An Analysis of the Enablers and Barriers to a Tourism Destination's Resilience: A Case of the Erongo Region in Namibia

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Abstract

Destination resilience is emerging as an important concept in the tourism management literature. This is because of the recognition that tourism needs strategies to cope with future shocks. The tourism disruptions caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the frequent occurrence of climatic disasters globally have made this need more apparent. Against this background, this study sought to analyse the enablers and barriers to tourism destination resilience in a post-Covid-19 Namibia. Data were collected in 2022 in the Erongo Region, which is one of Namibia's key tourism destinations, and it was also a major Covid-19 pandemic hotspot. A stratified cluster random sampling approach was used to collect data from towns that were grouped into three tourism strata: Tourism accommodation, tour operators, and tourism-related characteristic industry. The study identified several key enablers for resilience. At the individual level, these enablers include intelligence and academic ability, social competence, and self-efficacy. For enterprise resilience, the study findings underscored the importance of having management and staff that are imbued with self-determination to adapt, and the skills to deal with future changes, as well as the ability to collaborate. In terms of community resilience, the important enabling factors were the level of infrastructure construction, access to resources, and the presence of innovative tourism marketing and local people's traditional environmental knowledge. The major barriers to destination resilience were, namely,

unprofessional customer service, lack of security infrastructure, insufficient investment in the sector, high tax on tourism products and lack of proper amenities. Given these findings, this paper contributes to the nascent literature on tourism disaster and crisis management in Namibia. It also draws research attention to the importance of small tourism and hospitality businesses as a pathway to foster more resilient businesses in the face of possible future shocks. The study recommends the establishment of appropriate tourism policies that are pivotal to building destination resilience, building capacity to plan and anticipate future changes and investing in durable infrastructure that can withstand economic disruptions and climate-induced shocks.

Keywords: destination resilience; enablers; barriers; COVID-19; micro-tourism businesses; micro-hospitality businesses

Introduction

The importance of tourism to Namibia's economy is irrefutable, especially in relation to its sustaining of employment and community livelihoods. In 2018, the tourism industry directly contributed N\$5.2 billion to the economy – an equivalent of 3.5% of the total Gross Domestic Product of the country. In addition, a further N\$26 billion was contributed indirectly, thereby making up a total contribution of about 14.5% of the GDP (GIZ, 2020). In terms of job creation, tourism is responsible for 44,700 jobs in terms of direct employment, including over 2,900 tourism-based jobs provided in community conservation areas. However, despite its economic importance to Namibia, tourism is very susceptible to natural and manmade disasters, including climate risks, health risks and other vulnerabilities. This was made more apparent by the disastrous impact of COVID-19 on the Namibian economy. The pandemic brought to a halt the tourism growth trend since the 1990s. The number of visitors was reduced from 1.5 million in 2019 to close to zero arrivals in mid-2020 (MET, 2020). To recover quickly from such disasters, and to enhance preparedness for future catastrophes, hazards and/or risks, Namibia needs to build resilience for it to remain strong as a tourist destination.

Destination resilience is a current and valuable concept that deals with risks and uncertainties relating to tourism. It can help tourism stakeholders and tourism destinations to absorb disruptions, as well as increase adaptability and transformation towards sustainable tourism development (Lendelvo et al., 2022). Destination resilience, therefore, can be described as the overall ability of stakeholders in a tourist destination (e.g., service providers, institutions, organisations) to deal with different risks while sustaining an acceptable level of functionality of the tourism system in consideration of the long-term prospects for sustainable development. Dealing with existing and emerging risks encompasses the ability to assess, plan, and act to prepare for, prevent, adapt, and respond to different sources of risks, shocks, and stressors (DKKV, 2022; UN, 2020; UN-Habitat, 2018).

Shocks and stressors include different hazards that may be natural, human-made or hybrid in origin. Hazards can be described as sources that have the potential to cause harm, accidents, or adverse impacts (Muhammad & Hastuti, 2019). The United Nations General Assembly (UNDRR, 2020), perceive a hazard as a process, phenomenon or human activity that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, social and economic disruption, and environmental degradation. Aznar-Crespo et al. (2020) contend that hazards are by nature very damaging to the tourism industry and they affect mostly tourists, tourism businesses and the local population. Conversely, risks generally result from the interaction of vulnerability, exposure, and a hazard. In the context of tourism, a risk is the potential for adverse impacts and consequences for something of value in the tourism system, i.e., tourism actors, tourists and visitors, assets, properties, infrastructure, and natural or cultural attractions.

The difference between hazards and risks is that while hazards deal with tangible possibilities, risk perception is concerned with the extent of awareness of a specific issue and its consequences on one's close environment (Genc, 2021), specifically, an individual's

interpretation of a potential risk and the probability of hazard occurrence regardless of the degree of the perceived threat. Therefore, when a tourist is making a holiday decision, the selection of a destination is based not only on the price and image of the respective destination, but also on personal safety, which is largely perceived in relation to the respective destination (Eitzinger & Weidemann, 2009). Risk perception, therefore, has an impact on the image of the destination. This is primarily because the success of a tourist destination largely depends on the perceived image that tourists have of the present reality as well as the future.

Hence, hazards and any negative perceptions are likely to result in a reduction of tourist arrivals to a destination. Reduced tourist arrivals mean a reduction of the income that is likely to be generated along the tourism value chain. For a destination such as Namibia, it is, therefore, imperative to identify and profile the different hazards and challenges that are relevant to the country's tourism and to understand their impact on the sector. In this study, therefore, we analysed the enablers and barriers to tourism destination resilience in Namibia using the Erongo region as a case study.

The tourism industry is generally known to be vulnerable to external disasters. Hence, it is crucial that it has established resilience measures prior to any disaster that will enable it to mitigate, prepare, adequately respond, and recover from a disaster. However, according to the Tourism Digital SEIA report, the COVID-19 pandemic had a major negative impact on the Namibian tourism industry in general and the micro-small tourism and hospitality businesses specifically, resulting in retrenchments and rising unemployment due to closure of several businesses (Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism [MEFT] & United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2021). During the pandemic, low demand, and severe uncertainties in terms of future operations and revenue generation led to significant financial losses and operational constraints (IPPR Briefing Paper, 2022). Despite the known vulnerability and the lessons learnt during this crisis, there is still a paucity of research on the enablers and challenges to building the resilience of tourism and hospitality businesses in Namibia. Further research into the latter contributes to the literature on enablers and barriers to building the resilience of micro-small tourism and hospitality businesses in the face of current and potential future disasters.

Given the foregoing discussion highlighting the vulnerability of the tourism sector to shocks and disasters, and the paucity of studies on destination resilience, the need for research on enablers and barriers to tourism destination resilience is self-evident. The objective of this study was, therefore, to analyse the enablers and barriers to tourism destination resilience in a post-Covid-19 Namibia. Such a study provides a much needed and relevant extension of the body of knowledge on the enablers and barriers to tourism and hospitality business resilience. An understanding of these enablers and barriers has positive policy implications as both the tourism's public and private sectors will increase their understanding of the nature of challenges to building destination resilience as well as the opportunities that exist to enhance such resilience.

Literature review

Tourism destination resilience is the overall ability of people in a tourism destination (e.g., service providers, institutions, organisations) to deal with different risks while maintaining an acceptable level of functioning of the tourism system without compromising long-term prospects for sustainable development (Destination Risk and Resilience Manual, Erongo Region, 2022). According to the DKKV (2022), and based on the UN-Habitat (2018), dealing with existing and emerging risks involves the ability to assess, plan and act in order to prepare for, prevent, adapt and respond to different sources of risks. Therefore, building tourism destination resilience enables it to absorb disruptions, and then adapting and transforming and

realising its full and sustainable potential. Hence, building tourism destination resilience is crucial for rapid recovery and improved preparedness for risks, hazards, and/or disaster management in the future.

Building resilience at the destination level has received attention in recent research (Schroeder & Pennington-Gray, 2018; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019; Lindsay-Smith et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022; Gera & Kumar, 2023). However, a tourism destination is made up of various stakeholders such as individuals/employees, tourism businesses, and communities as actors, thus assessing their resilience is a crucial first step in developing a strategy for destination-wide resilience. The micro, meso and macro tourism resilience framework is a widely acknowledged conceptual model for analysing tourism resilience at various scales. The micro level resilience comprises of tourism employees/individuals (Saad & Elshaer, 2020), tourist segments (Verèb et al., 2020), residents (Janusz et al., 2017) and other tourism-related temporary populations. Meso-level resilience incorporates tourism businesses (Chowdhury et al., 2019; Jamaliah & Powell, 2018; Nyaupane et al., 2020; Partelow, 2021) and value chains (Mandal & Saravanan, 2019; Mandal & Dubey, 2021). Macro-level resilience involves the tourism destination (Filimonau & de Coteau, 2020, Sisneros-Kidd et al., 2019; Cartier & Taylor, 2020) and tourism systems (Hall et al., 2021). The current study used a multi-scalar approach that addresses building destination resilience at three main scales: individual or personal resilience, business resilience and community resilience.

Multiscalar enablers to destination tourism resilience
Individual tourism resilience
Building resilience at individual level is crucial. It ensures individual wellbeing, as well as the ability to cope effectively with disasters and risks, while maintaining sustainable economic growth. The development of resilience skillsets at individual/personal level cascades into the overall business resilience and eventually the community and destination level. The lack thereof, can adversely affect an individual's mental health when having to manage a difficult crisis or disaster at work. In addition, an individual's resilience is a key part of the healthy recovery and development of the tourism business and destination (Jiang et al., 2019). According to Umana-Hermosilla et al. (2020), individuals' job security and other responsibilities contribute to an employee's or self-employee's resilience. In addition, the coverage of loss of earning, medical insurance cover, psychological capital resilience, employees' involvement in policymaking, bailout packages with corresponding subsidies, and government support, were found to be important enablers (Bui et al., 2021). Other authors have highlighted the need for skillsets such as self-efficacy and personalities such as neuroticism or emotional stability (Locke, 2000; Zhao et al., 2010). However, empirically, some researchers have generally reported a negative correlation between neuroticism and resilience (Nakaya et al., 2006). Gong et al. (2020) argue that neuroticism is a risk factor for developing resilience. An openness to learning from experiences, whether positive or negative, and a high level of emotional intelligence, have been identified as enabling individuals to adapt and develop new skills to cope or face future challenges (Zhao, 2010), a positive association between openness to experience and high levels of resilience has also been found (Gong et.al. 2020).

Several studies have operationalised extraversion as either a mediator or moderator leading to resilience (McDonnell & Semkovska, 2020; Nurani & Astriani, 2019; Tse et al., 2018) since high extraversion enables individuals to leverage social support to overcome challenges faced during entrepreneurship (Ercan, 2017). It also leads to individual development when provided with opportunities to learn (Neise et al., 2021). In addition, personal growth, knowledge acquisition and training were seen to lead to resilience enablers (Lijauco et al., 2020). It is argued that individuals with academic competence may be better able to think

critically, solve problems, and analyse circumstances efficiently. These abilities enable one to cope with challenges more successfully and find creative solutions. Moreover, the empowerment of individuals with the autonomy to self-organise or assess work at different business problem levels and to turn such information into courses of action that improve performance is considered vital (Audretsch & Belitski, 2021). Furthermore, researchers argue that the ability to socially network for emotional support, advice, or assistance (Scuotto et al., 2017) and social competence (Traskevich & Fontanari, 2023) can increase an individual's resilience and coping abilities during a crisis. These researchers have found that expressing one's emotions openly and receiving warmth and affection from others while nurturing positive emotional connections can foster resilience by providing a sense of belonging and comfort during challenging times and viewing setbacks as temporary, thereby, enabling them to recover more effectively. Overall, these factors are interrelated, and they enrich an individual's overall resilience. Developing and nurturing these attributes can significantly enhance the ability to cope with and thrive in the face of adversity. However, it should be noted that resilience as an attribute can evolve. It can be developed and strengthened through personal development, social networks, and rewarding experiences. In summary, individual/personal resilience in preparedness for times of crisis and pandemics, during crises, and recovery is important to building and maintaining sustainable tourism businesses.

Business resilience
According to Jiang et al. (2019), business resilience at the organisational scale refers to an organisation's ability to persist and withstand external environmental changes (Preparation), mitigate and cope with negative effects caused by the changes (Response), and bounce forward to a new state for better future performance (Recovery). Business resilience can improve business performance in crises. Several tourism studies suggest that cash reserves (OECD, 2020) or building financial slack (Wieczorek-Kosmala, 2022) and safety nets (Mapfumo, 2022), in the form of having available unused resources (both cash and cash equivalents) that can be accessed during financial stress, enable business resilience. Furthermore, low debt levels and sound financial management leads to enhanced navigation in unforeseen situations. Other studies have identified the advantage of the social capital that establishes strong social networks and knowledge exchange by leveraging social connections and collaboration during crisis (Chowdhury et al., 2019; Gursoy & Chi, 2020). Business resilience has been noted to be reinforced by organisational learning, indicating that as the organisation evolves over time, it gains experience, and this experience can lay the foundation of knowledge creation which, in turn, shapes organisational competencies (Bhaskara & Filimonau, 2021; Kauatuuapehi et al., 2023; Tervo-Kankare et al., 2018). These authors posit that the former can lead to adaptation and skills development to deal with future changes. In fact, dynamic capabilities that lead to purposefully creating, extending, or modifying resources to adapt to changing trends have been noted as vital by businesses such as Accor (Accor, 2020). For instance, due to technological advancements post-pandemic, Accor encourages "digital nomadism" by providing co-living spaces that include hotel services and combining a place to live with a place to work through focusing on the local use of hotels (Accor, 2020). In addition, the OECD (2020) supports notions that ensure the existence of a disaster action plan, a tourism communication plan between the government and the industry, and the provision of data sources in open forums for decision-making as additional keys for building business/organisational resilience.

Community resilience
Community resilience is important for sustainable development in local communities. Community resilience is defined as the existence, development, and engagement of community

resources by community members to thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise (Magis, 2010). Community resilience allows local communities to recover from external shocks affecting their livelihoods. Within the tourism context, communities can be prone to various forms of natural or man-made shocks. Matarrita-Cascante et al. (2020) argue that communities can be vulnerable from natural and man-made shocks. Natural shocks include droughts, floods, volcanoes and earthquakes. On the other hand, man-made shocks include resource depletion, refugee influxes, economic restructuring, economic depression and armed conflicts (Adger, 2000). Community resilience to recover from external shocks is influenced by the presence or absence of various factors, namely, social, economic, and environmental factors (Holland et al., 2022; Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020). For instance, Musavengane and Kloppers (2020) argue that social capital is an important factor for local communities to recover from any shocks. Social networks and relationships can promote the development and deployment of resources and the gains that can be of benefit to an individual as well as the collective (Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020). The presence or absence of support from social networks within a community can influence the community's ability to recover from natural or man-made shocks. In addition, social capital can be determined by other interlinking factors such as trust, solidarity, fairness, networks, social inclusion and cohesion, communication, and empowerment. Good social support systems are crucial, especially for vulnerable groups of the community such as the elderly and underprivileged populations (Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020).

According to the UNWTO (2008), issues related to governance should be well considered when building community resilience in tourism development at community levels. A community with strong institutions with regards to governance can recover better from disasters and risks compared to communities with poor governing institutions. Local government and budgeting within local government institutions are also crucial factors to ensure that adequate resources are made available to communities for them to recover from shocks. Moreover, the availability of the necessary skills to manage tourism are also essential for community resilience. Collaborative management between local communities and NGOs or government officials might be an alternative option to increase community resilience in communities where the necessary skills might not be available (Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020).

Finance is one of the economic factors that play a crucial role in building community resilience, especially at community-based tourism (CBT) projects levels (Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020; Powell et al., 2018). The availability of funding and other opportunities for community members to generate income can contribute to community resilience. Holland et al. (2022) also claim that reliance on the environmental factors is one of the environmental factors that should be considered in community resilience. If people highly rely on the environment, it might create problems between the local communities and potential tourism development projects because of competing for the same environmental resources. Therefore, effective environmental conservation protection programmes are used for community resilience.

Barriers to destination resilience

Barriers to resilience at the tourism destination level can be categorised into four areas: economic, social, institutional and environmental. Socially, studies have indicated that resilience can be hindered by a lack of close relationships and collaboration among local destination stakeholders (Daniels & Tichaawa, 2021), resulting in mistrust and eventually lack of collective evidence-based decision-making. In addition, consumer dissatisfaction and negative experiences (Traskevich, 2023) of the destination caused by either the tourism supply

side or the community contribute to these barriers, although Chen et al. (2013) argue that in comparison, the uniqueness of the destination's attractions can play a much greater role in sustainable tourism development. However, occasionally due to economic reasons, unsatisfactory experiences can be caused by several factors such as the provision of insufficient amenities and skills deficiencies resulting in subpar service performance and negative after-sales services. Moreover, adverse experiences can be the result of the perception (or reality) of a destination as being unsafe (Traskevich, 2023). According to some studies, high prices (Chen, et al., 2013) can act adversely towards the competitiveness of a destination as well as insufficient marketing, diversification and innovation of products and services offered (Traskevich, 2023). It is observed that a slow adaptation to digital technologies can be caused by limitations in digital capabilities. Institutionally, studies have highlighted the shortcomings in re-designing policies that are evidence-based and that address vulnerabilities that are destination-specific, along with the lack of learning from experiences (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2020). In addition, the lack of government agility and flexibility in policy design processes in response to crises hampers destination resilience. Furthermore, inadequate coordination between central and local governments can cause failure in designing and implementing programmes meant to build resilience through multi-level governance. This connectivity as guided by a place-based tourism policy is considered vital (Chand, 2018). Additionally, the geographical spread of a destination's hotspots and tourists enables it to overcome shocks in the event of a local crisis. Finally, the lack of appropriate or inaccessibility to healthcare infrastructure has been noted to act as a hindrance to destination resilience (Cochrane, 2010; Ketter, 2022), coupled with inadequate network coverage and high speed Internet connectivity in rural areas. Ultimately, the removal of barriers to destination resilience relies on building resilience in a well-coordinated manner with consideration of a multiscalar approach within the tourism ecosystem.

Methods

Data were collected in 2022 in the Erongo Region (Figure 1). This region is one of Namibia's key tourism destinations and it dominates in terms of tourist attractions, and it attracts a large number of tourists in comparison to other tourist areas in the country. The Erongo Region comprises seven constituencies, namely Arandis, Daures, Karibib, Omaruru, Swakopmund and Walvis Bay. Its major attractions include the Dorob National Park, part of the Namib-Naukluft Park, the Spitzkoppe and Brandberg mountains, the Ohungu and Tsiseb conservancies and many other attractions. The Erongo Region was a major COVID-19 pandemic hotspot and, therefore, it was envisaged by the present researchers to serve as a rich case study on destination resilience.

This study used a structured questionnaire to collect data from 68 respondents. The questionnaires were administered face-to-face to study respondents along the Walvis Bay-Otjiwarongo Road corridor in Erongo region. The need to collect information that could be compared across sub-sectors necessitated the use of standardised questionnaires. The questions centred of barriers and enablers to destination resilience as well as the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. After the questionnaire was developed, a pilot study was done in Windhoek in order to validate the research instrument. A total of 12 individuals, sub-divided into the three sub-sectors, agreed to participate in the pilot. Thereafter, the flow of questions was adjusted. In addition, some technical questions were rephrased for clarity so that respondents could fully understand them. Respondents were interviewed in the following towns: Omaruru, Walvis Bay, Swakopmund, Karibib and Usakos.

Figure 1: The Erongo Region

Source: Erongo Regional Council (2022)

A stratified cluster random sampling approach was used with clusters being the towns, selected in the three tourism strata (tourism accommodation, tour operators, tourism-related). Stratification was done to understand how allied sub-sectors of tourism were affected by the pandemic and to determine their resilience. Although shocks may immediately affect accommodation and the hospitality sub-sector, the other two (souvenirs, including recreation and entertainment, food and beverage services, and transportation, tours and travel), will eventually be affected owing to the dwindling number of tourists. As such, a stratified approach was found to be ideal for exploring enablers and barriers to tourism destination resilience. In addition to questionnaire administration, data were also collected from workshop participants. There were two workshops that were held, one in Windhoek and the other one in Swakopmund. These workshops, held to discuss destination resilience, supplied invaluable data, especially on the indicators on enablers to tourism resilience. This added to data collected from the questionnaire survey. Peoples' ability to act in the context of risk strongly depends on their access to assets or capital (human capital, social capital, natural capital, physical capital, and financial capital), while the willingness to take action is shaped by individual values, norms, and beliefs. These factors serve both as enablers and barriers. Both enablers and barriers to pursuing resilient action are discussed in the following sections.

Results

This section presents findings on enablers to tourism resilience. The indicators were derived from the workshop participants and from the reviewed literature. Three types of enablers were

identified, that is, enablers that apply at individual level, at the enterprise/business level, and at the community level. Respondents were asked to select all that apply within each category.

A total of 68 people participated in the study. There were 33 females and 35 males who participated with the mean age of 38.4 and 49.8 years for females and males respectively (see Table 1). The minimum age was 28 years for females and 22 years for males, while the maximum age was 62 years for females and 68 for males. Figure 2 presents the educational level by gender. Relatively more females than males attained secondary education, whereas a higher proportion of males achieved tertiary education compared to females.

Table 1: Age of the respondents by sex

Sex	Number	Age (in years)	Min	Max
Female	33	38.4	28	62
Male	35	49.8	22	68
Total	68	44.3	22	68
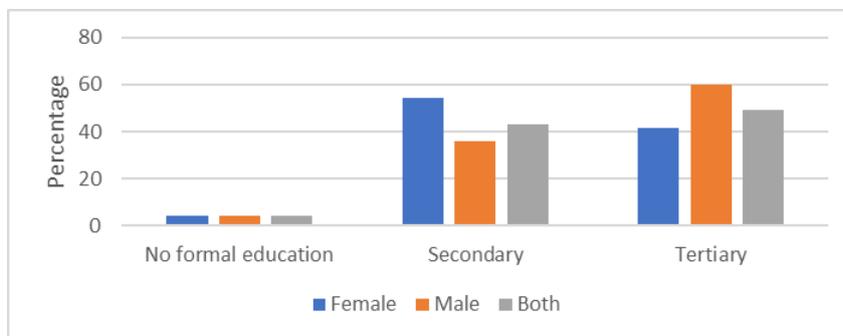
Figure 2: Educational level of respondents by gender

Type of business operated

With regards to the type of tourism business operated by the respondents, Figure 3 shows that both tourism accommodation and tourism related businesses were the most common (35.3% and 37.3% respectively). For both types of businesses, relatively more female than males dominated the trade. On the other hand, for tour operators and other subsidiary tourism businesses, these had more males than females doing these types of businesses. A few respondents indicated participating in tour operations and in other sub-sectors such as in restaurants, food, beverages and retail.
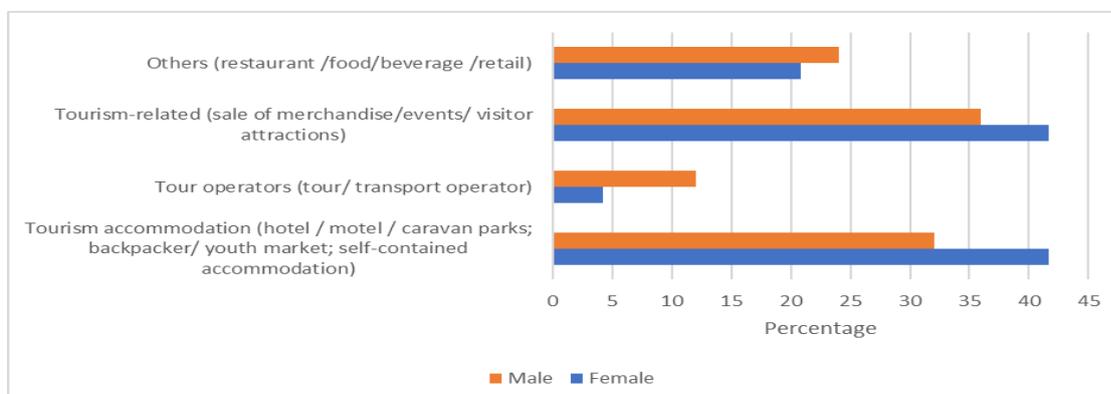

Figure 3: Type of business operated by gender

Type of services offered

The respondents indicated that they offer multiple services to tourists. Figure 4 presents the percentage distribution of common services offered by the gender of the respondents. Accommodation and sales of merchandise were the most popular forms of services for both females and males, although females dominated the trade. Other services offered include free visitor information (21% females, 16% males), visitor access to internet (17% females, 8% males), followed by visitor access to maps and brochures (12.5% females, 8% males), as well as booking services (12.5% females, 20% males). The least offered service is the sale of national park passes which was offered by male operators only (4%).
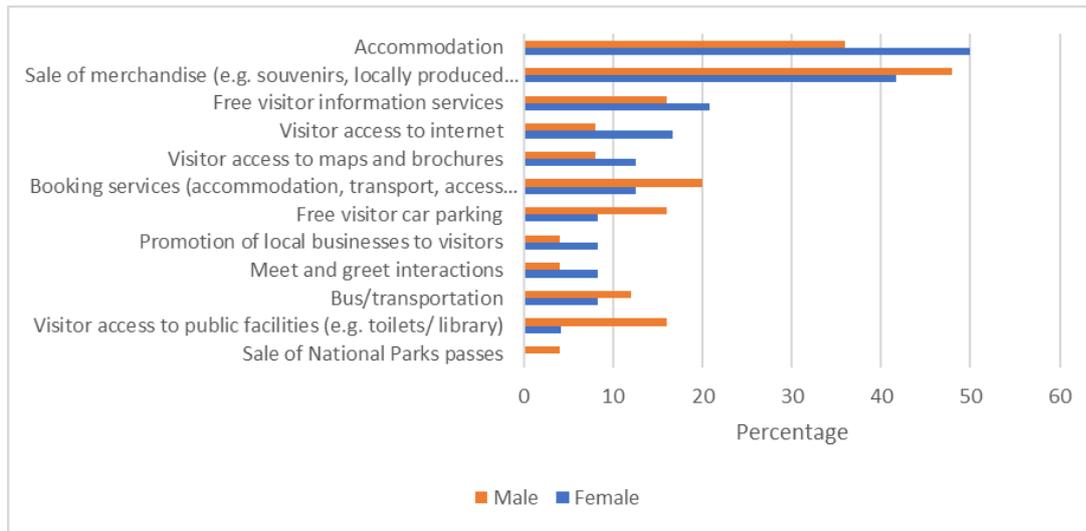
Figure 4: Type of services offered by gender

Enablers and barriers to resilience

This section presents findings on the enablers and barriers to tourism resilience. Three types of enablers were identified: those that apply at the individual level, at the business level, and at the community level. Respondents were asked to select all that applied within each category. Figure 5 displays the percentage responses for individual enablers by type of service provider. For those in the tourism accommodation and tourism-related services, intelligence, and academic ability (61.1% for both groups of providers), as well as social competence (89.5% for tourism accommodation, 73.7% for tourism-related services) were selected as important enablers to building resilience. Most tour operators rated the ability to establish and access a network of support as being very important (75%), whereas there was an equal split on the following individual enablers within this group of service providers: Expressiveness, warmth, and affection (50%), a secure base (50%) and self-efficacy, mastery, and high self-esteem (50%). On the other hand, those offering services in restaurants, food, beverage, and retail sub-sectors considered the capacity for social competency (72.7%), as well as self-efficacy, mastery, and high self-esteem (45.5%), and intelligence and academic ability (45.5%) as important individual enablers. Overall, the following individual enablers: intelligence and academic ability, social competence, self-efficacy, mastery and high self-esteem were deemed the most important among service providers in tourism accommodation, tourism-related (sale of merchandise/events/visitor attractions) and those offering food and retailing services.
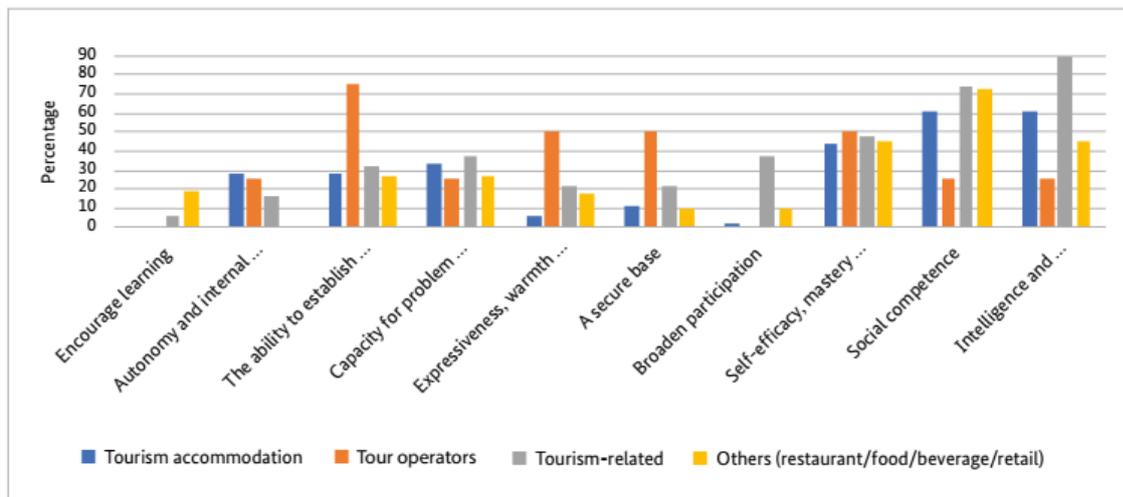
Figure 5: Individual enablers by type of service provider

Enablers for enterprise resilience
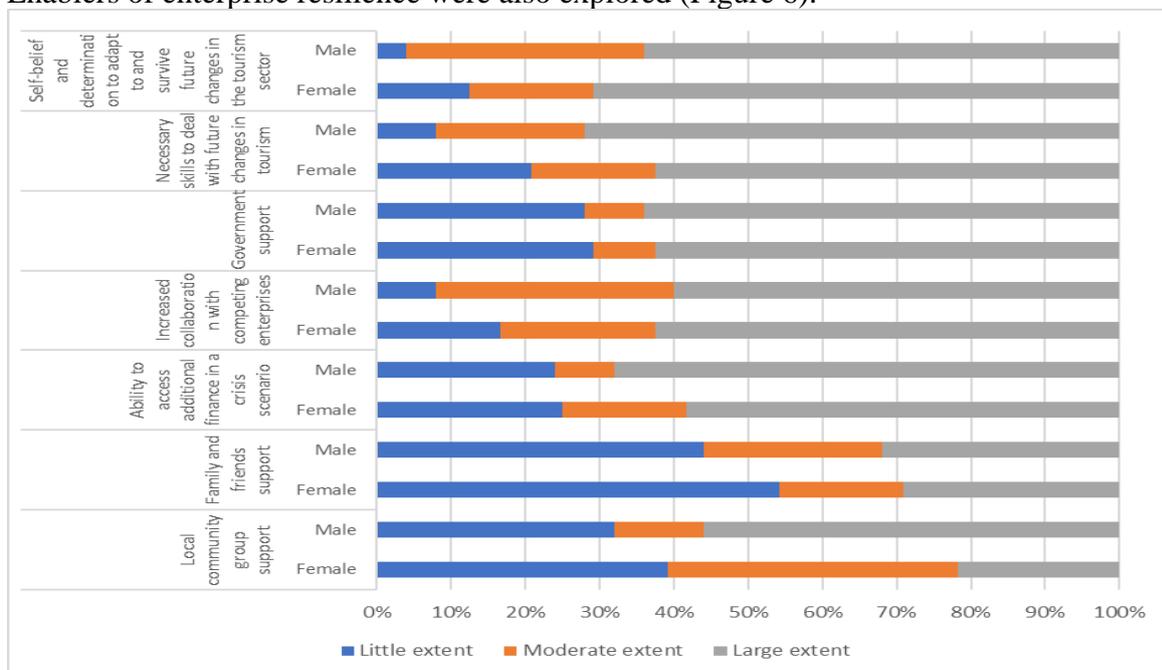Enablers of enterprise resilience were also explored (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Enablers of enterprise resilience by gender

In addition to individual enablers, enterprise resilience has long been known to continue to reshape the tourism sector's resilience. Seven components were examined and these ranged from government support, family and friends' support to management and staff skills, as well as self-belief and determination to adapt by management and staff. According to the study results, both females and males identified that to a large extent having management and staff with self-determination to adapt, and having skills to deal with future changes are important. Similarly, government support and increased collaboration within a network were deemed important for enterprise resilience.

Enablers for community sustainability and resilience
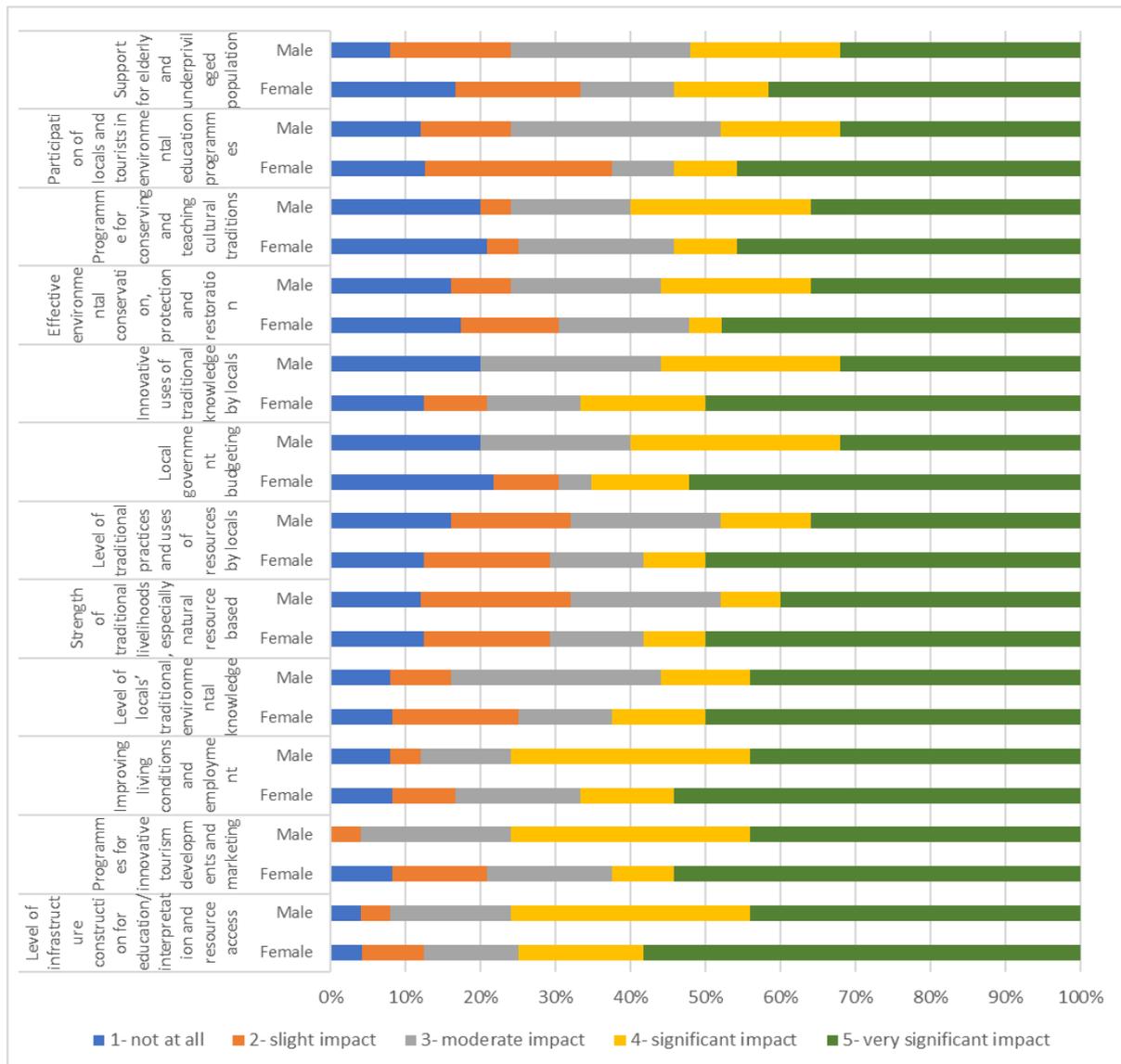Resilience in the tourism sector also depends on community sustainability.

Figure 7: Enablers of community sustainability and resilience

Some of the enablers of community sustainability and resilience are displayed in Figure 7. A total of 12 indicators were explored and they were disaggregated by gender. For both females and males, the top five indicators that significantly enable community sustainability and resilience were the level of infrastructure construction for education/interpretation and resource access; programmes for innovative tourism developments and marketing; improving living conditions and employment; level of locals' traditional environmental knowledge; and, strength of traditional livelihoods, especially natural resource based. Nevertheless, females were more likely to indicate a very significant impact compared to males.

Barriers to resilience
Alongside enablers, policymakers responsible for developing and growing successful tourism destinations face a variety of change drivers in key tourism source markets. Identifying barriers to resilience is vital if the tourism sector is to become more resilient against disruptive events and to prepare for long-term stability. In this study, we explored 17 indicators that were presented to respondents to indicate the extent to which they could be treated as barriers to tourism. Figure 7 shows the results. The following were considered, to a large extent, the top

five barriers to resilience: unprofessional customer service (71.4%); lack of security infrastructure and policies (69.4%); insufficient investment in the tourism sector (67.3%); high tax on tourism products and services (65.3%), and lack of proper amenities (63.3%).
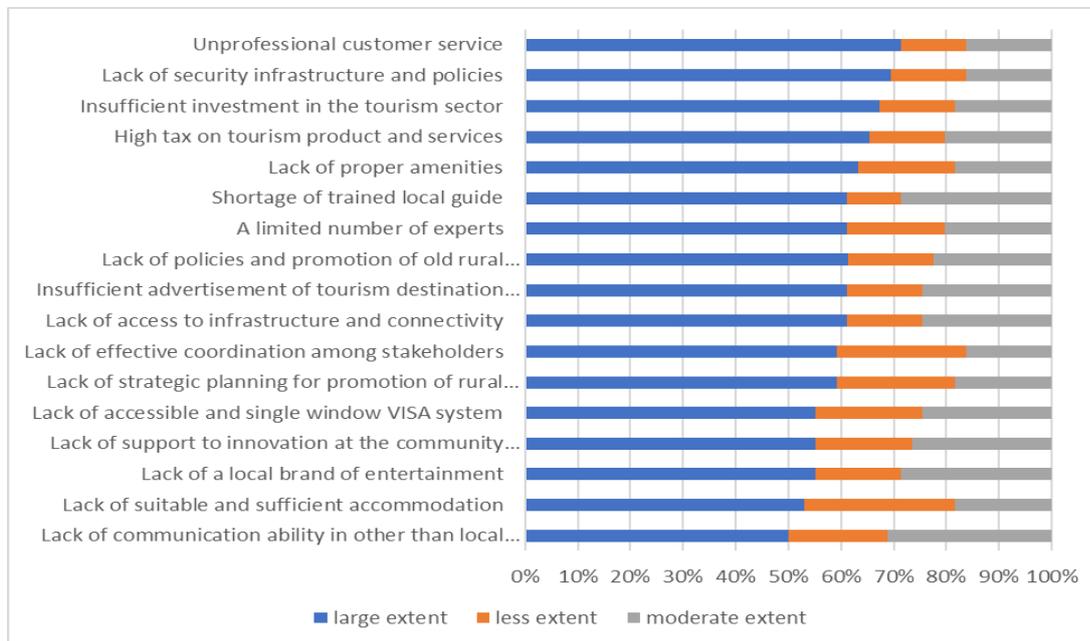

Figure 8:
Barriers to tourism resilience

Overall motivation towards working in the tourism sector

One of the building blocks towards a resilient tourism sector is individual motivation for continuing to work in the sector. Respondents were asked a question as to how motivated they are and how working in the sector impacted their everyday life. A summary of the findings is provided in Figure 9. The majority of the respondents indicated that they love working in tourism (84% male, 83.3% female), that tourism has impact their everyday life (92% male, 83.3% female), and they are not planning to move out of the tourism sector (96% male, 83.3% female). Similarly, over 60% of the respondents suggested that stopping tourism in their community will cause changes to their community, while others reported that they love/enjoy the lifestyle associated with working in the tourism sector, whereas others feel that working in the tourism sector is part of whom they see themselves. Others stated that life is becoming difficult in the tourism sector (48% male, 45.8% female).
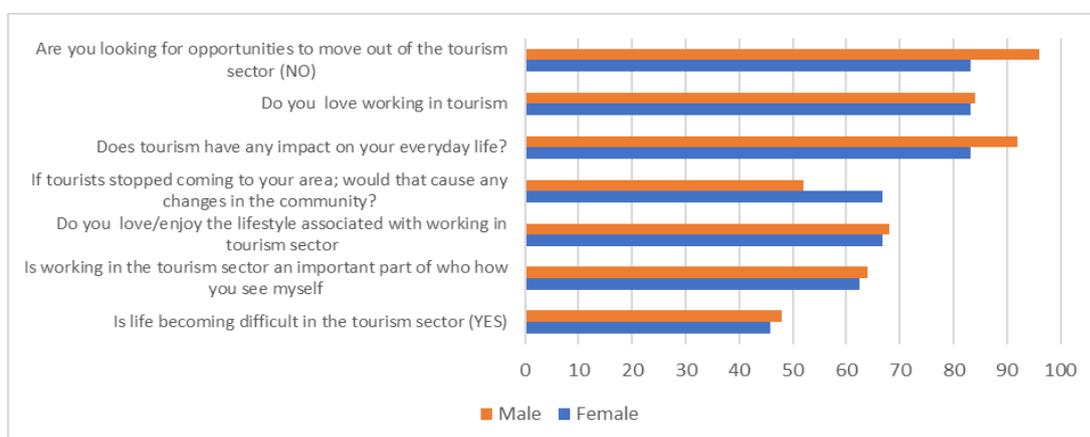

Figure 9:
Motivation towards working in tourism sector

Discussions and implications
Tourism resilience enablers

From an individual level of tourism resilience, the research findings indicate that intelligence and academic ability, social competences, self-efficacy, mastery and high esteem are the most important individual resilient enablers for those working in tourism accommodation and tourism related services. For tour operators, the ability to establish social networks was considered to be very important. As stated previously, individual resilience is crucial as it ensures individual wellbeing, as well as the ability to cope effectively with disasters and risks while maintaining sustainable economic growth. The development of resilience skillsets at individual/personal level stimulates overall business resilience and eventually the community and destination level. Lack of these skills can adversely affect an individual's mental health when having to manage a difficult crisis or disaster at work. An individual's resilience is a key part of a healthy recovery and development of the tourism business and destination (Jiang et al., 2019). Some of the individual resistance skills emanate from individual intelligence and academic competences that allow one to think critically, solve problems and scrutinise circumstances proficiently. This implies that employees in the industry should be provided with opportunities to learn (Neise et al., 2021) as well as develop personal growth, knowledge acquisition and training. Social competences, self-efficacy, mastery and high esteem increase individuals' resilience and their ability to cope in times of crisis. These skills can be achieved through training, personal development, social networks, and the empowerment of individuals at work places with autonomy to self-organise, make decisions and solve problems. Emotional intelligence enables individuals to adapt and develop new skills to cope or face future challenges (Zhao, 2010). High esteem can be a product of job recognition and rewarding schemes, and employees' involvement in policy making (Umana-Hermosilla et al., 2020; Audretsch & Belitski, 2021).

From an enterprise/organisational level, the most important enablers that influence enterprise resilience were identified as the availability of a team of self-determined management and staff with skills to adopt and deal with future changes. Equally important are government support, increased collaboration between competing tourism related enterprises, and local community group support.

At organisational level, business resilience refers to the business' ability to withstand external changes or crisis and to mitigate and cope with the effects of the changes. Business resilience can improve business performance in times of crisis. It is noted that resilience can be reinforced by organisational learning, which is an indication that an organisation evolves over time and gains the experience which lays the foundation of knowledge and skills creation. This in turn shapes organisational competences. Organisational experience and learning are shaped by, among others, a self-determined management and staff team with the skills to mitigate the effects of crisis, as well as to adapt and deal with future changes (Bhaskara & Filimonau, 2021). To achieve management and staff's increased levels of self-determination to work, this implies that the organisation or business must provide learning opportunities and other motivations that allow for staff retention.

The results show that top five resilience enablers that were prioritised at community level included infrastructure construction for education/interpretation and resource access, programmes for innovative tourism developments and marketing; improving living conditions and employment; level of locals' traditional environmental knowledge; and, strength of traditional livelihoods, especially those that are natural resource based. To achieve community tourism resilience, there is a need for education and training on the sustainable use of both natural, human and financial resources as well as governance. Training in innovative tourism

programme development and marketing is also necessary. The encouragement of development of social networks is also necessary (Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020). A community with resilient tourism development provides good living conditions and employment for its community members.

Barriers to tourism resilience
In terms of the barriers, the top prioritised barrier to resilience among the tourism enterprises was unprofessional customer service which is believed to customer dissatisfaction and negative experience (Traskevich, 2023). Among other barriers identified were lack of security infrastructure and policies framework which are key to tourism resilience as they can enabling environment and a sense of safety among participants. Insufficient investment in the tourism sector, lack of proper amenities and, high tax on tourism products and services were among the barriers that could lead to poor development within the sectors whilst also affecting diversification of tourist products and marketing initiatives. When these barriers are attended to satisfactory it can act adversely towards destination competitiveness and lead to insufficient marketing, diversification and innovation of products (Chen et al., 2013).

Motivation towards working in the tourism industry can be either a barrier or enabler for tourism resilience. To a large extent, the members of the industry indicated that they love and are motivated to work in the industry that to a large extent has impacted on their daily lives and that of their communities. They were, therefore, not planning to move out of the industry even if life was becoming difficulty in the tourism sector. The implication for this is that the industry and the government should avail incentives for the workforce to keep it motivated and thereby enhance individual resilience. As indicated previously, a motivated workforce contributes to the development of business resilience and eventually a resilient destination.

There is evidence from results that people working in the tourism sector in the Erongo region are likely stay within sector longer. The longer they stay in the organisation, the more they gain the experience they can draw from in times of crisis to create, extend, and modify resources to cope with crisis and changing trends (Bhaskara & Filimonau, 2021; Kauatuuapehi et al., 2023; Tervo-Kankare et al., 2018). Community perceptions in this study showed that resilience in the tourism sector is affected by diverse factors including government support. This is in line with the OECD report that governments can enhance business resilience through the provision of financial subsidies, training and marketing or other incentives (OECD, 2020). Increased collaboration between competing tourism related enterprises is important for leveraging resources, creating strong social networks and the exchange of knowledge (Chowdhury et al., 2019; Gursoy & Chi, 2020; Hall et al., 2018). Erongo region has embraced the tourism identify and this has enabled the collaborations among the different sectors both within the region and country-wide, even internationally to promote the sector and this contributed to the resilience and survival of the sector during COVID-19. Furthermore, self-introspection of any sector after crisis, particularly in the identification of barriers and enablers, is key to building resilience but also crucial in sustaining its contribution to socio-economic and national development.

Conclusion
This paper assessed the enablers and barriers to a tourism destination resilience from an individual/personal level, a business level and a community perspective. The development and maintenance of tourism resilience at each level ensures the survival of the tourism industry in times of crisis and disasters. While the enablers and challenges were presented separately at each level, it is important to note that some of the challenges are enmeshed within each other, operating simultaneously and across the different levels. Dealing with these challenges thus

requires a recognition of this multi-scale impact, and that dealing with parts and not all the levels may not produce the desired results. Thus, to enhance destination resilience, there is a need for collaborative efforts in planning, and the establishment of appropriate policies and decision-making. Enhancing collaboration requires a policy environment that is encompassing, whilst at the same time being holistic in understanding the nature of the shocks and challenges as well as identifying opportunities for action in enhancing a tourism destination. The policy environment must also open up and incentivise support to tourism players so that they are able to access funding which is necessary to build resilient infrastructure. In addition to promulgating relevant policy, it is important for both the government and private sector to support institutions that participate in crafting innovative programmes and strategies that can build tourism resilience. Such support may be in terms of knowledge and technical expertise on mainstreaming the resilience language, plans and actions in the sector. This will help to foster more resilient businesses in the face of possible future shocks.

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