



# Assessing tourism as a catalyst for rural development and community awareness: A case study of Coffee Bay, Mqanduli in the Eastern Cape Province

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## Abstract

The aim of this paper is to assess tourism as a catalyst for rural development and community awareness in a case study of Coffee Bay. Tourism is considered as a viable tool for economic development, specifically in the developing world. It was envisaged and deemed necessary to develop tourism in the local community as it would generate community development, thus supporting its overall development. Apart from this tourist sites enhance community cohesion and promote peace within the host community. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. Questionnaires were distributed to community members of Coffee Bay. Furthermore, a random sampling method was used for the purpose of the study. Data obtained was analysed through the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings of the study revealed a high awareness and a high level of community willingness to participate in tourism ventures. Furthermore, findings of the study revealed that some members of the community have already participated in Small Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs). However, the negative aspects raised by the community in the development processes are the issue of government interference and the lack of sponsors together with the poor infrastructure. Therefore, it is recommended that the government must make a concerted effort in providing a sustainable and conducive environment for tourism to thrive in the Coffee Bay community. Funding was also cited as one of the bottlenecks. As such, funding should be provided either by the government or by the private sector to ensure an on-going process of tourism development.

**Keywords:** Tourism, funding, rural development, Coffee Bay and community awareness

## Introduction and background to the study

Tourism has an important role to play in the improvement of environmental, economic, social and cultural structure processes in rural communities. For rural communities, tourism plays a primary role in upliftment because the tourist has to move towards a tourist destination in order to enjoy the product and this results in the support of many industries (Sgroi, Di Trapani, Testa, & Tudisca, 2014). Tourism development is dependent on commercial, economic, and logistical offerings which influence the overall quality of the product, accessibility and infrastructure of the destination, availability of skills, and interest of investors. In most of these aspects, rural areas are often at a disadvantage compared to urbanised and more developed areas (Lonela, Constantin & Dogaru, 2015) Thus, tourism can play a significant role in the generation of employment opportunities, creating opportunities for local and regional investment, providing local residents with trade opportunities and supporting other economic sectors within a destination zone (Lin & Mao, 2015).



Meimand and Khalifah (2017) assert that tourism development may affect both communities and tourists negatively and positively. It is therefore imperative that local people be capacitated on tourism and its value. However, it is found that the wealth of knowledge regarding tourism has not trickled down to the average citizen, especially those in rural areas. As such, most residents are not adequately informed regarding tourism development resulting in low public involvement (Tosun, 2001).

Tourism awareness is very important as it has the potential to increase the participation of the communities in tourism (Cole, 2011). Furthermore, awareness can change the community perception about tourism. Therefore, tourism awareness and perception are the cornerstones of community participation in tourism. Additionally, community participation is considered necessary to obtain community support and acceptance of tourism development projects, to ensure that the benefits relate to the local community's needs.

Tosun and Timothy (2003) further argued that the local community is more likely to know what would work in the local environment. Community participation can add to the democratisation process and has the potential to increase awareness and interest in local regional issues. It is believed that tourism should benefit the local residents of the place that tourists visit and are attracted to (Saarinen, 2010).

## Literature review

In contemporary studies on the development of international trends in the travel industry, rural tourism has raised and increased the wealth of local communities as it creates job opportunities. According to Lane and Kastenholz (2015) tourism is recognised by local communities, as well as local municipalities, as an important economic activity with many manageable challenges and regeneration utilities in rural surroundings. Rural tourism is not strongly based on property development, but it is created largely by changing existing properties and heritage properties with the potential to be rural tourist attractions and accommodation facilities.

Rural development begins in the everyday lives of local people. This is the initial context for sustainable change. It is founded on a process of empowerment and participation. Empowerment involves a form of critical education that encourages people to question their reality. This forms the basis of collective action and is built on principles of participatory democracy. In the process of action and reflection, community development grows through a diversity of local projects that addresses issues faced by people in a community (Margaret, 2012).

In most developing countries such as South Africa, Botswana, and Mozambique to mention a few, local people need to be sufficiently aware of and knowledgeable about tourism. It is clear that often information about tourism may not have been disseminated to the citizens in ways that are comprehensible to them. Most residents are not well-informed regarding tourism development; therefore, low public involvement is often a given in the public participation processes around stakeholder engagement (Tosun, 2014).

Community learning refers to the acquisition of knowledge and its relationship to building capacity in the community. Butler and Hinch (2014) acknowledge the role of cultural pride and access to information as motivators for indigenous people in tourism. Knowledge can come from many different sources including traditional knowledge, which is passed down from generation to generation or from more formal institutional models (Butler & Hinch, 2014). Knowledge and values are the cornerstones for decision making in tourism development in any country. However, the issue of local tourism awareness has not always been studied widely in the community-based tourism (CBT), including Southern Africa (Saarinen, 2010).



CBT is based on the active participation of the local community. This is why the creation of community events which may favor this type of tourism, while at the same time helping to create a relationship between the local community and visitors, is so important. To facilitate this, different public administrations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), private institutions and the local community itself should get involved and work together as stakeholders (Oketch, 2016). Stakeholders are people identified as potentially being directly and indirectly involved or affected by the CBT venture, and they need to be identified and involved in some way during the assessment process. Community members together with any external collaborators and/or partners need to work together to appraise the community's vision, needs and priorities, and assess their fit with tourism (Asker, Boronyak, Carrard & Paddon, 2010).

CBT is often promoted as one way of alleviating poverty among poor rural communities by complementing their traditional livelihoods (Hawasaki, 2013). However, for communities to benefit from CBT, locals need to be sufficiently aware and knowledgeable about tourism (Manwa, 2017). A lack of communication between these groups does not only increase the knowledge gap between local communities and decision-makers, but also can accelerate the isolation of the local community from the tourism development process (Butler & Hinch, 2014).

The knowledge gaps of understanding tourism development between centralised authorities and local communities makes it difficult for a host community to participate in the tourism development process (Tosun, 2014). The implication of this argument may be that greater awareness and interest among members of local communities could be achieved if meaningful and comprehensible information contained in reports and plans is disseminated (Butler & Hinch, 2016).

## **Research Methodology**

According to Lucinda, (2016), a research method is essentially an analytical process of resolving a problem. In a research study a research methodology outlines and explains the work plan of the research conducted. This study aims to ascertain Coffee Bay's local tourism development and investigate the involvement and effects on the local community.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions are posed by the study:

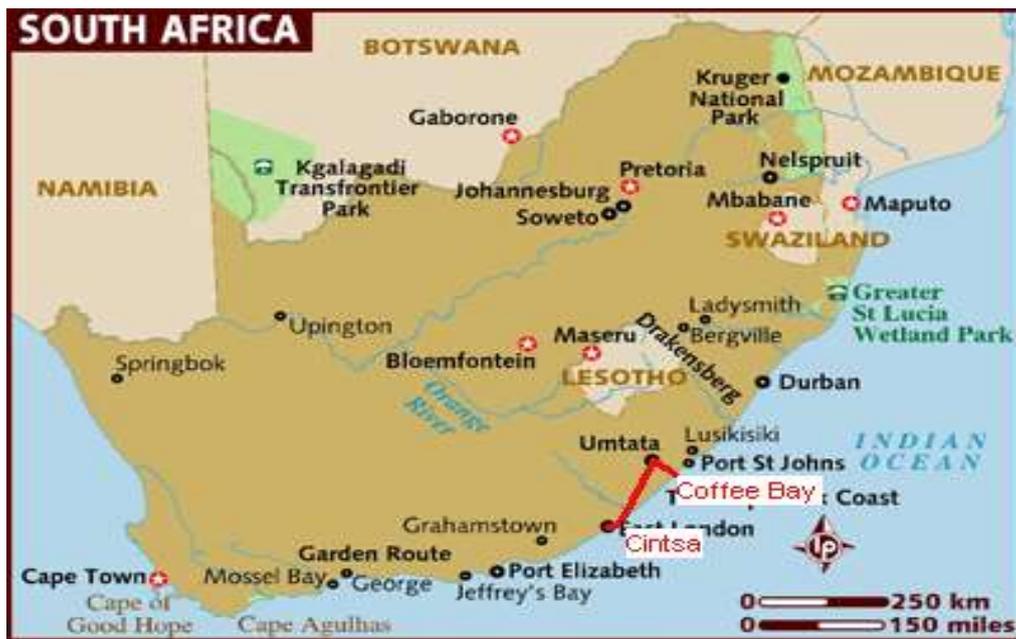
- What is the community's level of awareness of tourism?
- What are the community's opinions of local tourism, specifically with regards to participation?
- How has the community benefitted from tourism?

## **Study Area**

Coffee Bay is a small town situated on the Wild Coast of the Eastern Cape (EC) Province of South A. The town was named Coffee Bay in 1893 after a shipwreck lost its cargo of coffee beans near the coast of Coffee Bay (Mhlangabeza, 2016)

The municipality is located in an area that was previously part of the Xhosa Bantustan, Transkei, and the population is still predominantly Xhosa. The community is largely rural and Coffee Bay's infrastructure includes informal settlements, a trading store, a plain camping site and two resort hotels.

Figure 1. Coffee Bay in Mqanduli



Source: Springer Science Business Media Dordrecht (2014)

## Research design

The research design of a study is the coherent structure of data obtained from the investigation (Lucinda, 2016). A research design is the rational framework of the investigation that allows the researcher to believe that their study process will permit them to obtain valid and effective conclusions. According to Pedrana (2013) research design is a significant element when conducting a research study. Due to the social nature of the investigation, the study embodies the positivist paradigm and therefore used a quantitative method of accumulating data. Positivism deals with the empirical examination of phenomena, in particular human phenomena, that the researcher can approach both scientifically and/or quantitatively. Lucinda (2016) further states that the makeup of social phenomena for positivists is that empirical data can be found independently from personal notions or opinions. They are ruled by laws of the domino effect, forms of social realism are constant and data concerning them is captivating.

Quantitative analysis is the investigation of a phenomenon through numerical data, which assists the researcher to measure variables and correspondingly allows for statistical testing to be conducted Pedrana (2013). Quantitative research is associated with the realist philosophy and is also known to produce factual evidence concerning the world and behaviour and these are observed to increase the amount of human understanding as it is accepted as a valid method of measurement of variables.

## Data collection instrument (questionnaire)

According to Lucinda (2016), a questionnaire is a set of sensibly considered questions distributed via the exact same method to a set of people in order to obtain data about subjects of interest to the researcher. He also added that a questionnaire is the data collection method most frequently used in social analyses. According to Creswell (2009), a questionnaire is a research instrument that contains a list of written questions to which respondents are expected to provide answers, and acts as an inductive method of study with a review to formulating new theory.

Benefits of structured questionnaires include reduced costs and the allowance for larger topographical coverage without experiencing the added expense of time and travel. The target population for this study was spread over a wide geographical area and required management



(who generally have demanding work roles) to answer questionnaires. Therefore, the use of structured questionnaires as the measurement instrument for this study saved both time and effort and allowed convenient access to the various organizations. Lucinda (2016) further explains that the utilization of highly structured surveys allows the collection of large amounts of data from a large population in quantitative form.

### **Sampling procedure**

Al Kindy, Shah and Jusoh (2016) argue that sampling can be explained as a specific principle used to select members of a population to be included in the study. It has been rightly noted that “because many populations of interest are too large to work with directly, techniques of statistical sampling have been devised to obtain samples taken from larger populations”.

### **Sample selection**

According to Rea and Parker (2012) a survey population refers to a target population who are within a particular criterion that one wants to understand. Furthermore, it is important to understand the population, in order to determine the scope of the survey. Alvi (2016) defines a sample as a group of people whom are chosen for a particular research; while Gravetter and Forzano (2009) contend that random sampling is basically the term for which each possible combination of person, establishments, house or whatever that exists in their area of interest has the same chance of being selected as every other combination.

Local residents are highly mobile, making it very difficult for the researcher to have access to all during the period of data collection. All the individuals in the population had an equal chance of being selected.

### **Research instruments**

Research instruments refers to all material used to collect data to answer the research question. Primary and Secondary data were used in the study (Rea & Parker, 2012).

#### **Primary data**

Oluwatosin (2017) defines primary data as raw or first-hand data that a researcher conducts through direct effort, with use of accepted research methodology. It is a collection of data that did not exist before. For the purpose of this study, questionnaires were administered to the respondents.

#### **Secondary data**

Secondary data is information that has already been collected and is usually available in published or electronic form. Secondary data is collected, analysed and organized with a specific purpose in mind, it may have limited applications to specific market research. However, some of the advantages of secondary data for market research include both cost and time saving (Johnston, 2014).

### **Questionnaire**

According to Rea and Parker (2012) a questionnaire is a structured set of questions, used to gather raw data from respondents. A questionnaire is often used as it is an instrument that is most applicable in answering research questions. In this study 100 self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. In short, the questionnaire survey of this study was composed as follows:

**Section A:** The first section recorded the demographic profile of the respondents, including their age, gender, race, marital status, and level of employment.

**Section B:** The second section focussed on awareness and participation of the respondents in tourism.

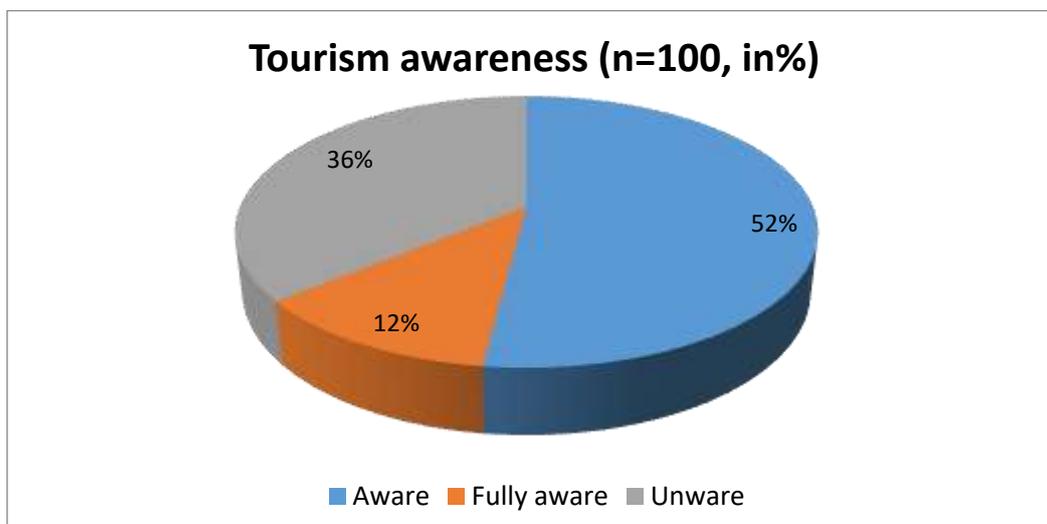
**Section C:** The third and the last section examined the impacts of rural development resulting from tourism.

### Data Analysis

According to Armour (2015) data analysis can be defined as the instrument for reducing and organising data to produce the findings that need to be interpreted by the researcher. For the purpose of this study, data were captured with use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 25.00 (SPSS).

### Findings of the study

**Figure 2. Tourism awareness**



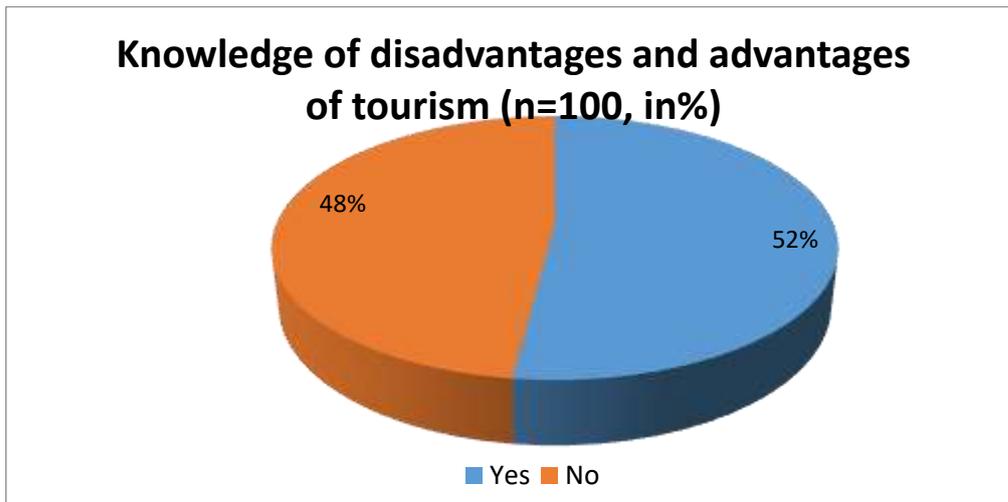
**Source: Reseachers own construction**

The respondents were requested to rate their levels of tourism awareness. The reasons for such a request were to measure the tourism awareness that the locals had and to measure the community participation. The results indicate that the majority of respondents (52%) said that they were aware of local tourism initiatives. However, a significant portion (36%) indicated that they were unaware, while (12%) of the respondents stated that they were fully aware.

### Disadvantages and Advantages of tourism

Respondents were asked whether they had knowledge of tourism benefits and disadvantage. Figure 3 depicts the results.

**Figure 3. Disadvantages and Advantages of tourism**



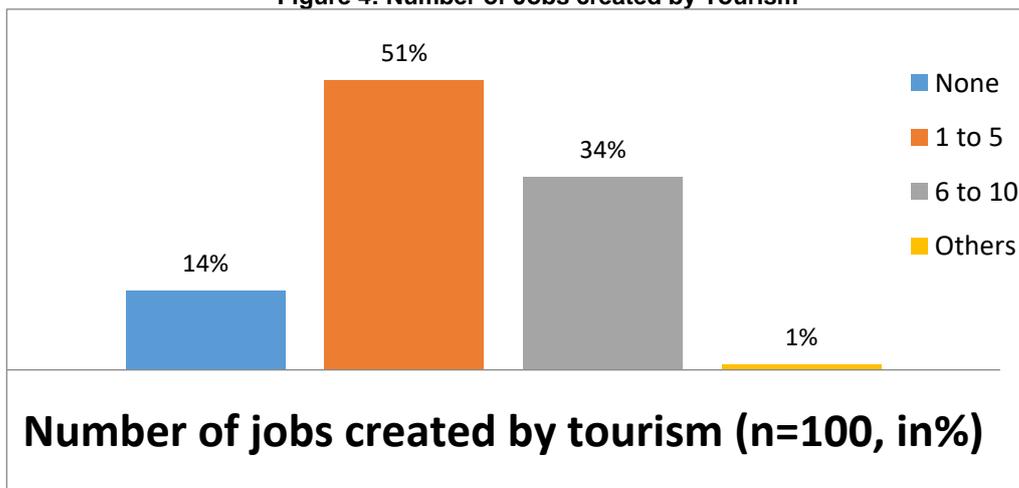
Source: Researchers own construction

The NTSS (2011) argue that awareness and understanding of tourism among communities, particularly rural communities eliminates unrealistic expectations. Furthermore, community members of Coffee Bay were expected to be knowledgeable about both disadvantages and the advantages of tourism. However, the highest percentage (52%) of the respondents said that they were knowledgeable about both tourism advantages and disadvantages, while (48%) indicated that they knew nothing about disadvantages and advantages of tourism.

### Jobs created by tourism

Sebele (2010) states that if tourism development brings no benefits in the social and economic situations facing communities, there is a little possibility for residents to change their attitudes towards the utilisation of tourism resources. In other words, tourism is expected to benefit the community economically and socially. The Tourism White Paper (1996) also amended its laws regarding development, stating that historically handicapped communities should benefit from the development taking place. According to the results obtained and illustrated in Figure 4

**Figure 4: Number of Jobs created by Tourism**



Source: Researchers own construction

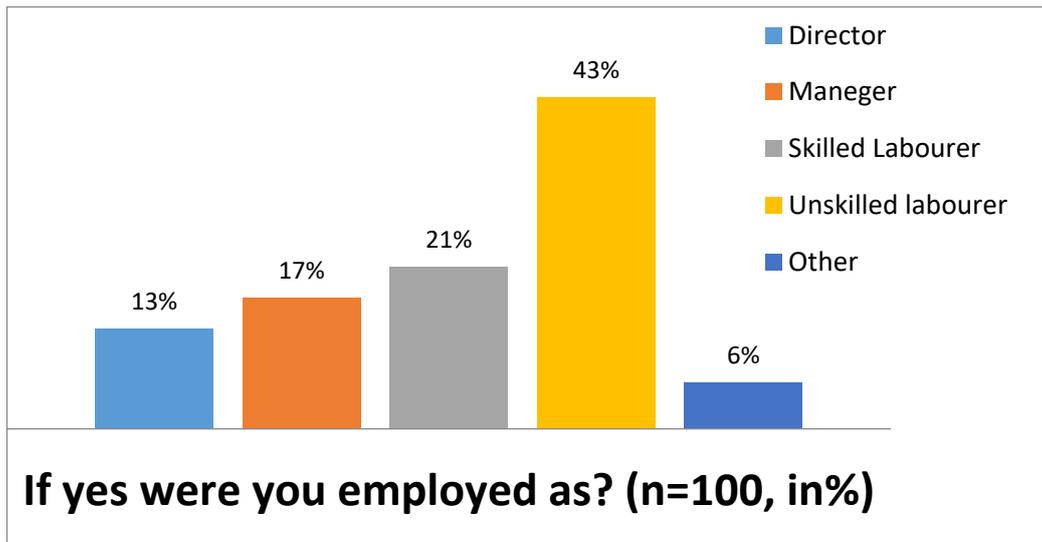
The highest proportion (51%) of the respondents indicated that the tourism industry created 1 to 5 jobs per annum, whilst the second cohort (34%) indicated that tourism created 6 to 10 job

per annum. A small group (14%) indicated that tourism industry created no jobs and the minority of (1%) did not specify the number of jobs created by the tourism industry. Seemingly tourism created a few jobs.

### Employment of respondents

Benefits can only manifest if communities exercise control over their own growth and development (Rynish, 2009). Being employed as a community member is the improvement of CBT. Respondents were asked as to whether they ever employed by tourism organisation. The majority of the respondents (78%) said No, while the minority of (22%) said Yes.

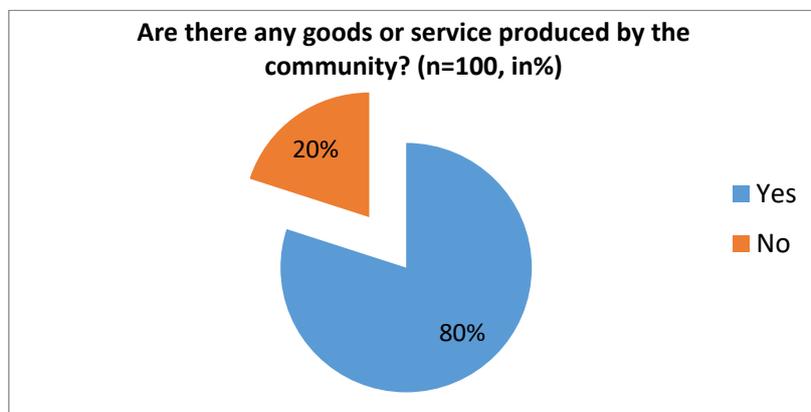
Figure 5: Employment of respondents



Source: Researchers own construction

The follow up question was designed to clarify what kinds of jobs were created for locals and specifically the skills level of such employment. They were asked to indicate the area or qualifications they were employed in and engaged with. The larges cohort (43%) indicated that they were employed as unskilled labourers. Only 21% indicated that they were employed as skilled labourers and 17% as managers. A minority (13%) indicated that they were employed as Directors and 6% did not specify their position.

Figure 6: Goods or Services produced by the community which are sold to the tourists



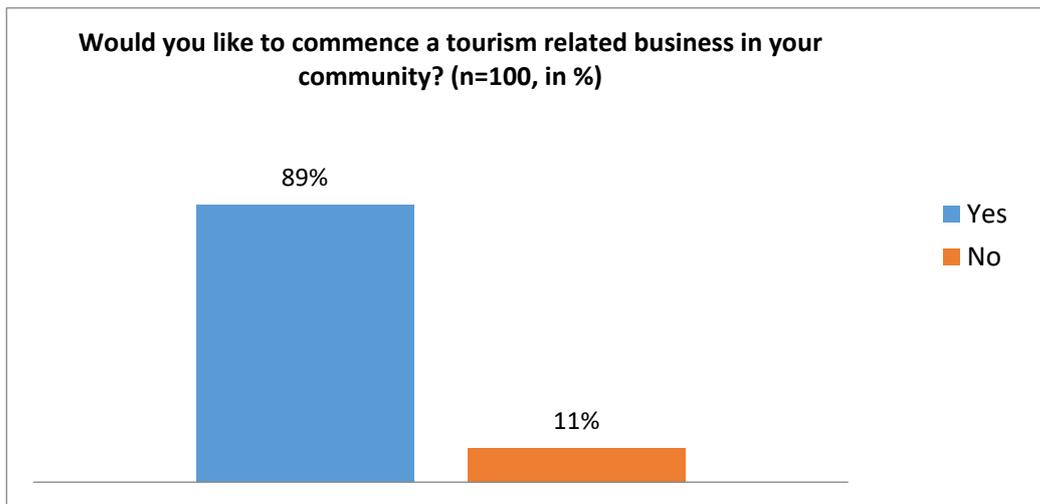
Source: Researchers own construction

The respondents were asked whether there were any goods or services produced by the community which were sold to the tourists. The vast majority (80%) of respondents agreed that there were goods and service that were produced by the community and which were sold to tourists. Additionally, a minority of 20% indicated the negative. These results gave hope that the host community was aware of tourism and were in support of the developments that were taking place.

### Tourism-related business in your community

In order to determine residents understanding and contribution towards tourism development in their location using the case of Coffee Bay, respondents were asked if they would like to commence an SMTEs in the community.

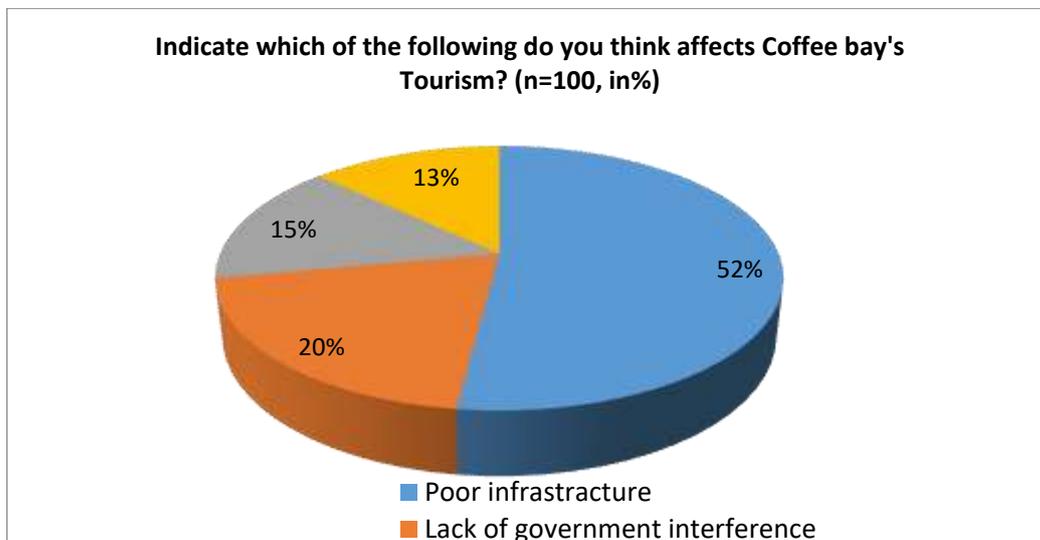
Figure 7: Tourism-related business in your community



Source: Researchers own construction

The results in Figure clearly depict that 89% of respondents were keen to start their own enterprises. In the same vein, 11% of the respondents concluded that they are not keen.

Figure 8. Coffee Bay's Tourism



Source: Researchers own construction



In the Figure above, 52% of the respondents said that poor infrastructure was one of the challenges facing tourism development. On the other hand, 20% said lack of government involvement made delayed community improvement regarding tourism. A small group (15%) noted an over-dependence of the locals on tourism development. Lastly, 13% said poor marketing, and a lack of tourist arrivals affected tourism development which leads the community not being interested in tourism development.

### **Limitations of the study**

The study was limited to assessing tourism as a catalyst for rural development and community awareness through a case study of Coffee Bay in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. Therefore, this study is region-specific and cannot be generalised to the whole country.

### **Recommendations of the study**

Coffee Bay is facing acute poverty challenges which can be attributed to a legacy of poor education provision, a limited subsistence economy that forces people out of the village into migrant labour, and an absence of basic government services. Furthermore, as the results revealed, the community faces a high rate of unemployment. The people of Coffee Bay were reliant on subsistence farming, government grants and wage remittances from migrant workers but despite these drawbacks the village has proved that it may have huge wealth because the development of tourism was taking place (Thom, 2007). As such the study recommends the following:

- ✓ Encouragement in the form of incentives, workshops and community meetings be provided to give support to community members who want to start tourism related businesses;
- ✓ Government should strive to reduce the illiteracy level of the community by offering more educational opportunities like tourism related offerings at schools, and increasing awareness about the global importance of conservation and maintenance of the environment. This could increase the potential of involvement in decision making and empowerment thereby instilling a sense of ownership and responsibility, increasing understanding of the challenges that come with tourism and also provide a platform for the acquisition of the technical knowhow of tourism business operation;
- ✓ All development in the community should be based on the sustainable development concept;
- ✓ Any development proposal involving resources in and around communities, particularly in protection areas, should be brought for consultation by all stakeholders. This would help avoid the adverse impacts on the physical and socio-cultural environment of the local people;
- ✓ The integration of social and economic activities in the communities should be endorsed; and
- ✓ Equitable development should be promoted and a system for sharing benefits among community members established by government support and the community's own efforts.

### **Conclusion**

Communities should be involved in management, ensuring that all issues concerning communities are taken into account during tourism development. Active public participation in decision-making benefits local communities and public participation is an important tool for successful tourism (Azizan, 2012). Stakeholders could be supported by innovative initiatives



including training of willing participants in guiding, birding, indigenous accommodation and food and beverage operations or art and craft development (Nicolaidis, 2015). Partly because of the problems that may arise from contact between tourists and communities in developing countries, and in an attempt to ensure greater benefit to host communities, there has been a recent focus on community participation in tourism management, planning and development. Public involvement in tourism is an essential element of tourism planning and design. The engagement of all stakeholders is crucial to every tourism development effort as it promotes the sustainability of rural tourism developments. In essence the stakeholders must be proactively managed in all activities so that the stakeholders' engagement is maintained. The typology of tourism stakeholders and their characteristics are important considerations. Most importantly, without the full support of local communities, the sustainability of tourism is doubtful. (Nicolaidis, 2015). Tourism developers have an obligation to involve locals in the development of their plans because this could promote local interests. Local people have the right to participate in management of tourism projects that affect them, and experience in tourism has shown that the role of dialogue across a wide spectrum of direct and indirect stakeholders is especially important (Messerli, 2011).

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