

Views of utilizing sustainable tourism to improve community sustenance: a case study of the impoverished rural communities of Musina Municipality

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Abstract

Purpose – This study assesses the “possibilities of utilizing sustainable tourism to improve community sustenance in Musina Municipality, Limpopo, South Africa.”

Design/methodology/approach – Therefore, to competently discern the implications of tourism in Musina Municipality, data got accumulated by questionnaire surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, document reviews and field observations. Thus, Microsoft Excel, Spreadsheet and Cross-Tabulation Analysis provided both quantitative and qualitative data analyses.

Findings – The study identified immense tourism potentials attached to low tourism influences and privileges on the local community’s advancement. The relationships and contributory factors pointing to the present and latent tourism situations in Musina Municipality got critiqued. The study inferred that the Musina Municipality is well enriched with tourism potentials and necessitates a fitting tourism plan to profits the locals.

Originality/value – Musina Municipality is one of the driest districts in the remote North of Limpopo Province, South Africa. It is aggregated by meager livelihoods of rural communities, as do most rural communities abroad. However, the Municipality exemplifies some of the numerous tourism-based areas in the Vhembe District of Limpopo. The undertakings of tourism, community sustenance and sustainable promotion have been more proceeding to the lead. However, diverse investigations neglect to efficiently estimate the fundamental points and the complete functions of multiple forms of tourism in community development within many rural expanses.

Keywords Tourism, Socioeconomic development, Conserved areas, Parks, Hospitality, Agritourism, Sustainable tourism development, Community-based natural resource management, Enterprises, Sustainability

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Many years have beheld the development of a commanding criterion of sustainable tourism development. It thus emerges to outline a rational course, matching the fundamentals of tourism development with the stability of the environment (Hunter, 1995). Several rural communities have inadequate access to essential conveniences such as best educational services and employment possibilities. Therefore, this is the predicament with the rural



communities in the Musina Municipality, South Africa (South Africa, 1996; May, 1998). The 1998 Job Summit noted the tourism sector to curb unemployment, produce income and ease poverty in rural expanses. Although South Africa expands across as an upper-middle-income country per capita, exterminating rural poverty is crucial; consequently, income allocation is among the most untenable in the world (Timothy, 1998; De Haan, 1999; Kirsten and Rogerson, 2002).

Rural economic development is urgent precedence of the national and provincial authorities. Hence, the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) got launched due to poverty and mounting unemployment. The outstanding aim of the ISRDS was to make rural areas profitable and promote entrepreneurship (South Africa, 2000). The augmentation of the tourism industry has been one of the essential divisions preferred by jurisdictions universally (DEAT, 2000a, b). The White Paper on the growth and betterment of tourism in South Africa not only assume the tourism department as a national pre-eminence, but it also affirms that tourism has to be improved in a method that points to more genuine life character for every South African (DEAT, 2000a, b; Keyser, 2002). Therefore, there is an inherent order for tourism investment, particularly in rural regions, to enable the marginalized and previously disadvantaged individuals (PDIs) (Kirsten and Rogerson, 2002; Shackleton *et al.*, 2007; Ramaano, 2008). The Musina rural communities are in manifest necessity of such grants for their socioeconomic betterment and sustainability (Ramaano, 2019). Nevertheless, there had been some disinclination by the private sectors to elevate tourism in the country areas of South Africa. The aforementioned is correlated with the complexity and ambiguity concerning land tenure, poor foundation assistance, scarcity of the tourism market and apparent risk-averse business community (Ramaano, 2021). The refined transform responsibilities for the tourism management to capacitate the marginalized got preference by the government and are furthermore appropriate to this position (Ramaano, 2019, 2021).

1.1 Tourism view as a capacitating means for promoting sustenance around parks and conservation areas

Tourism packages support the livelihoods of local communities inhabiting in and around preserved areas and tourism enterprises. Thus, there is a dire necessity to nurture the nexus between tourism and national development policies to perks the targeted recipients (Scheyvens, 1999; Ashley *et al.*, 2000). Indeed, tourism is one of the socioeconomic enterprises that enhance the people from nature conservation (Richards and Hall, 2000; Ryan, 2001; De Azeredo Grünewald, 2002; UNWTO, 2002). Tourism development needs to be well sketched to improve and broaden economic prospects for ordinary people, to better their subsistence through job invention and income creation from tourism resourcefulness (Eagles and McCool, 2002; Goodwin, 2002). With that, tourism deviates from other economic activities as it employs a more comprehensive scope of enterprises and facilities across various industrial sectors (Ferreira, 2004; Gössling *et al.*, 2005). Thus, this study unreservedly recommends the essential view of sustainable tourism and livelihood improvement around protected areas (Figures 4–6). Tao (2006) and Chok *et al.* (2007) exhibited that tourism performs an extensive function in the progression of livelihoods through supporting economic growth and making job programs. Henceforward, some authors have testified the earnings of tourism to indigenous communities staying around the protected expanses, particularly Scheyvens (2007), Zhao and Ritchie (2007), Spenceley (2008), Jamal and Stronza (2009), Marzuki (2009) and Mitchell and Ashley (2010). They professed that local communities got supported by tourism through vocation, capacity framework in enterprise development and management, excellent social welfare, and wealth creation underpinned by tourism. With that, tourism guides direct capital mobilization and the making of jobs. Thus, a sturdy impact on sustenance (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010). Regional, national and local economies earn from

tourism by the inventiveness of numerous tourism projects. Therefore, inducing favorable attributes of an area (UNECA, 2010; Sutawa, 2012; Ryan and Page, 2012). Tourism attained a niche in the national development paradigms of diverse countries. Henceforward graduated as one of the substantial programs of socio-economic headway (Liu *et al.*, 2012; Cobbinah *et al.*, 2013; De Vita and Kyaw, 2016; UNEP, 2016; Mugizi *et al.*, 2017; Zacarias and Loyola, 2017). To that end, essentially survive a global cross-cultural connection catalyzed by tourism essentials and enthusiasms. Besides, tourism encourages progress within the poverty-stricken and marginalized rural areas, where the populations undergo discredited economic backgrounds and meager livelihood opportunities. The mentioned resonates with the Musina Municipality community in transposing its already affluent biodiversity area into a more profitable resource base through an active tourism policy strategy.

Indeed, tourism improvement in protected and preservation areas is presently a standard world event (Ramaano, 2019). Ultimately, preserved and conservation area administrators and central role players should be well vested with necessary erudition. To that end, for the necessities and well-being of local and adjacent communities, including extra relevant role-players and stakeholders such as tourists. The before-mentioned echoes with the adjoining tourism initiatives of the sampled communities within the Municipality, such as the [Tshipise Forever Resort] amongst others in the study area. See [Plates 1 and 2](#). Henceforth, the study area in Musina Municipality has an abundance of natural biodiversities, affluence of rural tourism possibilities as in agric and cultural tourism means that could develop the communities' livelihoods if the suitable parameters and tact are in position (Ramaano, 2021). The problem statement spells out that notwithstanding the resource potentials observed in the study area. Tourism, however, seems to not capacitating the local inhabitants adequately. Consequently, the research question is: What are the views of using sustainable tourism to improve community sustenance in Musina Municipality, Limpopo, South Africa? This study argues that by identifying such activities, one can advocate for necessary steps on efficient tourism and sustainability strategy in the study area.

1.2 The relevance of sustainability, sustainable tourism and sustainable development

This research thus liaises with the theory and opinions of sustainable tourism. Sustainability, sustainable tourism and sustainable developments are used correspondently in the literature (Liu, 2003; De Witt, 2011). Elevated global attention about sustainability has put pressure on companies to justify the value of their commodities and services beyond private profit and to take obligation for the negative consequences of their activities (Southgate and Sharpley,



Plate 1.
An entrance gate of
Tshipise Forever
Resort outside
Musina Town

Source(s): Author, 2019



Source(s): Author, 2019

Plate 2.
Typical
accommodation
facilities in Tshipise
Forever Resort outside
Musina Town

2014; Moscardo and Murphy, 2014). The policy predicament characteristics of sustainable tourism are fundamental to new institutional systems and policy settings at international, national and local measures. Therefore, there is always a necessity to revisit the tourism actions around sustainable tourism guidelines within respective structures in destination areas and relative countries. Hence, there is a need to enable livelihoods for local communities, such as in the study area (Hall *et al.*, 2015; Ramaano, 2021). The next section presents the study area and methods used.

2. Study area and methods

2.1 Location and characteristics

Musina Municipality makes a portion of the Vhembe District Municipality. It has dwelled in the outlying North-Eastern segment of the Limpopo Province, adjacent to Zimbabwe in the North and Mozambique on the East side next to the Kruger National Park. So, on the remoter North, the Municipality is nearby Musina Town attached to the Thulamela Municipality (Musina Municipality, 2019). It is, hence, set between 22° 25' 00" and 22° 50' 00" E lines of latitude and between 30° 20' 15" and 31° 01' 22" S lines of longitudes. See Figure 1 for the location map (Ramaano, 2019, 2021).

Admittedly, Ramaano (2021) designated that the research area is affluent with Baobabs [*Adansonia digitata*], Marula [*Sclerocarya birrea*] and Mopani [*Colophospermum mopane*] trees. Besides, Pandey *et al.* (2003) argued that there is notable reciprocity linking the physical characteristics and climatic conditions. The Musina Municipality area undergoes a biodiversity-related annual rainfall of nearly 500 mm per annum (Poto and Mashela, 2008; Musina Municipality, 2017).

2.1.1 Views on sustainable tourism, community-based tourism (CBT) and community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) activities. Significantly, CBNRM is a scheme to operate synchronically to shield communities' natural resources, and at the very point, permit durable avail to the inhabitants. It means local people grappling to protect their land, water, animals and plants so that they can manage these natural resources to develop their entities and the lives of their contemporaries and grandchildren. It is an approach to facilitate every existing member of the community to keep a role to play in heightening the status of participation economically, culturally and spiritually. Triumphant CBNRM can return countless mixed earnings. For example, it can: Equip people with a path to resources, improve farming and food supply, create jobs, intensify small businesses, render possibilities for education and training, develop community organization, raise community health, sustain

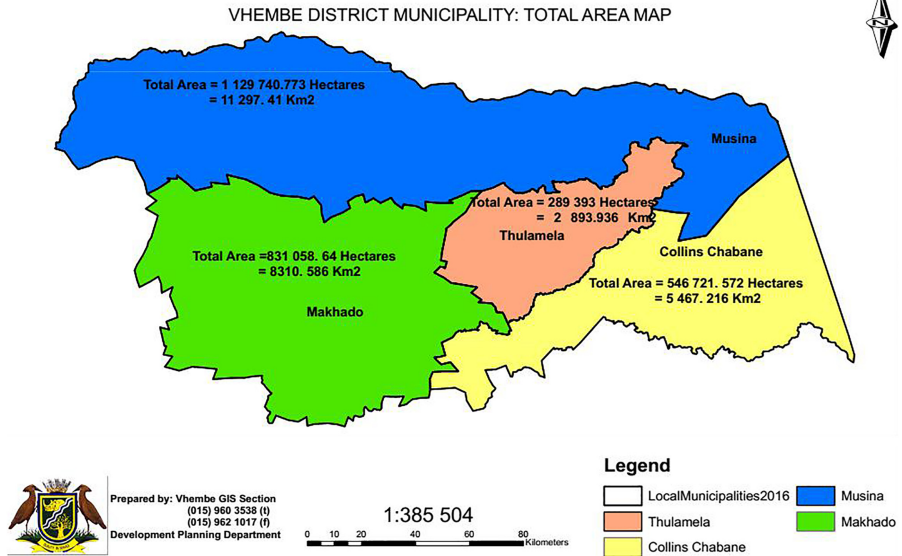


Figure 1.
Location of the
study area

Source(s): Vhembe District Municipality, 2017

and strengthen cultural and spiritual views (DEAT, 2003; Ramaano, 2019). Likewise, bioprospecting concerns any attempt to distinguish biological resources and the joined indigenous information for business exploitation. It got comprehended as biodiversity prospecting. It consequently can be a required element of medical tourism for the rural communities that live next to the preserved areas. Despite this, organizations and agreements in phases of using the resources are vital. Therefore, for the pharmaceuticals from the ethnobotanicals within the operations of conservancies. Reasonably, bioprospecting can be an essential part of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), sustainability, community development and sustainable tourism (Ramaano, 2019, 2021).

The basing view of CBNRM is that people who reside imminent to a resource and whose sustenance instantly depend on it have an interest in sustainable land use and supervision than the government or elsewhere regularities. Charges of CBNRM affirm that it delivers the best expectations for achieving conservation ends. Henceforward, in the manner of raising the poverty-stricken rural communities who got seized of the elemental power to substantive collaboration in settlements that reshape their well-being and livelihoods. The study validates the abounding biodiversity within the adventuresome and appealing qualities of the Mukununde and Makavhini Mountains (Ramaano, 2019). So, other tourism potentials in the study area are within the Big Tree [Baobabs] Nature Reserve, [Dambale Bushmen Rock Paintings], [Sagole Spa], [Tshipise Forever Resort], [Musina Tourism Info and Hub]. The specified supports heritage, cultural, hospitality and eco-tourism potentials (e.g., Plates 1 and 2). Commonly, the Musina Municipality has a wealth of community-based natural resources potentials estimated by its mixture of tourism assets and natural biodiversity. Tourism can influence permaculture and horticulture by affording secondary and alternative income reservoirs (Ramaano, 2019). Farm tourism and ecotourism extensions may improve the socioeconomic ranks of the citizens (Ramaano, 2021). Rural and agric expansion education are meaningful dimensions in supporting and advancing agricultural compositions. A potential

collaboration amongst rural, agric extension, hospitality, cultural and sustainable tourism education for rural populations empowerment, such as in the research area, could be a priority (Figure 4).

The ecological backdrop hints that Musina municipal area is plenteous with natural biodiversity. Thus, however, vulnerable to impoverishment, the communities have choices for the approach they may adhere to in bettering their livelihoods. The Municipality is for numerous land employs such as agriculture, game farming, hunting, mining, forestry, and tourism. Wilderness, hospitality, and tourism activities being the most desirable. Indeed, adopting sustainable tourism development leadership, such as a combination of cultural, heritage, inclusive and eco-tourism amongst others, can support the communities towards socioeconomic gain; hereafter, sustainability within their area (Figure 5). The aforementioned can synergistically collaborate with other projects, but, most auspiciously, agriculture and forestry within the milieus.

2.2 Data and methods

The methods appropriated in this study expected to appraise the “views of utilizing sustainable tourism to improve community sustenances in Musina Municipality, Limpopo, South Africa.” The study operated a mixed-methods study using quantitative and qualitative surveys, as it proffered an enlightening account. In this manner, all the ethical research systems and permissions got acknowledged. The study applied purposive sampling, whereas predominantly questionnaires and interviews got utilized as research methods. A purposive sample is a non-probability representation. It is picked based on population features and the aim of the study. The reason for choosing this kind of sampling was that the researcher understood that he could obtain a representative sample by using a reasonable mind, which would succeed in conserving time and money (Patton, 2001; Ramaano, 2019, 2021).

2.3 Sample size calculation and rationale of the study

The sample size got determined by applying Taro Yamane’s formula (Yamane, 1973). $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$, where n is the sample size, N is the population size and e is the precision level. The conferred study area involves Folovhodwe, Gumela, Tshipise and Zwigodini villages in Musina Municipality and holds 4,947 populations. Accordingly, the sample got stabilized at 5% ($e = 0.05$), and the sample size of the study area was plainly around 370. The impoverishments and neighborhoods of the villages around the protected areas led to the choice of the study area. Hence, eventually, the development of the comprehensive questionnaires. Finally, four villages were careful and purposefully selected (Ramaano, 2021). They are Folovhodwe, Gumela, Tshipise and Zwigodini, and all juxtaposed to various tourism existences such as the [Nwanedi Nature Reserve], [Sagole Spa] (Geothermal Spring), and the “Big Tree Nature Reserve” amongst the rest (Table 1). Thus, Table 1 reveals the allocation of questionnaires within the sampled villages in the Musina municipal area. Table 2 shows the adjacent tourism ventures and entities that got interviewed within the study area. Hence, Table 3 shows the focus group preparations in the study area.

Data got culled applying primary and secondary methods according to the basis of the study. Thus, data got assembled through (a) questionnaires, (b) interviews, (c) reviews of existing documents, (d) focus group discussions and (e) field observations. Denoted sources had mixed preferences for meeting times; some chose morning sessions while others went for midday slots as per earlier arrangements. Additionally, distance environment inspired research sessions. Concerning the whole investigation process, closer areas got morning slots, while afternoons were for too distant ones. To that end, respective data from both local communities and adjacent tourism ventures got acquired. Questionnaire surveys ($n = 370$) (Questionnaire survey within the four sampled villages, distributed between the mornings of March 1 to afternoon April 30 and collected between the mornings of May 15 to afternoon

June 15, 2019) aimed at obtaining the primary fulfillment of the study, while interviews ($n = 30$) (*Key informant interviews within the six sampled tourism ventures and entities 8/9/10 April 2019, during the mornings and afternoons*), document reviews (*conducted between March 2019 and April 2021*), focus group discussions ($n = 20$) (*Focus group discussions within all the sampled villages [mornings and afternoons] 17/18/19/20 March 2019*), and field surveys (*conducted between March 2019 and April 2021*), aimed at independently appending questionnaire data. Primary sources were the sources such as eyewitness explanations of the event, but secondary sources were somewhat distant from primary sources and covered reports from people who were not eyewitnesses (Esterberg, 2002; Ramaano, 2019, 2021). Hence secondary data entails data that are already useable. They held information that has already been assembled and analyzed by someone else. Thus, secondary data were associated with the data previously for other projects and activities. Therefore, seemingly not broadly dispensed. With that, Musina's previous integrated development plan (IDP) and local economic development strategies (LEDs) proved significant. Hence, general literature reviews also supplemented secondary data. The usage of spreadsheet, Microsoft Excel,

Table 1.
Selection of villages
and calculation of
sample size

Villages	Population	Calculation formula and percentages	Sample size and allocation of questionnaires per villages
Folovhodwe	2,806	$57\% \times 370 = 210.9$ (Rounded to 211) = 211	211
Gumela	383	$8\% \times 370 = 29$	29
Tshipise	1,052	$21\% \times 370 = 77.7$ (Rounded to 78) = 78	78
Zwigodini	706	$14\% \times 370 = 51.8$ (Rounded to 52) = 52	52
Total	4,947	100%	370

Source(s): Musina Municipality (2011, 2019)

Table 2.
Tourism ventures and
allocations of
interviews from
designated
questionnaires on
tourism ventures
personnel

Name of tourism ventures and their activities	Location of the tourism venture (villages)	Interviewees per venture/entity
Nwanedi nature reserve and resort, (Luphephe dam)	Gumela (/Folovhodwe) villages	5
The big tree holiday accommodation	Zwigodini (Madifha) village	5
Manalani lodge; (Sagole spa geothermal spring)	Tshipise village	5
The Big tree nature reserve (big baobab and mopani trees)	Zwigodini (Madifha) village	5
Beria Madzonga resort	Zwigodini village	5
Musina LED and Tourism info	Musina Municipality (Musina town)	5
Total	6	30

Source(s): Musina Municipality (2011, 2019)

Table 3.
Allocations of focus
group discussions from
designated
questionnaires on
villages in the
study area

Villages	Focus group discussion individuals per village
Folovhodwe	5
Gumela	5
Tshipise	5
Zwigodini	5
Total	20

Source(s): Musina Municipality (2011, 2019), Ramaano (2019, 2021)

Cross-Tabulation Analysis and manual sorting of focus group discussions (FGDs) information were supplementary in both quantitative and qualitative data examines (Ramaano, 2019, 2021).

2.3.1 Required data and their function. Data on the demographics and day-to-day challenges were meaningful to produce a socio-economic hurdles portrait within the study area. Data on the variety of tourism activities erudition on examples of tourism development activities in the Musina Municipality were necessary. Consequently, data on the influence of tourism development exercises on sustenance and socioeconomic standings of the local communities of Musina Municipality got obtained. Data on major potential tourism development appealing enterprises within the study area were required. Finally, such data got obtained to liaise them with the probability of further tourism potentials with the uprightness of a proposed tourism approach in the study area. Data on the turnaround of sustainable tourism and sustainability tacts within the communities were also vital. The specified data got acquired to evaluate how the Musina Municipality serves the environmental sustainability of tourism and sustainable tourism initiatives within the district. Eventually, such data were the significant symbols within the call for organizing tourism in local community advancement in the Musina municipal area. The resultant data were hence indispensable in estimating a conceivably best versatile strategy envisaged by the researcher. Thus, developing the sustainability of community livelihoods from the advantages of sustainable tourism within the expanse. The next part exhibits the results and discussions of the study.

3. Results and discussions

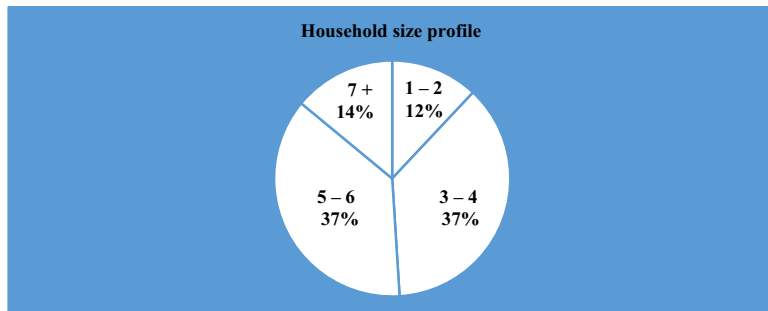
3.1 The demographics of the respondents in the research area

This results segment manifests insight into the household size and education profiles of respondents in the study area. Demographics are essential constituents that shape any provided community.

3.1.1 Household size profile. The household size is an imperative component of the communities that determine elementary needs such as health procurements and education essentials. These perspectives got checked to learn how they broadly associate and influence fundamental obligations. A well-defined tourism development strategy can conceivably reshape them by tourism employments. Therefore, also linked with entrepreneurship advancements and hospitality projects. Thus, (Figure 2) reveals that of the total respondents in the survey, the household size varied from 1–2 to 7+ members; though about the majority of the household size (37.2%) contains 3–4 and 5–6 members apiece; whereas 13.4% of respondents have 7+ affiliates. Therefore, 11.6% of the respondents have 1–2 members, which could be more obvious to secure versus those with more extended ($n = 370$). The household size is necessary for determining the source and outcomes of impoverishment on substantial essentials such as energy, food security, quality education, health and sanitation. Food security necessitates the assurance of supplies, food availability and accessibility to the given members (Maxwell, 2001; Ramaano, 2019). Hence, it is vital to collect data on the household sizes and how it might influence the socio-economic status and impoverishment within the societies. Accordingly, one will understand the imperativeness of the socioeconomic privilege of a proper tourism development strategy that could support various household sizes in the study area. Therefore, Ramaano (2021) exposed that the study area has 54% men and 46% women. Accordingly, tourism has the potential to generate jobs for both men and women equal, advancing gender equity.

3.1.2 Educational rank profile. The education levels of the respondents got reviewed concerning their overall experience, tourism, and environmental exercises. Therefore, the importance of utilizing a potential tourism policy approach for the progression of sustenance

Figure 2.
Household size profile



Source(s): Author's field data, 2019

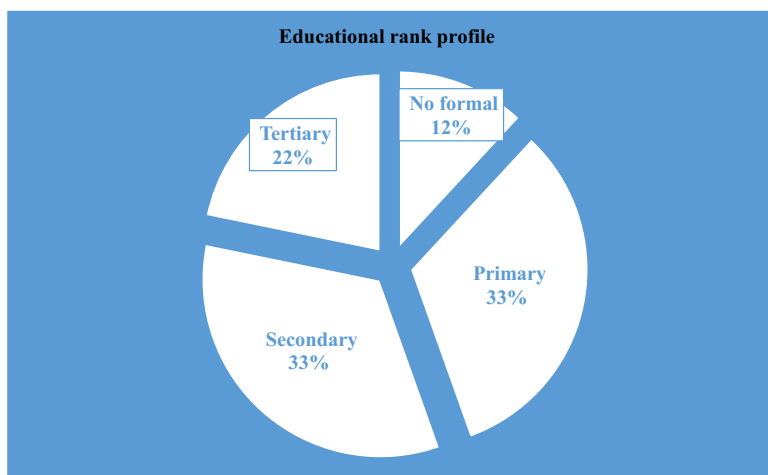
in the research area. Refer to [Figure 3](#) for the education rank of the respondents in the Musina municipal area. Accordingly, of the total surveyed respondents, 33.7% attained secondary level, and 21.8% have experienced some education at the tertiary level. So, about 33.7% of the respondents have reached a primary level whereas, 11.6% have never undertaken any formal education ($n = 370$).

Generally, the comprehensive education situation can allow the community to discern policy and approaches documented for tourism ([Ramaano, 2019](#)), thus for community advancement and environmental management. Furthermore, decently operate tourism enterprises can magnify the educational accomplishments of the community through tertiary education support.

3.2 Everyday hurdles for the communities

3.2.1 *Responses on the day to day challenges.* Data in [Table 4](#) describe that a total of 138 respondents identified [inadequate biodiversity maintenance] as the reaction to the question on the nature of their day-to-day challenges. Furthermore, 108 respondents picked

Figure 3.
Educational rank profile



Source(s): Author's field data, 2019

		Section B, Q1 (b) Day to day challenges?							Total
		Lack of adequate electricity supply	Food insecurity	Poor education services	Lack of proper transportation and services	Shortage of adequate health facilities	Inefficient water services	Inadequate biodiversity maintenance	Others (specify)
Gumela	Count	3	0	0	5	4	16	1	0
	%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%	17.2%	13.7%	55.1%	3.4%	0.0%
Folovhodwe	Count	15	7	0	8	30	64	87	0
	%	7.1%	3.3%	0.0%	3.7%	14.2%	30.3%	41.2%	0.0%
Tshipise	Count	10	8	0	2	13	17	28	0
	%	12.8%	10.2%	0.0%	2.5%	16.6%	21.7%	35.8%	0.0%
Zwigoadini	Count	7	2	0	0	10	11	22	0
	%	13.4%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%	21.1%	42.3%	0.0%
Total	Count	35	17	0	15	57	108	138	0
	%	9.4%	4.5%	0.0%	4.0%	15.4%	29.1%	37.2%	0.0%

Source(s): Survey by the Author (2019)

Table 4.
Responses on the day
to day challenges

[inefficient water services], 57 respondents elected [shortage of adequate health facilities], whereas 35 respondents decided [lack of electricity supply]. On the other note, an overall entirety of just 17 respondents elected the [food insecurity] section. None respondents marked [poor education], accompanied by the [others] only with a (0) respondent description. Accordingly, data in the table also explains three categories of respondents as more obviously described than others; 37.2% for [inadequate biodiversity maintenance], 29.1% for [inefficient water services] and 15.4% for [shortage of adequate health facilities] ($n = 370$). The data summarize the most challenging service performance burdens for the largest villages in rural areas. Inefficient water services, inadequate health services and lack of biodiversity management are the most disturbing malfunctions of service delivery and environmental challenges in the study area; besides, generally visible in many rural areas in Limpopo (Ramaano, 2019). Therefore, in this investigation, the anticipation of utilizing sustainable tourism to improve community sustenance should rest on devising a holistic and inclusive strategy that benefits the synergies amongst all estimable resources and biodiversity in the study area. Consequently with tourism being an inspiration, initiator, and motivating viewpoint for overall development. Therefore, the latter will restrain the debilitating difficulties such as inefficient water services, inadequate health services and biodiversity management in the study area. *Furthermore, 90% of respondents from focus group discussions accorded the same opinions on the specified ($n = 20$). Document review and physical observation assisted the same, but the actual data through the reviewed documents and photographs.*

3.3 The nexus between tourism potential and the sampled ventures and entities

3.3.1 *Focus group responses on the tourism venture (entity) closer to them.* Data in Table 5 show that the Nwanedi Nature Reserve, Big Tree Accommodation Lodge and the Big Tree Nature Reserve shared the spoil with a uniform and higher percentage representing 20% each from the feeling and responses of the focus group, thus also influenced by the proximity and popularity of the tourism ventures and entities. In second place were Manalani Lodge and Beria Madzonga Resort, with 15% of each response, which then followed lastly by the LED and Tourism Information Center with a 10% representation. The latter represent entities much far away from the rural milieu, situated in Musina Town. Also, quite relevantly, Manalani Lodge and Beria Madzonga Resort are the youngest entities amongst all others. Hence, it does seem that, despite the proximity, the age of entities matters within their popularity. That being so, the three fairly represented entities are the major ones within the study area. Hence all six, in general, present more or less tourism potential in the research area. Analogous to the before-mentioned, the majority total of 240 respondents replied [Nwanedi Nature Reserve and Resort] as the closer venture or activity that they are conscious of or within their local area. Therefore, a fair number of 52 respondents designated [The Big Tree Nature Reserve], accompanied by 78 respondents who showed [Tshipise Sagole Spa]. As such, separate from 0.0%, 14.0% of respondents describe the lesser percentage, whereas 64.8% factor the highest number of the respondents. In this view, one would have relevantly predicted [Nwanedi Nature Reserve and Resort] to be dominating as are the main entities around Gumela and Folovhodwe settlements, as was the fact. Therefore, the diversity within the replies got inspired by the number of inhabitants within their area. All the ventures indicated are the major ones within their respective villages, whereby Folovhodwe village has the highest population number ($n = 370$). Both document analysis and physical observation aided the same but effective attestation of data through literature reviewing and captured pictures (see also Plates 1 and 2).

Focus group discussion 1(b) What are the entity and venture you are closer to in your area?

	Beria Madzonga resort	Big tree holiday accommodation	Big tree nature reserve	LED and tourism info center (Musina municipal offices)	Manalani lodge	Nwanedi nature reserve and resort	Total
Gumela	Count 0	1	1	1	1	1	5
	% 0.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Folovhodwe	Count 1	1	1	1	0	1	5
	% 20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Tshipise	Count 1	1	1	0	1	1	5
	% 20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Zwigodini	Count 1	1	1	0	1	1	5
	% 20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	Count 3	4	4	2	3	4	20
	% 15.0%	20.0%	20.0%	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%	100.0%

Source(s): Focus group discussions by the Author (2019)

Table 5.
Focus group responses
on their entity or
venture they are
closer to

3.4 Consequences of tourism activities on the sustenance of local communities

3.4.1 Ventures and entities responses on any empowerment or benefits to the adjacent local communities. Data in Table 6 show the 90% of the respondents responding positively to the value of their tourism venture on empowering communities. To that end, 10% of respondents suggested differently on the same inquiry. It is a good thing that the majority felt that tourism is currently a beneficial and significant activity for the nearby residents. Therefore, imperative for the ventures, entities and communities to build on this platform to make things even better through the inception of a more prospective, viable and integrated tourism strategy to maintain the advancement of livelihoods in the study area; and entirely for the municipality (n = 30).

3.4.2 Explanations on how such ventures empower communities Interview.Q3 (a) (i) Explain how it empowers communities. Of the majority [27] (90%) respondents who replied (yes) to such respective venture, empowering communities, all of them per venture indicated similar answers. In Beria Madzonga Resort (Zwigodini village), those who replied “yes.” They further posited that they help the community by promoting sports tournaments and supporting the local football team with all necessities from food, toolkits, accommodations and transport apart from offering holiday accommodations and entertainment to visitors and locals. From the Big Tree Holiday Accommodation (“Madifha” Zwigodini), all respondents indicated that they benefit local communities by giving communities some free slots for swimming pools and social relaxation in addition to offering holiday accommodation and entertainment to regular customers. With the Big Tree Nature Reserve (Zwigodini “Madifha”). The respondents expressed empowering the locals through ecotourism education as tour guides, hence offering subsidized price during a certain period of the year to get in and relax within the reserve. Thus, significantly in addition to ecotourism visits destination for the tourists and locals. With that, LED and Tourism Info Center (Musina Municipal Offices) interviews all indicated that they offer communities special education on tourism and organize certain entertainment functions. They went on to posit they have much better plans for the future. From Manalani Lodge (Tshipise village), all respondents indicated that they help communities by offering their relatives accommodations on much compromised and reduced prices in addition to their usual accommodation prices, during a funeral and other functions.

		Interview 3(a) Does your tourism venture or entity empower adjacent local communities?		
		No	Yes	Total
Beria Madzonga resort (Zwigodini village)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Big tree holiday accommodation (Madifha Zwigodini)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Big tree nature reserve (Zwigodini “Madifha”)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
LED and Tourism info center (Musina municipal offices)	Count	3	2	5
	%	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
Manalani lodge (Tshipise village)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Nwanedi nature reserve and resort (Gumela and Folovhodwe villages gates)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	3	27	30
	%	10.0%	90.0%	100.0%

Source(s): Interview by the Author (2019)

Table 6. Responses on any empowerment or benefits from the adjacent tourism venture communities by their tourism ventures and entities in the study area

With that, the respondents from Nwanedi Nature Reserve and Resort (Gumela and Folovhodwe villages gates). They indicated that the locals benefit from them because they come into visits, in a manner of a [mass tourism activity] during every holiday, privileged against those from afar area who may find it difficult to reach the places. They went on to say that they used to kill animals and distribute them to the locals at many affordable prices, an activity they indicated the desire to bring back. They also posited that most of their staff are from the two neighboring villages. However, all these responses differ from the overall respondents from the questionnaire survey. Locals substantially expressed dissatisfaction about receiving empowerment from tourism ventures and entities around them. The mentioned is an indication that everyone stands by their ground. Nonetheless, communities appear to receive at least something, though not up to scratch, and the average satisfaction of the locals within the respective areas.

On the different note of the same probe, the survey study exposed that a preponderance of (93.5%) respondents answered [No] opposed by simply (6.4%) who registered [Yes] to getting any empowerment from such ventures and entities ($n = 370$). Moreover, 95% of respondents from focus group discussions showed the identical on not acquiring enough profits from tourism insurance ($n = 20$). So, both document review and physical observation helped in such data through literature studies and images of some abandoned tourism activities.

3.4.3 Responses on how tourism benefits affect their livelihoods and daily basic needs. Data in Table 7 symbolize that a majority total of 337 respondents responded [none] to socioeconomic benefits from the value of main or any tourism enterprise within or nearby their area. The other 33 respondents acknowledged being [insignificantly] sustaining socioeconomic gains from such connected ventures and entities. Thus, (91.0%) of respondents meant [none], while (0.0%) showed [significantly] and [very significantly] separately and respectively. A next higher number of (8.9%) respondents betokened [insignificantly] to socio-economic perks ($n = 370$). Therefore, data in the table also express that the major or any tourism enterprises within or nearby their particular areas are not in their fittest statuses to enlist a desirable socioeconomic improvement in the Musina district (Ramaano, 2019). Therefore, a decent arrangement should target the functioning of tourism ventures and projects within the extent. Hence, for both tourism enterprises management and well-being of the communities.

Consequently, in the corresponding vein, respondents of 90% majority from focus group discussions shared the same sentiments on this instance ($n = 20$). As such, both document

		Section B, Q2 (b) (ii) Show us how does it affect your socioeconomic status, livelihoods and daily life basic needs from the table below?				
		None (nothing at all)	Insignificantly (not enough)	Significantly (enough)	Very significantly (more than enough)	Total
Gumela	Count	16	13	0	0	29
	%	55.1%	44.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Folovhodwe	Count	198	13	0	0	211
	%	93.8%	6.1%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Tshipise	Count	76	2	0	0	78
	%	97.4%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Zwigodini	Count	47	5	0	0	52
	%	90.3%	9.6%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	337	33	0	0	370
	%	91.0%	8.9%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Source(s): Survey by the Author (2019)

Table 7.
Responses on how
tourism benefits affect
their livelihoods and
daily basic needs?

review and physical observation confirmed the lack of sufficient and significant tourism contribution to their livelihoods and daily basic needs.

3.5 Major dormant tourism development appeal activities within the study area

3.5.1 Focus group discussion responses on major potential tourism development attraction activities. Data in Table 8 point that a total of (95%) respondents identified tree species, e.g. Baobab [*Adansonia*], Marula [*Sclerocarya birrea*], or Mopani [*Colophospermum mopane*] as the explanations to the given inquiry. Therefore, what is the [major dormant tourism development attractions activities in your area]; (5%) respondents picked [agricultural sites]. While, amongst others, [art crafts], [natural heritage tourism], and other categories did not resonate with the feelings of the focus group majority. Data show that trees are amongst the main potential tourist attraction in the area. Trees such as marula draw domestic tourists for gathering and drinking traditional beer produced from marula fruits. The latter empowers local income generation from domestic tourists from purchasing the beer. Other significant species such as baobabs [*Adansonia digitata*] have various values. Their fruits and production of oil and juice from their seeds. Hence, contents from their barks are equally valuable. Also manifest their material, pharmaceutical, and food values. Therefore, it complements their tourist attraction potentials.

Research of the related species would establish an illustration for other latent species in the area, e.g. medical, adventure, cultural, and eco-tourism could collaboratively be fundamental. Additional advancements on anything associated with the improvement of the proposed preservation of these species are vital. Consequently, production from their utilizations would ultimately bring local, social, and economic benefits with or without the aid of tourism in the future. So, such species in the study area have the potential to lead and also to be influenced by tourism. Thus the profit of local communities could be possible. For example, an industry based on manufacturing and marketing local outputs such as “Marula beer” from marula trees [*Sclerocarya birrea*] could be in the corresponding rural districts. The mentioned would have tourism utility and also self-governing economic importance from the trading of these products. Such milestones would resonate with nationwide and international economic privileges without anticipating the touring of local tourists. Accordingly, there exists an implied version of domestic tourists to regional, national and mayhap international dimensions. Thus, local economic development could be staunch. The latter could only be permissible if the right measures exist for promoting tourism development in association

Focus group discussion 8(a) What are the major potential tourism development activities in your area?

		Natural heritage sites	Art crafts	Agricultural sites	Tree species (e.g. Baobab tree, Marula or Mopani)	Others	Total
Gumela	Count	0	0	0	5	0	5
	%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Folovhodwe	Count	0	0	1	4	0	5
	%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Tshipise	Count	0	0	0	5	0	5
	%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Zwigodini	Count	0	0	0	5	0	5
	%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	0	0	1	19	0	20
	%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	95.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Source(s): Focus group discussions by the Author (2019)

Table 8. Focus group discussion on major potential development activities

with conservation, marketing, and production from these significant domestic species of diverse commodity values. Therefore, the study emphasizes the incorporation of these species in the sustainable tourism strategy. Consequently, the resultant flourishing of tourism and enhancement of communities livelihoods in the study district. Thus, a survey demonstrated akin findings with the dominants of tree and plant species alongside the agricultural site, arts and craft, and natural heritage sites. Onward, (49.1%) for [plant and tree species], (26.2%) for [agricultural sites] and (9.1%) for [art crafts], 5.1 % for [natural heritage sites] and (7.5%) for [none]. while the rest possibilities shared the insignificant remainders. (n = 370). Indeed, document reviews and field observation accord to the mentioned (Ramaano, 2019, 2021).

3.5.2 *All-inclusive view on the usages of significant plant, tree, and local resources for sustenance in the study area.* According to Ramaano (2021), the study area currently lacks appropriate knowledge and commanding policy on indigenous species and resources for tourism and community advancement values. Hence, such a decent Policy would ensure maximum use of significant natural resources, such as trees and plants with tourism, cultural and heritage values in the study area. Therefore, currently are doing less to the daily basic needs of the community. Indigenous resources are an essential aspect of agro-tourism and various cultures, generally tourist magnet in many rural areas; accordingly, potential market initiatives in rural villages. It is imperative to endorse the indigenous resource basis for the conceived tourism and community advancement scheme in the study area (Ramaano, 2019, 2021). Per the specified, various tourist niches in rural areas such as ethnic, cultural, and food tourism would attract influential international businesses in hospitality and tourism. In contribution to academic knowledge, gestalt in tourism forms and indigenous resources would complement and fill the void on other related prior research. The catalyst nature of tourism is not represented well on some indigenous resources and poverty and livelihoods approach. Per the mentioned, Shackleton *et al.* (2007) showed that Indigenous forests and savannas with ranch forests furnish variable prosperity to rural communities and the comprehensive society. He valued the use of protection and forestry in sustainable livelihoods and poverty alleviation plans and policies.

Maikhuri *et al.* (2007) recommended value addition in inherent wild edibles of central Himalaya for sustainable livelihood and small-scale enterprise development. Fuelwood is the prime energy source for residential destinations in the developing world in rural and city contexts (Madubansi and Shackleton, 2007). In most broad rural expanses, it is from the distinguished Mopani trees [*Colophospermum mopane*]. Nonetheless, Ramaano (2021) purported that plant species such as aloe vera can play a vital role within medical tourism and community development. Thus, from their pharmaceutical nature and abilities. Therefore, appending to the previously hinted values of Marula trees [*Sclerocarya birrea*] for enterprises in marula beers, Baobabs [*Adansonia digitata*] for their fruits, and cosmetic oil values from their barks and seedlings. There exists a direct comprehensive instance of their potential sustainable usages in community development (Ramaano, 2019). For example, the study area is by various adjacent protected and enclosed venues for hospitality and tourism outlets. Ventures and entities such as Nwanedi Nature Reserve and Tshipise Forever Resort have accommodation Chalets that each have a braai stand installed outside. Local community-based initiatives underpinned by Community Tourism (CT), bioprospecting of natural resources, community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), and hospitality could be vital. Thus, community entrepreneurship on the sustainable harvest of fuelwood contracted with their supply to the ventures and entities could be a beneficial undertaking. Hence, in ensuring the sustainability of the ecosystem services and environmental quality, such initiatives would collectively officially be by ecotourism, sustainable tourism, and sustainable development guidelines. Akin to the aforementioned African scenario, Cioca *et al.* (2018) juxtaposed the nexus of food and eco-products along with

the significance of environmentally protected areas. Indeed, enhancing the environmental performance of agro-tourism while decently preserving the environment. As such, [Khanal and Shrestha \(2019\)](#) vowed that agro-tourism provides proper routes to defend natural habitats, natural resources, and exotic sites. There dwells a definite intersection among national parks and conservation areas as an attractive target of agro and eco-tourism. To that end, [Hakim et al. \(2019\)](#) appraise healthy foods and beverages in rural tourism areas arising from sustainable agriculture systems. Meanwhile, they recommend better planning to advance tourism development within such milieus.

3.6 Turnaround tact for communities and environmental sustainability of tourism

3.6.1 Responses on having any turnaround strategy planned by local communities for the betterment of environmental sustainability of tourism and overall sustainability within their villages and the local municipality. Data in [Table 9](#) revealed that 95.5% of focus group discussions posited no extant turnaround strategy for specified inquiry. Hence only 5.0% expressed some positivity about environmental sustainability and overall sustainability plan within their expanses. The program would be vital to confront the current or possible detrimental effects of tourism and eventually preserves biodiversity efficiently. The cited would be a primary step before efforts towards the dire obligated integrated tourism scheme for improving the livings of the communities within the study area.

Likewise, (97.0%) of survey respondents said [No], while only (2.9%) said “Yes” to the knowledge ($n = 370$). Henceforward, 93.3% of the interviewed respondents within tourism ventures and entities stated that there is no turnaround strategy planned concerning the betterment of the environmental sustainability of tourism and sustainability in the study area. The other 6.6% supported some envisaged development coming in the pipeline ($n = 30$). Therefore, data could only mean the dire need for a well-informed tourism system to fix the existing tourism activities and the potential tourism initiatives in the study area. The latter would counteract the detrimental effect of activities like land pollution, excessive cutting of trees, and overgrazing and over-cultivation, which appears to be visible from the physical observation sight amongst other environmental problems. The mentioned are detrimental and diminishes tourism values and the integrity of the environment ecosystem conservation values. The building of parks to promote responsible tourism got aired in the interviews, with the inspiring promise from the LED section. The aforementioned exemplified some worries

Focus group discussion Q 9.2(a) Is there any turnaround strategy planned by your local communities for the betterment of environmental sustainability of tourism and overall sustainability within your villages and the local municipality?

		No	Yes	Total
Gumela	Count	5	0	5
	%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Folovhodwe	Count	5	0	5
	%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Tshipise	Count	5	0	5
	%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Zwigodini	Count	4	1	5
	%	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	19	1	20
	%	95.0%	5.0%	100.0%

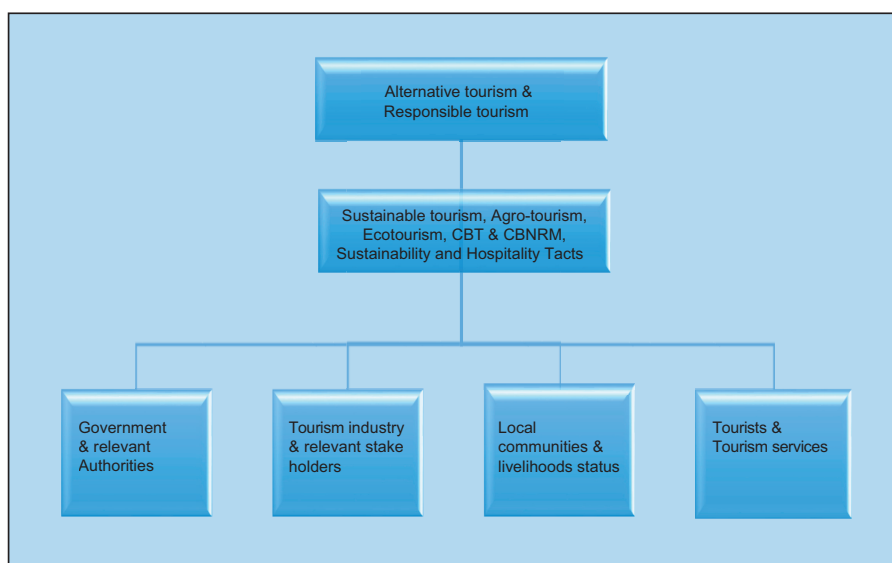
Source(s): Focus group discussions by the Author (2019)

Table 9. Responses on having any turnaround strategy planned by local communities for the betterment of environmental sustainability of tourism and overall sustainability within their villages and the local municipality

on precisions by those in internal statuses about the advancement of tourism enterprises to adequately trickle down the welfare to the mass without yielding any detrimental environmental effects. Thus, it got confirmed by both the document review and physical observation that a lot requires attention. Data were of related composition to those of questionnaire surveys and focus group discussions.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

Separate from questionnaire surveys, interviews, document reviews, and field observations, up to a group of five members of local neighborhoods per sample got involved in focus group discussions. The outcomes of this study earlier described findings on the socioeconomic and day-to-day challenges profile. The study determined that the Musina Municipality is rich with a variety of tourism potentials. The potentials ranged from the existing to the potential tourism resources assets. The tourism potentials in the study area sustain agricultural sites, art crafts, significant indigenous plants and tree species, and natural heritage resource acknowledgments (Ramaano, 2019). Data also aggregately registered from all the acquisition methods that tourism development activities are currently not granting enough to the local communities. About turnaround tourism approaches and environmental sustainability of tourism in the study area, it was transparent from all the gathering methods that tourism is not presently advanced and functioned in an environmentally sustainable fashion. Likewise, along with the researcher's statement of sustainable tourism and community development, it developed that a combination between local communities, government and nongovernmental organizations dealing with rural and sustainable tourism, was much-fancied potential stakeholder cooperation in the study area (Ramaano, 2019). There is a duty for tourism development and administration strategy within the study area in Musina Municipality. It will lean on the abundance of native resources and natural resource diversity in the area. The suggestion would then be supreme in uplifting the locals. Thus, the essence of this study.



Source(s): Modified from De Witt, 2011:50

Figure 4.
Alternative and
responsible tourism

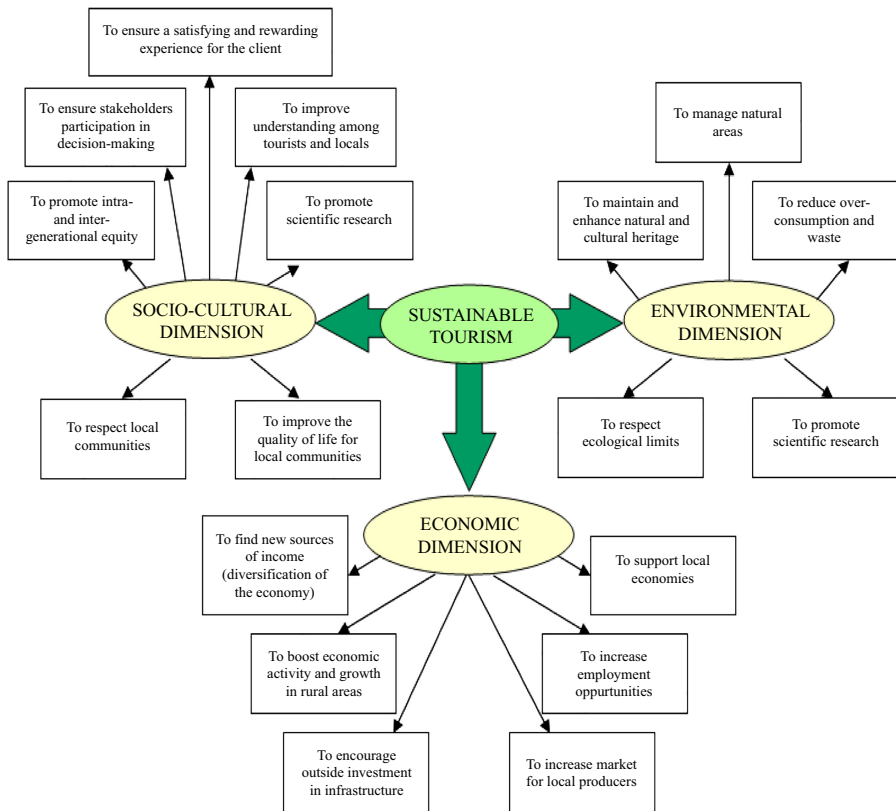


Figure 5.
The sustainable
tourism principles and
framework

Source(s): White *et al.*, 2006; Zamfir *et al.*, 2017; Ramaano, 2021

Therefore, counter to the view that rural areas are too remote and development unfit, rural places are decent optional settings for tourism enterprises, arraying from the farm, heritage, to ecotourism amidst the rest. Govender van Wyk (2007) inquired the example and endorsement of community-based tourism influences on the livelihoods of the commonages in the Namaqualand Northern Cape opposed to land reform solely and specifically opting for agriculture empowerments. Nonetheless, this study partially preserves the mentioned research results. Thus, the earlier research obliged ecotourism welfare for the respective villages. However, also, this study takes the prospect of the silver bullet character of tourism. Therefore, stretch it to the catalyst leader dimension toward general sustainability in the study area. The latter is a contribution to the academic knowledge from this study.

The study had its limitation on the utilization of Microsoft Excel and Cross-Tabulation Analysis as its sole techniques. Nevertheless, this did not restrict the findings of the study. However, future works can rope in different methodologies assessing such, potentially rigorously. This examination could not in itself develop a final tourism strategy along with the gist of this study. The study has nevertheless provided a conducive platform for such a potential scheme from its findings. Its theoretical implications are consonant with Figure 4 on the ecotourism model for South African National Parks adapted from De Witt (2011). Admittedly, De Beer *et al.* (2014) posited insufficient tourism wisdom in African probe

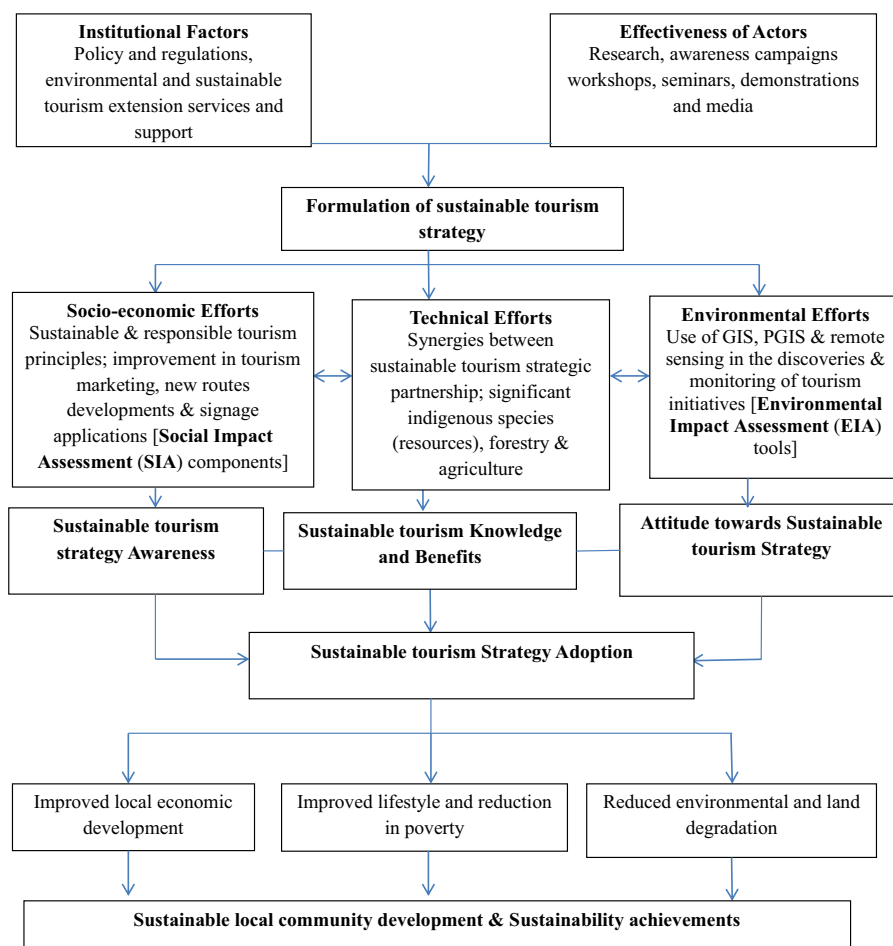


Figure 6.
The recommended
envisaged effective
sustainable tourism
strategy model

Source(s): Author's own; Ramaano, 2019, 2021

correlating to vocation statuses in tourism management. Hence South Africa is not immune to such discrepancy. Thus, they highlight the need for the critical role of the national government tactics for job creation and reliable working platforms in the tourism business. For example, they maintain that the bulk of tourist guides are doubtful or exposed to short-term jobs. Therefore, Figure 5 presents the sustainable tourism principles and approach adopted by White *et al.* (2006) and Zamfir *et al.* (2017). Likewise Figure 6 depicts the practical implications and the recommended envisaged model of sustainable tourism and sustainable community livelihoods for the study and communities in the study area. Figure 5 spells out the comprehensive nature of sustainable tourism rationales. Thus, for its socio-cultural, economic and environmental dimensions. Its environmental paradigm contributes a way to manage natural resources and enable scientific research. Likewise, the socio-cultural ideal favors stakeholder participation in decision-making. There remains a platform to support local economies and newer revenues from its economic paragons amongst other exits.

Essentially and along with the recommendations of this examination (Figure 6) shows the theme of sustainable tourism and sustainable community livelihoods. It holds for a meaningful clinging to sustainable tourism purposes in the study area, as developed in Figure 6. It asserts that management and augmentation services besides seminars and lessons can expand tourism opportunities and social development in rural areas. A tourism strategy should grant significant socioeconomic, technical and environmental objectives in the study area. Tourism retailing, new routes demonstration, gestalt within sustainable tourism strategic marketing, and prioritization of Gis (Geographic information systems), Pgis (Participatory geographic information systems) and remote sensing could be compelling. Conclusively, ascertaining and controlling tourism enterprises could be magnified. Thus, local communities' endorsement of a sustainable tourism approach is with the nature of their information, dues and opinions on sustainable tourism. The strategy's stake could benefit local economic development, discrediting poverty and subjugate environmental degradation. Sequentially, there could survive tourism-based sustainable community progress and sustainability within the area.

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