

A review of literature on local community participation towards sustainable tourism development in East Africa.

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a major contributor to global economic growth, hence it has been earmarked for the achievement of the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a result, UNWTO has partnered with governments, private partners, international and regional finance institutions and other organizations to realize sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the SDG goals is to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all by 2030 by devising and implementing policies to promote sustainable tourism. Impliedly, inclusivity of local communities is critical to the achievement of the aspirations. Ironically, literature contends that local communities lack participation opportunities in decision-making relating to tourism and experience inadequate financial, social and vocational benefits from projects that commercially exploit their resources. Therefore, this study reviewed the extent to which local communities participate in sustainable tourism development. This study adopted a qualitative approach by reviewing and analyzing existent literature on the topic under study. Based on the literature, the findings of these studies reveal that local communities participation in tourism is coercive, a low form of participation which denies the local community more opportunities to participate in key policy and decision making process. This study concludes that local community participation towards sustainable tourism development is more coercive and induced than spontaneous. Besides much participation is associated with socio-economic pillar of sustainability at the expense of the ecologic pillar. In addition, several personal and environmental factors influence local community participation. Consequently, this study proposed an integrated framework of factors which influence local community participation that can be used in East African countries. However, a quantitative study is recommended to investigate the reliability and the extent to which the framework can be applied in the Kenyan tourism destinations.

Key words: community participation; Local community; Sustainable tourism development; tourism

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been earmarked for the achievement of the aspirations of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, hence UNWTO has partnered with governments, private partners, international and regional finance institutions and international organizations to realize the sustainable development goals, one of which is to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all by 2030 by devising and implementing policies to promote sustainable tourism development (UNWTO 2014).

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) (1998: 19) defines sustainable tourism development as “tourism which meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support system.” (ETE/ UNESCO 2009).

In other words, sustainable tourism development is ecologically sustainable, economically viable as well as ethically and socially equitable. More specifically, sustainable tourism development is summarized under the following four main principles: communities’ wellbeing; protection of the natural and cultural environment; quality tourism product development and tourist satisfaction and adaptive management and monitoring. More precisely, sustainable tourism development supports and ensures the economic, social and cultural well-being of the communities in which tourism takes place. Secondly, sustainable tourism allows the use of natural and cultural resources for gaining economic profit while at the same time guaranteeing that such resources, both natural and cultural are protected and the maintained. Thirdly, sustainable tourism development is anchored on the quality of tourism products offered by a region and is characterized by material criteria like the quality of transport, accommodation and food, but also by non-material criteria like hospitality and experiences. Lastly, sustainable tourism development depends on the application of adaptive management and monitoring of tourism activities to ensure that tourism is developed in a way which is ecological, economic and socially sustainable (ETE/ UNESCO 2009).

On the other hand, local community participation in tourism is defined as the involvement of all local people and other stakeholders in the formation of programmes or policies that would assist to change their communities (Phiri 2009). Studies (Arnstein 1969; Pretty 1995; Tosun 2006) posit that local community participation in tourism projects is key to the achievement of sustainable development agenda both at the international and national fronts. According to Mugizi, Ayorekire&Obua, (2017) some of the positive socio-economic contributions of tourism towards sustainable development agenda can be realized through tourism revenue earnings, creation of employment opportunities, employment quality, balance of payment, local prosperity by reducing leakages, community wellbeing, social equity, biological diversity and resource efficiency.

However, according to Murphy (2013) one important factor to consider in order to sustain the socio-economic contributions for sustainable tourism development is the need to involve local community participation in the development process. In as much as local community participation contributes to ecologically sustainable, economically viable and socially equitable tourism development, studies (Nsabimana 2010; Muthuri 2012; Muganda, Sirima, & Marwa, 2013; Mugiziet *al.*, 2017) assert that there is little local community participation in tourism planning and development.

Besides, most studies focus on importance and the extent of local community participation rather than the factors that influence such participation (Tosun 2006). For instance, Nsabimana (2010) study focused on the extent to which communities are involved in sustainable tourism development and conservation activities in Rwanda while Muthuri (2012) focused on factors hindering local community participation in tourism development in Kenya. Muganda *et al.*, (2013) study extensively focused on the role of local community participation in tourism development in Tanzania.

From the studies reviewed, it's evident that several factors influence local community participation towards sustainable tourism development. Muganda *et al.*, (2013) reckons that the local community perception towards their participation in tourism projects is imposed on them. Consequently, a knowledge gap exists between what local community thinks of their roles in sustainable tourism development is as opposed to their imposed roles.

Besides in most developing countries, interferences from authorities in local community tourism projects and little consultation between the government and local community in key decision making seem to be rampant. For instance, in Kenya the findings of a study carried out in Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary around Amboseli National Park, point out interference from the government in bid to control the sanctuary (Ondicho 2012).

More often, the decision and policy making process is top down and mostly dominated by the government, private sector and /or NGOs (Scherl & Edwards 2007). Deriving from the Doxey's Irritation Index model (1975), little consultation between the government and local community may cause local communities to demonstrate misgivings about tourism when they are less involved in key decisions. This may eventually develop into irritation expressed either verbally or physically against tourists. Nsabimana (2010) and Muthuri (2012) underscore that little consultation between the government and local community leads to resistance to tourism which may result into illegal activities by the local communities against tourism.

Mugiziet *al.*, (2017) notes that a heterogeneous nature of the communities presents unequal opportunities and different expectations in the participatory approach to tourism planning and development. Mugiziet *al.*, (2017) expounds that while some local community members may have little information about tourism, others may lack the

resources to benefit from tourism activities hence, they may be prone to manipulation and exploitation from the privileged. For instance, there are cases in Kenya where communal pieces of land of local communities around tourism protected areas are managed by foreigners, which has caused resource use conflicts (Okello 2011).

Based on the literature reviewed, there seems to be a myriad of factors which influence local community participation in sustainable tourism development. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine Therefore, this study reviewed the extent to which local communities participate in sustainable tourism development. The study was guided by the following research objectives

Research objectives

- i. To identify the level of local community participation towards sustainable tourism development in East Africa
- ii. To identify factors that influence local communities' participation towards sustainable tourism development in East Africa
- iii. To propose a framework for local community participation towards sustainable tourism development in East Africa.

Literature Review

According to UNEP & UNWTO (2005) sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary. The main focus of sustainable tourism development is firstly, to make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in sustainable tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural resources and biodiversity. Secondly, sustainable tourism development aims at enhancing respect to the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance. Lastly, it ensures viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation (UNEP & UNWTO 2005).

For this study, sustainable tourism development was conceptualized as economic, social, and ecological sustainability of the tourism resources (ETE/ UNESCO 2009). More specifically, the social dimension was measured by community wellbeing and social equity, while economic dimension was measured by employment quality, reduction of leakages and economic viability. In addition, ecological dimension was measured by biological diversity and resource efficiency (UNEP & UNWTO 2005).

On the other hand, there has been a lot of literature on local community participation in sustainable tourism development activities. As a concept local participation is regarded as

a bottom -up process that empowers marginalized groups thus providing them with opportunity to have a say and greater control over decisions and activities that affect their lives and well-being (Scheyvens, 2007).

In order to conceptualize local community participation in sustainable tourism development, community participation model propounded by Tosun (1999a). Later on in 2006, the model was reviewed in relation to other models from other disciplines such as developmental studies hence, a more comprehensive model was developed. Since then, Tosun (2006) model has widely been in tourism studies.

Tosun (2006) model is a combination of Arnstein(1969) and Pretty (1995) models of community participation which focused on participatory development approaches in development studies. According to Arnstein (1969) citizen participation is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not Citizens to be deliberately included in the future. It is the means by which they can induce significant social reform, which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society. Arnstein(1969) approach was in terms of a ladder or typology of citizen participation including eight levels, which are classified in turn among three categories relative to authentic citizen participation. While the lowest category represents manipulative participation, the highest category refers to degrees of citizen power. The middle category indicates degrees of citizen tokenism. On the other hand, according to Pretty's (1995) typology of participation, local participation is a critical factor to the success of development projects. As such, development projects and programmes implemented by Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and governments need to incorporate a strong aspect of local community participation. Each level of participation allows for differing degrees of external involvement and local control, and reflects the power relationships between them. Self-mobilization is the most crucial of all the seven categories because without it the local communities would not have a platform to make meaningful contributions to decisions that are made to guide the implementation of development programmes that benefit them. Clearly, the benefits received by local communities from tourism and related activities will depend on the extent to which they have been involved and the equitable manner in which the benefits have been shared.

Tosun (2006) model takes a participatory approach to tourism to facilitate implementation of principles of sustainable tourism development by creating better opportunities for local people to gain larger and more balanced benefits from sustainable tourism development taking place within their localities. This results into more positive attitudes to tourism activities and conservation of local resources, and increases the local communities' tolerance to tourism. These could ensure both visitor satisfaction and ongoing benefits for the residents of destinations areas. More specifically, there are 3 typologies of community participation in tourism. The typologies are classified as spontaneous, induced and coercive (Tosun 2006). Firstly, spontaneous participation refers to an ideal mode of local community participation which provides full managerial responsibility and authority to local community (Tosun 1999a). Spontaneous level of participation represents situations when the local community has full control and authority (Sakhile&Tembi 2017).

Secondly, induced community participation in tourism is perceived to be the best type of participation as the local community is allowed to hear and be heard. They have a voice in the sustainable tourism development process, but they do not have power to ensure that their views will be taken into account by other powerful interest groups such as government bodies, multinational companies, international tour operators, etc. Therefore, it seems to denote level of tokenism. This type is the most common mode to be found in developing countries where a local community only endorse decisions regarding tourism development issues made for them rather than by them (Tosun1999a).

Induced community participation is top-down, passive and indirect in the sense that local communities may participate in implementation and sharing benefits of tourism, but not in the decision making process. This level of participation implies that the local community has no autonomy to influence decision-making. This is often referred to as top-down approach. Lastly, coercive participation is realized when some of the decisions are made to appease the local community by meeting a few basic needs, so as to avoid socio-political risks for sustainable tourism development (Sakhile&Tembi 2017).

Lastly, coercive participation is manipulated and contrived as a substitute for genuine participation. The real objective is not to enable people to participate in sustainable tourism development process, but to enable powerholders to educate or cure host communities to runaway potential and actual threats to future of sustainable tourism development. Some decisions may be taken to meet basic needs of host-communities by consulting local leaders so as to reduce socio-political risks for tourists and sustainable tourism development. Although it seems that sustainable tourism development is to take place based upon host communities' priorities, it is heavily skewed towards the fostering and development of tourism, and would primarily be concerned with meeting the needs and desires of decision makers, tourism's operators and tourists.

Figure 2.0 illustrates the typologies of community participation as modified by Tosun (2006)

7. Self-mobilization	←	8. Citizen control	Degrees of Citizen Power	→	<u>Spontaneous Participation</u> Bottom-up; active par.; direct participation; par. in decision making; authentic participation; self planning;	
6. Interactive participation		7. Delegated power				6. Partnership
5. Functional participation	←	5. Placation	Degrees of Citizen Tokenism	→	<u>Induced Participation</u> Top-down; passive; formal; mostly indirect; degree of tokenism, manipulation; pseudo-participation; participation in implementation and sharing benefits; choice between proposed alternatives and feedback.	
4. Participation for material incentives		4. Consultation				3. Informing
3. Participation by consultation		3. Informing				
2. Passive participation	←	2. Therapy	Non-participation	→	<u>Coercive Participation</u> Top-down, passive; mostly indirect, formal; participation in implementation, but not necessarily sharing benefits; choice between proposed limited alternatives or no choice; paternalism, non-participation, high degree of tokenism and manipulation.	
1. Manipulative participation		1. Manipulation				
Pretty's (1995) typology of community participation	Arnstein's (1971) typology of community participation			Tosun's (1999a) typology of community participation		



Keys: Corresponding categories in each typology  

Figure 2.0: Community Participation

Tosun(2006).

In as much as Tosunmodel (2006) is widely used in studies of local community participation in tourism, it has some limitations which relate to centralization of tourism administration, attitudes of professionals towards tourism, lack of human and financial resources as well as dominance of the elite in tourism activities, hence creating an impression that tourism programmes often benefit those with the capacity to participate in the planning, development and management of tourism which is not often the case. The capacity is what has been referred to as self-mobilization because it empowers the local community to make and execute decisions (Tosun 2000).

Besides, the model falls short of the explanations on why and how the different levels of participation exist. It is significant to examine understand factors which may result into the typologies in order to enhance local community participation in sustainable tourism development. However, there are various factors that can lead to spontaneous, induced and coercive participation. Such factors may result from individual personal issues to more complex systematic and structural issues. The individual personal issues may be

within the local communities' ability to influence them while the systematic and structural issues may be resultant from the environment in which they operate in.

This study proposed a model of such factors as shown in figure 2.1

Proposed model for the study

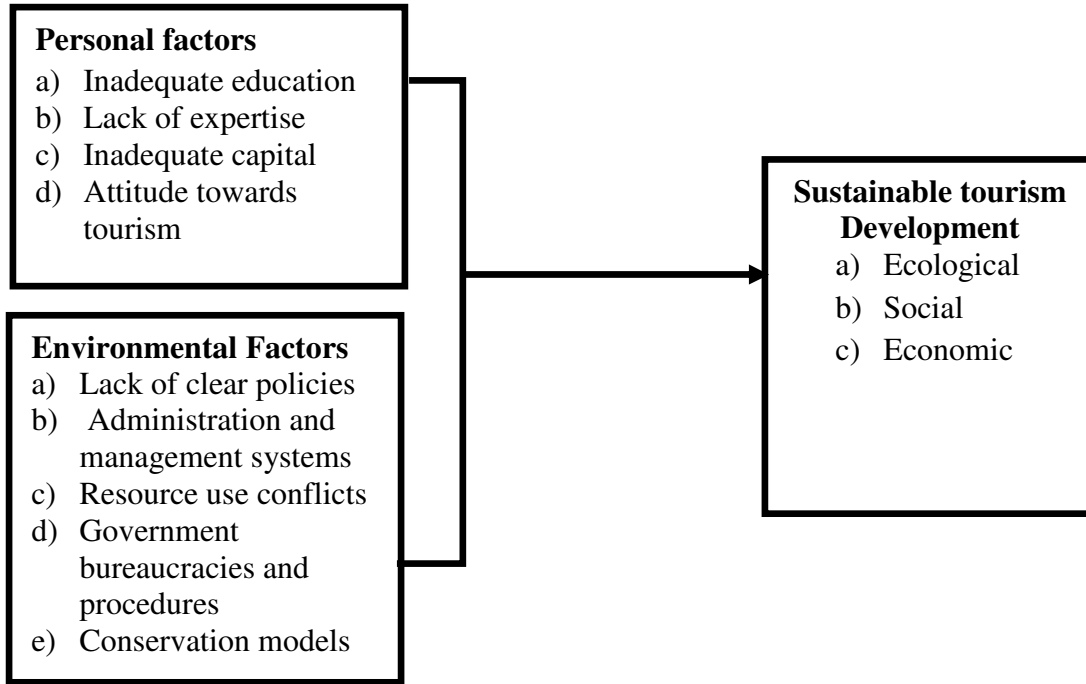


Figure 2.1: Factors influencing Local Community Participation

Modified from Nsabimana(2010); Muthuri(2012); Muganda, *et al.*, (2013) and Mugiziet *al.*, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted content analysis research design. It took a qualitative approach by reviewing previous studies on local community participation towards sustainable tourism development.

Table 2: Summary of reviewed studies

	Title& Authors	Findings of previous studies	Methodology
1	The role of local communities in tourism development: Grassroots perspective from Tanzania Muganda,, Sirima, &Marwa, (2013)	a) Local people views on their role indicated that they think that they should be involved in policy formulation and decision making the process; financially supported and be made ‘watchdogs’ in development issues. b) Illiteracy, limited capacity due to lack of education, lack of knowledge and skills were cited as some of the factors affecting involvement in tourism activities c) Decision making and policy formulation is still top-down and passive, not only in Barabarani area, but Tanzania in general.	i. Mixed method approach ii. Data collected between June-august 2008 iii. Questionnaire, survey and observation tools used iv. Sample size: 139 households from a population of 2480
2	Factors that influence local community participation in Tourism in Murchison falls conservation area in Uganda Mugizi, Ayorekire&Obua, (2017)	a) Majorly, participation is at coercive level, attributed to the nature of tourism employment opportunities such as security guards, trail maintenance, casual labourers, waiters, tour guiding and attendants in craft shops and restaurants. b) Highest level of participation is functional, which involves activities such as advising community tourism groups, representing communities on discussion platforms for conservation issues and providing leadership in Community Based Tourism Enterprises. c) None of the participation is at self-mobilization level due to limited education, lack of capital to support independent initiatives or inadequate support from donor agencies.	i. Sample size: 335 households randomly selected ii. Data collected by use of questionnaires and interviews.
3	The extent of community involvement in Tourism Development and conservation activities in Eastern Rwanda Nsabimana, (2010)	a) There is little participation in economic activities such as employment (though in low numbers for menial jobs) b) Local community operate small scale businesses such as curio shops, c) Hardly involved in process of decision making and policy formulation. d) Policies regard local residents as dormant participants who need to only be informed and economically assisted, (less valued as partners in decision making processes).	i. Data collected by use of questionnaire and interviews ii. Research Design: exploratory
4.	Factors hindering Kawiru Community participation in tourism development in Meru National Park, Meru County Muthuri, (2012)	a) Lack of Community-Based Organization b) Locals not effectively involved in the management of parks. c) Poor knowledge on tourism, high illiteracy levels, financial constraint and negative attitudes affect participation	i. Cross sectional descriptive design ii. T/Popln.19,679, sample frame: 1,800 and sample size 126. iii. Questionnaires, observation

	d) No clear policies which engage locals and challenge illiteracy	interviews
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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of the previous studies it is apparent that communities have not been involved adequately in sustainable tourism development in spite of the fact that they form an integral part of sustainable tourism development agenda. Studies (Nsabimana 2010; Muthuri 2012; Muganda *et al.*, 2013; Mugizi *et al.*, 2017) have indicated several factors which influence their participation in sustainable tourism development. The factors are both personal and environmental.

Personal factors such as inadequate education, lack of expertise, inadequate capital to operate and negative attitude towards tourism may affect the level of participation. The findings coincide with Ondicho (2012) and Okello (2011) studies which underscored that most often, local communities' education is inadequate and hence the reason why most locals are left to do seasonal unskilled jobs. This eventually degenerates into local community intolerance to tourism conservation. In addition, lack of expertise creates room for interferences from the government, private non local investors and the local elites who take advantage of the locals and control some of the local community based initiatives. Negative attitude towards tourism occurs when there is delayed compensation for destruction and death of the locals caused by human wildlife conflict and the failure to benefit from tourism.

On the other hand, lack of clear policies on how to engage the local communities in sustainable tourism development, less effective administration and management systems where most decisions are centralized and resource use conflicts are major factors which affect local community participation in sustainable tourism development. In addition, competing interests between other stakeholders and the local communities, government bureaucracies and procedures (which cause delays in compensation of reported human wildlife cases) also affect local community participation. The other factor noted to have an influence on local community participation in sustainable tourism development is the conservation models adopted by parks.

These findings coincide with Okello (2005) which asserted that management systems adopted by the central government in decision making process is often top down, marred with bureaucratic and cumbersome procedures especially when it comes to compensation for human wildlife conflicts. Besides, the conservation models adopted for instance, by the International Union for Conservation of Nature Category II Park model which has been criticized for displacing people, outlawing human settlement and designating resources as 'protected' have worked against local community participatory approach to sustainable tourism development. Other findings (Scherl & Edwards 2007) also emphasize that the decision and policy making process is classically top-down and is dominated by the government, private sector and/or NGOs.

Furthermore, Okello (2005) pointed out that resource use conflict, especially in cases where there is conflict of interests for instance between the government (e.g. through Kenya Wildlife Service, (KWS) and the local community in a project can influence participation. For instance, most often KWS interest in a community based tourism project is creation of space for wildlife dispersal, the private investors' interest is profit maximization, while the local elite's main interest is reported to be mainly as being swindling of funds from the projects for personal gains (Okello 2005). This scenario leaves the local community in a situation of little benefit from what is supposed to be their resource.

CONCLUSION

Apparently from the reviewed literature, local community participation towards sustainable tourism development is more focused on the coercive and induced form than spontaneous. Besides much attention of participation is associated with socio-economic pillar of sustainability at the expense of the ecologic pillar. There seems to be more subtle initiatives and policies which encourage local community conservation practices. Moreover, due to the low form of participation, the local community are more prone to negatively interfere with conservation activities, which threatens ecological sustainability. In addition, personal and environmental factors influence the participation of local community in sustainable tourism development. These factors if well addressed by stakeholders can positively influence local community participation at all levels. However, for generalization of the findings of this study, there is need for further research using more quantitative methods of analysis.

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