



Tourism diversification in Botswana - a stakeholder perspective

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Abstract

The paper examines the prospects of tourism product diversification in the tourism industry of Botswana. The government of Botswana is faced with the challenge of diversifying the economy and tourism has been proposed as one of the key clusters to lead the needed diversification. Tourism in Botswana is largely wildlife based. A review of tourism diversification discourse suggests that it improves destination competitiveness, overcomes the issues of seasonality and distributes tourists to other areas thereby ensuring industry sustainability. The methodological approaches to the study blended a mix of extensive literature reviews, document analysis, primary data collection through open ended and closed questionnaires to provide a balanced examination of the challenges and the opportunities of tourism product diversification. We conclude that there is need to diversify the tourism industry in Botswana through events, culture and sports tourism. Though sustainability and competitiveness are common objectives for tourism diversification, the stakeholders in Botswana regard it as an avenue to create employment for the local community and alleviate poverty. The study therefore recommends that the government, together with key stakeholders invest in the events industry, upgrade sports facilities and work with communities to reposition the local culture as a key tourism asset.

Keywords: Tourism diversification, stakeholders, sustainability, Botswana

Introduction

Tourism in Southern Africa has been largely nature based. Botswana's tourism is no exception as it has been sustained over the years through its abundant wildlife resources. However, exposing the destination to intense competition from neighbouring countries and the ever changing tourist preferences is a challenge. According to World Travel and Tourism Council (2016) travel and tourism is an important economic activity in most countries around the world and it has significant indirect and induced impacts. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (2015) adds that tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which has implications on the economy, on the natural and built environment, on the local population at the destination and on the tourists' themselves. Therefore, tourism offers the opportunity for



economic diversification in Botswana. Tourism in Botswana is recognised as a means of supporting the diversification the economy which is concentrated in the mining sector, because tourism contributes to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country by 8.5% in 2014 and it is forecasted to rise by 5.3% pa in 2025. In addition, its employment creation is forecast to support 87,000 jobs an increase of 2.0% pa over the period by the year 2025 (10.9% of total) (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2015). However, the tourism product of Botswana is mainly wildlife based, and is concentrated to the north of the country, and the tourism strategy is towards a low-volume-high cost tourism model. This is because tourism demand in the north of Botswana has resulted in an increase of tourists and investment facilities in the area, therefore a low volume - high cost tourism strategy is adopted. As a result, other areas of the country remain underdeveloped. Moswete and Dube (2009) also note that the tourism in Botswana is strongly based on climate sensitive resources (such as wildlife) which may not be sustainable in the future due to climate change. Hence there is a need for tourism product diversification. As a result the study aimed to identify the prospects of tourism product diversification on the tourism industry of Botswana using a stakeholders' perspective as a guide.

Literature review

According to Kapunda (2003 cited in Malema 2012:55) "diversification is distribution of investment across different economic sectors to improve the economic spread and minimize overdependence on few sectors". Carlsen and Butler (2011) suggest that tourism growth can be maintained by diversification of the tourism product base, and also by producing markets with the aim of positioning the destination upmarket. Farmaki (2012) asserts that diversification requires the use of existing resources which are already under strain as well as previously unexploited resources. On the other hand, Carlsen and Butler (2011) emphasises that diversification involves developing new tourism products and attracting new markets. Furthermore, diversification has been associated with advantages of profit maximisation through the development of new products that complement cost reduction due to the transfer of assets to other markets and extension of seasonality by offering products that can be enjoyed off season (Farmaki, 2012).

Tourism product diversification in the case of Botswana would entail a rapid move away from reliance on wildlife. However, product diversification could be more of a blessing in more ways than one. Duncan and Higham (2004) assert that product diversification is schemed to adjust seasonal visitation and form physical development. Hence product diversification elevates the profile of lesser known destinations and improves the standard of living for local people (Smith, 2003). Bramwell (2004) emphasises that this is because rural properties are now redeveloped into tourism accommodation and therefore this encourages community based tourism to grow.

In addition, Agarwal and Shaw (2007) assert that tourism product diversification relieves pressure on congested resorts, provides income for older urban districts and promotes an appreciation of heritage. This also leads to an increase in quality of a country's image and the local economy becomes more diversified as jobs and shared infrastructure are created in tourism and tourism related businesses (Sharpley & Telfer, 2002). Furthermore, this can improve the residents' quality of life because the infrastructure developed does not benefit the tourists only but the hosts as well (Road, Biwal and Joshi, 2009). Although the attraction of other businesses and services to support the facilities for tourism development may increase prices in basic needs items to earn profit, hence life may become costly for the community (Malviya, 2005).

Wildlife tourism in the north of Botswana is already experiencing congestion and decongestion strategy is in place. Therefore, diversifying the tourism product to other areas will help distribute the tourist population and generate income. Despite this, Smith and Puczko (2009)



highlight that tourism product development based on nature is not different and solitary sufficient to create a profile because nature is everywhere and it does not show the distinction between competitive regions. This is relatively true in that South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and other neighbouring countries have national parks and nature reserves as nature tourism as does Botswana. However, the tourism product of these countries is diverse, unlike that of Botswana. This shows that the tourism product of Botswana is not distinctive enough to be uniquely distinguished and effectively competitive with other similar destinations offering the same type of products.

Legrand, Kauffmann and Sloan (2012) highlight that the tourism industry is highly competitive, therefore destinations must create a marked difference that will differentiate them from other similar destinations in the minds of potential tourists. Lubbe (2003) asserts diversification into culture tourism gives a country a competitive edge and provides the tourist with more to see and experience, distribute tourist population and promote return visits through positive word of mouth promotion and return visits. Rural areas in Botswana have the potential to diversify the tourism product through cultural tourism and provide the tourists with variety of experience. Tourism product diversification in Botswana can distinguish the country from other countries with its unique products therefore providing the tourists with more to see and experience hence an increase in length of stay translating to increase in revenue from tourism industry and income distribution.

Nevertheless, Farmaki (2012), argues that destinations varying the range of products lose distinctiveness when trying to reposition them as this can lead to confusion of the destination's image. This is because of the diversity of developed products that have to be marketed with the general wide brand of the destination of which some of the products developed are artificial. The tourism industry of Botswana has remained in the Chobe and the Okavango regions for a long time in the eyes of the tourists (Leechor et al, 2003). Consequently, establishing a differentiated brand foundation promoting different products might be a challenge and the recognisable nature which was known as the image of the destination might be diluted by other products as a result confusion of the destination image.

Furthermore, Agarwal and Shaw (2007) suggest that tourism product diversification may lead to increased road congestion and air pollution because of the heritage sites and resorts that are spread throughout the country that were lesser known before. On the other hand Hall and Lew (2009) postulate that the resort infrastructure geared directly for tourists as well as that which is required for the tourism industry labour force result in an extreme environmental pressure on air, land and water pollution due to congestion of the tourists and host in the limited space available. This is supported by Malviya (2005) who asserts that the involvement of many activities has the capability to steadily demolish the environmental resources on which it depends.

Tourism product diversification in Botswana may place unsustainable strain on local resources and restructuring of places as a way to compete with other countries and meeting demands of the tourists. Therefore, this has a negative effect on resident attitudes towards tourism diversification. However tourism product diversification may promote conservation of the natural resources of a local community that faded overtime and have lost appeal to the community. Therefore, this reflects distinctiveness of the community's material culture and promotes local pride in the community. However, commodification has been found as an obstacle that ruins authenticity of the product development to meet the demands of tourist expectations hence exploitation of natural resources and reconstruction of ethnicity (Malviya, 2005).



Role of stakeholders in tourism diversification

Stakeholders can be defined as individuals or groups that can be affected by the activities of an organisation (Freeman, 1984). These can also be looked at as individuals who have an interest in the organisation. Therefore, when looking at stakeholders it is necessary to have criteria that reflect the categories and the priorities of the stakeholder theoretically (Fassin, 2008). Jemilo (2012) suggests that stakeholders can be analysed using 'The Agile Stakeholder Management Framework for teams, programmes and portfolios'. In this framework, stakeholders are classified into major stakeholders and minor stakeholders. Major stakeholders have a high level of ability to influence the outcome of a decision and also have an interest in the outcome while minor stakeholders have low ability to influence the decision (MgGoerge and Zon, 2013). In addition, major stakeholders are continuously engaged in the organisation while minor stakeholders are engaged when deemed necessary. There is therefore need to monitor and meet the needs of all the stakeholders. This is because of the stakeholders' power to influence the decision and how their behaviour can also influence the outcome of a decision. In this case, tourism diversification must therefore be able to meet the needs of all the stakeholders of tourism in Botswana hence this paper examines perspectives of stakeholders with regards to tourism diversification. We conclude that a cautious approach to the development of tourism product to diversify the tourism industry of Botswana needs to be adopted.

Methodology

The researcher used pragmatism philosophy which is emerging in tourism research studies. Pansiri (2005) highlights that tourism research historically has tended to emphasize on the use of one philosophy without full justification, therefore there is a need to put more emphasis on researching. As a result, pragmatism philosophy is used which utilises two philosophies namely interpretivism and positivism. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) justify the combination of two philosophies. Notable is that, the way data is interpreted and understood is affected by our particular social conditioning therefore both positivist and interpretivist philosophies are used to integrate different perspectives to help collect and interpret data in detail. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to carry out the research. The two methods have been mixed to provide a balanced examination of the challenges and the opportunities of tourism product diversification in Botswana. Dawson (2009) justifies that neither the quantitative nor the qualitative is superior to the other, therefore mixing the two methods cover the weaknesses of the other creating a balance. Thus a mixed methodology is desirable.

The sample used for this research is from Botswana tourism government departments which are the major stakeholders because of their high-level ability to influence the outcome of decisions. They are namely, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), Botswana Wildlife Management Association, Department of Tourism (DoT), Botswana Tourism Organization (BTO), Hospitality and Tourism Association of Botswana (HATAB) and Statistics Botswana. The minor stakeholders involved are parastatal bodies and private sector actors such as inter alia, museums, academia, the accommodation sector, travel agents and tour operators.

Information for the study was collected through the use of a combined closed and open ended questionnaire. The number of participants who took part in the research is thirty-six (see table 1). Table 1 shows the number of participants by the organisation and whether they are major stakeholders or minor stakeholders.



Table 1: Number of Participants by the Organisation

Organisation	Number of Participants (n-36)	Major/ Minor Stakeholder
Botswana Tourism Government bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Botswana Tourism Organisation (BTO) in Gaborone • Department of Tourism (DOT) in Gaborone • Hospitality and Association Tourism of Botswana (HATAB) in Gaborone • Department of Wildlife and National Parks in Gaborone, Mochudi and Chobe • Botswana Wildlife Management Association in Chobe 	13	Major Stakeholder
Institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okavango Research Institute (ORI)-UB in Maun • Limkokwing University of Creative in Gaborone in Gaborone • New Era College of Arts Science and Technology in Gaborone • Mega-size College in Gaborone 	8	Minor Stakeholder
Museums <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of National Museum and Monument in Gaborone • Supa Ngwao Museum in Francistown • Phuthadikobo Museum in Mochudi • Kgosi Schele I Museum in Molepolole • Tsodilo Museum in Tsodilo 	6	Minor Stakeholder
Travel Agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunrise Travel and Tour in Gaborone • Maroon Safaris in Gaborone • Adventure Safaris in Gaborone • Wilderness Safaris in Gaborone 	4	Minor Stakeholder
Accommodation Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaborone Sun International Hotel in Gaborone • Cresta Lodge in Gaborone • Chobe Game Lodge in Chobe 	3	Minor Stakeholder
Statistics Botswana in Gaborone	1	Major Stakeholder
Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khama Rhino Sanctuary in Serowe 	1	Major Stakeholder

Secondary literature sources including books, journals, reports and newspapers were also used to extract information presented by other authors concerning the same topic so as to

meaningfully address the objectives of the study. Literature for secondary sources was extracted from the following themes, tourism diversification, destination competitiveness, tourism seasonality and Botswana tourism resource matrix. Data from the empirical survey was analysed through constant comparative analysis which involves comparing data to develop an understanding of relationships among the different pieces of data (Thorne 2000 cited in Shi, 2009).

Findings

Opportunity for tourism product diversification

The evidence from the survey showed that 100% of the stakeholders were of the view that Botswana indeed has the opportunity for tourism product diversification. Sixty four percent (64%) of these respondents agreed while thirty six percent (36%) strongly agreed, therefore this suggests that respondents have the common perspective that Botswana has opportunity for tourism product diversification. Fifty six percent (56%) of the respondents are minor stakeholders while 44% of the respondents are major stakeholders that participated in the study (see figure 1)

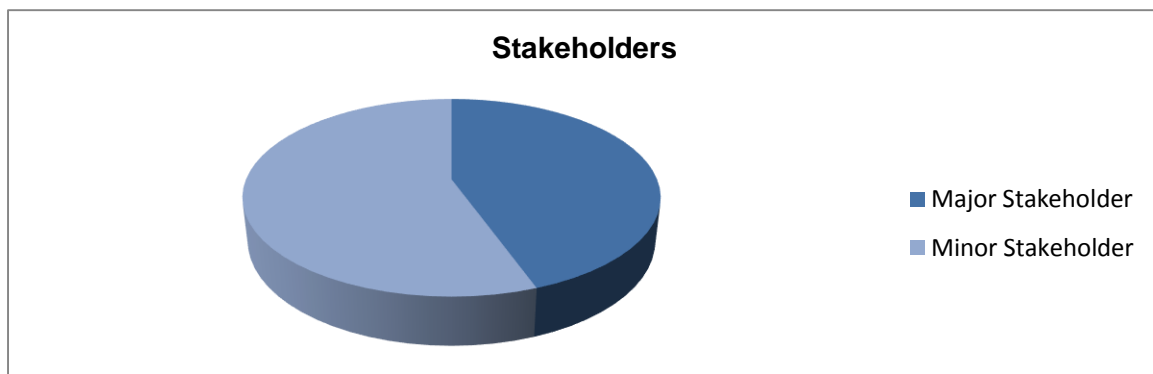


Figure 1: Stakeholder type

Both the minor and major stakeholders' respondents showed that Botswana has the opportunity for diversification by mentioning different opportunities as expressed in Figure 2 below.

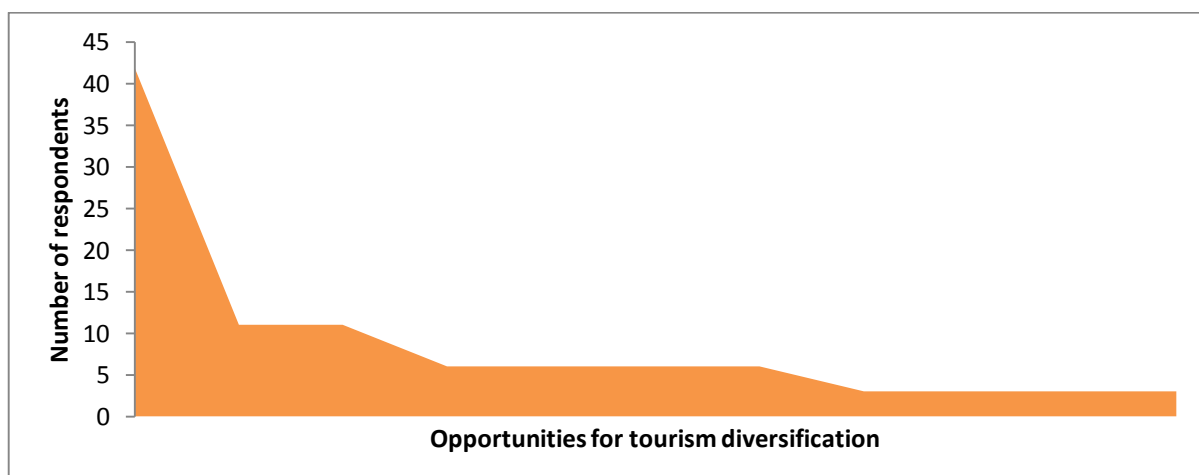


Figure 2: Opportunities for Tourism Diversification in Botswana



From the analysis of the survey chart above respondents mentioned that Botswana has various tourism services and products that the country has not tapped into. Mine touring, medical tourism, agro tourism, rock climbing in Kgale hill have the least number of respondents with three percent (3%) each respectively. While arts and crafts, event and conferencing – MICE tourism, entertainment tourism -leisure tourism followed from the least of number of respondents with six percent (6%) each respectively. The data from the above chart shows that sports tourism and spiritual – religious tourism both had eleven percent (11%) number of the respondents.

Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents that mentioned sports tourism e.g. The annual Khawa Dune Challenge can be an example of the opportunity for tourism product diversification because the place offers camel rides, quad bikes competition, camp sites and exhibitions for community.

Forty two percent (42%) of the respondents proposed culture as the opportunity for tourism product diversification in Botswana. A male director from a museum explained that:

Botswana has rich culture of different ethnic groups which are rich in their cultures with unique arts and crafts, historical archaeological sites which are ignored, and the museums have the potential to diversify into these products however the organisations are not promoted at all (participant Z).

In addition, another male director from a museum further explained that:

Communal cultural festivals have showed the potential of tourism product diversification in communities. Dithubaruba Festival in Kweneng District, Domboshaba Festival and Sedibelo Festival in Kgatleng district has attracted many locals and international tourists because of their uniqueness (Z).

The researchers identified another trend of opportunities for tourism product diversification from an analysis of a survey. Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents highlighted that Botswana has an opportunity for product diversification because of the community based natural resource management policy (CBNRM). This policy gives communities lump adjacent to protected area to benefit directly from natural resources.

Moreover eight percent (8%) of the males that participated in the research mentioned that Botswana has great potential for tourism product diversification because of the government subsidy schemes, youth grants and financial institutions, Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) to support citizens who want to participate in tourism activities.

A male of the age group 36-46 years from a museum added that:

The corporate entities have shown interest in sponsoring some of the activities. The Kuru Dance Festival was sponsored by the Botswana Telecommunications Corporation with close to P350 000 and Debswana with close to P500 000. This shows that if tourism diversifying products could be packaged well, the corporate world will be supportive (Z).

On the other hand, three percent (3%) of respondents said the bilateral agreements that Botswana has with other countries create opportunities for tourism product diversification as the country can easily benchmark from the partnering agreements. This concludes that indeed Botswana has opportunities for diversifying the tourism product because there are financial investment opportunities and abundant of resources which are unexploited.

The results presented above are further separated according to type of stakeholder (minor/stakeholder) perspective for comparison.

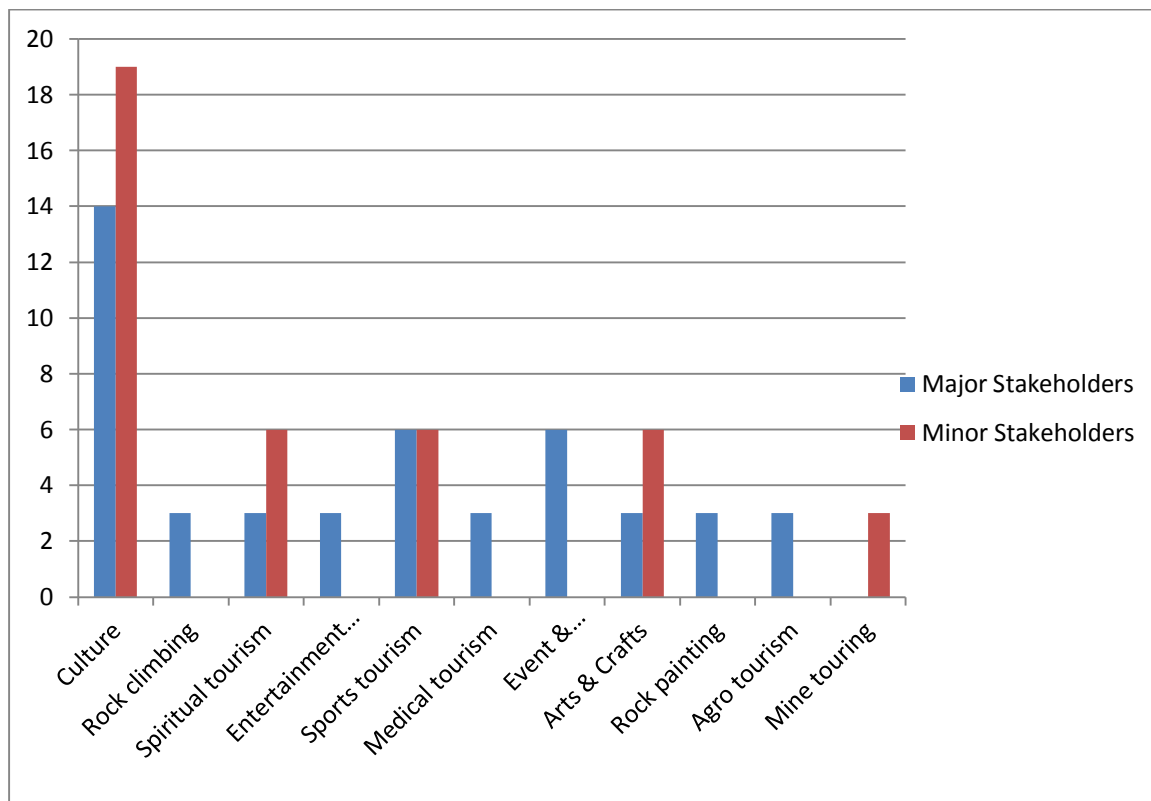


Figure 3: Stakeholder Perspective

The results indicate that major stakeholders mentioned different opportunities of diversifying the tourism industry compared to the minor stakeholders. The major stakeholders stated rock climbing, entertainment, medical tourism, event and conferencing, agro tourism and rock climbing as important aspects, which the minor stakeholders did not mention as opportunities for diversification. Mine touring is the only opportunity that the major stakeholders did not mention that is stated by the minor stakeholders. This shows that the major stakeholders have more knowledge concerning diversification of the tourism product than the minor stakeholders because there are continuously engaged in the organisation however the major stakeholders are sluggish in the implementation of the referred opportunities for tourism product diversification.

The study further concludes that tourism stakeholders are aware of the potential benefits of tourism diversification (see Figure 4). Increases in revenue for tourism and capacity building were minimally highlighted by the respondents, as the benefits for tourism product diversification. Increases in revenue was stated by two respondents and capacity building by one. The results indicate that tourism product diversification in Botswana is largely regarded as a creator of employment and is seen as an alleviator of poverty from the community because in reality the community is very poor. This concludes that the priority of tourism product differentiation in Botswana is to improve the residents' quality of life. Issues of being competitive in the market and improving gross domestic product are not seen as key priorities.

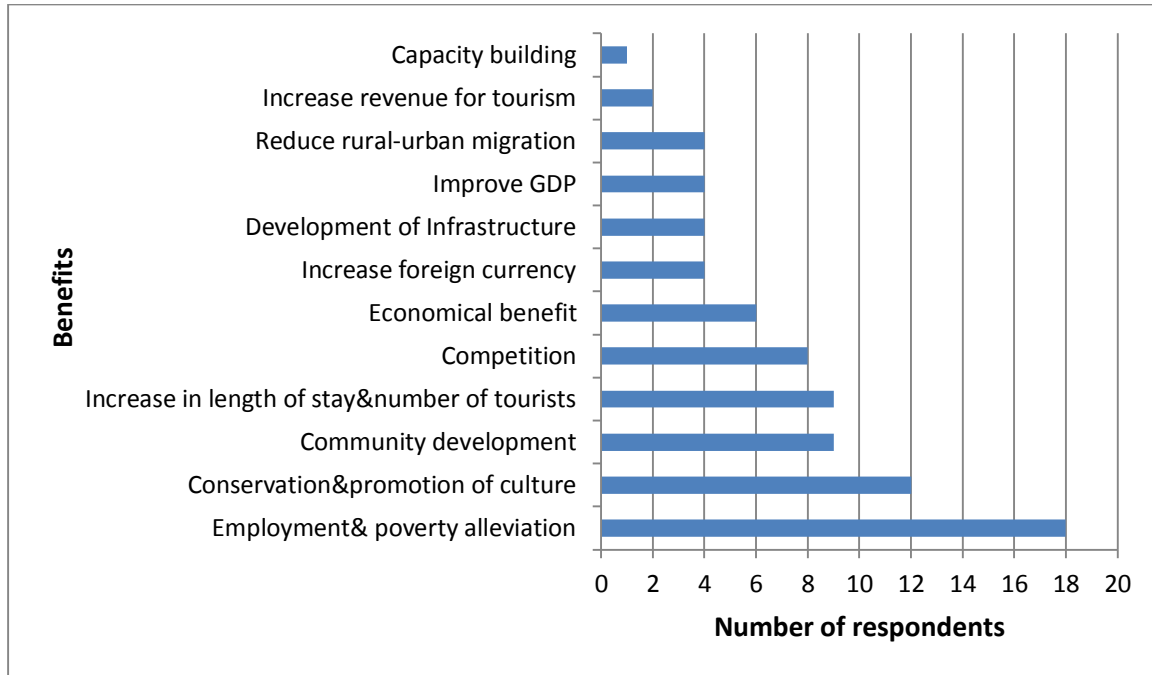


Figure 4: Distribution of Benefits of tourism product diversification by number of respondents.

Negative impacts of tourism product diversification

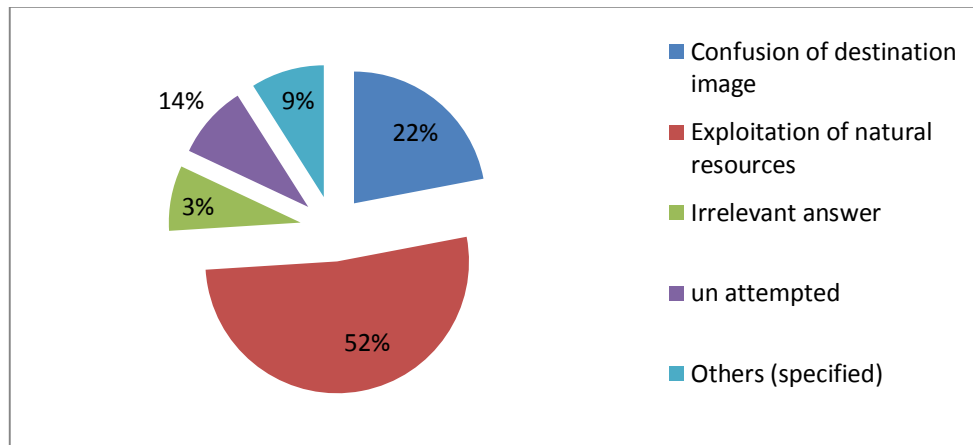


Figure 5: Negative impacts of tourism product diversification

The results in figure 5 shows that eighty three (83%) of the respondents agreed that tourism product diversification can have negative impacts while seventeen (17%) of the respondents did not answer the question.

Exploitation of natural resources: The majority of the respondents'- fifty percent (52%) said tourism product diversification in Botswana can result in exploitation of natural resources because of the opportunity for entrepreneurship, therefore exposing all products and commodification of products that proved to be a success in the market. Hence, leading to undeveloped products and compromising on quality of the offerings.

Confusion of destination image: Figure 5 reveals that twenty-two (22%) of the respondents assert that tourism product diversification can result in confusion of destination image because of a variety of products in different places therefore losing distinctiveness of other products that already exist. Consequently culture of the local community may lose its authenticity.



Others (specified): The survey analysis shows that only nine (9%) of the respondents specified other negative impacts of tourism product diversification that the researcher did not include in the questionnaire as options. A female from a tertiary institution said:

Tourism product diversification can result in involvement of inexperienced local community in entrepreneurship as a way to empower them. Hence product consuming and training will take place at the same time compromising quality offering (Y).

In addition, six percent (6%) of males from government tourism bodies purported that product diversification may lead to mass tourism and lack of support to different products as this requires strong focus and accountability.

From the analysis, in conclusion the researcher found out that tourism product diversification in Botswana can largely be improved to create employment and alleviate the community from poverty however there is fear that diversification will exploit the natural resources of destinations in Botswana. Hence authenticity of the destination is threatened as the results of the commodification and monopolization of the products.

Discussion

The emphasis of the survey indicates that tourism product diversification in Botswana is highly supported in order to vary the product offerings of the tourism industry. Alternative tourism, financial institutions and bilateral agreements were highlighted as explicit opportunities of diversifying tourism product in Botswana. Tourism product diversification in the views of respondents brings employment, community development and increase number of tourists and length of stay. This is also reflected in literature review by Roday, Biwal and Joshi (2009) that tourism product diversification improves the quality of life of the community because the infrastructure geared directly to product diversification also benefits the community.

The role of culture as a basis of diversification in Botswana

Culture is highly reiterated among other niches by the respondents as offering an opportunity to diversify the tourism product of Botswana. The respondents mentioned the use of museums and cultural festivals; Dithubaruba Festival in Kweneng District, Domboshaba Festival and Sedibelo Festival in Kgatleng as a way to promote tourism through culture. Lubbe (2003) justifies that diversification into culture tourism gives a country a competitive edge and provides the tourist with more to see and experience, distribute tourist population and promote return visits through positive word of mouth promotion. Tourism is part of a range of other activities in society (Cooper et al, 2008). Museums and cultural festivals as part of activities of tourism do contribute to the development of tourism's country to enable sustainable tourism. Van Aalst and Boogarts (2002 cited in Culley 2010) emphasize that museums have become important in supporting tourism by both educating and entertaining visitors as do the various cultural festivals.

According to Hoffman (2006) museums are now recognized as a tourist attraction. They are an important means of providing understanding into history (Lubbe, 2003), and serve as a tourist or cultural element in an overall redevelopment or renew programme for a location (Ambrose & Paine, 2006). A study by Jamal and Robinson (2009) stated that museums create a sense of 'hereness' which is necessary to convert a location into a desired destination. The latter continued saying local, regional and national museums are thus quite essentially connected with tourism; museums serve as power guides, displaying object that represents the important features of culture, history, art, and nature that tourists might want to visit. In Botswana where the tourism economy is important museums and cultural festivals may play a significant role as an attraction for a tourist destination hence diversification of the tourism



product. Ambrose and Paine (2006) support the notion that museums have a useful role to play in serving as a focus for explaining economic and associated cultural change to the local community and visitors.

Museums are part of cultural tourism positioned strategically to solve one of tourism's main problems 'density management'. They are promoted as an option to lower other sites' tourist density (Hoffman, 2006). Hoffman asserts that cultural tourism is a tool for strengthening understanding and tolerance amongst peoples through knowledge and dialogue. It includes ethnic and historical tourism and sites or places where intangible cultural heritage may be witnessed. The latter state that it focuses on local lifestyle and brings tourists closer to local people and their heritage through visits to museums, archaeological and historical sites and religious buildings. In addition, Hoffman (2006) argues that cultural tourism is an important and profitable sector which has been recognized recently. Lastly the latter suggests that preserving cultural and natural heritage is only way to find sustainability in tourism, quoting Jafari (2001:4) 'preservation and production acts ensemble can result in representative and sustainable tourism products'. Nevertheless, despite the positive consequences of the museums' role in tourism development through culture, the respondents mentioned that museums are not at all equally well promoted. Lubbe (2003) adds that museums do face the challenges of offering more creative interpretations to tourists and offering descriptive captions in more than one language. Lubbe (2003) argues that good interpretation can make a visit enjoyable for tourists. The latter defined interpretation as the act of making places understandable and meaningful to tourists. Lubbe (2003) states that good interpretation encourages visitors to ask questions and to also actively process information.

Negative consequences of tourism product diversification

Tourism product diversification has been highlighted as a consequence of exploitation of natural resource in literature review by Malviya (2005) and by the respondents. According to Butler (2006, cited in Schmitz, 2013) diversification can be achieved through exploitation of natural resources which had not previously been commercialised and the construction of new attractions in the extension of the life cycle. However, commercialisation of natural resources results negatively on developments because authenticity of the product is compromised, from adaptation to cultural expressions and manifestation to the taste of tourists, who are satisfied with quick and highly structured recreations of traditions culture and local life (Hall & Lew, 2009). Hence this leads to commodification of fragile natural resources leading to resentment by the community towards product development.

Nevertheless, if exploitation of natural resources is not used to diversify the tourism product of Botswana, other products which are benchmarked from other countries can be used. Though we should add that these products might also result in a negative impact of a destination's image and thus cause confusion. Distinctiveness of other products that the country is known for, will be lost and diluted because of trying to reposition with the non-existing natural resources of the destination or even with a wide variety of products which leads to no meaning existing for visiting a destination. Burns and Noveli (2008) assert that some destinations have used branding to sharpen images of their destinations however this has been a challenge to destinations that are diversifying products because of the need to build a wide destination brand with differentiated products in their limited capacity.

Conclusion

Tourism product diversification has been associated with enhancing seasonality of a destination, increasing length of stay and promotion of lesser known destinations hence improving the quality of life of the community. This is a result of destinations demanding to be distinctive and competitive in the market to satisfy the modern tourist who is sophisticated and



demands variety of products to consume. Nevertheless, the study found out that tourism product diversification in Botswana can largely benefit the community through employment and distribute tourist population and income generation. Therefore, tourism product diversification provides an opportunity for the community to alleviate poverty. On the other hand tourism product diversification in Botswana has been found to impact negatively by utilising natural resources that are under strain for commercialisation. Hence the authenticity of the product is compromised by the greater need to satisfy the new tourist and entrepreneurship initiatives of the community. In addition, commodification of the product also results in monotonous products being produced all over the country because of the fear of being different in the market.

The study indicated that major stakeholders are likely to be more knowledgeable about tourism product diversification than minor stakeholders because they are continuously engaged in the arrangements, and as a result they have a high level of ability to influence the outcome of a decision and have interest in the outcomes. However major stakeholders by comparison, are sluggish in development because tourism product diversification was found to demand financial resources as diversification requires large investments and most Botswana are not financially stable enough to support this. As a result, the study suggests that major stakeholders should empower the minor stakeholders with knowledge to elicit in the implementation of tourism product diversification.

This concludes, that from a stakeholders' perspective tourism product diversification of a destination depends on the level of acceptance of tourism in a country and what the destination is to achieve because it varies from destination to destination. The perception that tourism product diversification improves seasonality of the destination is not applicable to all countries. The dominant tourism product of a destination and the one opted for seasonally may attract masses of tourists at the same time therefore seasonality of the destination still remains a challenge. This is because the new tourists travel to see other new things and create a memorable experience and do not travel to merely consume one product. Future studies could look at how the level of acceptance of tourism in a country influences tourism product diversification because the study found that tourism product diversification in a country depends on what the country wants to achieve.

The study therefore recommends that government of Botswana together with key stakeholders, invest in the events industry, upgrade sports and recreational facilities and work with communities to reposition the local culture as a key tourism asset, especially that culture was highly reiterated among other niches by the respondents. Cultural tourism is justified to give a country a competitive edge, and provides the tourist with more to see and experience, and it distributes the tourist population and promotes return visits through positive word of mouth promotion.

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Appendix (a)

Pseudonyms by organisation

Organisation	Pseudonyms
Park	T
Accommodation Facility	U
Statistics Botswana	V
Travel agencies	W
Botswana tourism government bodies	X
Institutions	Y
Museums	Z