Simmons 1994).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of the Local Community in Tourism Development

Overall, local communities viewed five out of seven options as appropriate roles of local people in tourism development. The mean scores for such variables are above 3, suggesting strong agreement with these statements. In fact, when prompted by an open-ended question, respondents did not provide any other possibilities that they considered being an appropriate role of local communities in tourism development. One respondent for example, said,

"I don't see any other possibilities, I think we could consider which one is best among these [suggested by the statements]"

Table 2 presents the results of responses, ordered from the highest to the lowest mean, for each of the statements used to assess their role.

Table 2 shows that the mean scores for the top five statements are above 3, suggesting generally that respondents tended to support these ideas, but showed strongest support to the idea that local people should be involved when tourism policies are being made (mean 4.47, SD 0.58). The second most accepted option was the idea

Table 2: Local people's view on their role in tourism development (N= 139)

<i>In your view, what should be an appropriate role of local people in tourism development?</i>	<i>Mean^a</i>	<i>SD</i>
Local people should be consulted when tourism policies are being made	4.47	0.72
Local people should have a voice in the decision-making process of local tourism development	3.92	0.87
Local people should be financially supported to invest in tourism development	3.78	1.23
Local people should take the leading role as entrepreneurs	3.75	0.94
Local people should be consulted but the final decision on the tourism development should be made by formal bodies	3.29	1.27
Local people should take the leading role as workers at all levels	2.92	1.32
Local people should not participate by any means	1.32	0.67

^a The higher the mean score, the stronger is the agreement

Source: Field survey, June-August 2008

that local people should have a voice in the decision-making process of local tourism development (mean 3.92, SD 0.87). In fact, these results somehow reinforce suggestions by Scherl and Edwards (2007), Niezgoda and Czernek (2008), Matarrita-Cascante et al. (2010), Muhanna (2007), McIntyre et al. (1993), Pongponrat (2011), and Sanoff (2000) and reflect results by Tosun (2006) regarding the role of local communities in tourism development. In contrast, the results in this paper have taken a further step to explain why respondents held such a view point as discussed in more detail in subsequent sections.

On the other extreme, local communities overall rejected the statement that the 'local people should not participate in tourism development by any means' (mean 1.32, SD 0.72). This was the only negatively worded statement in the series. A similar feeling was observed by Tosun (2006) in his study regarding expected nature of community participation in tourism development in Turkey, and reflected in the suggestion by Jamieson (2001). The remaining statement, 'local people should take the leading role as workers at all levels' (mean 2.92, SD 1.32), is positively worded but still respondents disagreed with it in contrast with what Tosun observed in Turkey. However, based on standard deviations, it seems there was a broader range of responses

to three statements: local people should be consulted but the final decision on the tourism development should be made by formal bodies; local people should take the leading role as workers at all levels; and local people should be financially supported to invest in tourism development. This suggests that there were relatively more respondents who seemed to favour extreme responses (strongly agree and strongly disagree) when responding to these statements.

Further analysis of the responses across the profile variables revealed that overall respondents, regardless of their location, gender, occupation, and education, embraced five out of seven statements, but showed mixed views about two statements: local people should be consulted but the final decision on the tourism development should be made by formal bodies; and local people should take the leading role as workers at all levels (Table 3).

The results suggest that respondents from sub-villages located far from the road supported the idea of local people taking the leading role as workers at all levels while those from sub-villages close to the road were against this idea. It is however, important to note here that there was a general perception among members of the local community that the presence of this tarmac road facilitates tourism activities among communities living close to it. Though slight differences exist in the mean scores, up to this point the quantitative findings have not established clearly whether this perception was a reality. One respondent for example, noted when asked to give comments to one question,

"Tourism is for those living along the road. They block them [tourists] there and give them everything, so we never see them in our area".

The results also revealed that there were both male and female respondents who disagreed with the idea of local people taking the leading role as workers at all levels. In addition, respondents who described themselves as peasants, full-time employees in the public or private sectors, and primary school or college/university education holders also tended to disagree with this statement. Respondents who possessed college or university education were also against the idea that local people should be consulted but the final decision on the tourism development should be made by formal bodies. Overall, the results appear to suggest that all

Table 3: Views by categories of local people on the role of the local community in tourism development (N= 139)

<i>In your view, what should be an appropriate role of local people in tourism development?</i>	<i>Respon-</i> <i>dents</i>	<i>Entrepre-</i> <i>neurs</i>	<i>Workers</i>	<i>Voice</i>	<i>Policies</i>	<i>Consi-</i> <i>dated</i>	<i>Not</i> <i>participate</i>	<i>Financial</i> <i>supported</i>
<i>Variable</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
<i>Location</i>								
Zone (R) sub-villages	92	3.79	2.72	3.96	4.46	3.39	1.29	3.68
Zone (F) sub-villages	47	3.66	3.32	3.85	4.51	3.09	1.36	3.98
<i>Gender</i>								
Males	76	3.70	2.97	3.91	4.49	3.28	1.33	3.95
Females	63	3.81	2.86	3.94	4.46	3.30	1.30	3.59
<i>Occupation</i>								
Peasants	89	3.73	2.85	3.82	4.40	3.22	1.30	3.71
Businessmen/women	30	3.87	3.17	4.03	4.53	3.40	1.30	3.77
Employed full-time	9	3.56	2.56	4.11	4.67	3.11	1.22	4.11
Unemployed	11	3.73	3.09	4.27	4.73	3.64	1.55	4.18
<i>Education</i>								
Primary education	82	3.80	2.77	3.86	4.46	3.22	1.29	3.71
Secondary education	41	3.63	3.12	4.10	4.71	3.51	1.24	3.98
College/university education	2	3.50	2.50	4.50	4.50	2.50	1.00	3.50
No formal education	14	3.79	3.29	3.79	3.86	3.14	1.71	3.71
Overall mean		3.75	2.92	3.92	4.47	3.29	1.32	3.78

(R)= sub-villages close to the main road

(F)=sub-villages far from the main road

respondents rejected the statement that the 'local people should not participate in tourism development by any means' despite their differences in terms of gender, education, occupation, and the location of sub-villages they came from.

Local People's Reasons for Their Ratings

A number of reasons were given by survey respondents to support their ratings in the above quantitative research results. These varied depending on the question asked.

Whether local people should be consulted when tourism policies are being made (mean 4.47, SD 0.72)

Regarding this statement respondent raised various points in favour of their arguments. Supporters for example argued that the statement suggests an important idea that would ensure local people have an opportunity to express their views to policymakers. It also ensures policymakers get views from stakeholders so they can prepare a policy that meets stakeholders' needs and addresses their concerns. The respondents also felt that the idea would help to ensure policymakers hear, and probably consider, local

people's views, needs, priorities, and concerns. It would help to avoid policymakers' tendency to favour government interest at the expense of the local community. However, this has a bearing on one of the issues that most concerns the local communities living adjacent to wildlife-based tourism resources (such as national parks, forestry and game reserves, and other wildlife areas) in Tanzania, that is, that they have been denied access to arable land in these areas. The perception of these local communities is that the government, without involving them, designed policies that protect tourism resources and deny local people access to land in these areas, which is considered naturally fertile. For instance, one respondent said,

"Look! Wild animals seem to be more valued and protected than our lives. They [policymakers] deny us land [for agriculture] and set it for animals."

In contrast, respondents who did not believe in the idea of consulting local people when tourism policies are being made gave two major reasons. First, they emphasized that the government has got plenty of professionals and experts who can design and formulate good policies for the industry, even without consulting local communities who definitely know little as

far as tourism is concerned. Second, their feeling is that the problem with the tourism sector, like any other sector in Tanzania, is about the implementation of the policies and not the question of whether local people should be consulted or not as there are already concrete policies in place, but the problem remains poor implementation. Highlighting this, one respondent argued,

"The problem here is not consultation. We have good policies already, but look at what is happening! I am saying the problem is implementation! Officials just put forward their personal interest and leave aside what is stipulated in the policy".

Whether local people should have a voice in the decision-making process of tourism development (mean 3.92, SD 0.87)

Respondents who supported this statement said that the idea is likely to speed up tourism development in their area since local people know their area (in which tourism takes place) better than anyone else. They further underscored that allowing local people to have a voice in development issues (not necessarily tourism development), could help to protect the community interests, and increase transparency and accountability, and wipe out embezzlements and abuse of offices, which are rampant acts amongst decision-makers. In addition, they were of the feeling that the current level of tourism development is lower than could it be if local people had a voice in tourism development issues. This situation, according to them, is somehow caused by their leaders' reluctance to involve the rest of the community in tourism decision-making process creating 'a blue sky' among community members of what is going on. One respondent for example, said,

"We are left behind, our leaders put forward their interests, but if we had power we could be blocking their dirty deals".

However, it does seem to some members of the local community in the study area, who opposed the statement, that allowing them to have a voice is likely to undermine efforts to develop the industry as many local people have no formal education so it will be difficult for them to contribute in tourism development issues. They also observed that local people are likely to put forward their interests leaving behind those of the nation because their interests are, in most cases, unjustifiable and often conflict with fu-

ture generations and the survival of tourism resources. For example, while tourism authorities strive to conserve tourism resources such as wildlife and forestry available in protected areas, local communities living adjacent to these areas have been demanding access to these areas so they could collect firewood and timber, and undertake farming, mining, fishing, and hunting. These are all illegal activities, not allowed in any national park in Tanzania. According to the village government officials interviewed (who were mostly decision-makers); the local community claims that denying local people access to these activities is like denying them enjoyment of the fruits of having tourism resources in their area. Therefore, local people are likely to allow these activities if they were allowed to have a voice in tourism decisions. In fact, these activities have been the main source of many conflicts between tourism authorities and local communities, and remain challenges to managing national parks and other protected areas in Tanzania.

In addition, there was fear among the respondents that giving local people a voice in tourism development is likely to lead to making uninformed decisions because they lack expertise. Yet others had the view that tourism development issues are too hard for the local people to make sound decisions, thus they urged the need for them to have a voice in only such issues that they are capable of.

Whether local people should be financially supported to invest in tourism development (mean 3.78, SD 1.23)

Respondents also provided various views regarding the idea of local people being financially supported to invest in tourism development. Those who supported this idea, which had the third highest ranking, raised five major reasons for their stand. First, they believe the idea will lead to more and improved tourism facilities (hotels, campsites, restaurants, etc.), tourism products and services in their area. Second, more employment opportunities will be created by the increased number of investments in their area. Third, the idea will also increase and improve local people's capacity to invest as entrepreneurs since currently lack of financial capital remains their greatest hindrance towards investing in the industry. Fourth, it aims to increase and improve tourism products and services for the tourists as many people will get into the busi-

ness, thereby increasing competition. Lastly, the idea is likely to motivate many people to bring in their talents and passions, and consequently speed up tourism development in their area. One survey respondent said,

"As you know, you need financial capital to set up an income-generating project. This is why most of us are unable to invest in tourism, it's not that we don't like!"

On the other side, the respondents who rejected the idea expressed their fears about tourism business being not profitable any more as more people will engage in the same business. According to them, the idea also tends to bring in more tourism investments than required by the market. This will, in turn, make many of these investments unviable and redundant as so far there are few tourists who visit their area. In addition, the idea may lead to the loss of valuable financial resources as not all people prefer to invest in tourism. This can happen through various ways. Within the local community for example, the idea may create 'a pseudo desire' to invest in the industry so that they could gain financial assistance, which would certainly end up being fruitless. Furthermore, the respondents emphasized the fact that the idea is likely to cause overpopulation as many people from elsewhere in Tanzania will migrate to their area. It should be noted that the survey questions that respondents were asked, focused on tourism development in the study area (Mto wa Mbu) and not on tourism development in general. This is why respondents' comments assume that such a scheme (of supporting local people financially) would only apply in their village, rather than commenting on tourism development in general. For example, one survey respondent observed,

"It is obvious many people will leave their area and come to live in Mto wa Mbu. You know, some people just hear about tourism, have never tasted it! [Referring to money obtained from tourism], so they will now come!"

Whether local people should take the leading role as entrepreneurs in tourism development (mean 3.75, SD 0.94)

The respondents gave various answers regarding whether local people should take the leading role as entrepreneurs in tourism development. Those who supported this fourth highest ranked statement provided four major reasons. First, that enabling local people to take

the leading role as entrepreneurs creates more employment opportunities for them. Second, the idea helps them to accrue more income and consequently improve their poor lives. Third, it helps to cultivate a development spirit amongst local people as opposed to the current situation in which migrants are taking the leading role as entrepreneurs. And lastly, the idea helps to ensure that more money is left in the hands of local people who are more likely to transform it into other investments that enhance the growth of their area, as apparently most migrants (the leading entrepreneurs) collect money in Mto wa Mbu and invest elsewhere. One survey respondent for instance, highlighted when airing comments on this,

"Our town would have grown more if big entrepreneurs here could be local people. You know, they [migrants] just come here to collect money and go! None has even a plan to set up a nice building so our town could look beautiful!"

However, those who opposed the idea of local people taking the leading role as entrepreneurs argued that many of them have no entrepreneurial spirit and therefore it would be difficult for them to be successful entrepreneurs. They also stated that not all local people prefer to put their entrepreneurial skills into tourism as some of them would inevitably go for other livelihood activities such as agriculture or livestock keeping. In addition, there will be little competition and creativity if only local people are allowed to take the leading role as entrepreneurs. Furthermore, many local people have limited financial capacity to enable them take the leading role as entrepreneurs. One respondent said when asked to comment on this,

"You know our lives and you know our financial situation and how hard it is to us to make a living, so how can we be entrepreneurs then! If I had money, I would have owned a tourism business instead"

Whether local people should be consulted but the final decision on the tourism development should be made by formal bodies (mean 3.29, SD 1.27)

Those who supported the statement argued that the idea is appropriate because in most cases formal bodies make concrete decisions that balance the needs of the present and future generations as they often consist of people with wide knowledge and expertise. In addition, local

people have little knowledge about tourism and it is not enough to enable them to make tourism related-decisions on their own. Others had the feeling that the decisions made by formal bodies should be final and conclusive as local people alone might fail to make informed decisions due to limited capacity of analysing issues attributed to lack of education. They also observed that even a mere consultation with the local people is by itself enough and appropriate as it makes formal bodies hear, for consideration, views from the local community. One respondent for example, said when giving comments to this question,

"...they [decision-makers] always bypass us, we know it's because we haven't gone to school like them, so they think we have nothing to contribute!"

However, respondents who did not like the idea of local people being consulted but the final decisions made by formal bodies, stressed the need to include local people's involvement in the final decisions as well. This could help them become 'watchdogs' amid public outcry in the study area that many members of the formal bodies are not trustworthy as they are often involved in corruption, embezzlement of public funds, and abuse of office. Indeed, this would also ensure that their interests are taken into account, and not by-passed. They also added that formal bodies normally disregard local people's interests, needs, and priorities, and often come up with decisions that favour only a few individuals, leaving the majority suffering. However, it should be noted here that, for local communities in Mto wa Mbu, much of what respondents describe as community interests are those which involve illegal activities (gathering firewood, timbering, mining, fishing, hunting and farming in Lake Manyara National Park).

Whether local people should take the leading role as workers at all levels (mean 2.92, SD 1.32)

The villagers surveyed gave various reasons regarding whether local people should take the leading role as workers at all levels. This is one of the two statements, which gained low scores and were overall rejected by the respondents. Those who supported the idea believe that by doing so could increase local people's access to employment opportunities and consequently improve their poor lives. Indeed, the idea will help to reduce conflicts between the local com-

munity and tourism authorities. It also creates room for local people to access high ranked jobs [referring to those in tourist hotels], which are normally given to migrants and foreigners. Moreover, the idea recognizes the fact that local people should be given first priority since tourism happens in their areas.

On the other hand, respondents who rejected the idea raised five major points. First, they established that many local people have no formal education to enable them work professionally and successfully at all levels. Second, promoting this idea implies that people from outside Mto wa Mbu, who could bring in new ideas, will be denied an opportunity to work in the area. Third, allowing only local people to work at all levels could reduce work competition thereby jeopardizing efficiency. Fourth, denying people from outside Mto wa Mbu the chance to work in the area's tourism industry might fuel tribalism at work thereby inviting unnecessary conflicts. And fifth, the idea is likely to deprive other people's right to access employment opportunities. One survey respondent for example, put it clearly,

"If only Mto wa Mbu people are allowed to work, do you think other people will be happy? This will be considered as purely tribalism, the start of conflicts as everyone has the right to access job opportunities"

Whether local people should not participate by any means (mean 1.32, SD 0.67)

The few respondents who supported this statement believed that local people would concentrate more and use much of their time on other sectors such as agriculture if they are denied participation in tourism. However, it is important to bear in mind that this argument might be a result of a growing tendency amongst local people in the study area to 'rush at tourism businesses', thereby leaving little manpower for other crucial sectors. Contributing to this, one respondent commented,

"Everyone dreams about tourism, they waste much of their valuable time doing tourism things, we don't see them going to farm! So who will be left doing other life sustaining activities [referring to agriculture]... My opinion is that let the whole issue of tourism development in Mto wa Mbu in the hands of our leaders"

In contrast, the respondents who opposed this idea observed that it would deny local peo-

ple an opportunity to participate in their area's development issues. Also, it would be hard for tourism planners to attain their development goals as implementation of activities to achieve their goals highly depends on local people as the main actors. Indeed, the idea is likely to invite conflicts between local people and whoever makes such a decision as it will be hard for local people to access tourism benefits if they won't participate in any way. In addition, tourism development would decline due to the lack of local people's support and this would threaten cultural tourism, which is mostly conducted by the local community. The industry, according to them, is also likely to witness severe sabotage on its resources, increased illegal activities such as poaching, encroachment of conservation areas, environmental destruction, and insecurity to tourists. For example, with consolidated efforts of supporting conservation of tourism resources from the government, private sector, and non-governmental organizations through encouraging local community's participation in tourism, Tanzania is still losing 50,000 wild animals annually due to poaching (Shumba 2008). This could mean, when such efforts are no longer in place as the idea suggests, poaching is likely to increase tremendously, thereby threatening the sustainability of the country's tourism resources. One respondent for example, noted,

"Sometimes people just don't want to acknowledge, but the fact is we get something [money] from tourism, and that's why even poaching intensity in LMNP has declined. We know surely without wild animals..., no tourist will come to bring money in our area. But if you stop us from participating, you will note the outcome through poaching".

Furthermore, the respondents believed that the introduction of this idea (denial of local people's participation in tourism) could rather make tourism planners not consider local community's needs, interests, and priorities anymore. According to them, planners are sometimes forced to consider the community welfare because they would want to attract people's participation in order to achieve their goals.

CONCLUSION

Using a case study of Barabarani village in Tanzania, this paper contributes to the under-

standing of community participation in tourism development by bringing together perspectives from the grassroots. It examined local communities' views regarding their role in tourism development suggested by a series of seven statements supported by their reasons for having such reasons.

The findings have revealed that local people acknowledge the need to be involved in tourism decision making process regardless of their literacy level. However, they also recognize and acknowledge the need to involve tourism experts when formulating tourism policies because these formal bodies often consists of people with wide knowledge and expertise. Before making such policies, local people need to be consulted so that the outcome (the policy) meets stakeholders' needs and addresses their concerns. They also want to have a voice and become 'watchdogs' in development issues (not necessarily tourism development) to enable them to protect community interests. Although the findings through this case study have revealed that local communities wish to play an active role in tourism development, there is a need to conduct similar studies in various parts of Tanzania and in other developing countries. Such studies would provide the basis for policy formulation in relation to tourism establishments at local levels. As discussed by Tosun (2006), the most common form of participation in most developing countries for tourism development is functional – communities only have to endorse decisions regarding tourism development issues made for them rather than by them. Communities may participate in implementation (by running small scale tourism enterprises) or device benefit sharing mechanisms with investors but not necessarily involved in the decision making process. Decision making and policy formulation is still top-down and passive, not only in Barabarani area, but Tanzania in general. This is the key stage when communities need to be involved so that their voices can be heard. The study emphasizes on small scale methods in understanding the nature of community participation and their role to tourism development rather than what has been normally imposed on them.

The paper has implications for decision-makers and development specialists. The lack of financial capital remains the greatest hindrance for local communities to invest in the tourism industry. A mechanism for financial assistance,

including provision of soft loans, needs to be in place in order to encourage local communities to invest in the industry. In turn, this would create employment opportunities to local communities, reduce poverty, improve living standards and make them much more supportive for tourism development. Also, there is a feeling that community leaders are reluctant to involve the rest of the community in decision-making process thereby creating 'blue sky' to community members of what is going on. This implies that transparency needs to be enhanced.

NOTE

1. For details please visit: <http://www.tanzania cultural tourism.com/history.htm>

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