

**BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO ENHANCE
COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY: CASE OF
OLGULULUI GROUP RANCH, KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA**

Dr. Vundi Nason,
Lecturer: St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya.
Email: nvundi@spu.ac.ke; 0722 273 052

Phyllis N. Nyakiba (PhD Student)
Department of Development Studies,
PhD Student - Kisii University,

Abstract

This study is descriptive which enabled the researcher to capture the experiences and practices of the local communities within the Amboseli ecosystem as they are on the ground; using mixed research methodology; investigation was carried out on if the local community members in Olgulului Group ranch have been involved in any capacity building that will ensure enhanced community based tourism. Community capacity building empowerment generally sets a direct pathway towards the enhancement of CBT benefits for local communities. The study established that there is inadequate community capacity which could have enabled the community members to mobilize and solve problems effectively. From the findings, majority of the respondents (83.9%) agreed that the community capacity building should be carried out through training on local tourism, with the trainings being regular and in line with community needs. The respondents stated that trainings have enabled the community make better decisions on tourism initiatives towards the achievement of sustainable CBT. The community members further stated that capacity building should include training on local tourism, empowerment and knowledge acquisition which would enable the community make better decisions on tourism initiatives. Community capacity building not only represents an advancement towards generating a sustainable tourism industry for the locals in Amboseli ecosystem, but it is an essential ingredient for the overall development of the community in Olgulului group ranch. However, the community members stated that they have not been trained on community based tourism which is an indication that the success of CBT in Olgulului group ranch is not sustainable. The emphasis on the importance of community capacity building is relevant to ensure tourism expansion within the local community set up. It is interesting to note that the locals who are the supposed owners of the community tourism projects are not aware of the projects implementation with the very community being ignorant of their role because they have little control and knowledge on running tourism projects and on decision making of such projects. The study further adopts the Sen's theory of Human development which highlights the need for capabilities expansion as a human development approach as a starting point if there is the intention to develop for human advancement. The study therefore emphasizes the need for capacity building as an initial ingredient to achieve enhanced Community Based Tourism.

Keywords: Capacity building, community based tourism, sustainable development, community development

Introduction

Community capacity building is recognized as one of the ways that community development can take place and that tourism development can be addressed; while acknowledging that it is a crucial condition for the progression of the local community (Aref, 2009). On an inception note, the term Community Based Tourism (CBT) emerged in the mid 1990s and is ordinarily small scale and consists of interactions between the visitors and host community (Asker et al, 2010). CBT is very important according to (ASEAN, 2010) because it is stated that, “it may boost social sustainability by empowering indigenous communities to manage their own resources, deliver meaningful employment, and assist with capacity building and cultural preservation. CBT is further identified as a form of ‘local’ tourism, supporting local service providers and suppliers and concentrated on interpreting and communicating the local culture and environment to those who visit the communities (Asker, 2010). Therefore the greater emphasis is on ways the local community can have increased engagement with local tourism due to exposure to CBT. This paper intends to elaborate the identified community capacity approaches for sustainable tourism development and how they can ensure enhanced community based tourism for the local community towards the realization of sustainable CBT. Community capacity is part of the ingredient for improving the process of sustainable tourism while ensuring that enhanced benefits are at the centre of the local community benefits (Aref, 2010). The purpose of this paper is to highlight the association between building community capacity and local based tourism with the focus on the use of community capabilities for local tourism development. In this paper, primary and secondary data sources are available to evaluate the validity of findings.

What is Community Capacity Building?

Community capacity building talks about the capabilities that exist within indigenous communities and within individuals and communities that support individuals to define their values and capacities to act on them (Aref, 2010). Further, community capacity building in community based tourism development can be seen as the vehicle that gives the community members the capacity to participate in tourism activities (Cupples 2005). Community capacity building at the local grass root level reflects the need to boost the power for participation and decision making in local tourism activities (Aref, 2010). Effective CBT hence should involve including communities in tourism planning, continuous decision making, development and operations and this cannot be accomplished without capacity building for the local community members (Asker, 2010). The impact of community capacity building in the enhancement of CBT development is therefore emphasized on by various scholars since it will enable the community to participate more. While various tourism stakeholders often like to invest in training and capacity building for the local community as their contribution to community development. Community capacity building if taken into consideration since it will curtail ignorance and limited information which could lead to increased empowerment and ownership by the community members for sustainable local tourism. This paper identifies indicators to be measured under community capacity building as empowerment, and skills/ knowledge

acquisition gained that could progress their performance on their initiatives to drive local tourism. Ahmeti (2013) henceforth stated that tourism development and capacity building within the indigenous communities where tourism is appreciated as a community opportunity are closely connected and should evolve and flourish concurrently. The sustainability of community based tourism development therefore depends on the abilities and capabilities of the indigenous people to plan and manage the tourism activities (Razzaq et al, 2012). Creating sustainable tourism means creating a sustainable capacity building model that must be concurrently implemented with overall community development process. Therefore the study will seek to identify if there has been any capacity building and knowledge acquisition, disseminated to the community and how impactful they are on curbing ignorance on local based issues and enhancing local's knowledge towards the achievement of CBT.

Community Capacity Building in Enhancing CBT

Community capacity building is described as a means to sustainable tourism for community development which empowers the communities to realize their potential and their capacities and community resources for achieving community objectives. CCB further helps local communities to obtain an opportunity to achieve their community development goals. Increased capacity of the community is a result of sustainable tourism (Aref, 2010). Ahmeti (2013) highlighted that it is trivial that community capacity building programs help the locals to grow their capability to contribute to the tourism decision making process, other than being spectators on their own home ground. On the other hand, Community based tourism is a form of tourism that seeks to empower communities to manage tourism growth and achieve community aspirations relating to their well-being while including economic, social and environmental sustainable development (ASEAN, 2016). Community based tourism development can bring numerous possible benefits for communities' economy, society and environment, however, if it is not evaluated, planned and managed effectively with the communities, it may also come with an undesirable cost to society and economy, society and environment, and the dynamics between them (Asker, 2010). Ahmeti (2013) further stated that Community based tourism development and capacity building within the communities where tourism is comprehended as a community opportunity are closely connected and need to evolve and thrive concurrently. Therefore this paper is important because, there has been very little research or discussion focusing upon the Community Capacity Building in the enhancement of sustainable community based tourism.

Knowledge Acquisition

To develop community capacity, local community members should acquire skills and knowledge. Knowledge benefits people to think and act in innovative ways with Community capacity building (CCB) seen as a crucial condition for improving tourism development process and enhancing its benefits for indigenous communities to empower them to mobilize, identify and solve complications through the knowledge acquired (Aref et al. 2010). The Knowledge acquired from CCB will ensure that community based tourism respects and encourages equitable participation of the local community for the various learning's (ASEAN, 2010). It is therefore safe to note that skills and knowledge have become an important source for local tourism

development. Hence growing destination communities like Olgulului group ranch are at a disadvantage in terms of skills, experience, and knowledge of the tourism industry; and as an outcome, need institutional backing for information and capacity building concerning community based tourism (Asli, et al. 2013). Ahmeti (2013) additionally highlighted that “community capacity building not only represents a stride towards generating a sustainable tourism industry, but it is an essential component for the overall growth of the community”. The concept of community skill and knowledge is regarded to as a tool to assist in tourism and community development as well in local communities (Aref et al. 2010). Community Based tourism is therefore a community owned and operated tourism activity, managed and coordinated at the community level that contributes to the wellbeing of communities through supporting sustainable livelihoods and protecting valued socio – cultural traditions and natural and cultural heritage resources which can only be fully achieved if the community has sufficient capacity building (ASEAN, 2010). The lack of tourism skill and knowledge are acute barriers that not only directly limit the capability of local people to be involved in tourism development but also contribute to the next set of barriers (Aref et al, 2010).

Empowerment

Empowerment is an inner process in which individuals actively manage their individual challenges and set out tactics and strategies to tackle them, and ultimately accept accountability for the outcomes (Bonye et al, 2013). Community Based Tourism hence increases social sustainability by enabling the indigenous communities to manage their resources, provide significant employment, and assist with capacity building and cultural preservation (Asker, 2010). Further, tourism seems to have failed in the past due to the delayed incentives of community capacity building as the tourism trend overlaps the capability for a community to develop all needed skills to respond to tourism requirements (Ahmeti (2013). Therefore to achieve empowerment, the community members need to be actively involved in local tourism in their community through active constant participation, collective action of the community members and capacity building of community members. Empowerment will thus ensure that decision for CBT are made by the community based on informed choices which come from the capacity building they have been exposed to (Asker, 2010). Studies of tourism development have indicated that the greatest barriers to effective tourism development were due to a lack of skill and knowledge about tourism in general (Aref et al, 2010). The CBT principles as highlighted by ASEAN (2006) additionally indicated that CBT should involve and empower the community to ensure ownership and transparent management. Within the context of the development of the community, the local community members get empowered when they are continuously mobilized and are given the opportunity to freely participate in all joint activities embarked on (Bonye et al, 2013). Thus the indicators to be measured are empowerment, knowledge acquisition through training in line with the performance of the independent variables outcome. Capacity building of community members is mentioned as a challenge in most communities; however its significance seems not to be acknowledged. Secondly, the paper seeks to measure the role of Community capacity building on enhancing local based tourism – is there a direct correlation or not?

Research Problem

The paper endeavored to scrutinize the role of capacity building of the local communities on enhancement of community based tourism for sustainable tourism. The question that came to mind is that is capacity building an important step towards the realization of sustainable community based tourism? Secondly the study supports the view that communities should have an active role in driving various tourism centered initiatives to enable the community benefit more and this can only happen if the community has a lot of capacity building to empower them. Although the studied literature advocates how communities should gain from Local based tourism, little weight has so far been given to how local community's initiatives could be enhanced by capacity building which in the same breath will help in their contribution to local based tourism. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence on evaluations on the role of community capacity building in shaping community driven initiatives towards the realization of sustainable local tourism. The aim of this paper is to therefore to familiarize, describe and examine Community capacity building as a basis of sustainability of local based tourism projects.

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To establish if the local community has benefited from capacity building towards the enhancement of CBT
2. To investigate the performance of capacity building on enhanced Community based tourism

Study Methodology and Design

This study adopted a mixed research methodology. Non-probability sampling was used to identify the community members who live in the Amboseli park ecosystem in Olgulului ranch which guaranteed working with local Maasai who live in similar settings and relevant circumstances that befit the topic of the study; and are conversant enough to enhance the achievement of the study goals and research objectives. Questionnaires were distributed to the members of the group ranch with 328 fully filling them and returning for data analysis. These were a true representation of the local community members in Olgulului group ranch. This also included four groups for the focus group discussions with each group having women, men, youth and older men to give a true representation. An interview guide and questionnaires were used to collect the data. The data was coded, analyzed and presented in tables.

The Key Findings

The study pursued to find out the level of importance of community capacity building in Community based tourism. This capacity building included training on local tourism, empowerment, knowledge acquisition which empowered the community make better decisions on tourism initiatives. The study therefore checked on their training on local tourism and knowledge acquisition and if they have a role in improving CBT execution.

Community's Gender

Table 1.1: Gender of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	202	61.6	61.6	61.6
Valid Female	126	38.4	38.4	100.0
Total	328	100.0	100.0	

The study acknowledged that men were majority at 61.6% while the women accounted only for 33.3%. Men were expected to be more also because it was recognized that it was a male dominated community and men played a bigger role in various activities. On another note, the percentages could be an indication that women are to some extent involved in economic activities in Amboseli ecosystem.

Highest Level of Education and Training

The response given by the community members was likely to be determined by the education status which made it imperative to know the level of education of the respondents. An allotment of community members by the education attained indicated they are not educated. Table 4.9 below shows that a majority of the respondents (66.2%) were illiterate. 8.5% had adult education, 11.6% were primary school graduates, 11.3% were secondary school graduates, 2.1% were technical college graduates and 0.3% were university graduates as shown in table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2 Highest Level of Education and Training

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
None	217	66.2	66.2	66.2
Adult Education	28	8.5	8.5	74.7
Primary	38	11.6	11.6	86.3
Valid Secondary	37	11.3	11.3	97.6
Technical College	7	2.1	2.1	99.7
University	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total	328	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data (2017)

From the findings indicated above, majority of the respondents in Amboseli ecosystem are illiterate, which is an indication that they have low opportunities of inclusion in decision making due to high ignorance, limited knowledge and lack of information to make adequate decisions in community based tourism. The figure above confirms that youths of the age group 20-30 years and 31-40 years have higher education background compared to the older community members who are illiterate. From the findings indicated above, majority of the respondents in Olgulului Group Ranch are illiterate, which a symptom of their low chances of inclusion in decision making due to high ignorance, limited knowledge and lack of information to make adequate decisions in community based tourism. The current status as at the time of data collection showed that the few identified as educated in the community are from the younger generation. However, based on the sample size, the numbers are still low to make a significant change to the community at large. Secondly, very few within the older generation have attempted to be literate through adult education. This is an indication for the need for capacity building as an initial base towards increased knowledge.

Table 1.3: The Analysis of Variance on Education

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	59.479	4	14.870	11.938	.000
Within Groups	403.578	324	1.246		
Total	463.058	328			

Source: Field data (2017)

The table above shows the p-value being less than 0.05, which shows that diverse age groups have different education backgrounds in Amboseli ecosystem except those who are over 61 years that were generally illiterate.

Table 1.4: Community Capacity Building

	Participation		Total
	Agree	Disagree	
Training	168	35	203
Knowledge acquisition	107	18	125
Total	275	53	328

Source: Field data (2017)

Table 1.4 above indicates that a most of the respondents (83.9%) agreed that the Community capacity building that can impact on sustainable CBT is through training on local tourism for behavior change that can lead to increased roles in CBT; with the trainings being regular and effective. 16.1% of the respondents did not agree. This was interpreted to mean that community capacity building is vital in the growth of community based tourism.

Hypothesis

H0: There is no association between community capacity building and CBT growth
 H1: There is an association between community capacity building and CBT growth

Table 1.5: Chi-square test on Community capacity building

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.165 ^a	4	.004
Likelihood Ratio	21.616	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.155	1	.694
N of Valid Cases	328		

Source: Field data (2017)

Table 1.5 findings indicate that the Pearson’s chi-square value is 15.165 and the p-value is 0.004. Since $0.004 < 0.05$, this indicates that there is significant association between community capacity building towards the enhancement of CBT in Olgulului group ranch.

Table 1.6: Phi and Cramer’s tests for confirmation on Community capacity building

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.215	.004
Nominal Cramer's V	.215	.004
N of Valid Cases	328	

Source: Field data (2017)

Table 1.6, the Phi and Cramer’s chi-square values are 0.215 and 0.215 respectively and the p-value is 0.004. Since $0.004 < 0.05$, this ratifies the results in table 4.22 that there is statistical significant association between those who agreed and disagreed against community capacity building that there is an association between community capacity building and CBT. This implies that apart from training on local tourism and regular trainings, there are other ways of community capacity building ways that can be employed, which are not all being employed for the betterment of the community members.

Table 1.7 Trained on Local Tourism

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	168	51.2	51.2	51.2
Disagree	107	32.6	32.6	83.8
Neutral	19	5.8	5.8	89.6
Agree	29	8.8	8.8	98.5
Strongly agree	5	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	328	100.0	100.0	

CONCLUSION

CCB is then seen as a significant variable that can lead to the smooth implementation of CBT. It’s imperative to appreciate that the community members are not very literate and not proficient on running CBT initiatives. This then leads to the gap identified on the selling, packaging, communication and marketing skills the community members are administering to benefit from the sale of their products. It as much echoes on the findings whereby during high visitation in the park, the community still experiences low visitation due to limited capacity building which has been measured as an important variable towards the attainment of CBT in Amboseli. However, the limited capacity building has weakened the community members from proactively engaging in the identified elements for the successful implementation of CBT within the local setting. This then upsets the role they can play in decision making since they have insufficient skills and knowledge that can be delivered from various training initiatives to deliver the way they drive the local tourism initiatives. To survive, the community stated that they apply guerilla methods to ensure they drive initiatives on community based tourism which don’t automatically deliver the desired results to effect a change in their lives. Hence in conclusion, the statistical significance of the test indicated that community capacity building has its p-value < 0.05 , which indicates that it is not significant to the model/prediction. This then indicates the need to reject the null hypothesis stated meaning that the alternative hypothesis is true at the 95% confidence level.

The alternative hypothesis states that there is an association between community capacity building and CBT growth. This then means that, there is satisfactory evidence at the level of significance to reject the claim that there is no association between community capacity building and community based tourism. Therefore there is sufficient evidence to conclude that on the other hand, the odds of having community capacity building on enhancing local based tourism in Amboseli were 10.342 times less likely to be sustainable than those of no sustainability. Lastly, one main conclusion can be drawn from this survey: the local community is much aware that it presently does not have adequate training, education and knowledge to tackle the challenge of CBT implementation. Generating sustainable tourism means creating a sustainable capacity building model that must be simultaneously implemented with overall community development process (Ahmeti, 2013). Therefore community capacity building (CCB) which is expected to lead to successful CBT as stated by Aref et al, (2010) in the literature reviewed, is necessary for improving the process of tourism development and enhancing its benefits for local communities. There is insufficient community capacity which can empower the community members to mobilize and solve problems effectively. This then brings us to the supposition that if community capacity building is taken into consideration, it will curb the limited knowledge leading to increased empowerment and sense of ownership which have been acknowledged as an important recipe for sustainable CBT. In line with the inadequate education background as highlighted in the demographic data, there is ignorance and lack of information on what the community can do to improve on CBT implementation. Those who visit the Bomas are very few since they have little information flow and most of the community members don't know how to look for visitors. The community members additionally stated that the community does not have a website for communicating their products and they have no knowledge on how to source for one. During the dry seasons, some of the money gained from tourism is given to the community members to buy food. This then makes them consume the money used for foreseen circumstances which can be managed better. The community members reiterated that the community members use their savings during low season as they rely on those who come. This then highlights that the community members have little knowledge on how to access visitors

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure sustainable CBT, the community should ensure localized training on how to sell and market their products in response to the fact that they have inadequate capability. There is further need to identify market needs and how to feed into their needs. The capacity building should also integrate how to generate awareness and how to safeguard quality finished products that are easy to sell. Further, based on the findings on high illiteracy levels and little to no knowledge on marketing and selling their products, the communities need to be trained on how to display their artifacts in a well-ordered manner and not in the sun that affects the quality of their goods over time. To ensure the products are still in great shape at the point of selling them, the communities need to put up structures or systems that will control unplanned growing cultural boma structures with similar set out standards'. The existing selling system is not standardized and there is need for a central point of buying the products. Most importantly, the study findings dictate the need for developed standards to meet market demand, and the community to be educated and trained

to meet the set standards. The community needs to be also educated on how they can maximize and tap from tourism. Limited education was identified in the findings as a barrier towards the realization of local people in accessing various tourism opportunities. To ensure a connection between capacity building and enhancement of CBT, there is need for increased focus on training at the community level which will create great opportunities for the indigenous community in Olgulului group ranch. This then concludes that to attain sustainable CBT, the community members ought to commence by guaranteeing that capacity building is an initial step towards the realization of CBT. This will tackle the challenges as highlighted in the study namely; ignorance, illiteracy, limited knowledge of packaging and selling their products among others. The study therefore recommends that each stakeholder including the government, non-government and business community among other stakeholders have to work together in the process of designing and conveyance of CBT literacy capacity building models where the locals “own” the process. More significantly the findings indicate of capacity building having high likelihoodness towards the achievement of sustainability. This makes capacity building very critical as an initial stage towards the achievement of enhanced CBT. To this end, the study recommends learning and capacity building practices which ought to be encouraged across communities by promotion of opportunities and equipping the community with proper skills and knowledge to plan, manage and facilitate CBT activities in a sustainable manner. Employment, capacity building and recognition of skills and knowledge are significant for indigenous community members to gain from numerous opportunities within the community members of Olgulului group ranch that can allow them assist in the implementation of CBT. With this, the community members can take an additional step further to warrant that they determine an accreditation process for participants to finish their training.

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